Geoffrey Michael Brearley





Rank: - Pilot Officer (Observer)

Number: - 121216

Service: - Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 85 Squadron (Code letters LK)

Died: - Died 6 August 1942 aged 20.

Cemetery: - Brookwood Military Cemetery, Woking, Plot 2 Row B, Grave 2.

Geoffrey Michael was born in 1922 the younger son of Alfred Brearley and Beatrice Mary Brearley.

Joan Claire was born in 1915, Brian, who was to become a doctor, in 1917. Beatrice Mary died and on 7 February 1938 his father married Margaret Henderson Purves, formerly McMurray, at Auchter Garven, Scotland. They had both lived in Hong Kong.

The family lived at ‘Eastleigh’, Rosebery Avenue, Harpenden, Hertfordshire.

Beatrice Mary, Brian and Geoffrey returned from Hong Kong 29th Aug 1924. Geoffrey was a frequent visitor to relatives who lived in Batley, he was nephew to Mr J Albert Sykes of East View, Talbot Street and Mr.& Mrs. Gladstone Parkin of Birstall. His father, Alfred, was a native of Batley and occupied a seat on the Board of the Chartered Bank of London, which was given to him on retirement after long foreign service in practically every branch of the Bank. His last appointment was at Hong Kong. Geoffrey went to Sedbergh School and Cambridge University where he studied Law. He was always keenly interested in flying and was happy to gain his wings and proceed on to active service.



PILOT-OFFICER G. M. BREARLEY KILLED.

Batley Banker's Bereavement.

Pilot Officer Geoffrey Michael Brearley, who is reported to have been killed on active service with the R.A.F., is the younger son of Mr. Alfred Brearley, of "Eastleigh," Rosebery Avenue, Harpenden, Herefordshire, and the late Mrs. Brearley.

Pilot Officer Brearley was at Sedbergh School and Cambridge University, where he studied for the Law. He was always keenly interested in flying and was happy to gain his wings and proceed on active service. He was only 20 years of age. He was a frequent visitor to this district for he was a nephew of Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone Parkin, of Birstall, and Mr. J. Albert Sykes, of "East View," Talbot Street, Batley.

Pilot Officer Brearley.

His father, Mr. Alfred Brearley, is a native of Batley and occupies a seat on the Board of the Chartered Bank of London, which was given to him on retirement after long foreign service in practically every branch of the Bank. His last appointment was at Hong Kong. He has a son, Dr. Brian Brearley, of London, and a daughter, Mrs. Gordon Cheatham, of Fishguard.

Batley News, 22 Aug 1942

No. 85 Squadron, formed in 1917, took part in the first half of the Battle of Britain then moved to Church Fenton in September 1940, doing night-fighter patrols with Hurricanes. From May 1941 until May 1943 the squadron flew from Hunsdon, Herts. At first, they flew Boston Havocs but had just converted to De Havilland Mosquito 11 night fighters in August 1942.

Geoffrey Michael was killed whilst flying. His plane crashed into the sea just offshore From Lion Point near Clacton, Essex during an Air Firing Exercise.

Geoffrey is remembered with Honour at Batley War Memorial and the Royal Air Forces Association Club, Batley. He was awarded the 1939-45 Star and the 1939-1945 War Medal.



Researched by members of
Batley History Group