PO Thurstan Barns Skinner 104502 RAF

Thurstan was born on 18 August 1914 in Winchmore Hill, Middlesex, the son of Francis Barns Skinner and Mary Ann Elizabeth Skinner nee Battrawden. Thurstan was employed as a Salesman, but in 1938 had signed up for pilot training with the Civil Air Guard and was placed on standby for call up. In August 1941 Thurstan was appointed to a Short Service Commission.

On 9 June 1942, 107 Sqn deployed 12 aircraft from RAF Great Massingham, Norfolk to RAF Exeter, Devon to participate in the Circus 9 raid on Lannion Airfield, Brittany with fighter escort provided by Spitfires from the Exeter (Czech) Wing.

In the early morning of the 10 June 1942, the 12 aircraft departed but were recalled at 09:07 due to poor weather. A second attempt was to be made when the weather improved. At 12:50 Thurstan and the crew took off from RAF Exeter in Boston III Z2283 (OM) together with 10 other Bostons. At 13:49, bombs were dropped on the airfield from 12,300 feet and photographs showed a successful strike across two dispersal areas containing many aircraft. On the return journey, when just 25 miles from the English coast, the aircraft were attacked by Me109s from 8/JG-2. Thurstan's aircraft was hit and seen to crash in to the sea in flames, killing all on board.

Also killed : PO Lloyd Douglas Bowman RCAF (Observer); FS Alan Arthur Margrett RCAF (AG); Sgt Arthur Prince DFM (Wop/AG)

Thurstan has no known grave and is commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, Surrey

Thurstan is commemorated on Wall Panel 242