

Some Air Force Kiplings

Guy and Bernard Kipling were twin sons of Robert and Rosa Kate Kipling, born in 1918 in Midhurst, Sussex. Their ancestry can be traced back to the Kiplings of Bowes in the 18th century (see “Dean 1911”).



^e
The twins with their mother Rosa Kipling (nee Knight)

Both were Sergeants in the RAF Volunteer Reserve.

On the night of 9/10 May 1941, **Sgt Bernard Kipling** was an observer (navigator) on Whitley bomber P5106 MH-O of 51 Squadron when it was shot down by a night-fighter (Lt. Reinhold Knacke, 1.NJG1) and crashed at 03:05 over Boshoven (2 km West of Weert, in Belgium). Their target that night was Ludwigshaven. The crew of P/o P.Myers (pilot), Sgt H.G.Browne, Sgt B.Kipling, Sgt G.A.Selby and F/Sgt A.Jackson had taken off from Dishford at 21.59, so were presumably on their way home when intercepted. They are buried in Eindhoven (Woensel) General Cemetery



51 squadron reformed on 5 March 1937 when 'B' Flight of No 58 Squadron, was renumbered at Drifffield. Virginias and Ansons were flown until Whitleys arrived in early 1938, and it was these aircraft that the Squadron flew its first operational missions of the Second World War. The flights took place on the very first night of the War, 3/4 September 1939, and the Squadron dropped leaflets over Germany. Bombing missions started in May 1940, and continued until 1942 when No 51 was assigned to anti-submarine patrols over the Bay of Biscay as part of Coastal Command. The following year, Halifaxes replaced the ageing Whitleys and the unit returned to Bomber Command as a 'main force' squadron for the remainder of the

European War. Within weeks, the Squadron had transferred to Transport Command converting to Stirlings for troop and freight flights to India. These aircraft were replaced during 1946 with Yorks.

Almost four-fifths of the men buried at Eindhoven belonged to the air forces, and lost their lives in raids over this part of Holland or in returning from Germany, between 1941 and 1944. Men of the land forces who are buried here died between September 1944 and May 1945. The 79th and 86th British General Hospitals were located at Eindhoven during almost all that period. There are now nearly 700, 1939-45 war casualties commemorated in this site.



Sgt Guy Kipling was killed in action over Duisberg in Germany when an observer (navigator) in Short Stirling BK804 'WP-J' of 90 Squadron on the night of 22/23 April 1943. Cause of crash unknown. He has no known grave and his name is recorded on the Runnymede Memorial.

A quote on page 199 of 'Footprints' states: "There was no doubt, however, about the fate of three of the crew of Stirling BK804, 90 Squadron, that was shot down on the night of 22/23 June 1943 (Mulheim). It crashed near the railway station at Duisburg-Beek with four of the crew still in it. Sergeants N Graham, R Hammond and D Sanders, though, parachuted to what they must have thought was safety, but were captured and then shot by Ortsgruppenleiter Willi Lugger, assisted by Willi Henk and a man called Bollert"

However, a correspondent challenged this *"Are you sure that GRAHAM, SANDERS and HAMMOND were murdered ? These three airmen had a known grave in the Düsseldorf Nordfriedhof. The bodies of murdered airmen often were buried secretly"*.

Four of the crew are commemorated on the Runnymede memorial:

F/Sgt (Pilot) James A. ROBSON - 1044114

Sgt (Nav) Guy KIPLING - 657159

Sgt (Airbomber) Jack PICKTON - 658095, and

Sgt (Midupper) Clifford R. FENWICK – 522339



90 squadron re-formed in November 1942, as a heavy-bomber squadron equipped with Stirlings, and subsequently made a significant contribution to the Battle of the Ruhr, the devastation of Hamburg and the famous raid on Peenemunde. It also did a great deal of minelaying. In May/June 1944, No. 90 exchanged its Stirlings for Lancasters and with these continued to play a prominent part in Bomber Command's offensive until late April 1945. Between 8/9th January 1943 (when it began operations with Stirlings) and 22nd April 1945, members of No. 90

Squadron earned 6 DSOs 123 DFCs, one bar to a DFC, 1 CGM, 1 AFC and 33 DFMs.

The Air Forces Memorial at Runnymede commemorates by name over 20,000 airmen who were lost in the Second World War during operations from bases in the United Kingdom and North and Western Europe, and who have no known graves. They served in Bomber, Fighter, Coastal, Transport, Flying Training and Maintenance Commands, and came from all parts of the Commonwealth. Some were from countries in continental Europe which had been overrun but whose airmen continued to fight in the ranks of the Royal Air Force. The memorial was designed by Sir Edward Maufe with sculpture by Vernon Hill. The engraved glass and painted ceilings were designed by John Hutton and the poem engraved on the gallery window was written by Paul H Scott.



Even more unluckily, a third of Robert and Rosa's sons was also killed in the war. Corporal Peter Neville Kipling, a dispatch rider in the RASC was killed in a motor cycle accident on 22 June 1944 and is buried on home soil at St Mary's, Broomfield in Essex.

The three brothers are commemorated on the memorial below, at Broomfield, and in stained glass window in the parish church.



A fourth son, **Robert Edward Kipling**, (photo below) also served in the RAF and fortunately survived. He died in 2007 in Romford.





Cpl Peter Neville Kipling



Sgt Guy Kipling



Sgt Bernard Kipling

Peter Cyril Phillip Kipling RAFVR was a Sergeant (air gunner) in 40 Squadron. He was the son of Edgar Charles and Helen Beatrice Kipling of Morden, Surrey. Edgar was a traveller for a furniture manufacturer (in 1911) and was the son of John Ellis Kipling of Shoreditch, a composer. John was in turn the son of Robert L Kipling originally of Gilling, Yorkshire (see "Gilling1911" in preparation).

Sgt. Peter Kipling was killed on 11 April 1943, in North Africa, aged 20. He is buried in the MEDJEZ-EL-BAB WAR CEMETERY in Tunisia.



No.40 was re-formed as a bomber squadron in 1931 and in the Second World War operated in several theatres: flying Blenheims and Wellingtons from bases in England it bombed targets in France, the Low Countries and Germany; flying Wellingtons from bases in the Middle East it bombed targets in North Africa, Sicily, Sardinia, Rhodes, Crete, Greece, Pantellaria, Lampedusa and Italy; and flying Wellingtons and Liberators from a base in Italy (Foggia Main) it bombed targets in Italy and the Balkans. In March 1945 the Squadron converted to Liberators which were moved to Egypt in October. Its badge of a broom was chosen to immortalise the frequent exhortation of Major 'Mick' Mannock, the famous

World War I pilot, who served with the squadron, to "sweep the Huns from the air!"

In May 1943, the war in North Africa came to an end in Tunisia with the defeat of the Axis powers by a combined Allied force. The campaign began on 8 November 1942, when Commonwealth and American troops made a series of landings in Algeria and Morocco. The Germans responded immediately by sending a force from Sicily to northern



Tunisia, which checked the Allied advance east in early December. In the south, the Axis forces defeated at El Alamein withdrew into Tunisia along the coast through Libya, pursued by the Allied Eighth Army. By mid April 1943, the combined Axis force was hemmed into a small corner of north-eastern Tunisia and the Allies were grouped for their final offensive. Medjez-el-Bab was at the limit of the Allied advance in December 1942 and remained on the front line until the decisive Allied advances of April and May 1943.

Matthew George Kipling was the son of Matthew George and Ethel Kipling of Darlington. His grandfather was yet another Matthew George Kipling, the son of photographer Tobias Kipling (see “Melsonby 1911”).

Matthew, too, was a sergeant (air gunner), this time in 35 Squadron, flying the Halifax. He was killed on 31 December 1941. The account of his death from the squadron record is as follows :

“1941/197 35/V9979 T/o 1125 Linton-on-Ouse similarly tasked. From eyewitness statements it is reported that the bomber, with one engine ablaze, passed low over the village of Lanildut [Finistere], NW of Brest, pursued by a fighter which in turn was shot down by Sgt Kipling just moments before the Halifax hit the sea, finishing up on rocks at Porspoder a few kilometres to the north of Lanildut. Soon after the crash the Germans requisitioned some seaweed boats and having searched the area returned to the small harbour at Mazou with a number of badly burned bodies though it is believed some were still alive. All were examined by a German doctor but those who had survived succumbed to their injuries. A few days later a teenage girl found the body of the wireless operator whom she identified from his tag as Sgt Maflin. All rest in Kerfautras Cemetery.”



In November 1940, 35 squadron was re-formed for the express purpose of introducing the new Handley Page Halifax into operational service. It flew its first sorties on Halifaxes on the night of 11/12th March 1941, when the target was Le Havre. Six aircraft were despatched, four of which successfully attacked the primary target whilst another, unable to see either the primary or the alternative target (Boulogne), bombed Dieppe instead. The sixth aircraft, failing to see the target even after repeated circuits and having insufficient fuel to allow it to proceed to the alternative, jettisoned its bombs in the Channel. Unfortunately, one of the aircraft which had bombed Le Havre was mistaken for an enemy aircraft on the return journey and was shot down in flames at Normandy, Surrey, by one of our own night fighters. Only two members of the crew - the pilot and the flight engineer - escaped by parachute and survived.

During the rest of 1941 the squadron bombed a variety of targets in Germany and occupied France, some of the raids being undertaken in daylight. In July No. 35 made its first raid on Berlin (two Halifaxes were despatched and the pilot of the only one

known to have reached and bombed the target was none other than Flying Officer - as he then was - GL Cheshire, later Group Captain GL Cheshire VC DSO DFC, and in September made the 1,700-mile trip to Turin in Northern Italy. In February 1942, it was one of the squadrons which attempted to stop the German warships Scharnhorst and Gneisenau during their escape dash from Brest to North German ports. April saw two unsuccessful attacks on the Tirpitz lying near Trondheim fjord, and at the end of May the squadron contributed 18 Halifaxes to the historic 1,000-bomber raid on Cologne.

Matthew is buried at Brest, in France, at the Kerfautras cemetery.

During the 1914-18 War, Brest was United States Naval Headquarters in France, and the main port of debarkation from United States transports. During the 1939-45 War it was the disembarkation port for the stores and vehicles of the first British Expeditionary Force, and temporary maintenance depots were formed there until an Advanced Base was



established near Le Havre. In 1940, after the German entry into Paris on 14th June, the first contingent of the Canadian forces, which had only just reached France, were re-embarked from Brest, as were the last of the United Kingdom forces remaining in France - our Line of Communication troops and material. A Fighter Squadron of the Royal Air Force Component operated from Brest to give close protection to the port during re-embarkation. There are now over 30, 1914-18 and nearly 100, 1939-45 war casualties commemorated in this site.

Sergeant T Kipling RAF was seconded to 410 Squadron of the Royal Canadian Air Force and is mentioned in the squadron history as being part of the crew which gave the squadron its first kill, a Dornier Do 217. He and the pilot were in a Mosquito II from RAF Acklington. As far as is known, he survived the war.



No. 410 (Cougar) Squadron of the Royal Canadian Air Force has the distinction of being the top-scoring night fighter unit in the Second Tactical Air Force in the period between D-Day and VEDay. Its record book shows 78 enemy aircraft destroyed, two probably destroyed and eight damaged, of these 85 victories, 60 were won in the 11-month period between June 1944 and the end of April 1945.

There was some night activity too. Scrambles after raiders on 13 January 1943 were luckless, but another raid nine nights later brought the Cougars their first kill. The lucky crew were FS B.M. Haight and Sgt. T.

*Kipling (RAF). Ground control put them on to a target which **Kipling** picked up on*

his radar, holding the contact until his pilot got a visual at 600 yards. From its silhouette against the clouds, he identified the bandit as a Do.217. One brief burst at 100 yards range produced a brilliant white flash on one engine. A second burst of 75 rounds from the Hispanos had no visible effect, but the bomber disappeared into the clouds in a steep spiral dive and contact was lost. The Royal Observer Corps, however, saw the aircraft dive into the sea, with a brilliant flash and explosion, five miles off Hartlepool.

It is possible that he is the Thomas Kipling in the two London gazette entries below:

ROYAL AIR FORCE VOLUNTEER RESERVE. <i>GENERAL DUTIES BRANCH.</i> <i>Appointment to commission.as Plt. Offs. on prob. (emergency): —</i> Wt. Offs. 11th Feb. 1945. 1488509 Thomas KIPLING (191481). <i>Confirmation and promotion.</i> <i>Plt. Offs. (prob.) confmd. in appts. and to be Flg. Offs. (war subs.): —</i> T. KIPLING (191481). nth Aug. 1945.
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“Bovlei Cellars in Wellington has released a new brand named after **Thomas Kipling** the celebrated South African war hero and humanitarian. The range comprises five wines the 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon, 2009 Merlot, 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot, non-vintage Dry Red and the 2009 Chenin Blanc/Sauvignon Blanc.

Kipling enlisted in the South African army in the early months of the Second World War and saw action as an air gunner with the SA Air Force in Egypt and Italy. He participated in two dangerous missions over Nazi-occupied Warsaw in 1944, of dropping supplies and ammunition by bombers to the Polish resistance, from which few returned alive. For his heroic actions, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and two high-ranking Polish medals. He was promoted to the rank of Captain and was demobilised in 1946. He died in 2007 in East London. Herman le Roux, GM of Bovlei Cellars, says, “We are pleased to have acquired a brand named after a patriotic South African.” Press release 2010



Thomas served in 31 Squadron SAAF, as noted in the London Gazette of 21 August 1945.

<i>Distinguished Flying Cross.</i> <i>Lieutenants.</i> Thomas KIPLING (5730097), 31 (S.A.A.F.) Sqn.

He was previously mentioned in dispatches, gazetted 14th June 1945

Jack Kipling of Cape Town wrote in 2011 “Thomas Kipling of the wine was a name adopted by the pilot. The wine is made by his son who is not a Kipling but has used the adopted name for marketing reasons. I spoke to him some time back when the wine first came on the market.”



Re-established as No. 31 Heavy Bomber Squadron in January 1944 at Zwartkop Air Station. The squadron departed for North Africa from 30th January 1944 and started arriving at the SAAF Base Depot at Almaza from 19th February 1944. The aircrews were sent to No. 1675 Conversion Unit at Lydda, Palestine to be converted onto the Consolidated B-24 Liberator bomber. On 19th April 1944 an Advanced Party set off to establish a base camp forty kilometers north of Cairo. The camp was accordingly named Kilo 40. The first aircraft arrived at Kilo 40 on 27th April 1944. After the arrival of No. 34 Squadron at Kilo 40, both squadrons came under the control of the newly established No. 2 Wing, SAAF. The squadron flew its first operational sorties on 27th May 1944 against the German-occupied island of Crete. From 16th June 1944 the squadron started the migration process to Foggia in southern Italy. The bombers and a small detachment were immediately flown to Foggia and put on operations as part of No. 205 Group, RAF. 31 Squadron was temporarily placed under control of No. 240 Wing, RAF until No. 2 Wing came into full operation. The squadron took part in a large-scale air offensive against the petroleum industry in eastern European countries supporting Nazi Germany. From 1st July 1944 the squadron also became involved in occasional mine-laying sorties along the Danube river. No. 31 Squadron came under effective control of No. 2 Wing, SAAF during July 1944. First operations against the Ploesti oilfields of Rumania commenced on 26th July 1944.

The Squadron (with 34 Sqn) is most famous, along with the USAAF squadrons, and RAF 178 Squadron, for flying to Warsaw with supplies during the uprising of the Polish resistance under General Bor Komorowski for which the Squadrons suffered heavy losses in August 1944. The Squadrons also dropped supplies to the Yugoslavian resistance under Marshal Tito in the later part of the War.

Moved to Foggia - dropping supplies, attacks on marshalling yards. Troop transporting to Greece during the E.L.A.S. flare up. After the end of the war in Europe the squadron was utilized in a trooping role and to repatriate POW's to England. Withdrawn from operations on 5th December 1945 and disbanded 6th December 1945

The London Gazette also contains references to one other (immediate post-) wartime RAF Kipling, whom I have as yet been unable to trace elsewhere.

London Gazette 1st January 1946

Air Ministry 1st January, 1946. -

The KING has been graciously pleased to give orders for the publication of the names of the following personnel who have been mentioned in despatches: —

Warrant Officers. W. E. KIPLING (510363).

There was also a **Flt. Lt. P Kipling** of the General Duties Branch referred to in two London Gazette (LG) promotions below

ROYAL AIR FORCE VOLUNTEER RESERVE.

GENERAL DUTIES BRANCH.

17/5/44 Confirmation and promotion. Plt. Offs. (prob.) confmd. in appts. and to be Flg. Offs. (war subs.)

P. KIPLING (158019). 19th Jan. 1944.

17/8/45

Fig. Off. to Fit. Lt. (war subs.): —

P. KIPLING (158019).

Last but not least, my father **Robert Furze Spencer Kipling** was a Sgt in the RAFVR, selected and put on a waiting list for pilot training in 1943 but then being trained instead as a wireless operator then later as a driver.

Mike Kipling

July 2014