George Edward Benson





Rank: - Sergeant (Air-Gunner)

Number: - 1143366

Regiment: - Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, 78 Sqdn. (Bomber Command)

Died: - Shot down 12th March 1943 Age: 21

Cemetery: - Uden War Cemetery, Noord-Brabant, Netherlands Plot 4 Row C Grave 7

George Edward was born in Middleham on 22 Sep 1921 the son of George Edward and Annie Benson nee Dinsdale who had married on 24 October 1908 at the Collegiate Church, Middleham. Florence was born in 1909 and Phyllis Hannah in 1910-1916. According to the 1911 census George Edward was a groom at the racing stables and the family lived in a substantial five roomed home. Dorothy was born 1911 but sadly shortly after birth, Evelyn was born in 1912, Muriel 1916, John 1918-1918, Kathleen 1919, George Edward “Sonny” 1921. The family lived in Middleham /Market Place, Leyburn before moving to live in Birstall after 1939 but the family must have had Birstall connections

because Phyllis Hannah was buried at St. Peter's giving the address of 2, Sedgwick Street, in 1916. In 1939 the family was living at Market Place, Leyburn, next door to the Commercial Hotel and was working as bootmaker's assistant.

At the time of his death George was serving with 78 squadron 4 Group, Bomber Command Flying Halifax's and based at Linton-on-Ouse. On the night of 12/13 March 1943 there was a 457-bomber raid on the giant Krupps factory at Essen in which 23 of the attacking forces (5%) including seven Halifax's were lost. Very accurate bombing took place over the Krupps factory, 500 homes were also destroyed. German authorities also reported damage and deaths in neighbouring towns.

His plane DT774 marking EY-E was shot down by a night-fighter and crashed at Grafwegen on the Dutch-German border. His fellow service men were Sgt H Bentley, Sgt C G Dyer, Sgt WH Gosnell, F/S F A Marean, Sgt W J McLelland and Sgt B M Singleton. After the war the Bensons lived at 27, Low Lane, Birstall.

George was awarded the Air Crew Europe star; 1939-45 Star; 1939-1945 War Medal

He is remembered with Honour at Plaque Halifax DT 774, Grafwegen, Groesbeek, Netherlands; Royal Air Forces Association Club, Batley; Batley War Memorial (addenda) and Birstall War Memorial (addenda)



Researched by members of
Batley History Group