

### Sgt Aaron Ottolangui (1391065) 101 Squadron

Sgt Aaron Ottolangui, Air Bomber 101 Squadron, was killed in action on the night 14/15th April 1943. He is buried in Maubeuge Cemetery in Northern France in Row A in a Joint Grave with one headstone Grave 17. He is interred with Sgt Frank Wood (1149392) the Flight Engineer of the crew. Etched onto the Portland stone is a Christian cross and a Star of David for Aaron.

### George Northover

Next to them in Grave A18 is Sgt George William Henry Northover (1601428) 20-year-old Air Gunner, born in Dorchester, Dorset in 1922. He was the son of George Herbert & Gladys Sarah Louise Northover (né New) of Stratton in Dorsetshire. His parents had married in Dorchester in 1915. Sgt Northover had the following siblings: - Evelyn L born 1921, Geraldine B born 1924, Gladys E G born 1916, and Horace J Northover his brother, born in 1926 Dorchester.

### Joseph Cartmell

In A19 lies Sgt Joseph Leadbetter Cartmell (1129644), the Lancaster's wireless operator and air gunner. His parents were Frederick Victor & Mary Cartmell born 9th Oct 1892 (né Cowell) of Fleetwood in Lancashire. Dad Frederick, born the 6th Aug 1894 (died 1969 Fylde) in Fleetwood, married Mary Cowell (born 9 Oct 1892) in Fylde in 1916. Joseph had 2 siblings, Frederick V Cartmell born 1930 in Fylde and Marjory born in Fylde in 1917. In the 1939 Register they were living 33 Flag St, Fleetwood, and Dad Frederick was a foreman fish worker. Sister Marjory (who became Adams) was a sugar confectioner and airman Joseph was also a fish worker. Frederick Victor Cartmell born 1930 was married to Cynthia Christy in Fylde in 1954.

### Eifion Clement

Beside him is F/O Henry Eifion Clement (127970) born in 1922 in Pontardawe, Glamorganshire, was the 22-year-old Navigator - Henry was the son of William Thomas Clement born in 1894 & Mary Hannah Roberts born in 1893 of Velindre, Swansea. They had married in Swansea in 1917 and apart from Henry had the following children: - Dillwyn born 1919 - 2004, Johnny H born 1920, Mary V born 1933 (married Jones) and Sarah M born in 1923 (married Evans). In 1939 the family were living Brynderw, Pontardawe and dad William was a colliery repairman below, whereas brother Dillwyn was an on setter below. Henry's brother Johnny married Anita Jones in 1946 in West Glamorganshire. His brother Dillwyn married Sarah E Williams also in 1946 and in 1947 a daughter Heulwen M Clement was born. In 2013 she attended a service in Maubeuge for the dead servicemen which was covered in the French newspaper 'La Voix du Nord' 25/4/2013. Schoolchildren sang the Marseillaise whilst those gathered could hear the roar of 4 Rolls Royce Merlin engines as the crowd gathered around the commemorative plaque.

### Peter Steed

Beside Clements in A21 grave is Sgt Peter Donovan Steed (1307887) who was born the 20th May 1922 a 20-year-old air gunner. He was the son of Mr. & Mrs. Harold Sylvester Steed and stepson of Hilda Elizabeth Steed of Humberstone in Leicester. The epitaph on his grave is "*He gave his Life that we may Live, Ever Remembered, Father, Eileen, Hilda*". In the 1939 Register, Peter's occupation was noted as a fitters improver hosiery machine. His Dad Harold was a widow who was born 28th Oct 1887 and was the local manager of cardboard march. They lived at 10 Peter's Drive: Leicester. His father remarried in 1941 to Hilda E Coatan. Peter's mother was Winifred M Grant. Peter had two siblings Eileen D Steed born in

Bristol in 1916 and Anthony Grant Steed born in Bristol in 1913. His brother Anthony was a Leading Aircraftman (529407) and was killed on the 16th August 1940 and is buried in Wick Cemetery with the epitaph *"In Memory of Tony, affectionately remembered by Dad, Eileen and Hilda"*

### **Robert Hamilton**

Sgt Robert Gordon Hamilton (1043580) was the 21-year-old pilot of this Lancaster serial No. W4951 SR-O which had crashed in the Forest of Trelon on a bombing mission to Stuttgart. He was the son of Robert John & Nellie Gertrude Hamilton of Moss Side, Manchester. Robert was born in 1921 in Chorlton Lancashire his father Robert J Hamilton had married his mother Nellie G Green in Chorlton in 1917. He had a sister called Sybil Gertrude Hamilton who was born in 1919 in Chorlton. Sybil married John E Wiles in Manchester in 1944. She died in Southminster, Essex in 2009.

### **Operations**

All of the crew were on their first operation in Bomber Command on Saturday 3rd April 1943 on a bombing mission to Essen. Hamilton was at the controls of Lancaster ED379 when they took off at 8pm that night. Their bomb load was 1 X 4000lb & 540 X 4lb & 48 X 30lb. When debriefed Hamilton reported that bombs were dropped at 22h.11 from 16,400ft. No cloud. Excellent visibility by Path Finder Flares. There were large fires 2 miles south of the main concentration. A successful op. The record of events went on to state that Sgt Hamilton had an engine failure over the target, but he managed to return and land at 01h;15 with only 3 engines in commission. That night a BBC journalist had accompanied the Pathfinder crew in a Lancaster bomber, and this was broadcasted sometime later on the BBC. It was made into a record called RAF Over Essen. 348 aircraft took part in the raid - this was the first raid in which more than 200 Lancaster's had taken part. The bombing was accurate and local reports said there was widespread damage in the centre and western part of Essen. Recording and transcript of the bombing that night by a Lancaster crew, [https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=MF5\\_hvE4WEA](https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=MF5_hvE4WEA)

The Lancaster was hit in the front turret which caused an oil leak, then they see about 100 searchlights ahead and one of the crew says *"By God, I've never seen anything like this before"* Flak was all around them *"My God! You could light your fag on those! "Watch your height. I'm watching everything. Flak directly beneath us - Searchlights searching for us. You bastards! Then "Oh Hell" as they were coned "Could do with a pint! "*

2nd Operation was a bombing mission to Kiel on Sunday 4th April 1943. Sgt Hamilton was flying Lancaster ED373 and took off from the airfield at 20h:30 carrying 9 X 1000lb & 2 X 1000lb 12-hour delay bombs which were dropped at 23h:25 from 18,000ft through 10/10 cloud cover via Path Finder Flares. A good trip. 577 aircraft took part and it was the largest raid on Kiel so far.

3rd Operation was a bombing mission to Frankfurt on Saturday 10th April 1943 in Lancaster ED379 which they'd flown on the 3rd and experienced an engine failure. They took off at 23h:45 with 1 X 4000lb & 540 X 4lb & 48 X 30lb bomb load, which was released over the drop zone at 02h51 from 17,000ft through 10/10 cloud by markers on approach. A disappointing trip owing to cloud conditions. 502 aircraft flew on the mission. Severe cloud cover over the target meant Bomber Command had no idea where the bombs were falling.

4th Operation was a bombing mission to bomb the dock area of Spezia on Tuesday 13th April 1943 the operations book reports that *"Sgt Hamilton was compelled to return early owing to oil pressure failure in both outer engines"*. They were flying once more in Lancaster ED379 and took off at 20h00 with a bomb load of 5 X 1000lb 25 seconds delay & 180 X 4lb & 16 X 30lb. Mission abandoned at 50.43N00.47W.

Both outer engines being u/s. Bombs jettisoned at 22h33 at 54.090131E safely

5th and final Operation Sgt RG Hamilton's Lancaster W4951 was in 'A' Flight of 101 Squadron which flew out of RAF Holme on Spalding Moor. That Wednesday night they had taken off from Chorley for the raid on Stuttgart on the 14th April 1943. They crashed with 7 fatalities. The Lancaster was shot down by night fighter Oberleutnant Rudolf Attendorf of the 2/NJG 4 flying BF110 3C+EK from Florennes airfield in Belgium. They had a bomb load of 1 X 4000lb & 3 X 1000lb GPTTD & 2 X 1000lb of 12-hour delay fuses.

The Operations Book notes *"Nothing heard from this aircraft after takeoff"* The diary of events continued *'A' Flight had the honour to supply the only aircraft from the Squadron to attack Stuttgart. It was very unfortunate that Sgt Hamilton should fail to return. The Squadron felt the profound loss of a good crew. Crashed in the vicinity of Maubeuge. All buried in the cemetery"*