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In Memoriam

Sergeant (Air Gunner) Arla George

460 Squadron RAAF



Died 2nd February 1945

Son of Clifford George and Violet Alexandra George
of Llangwm

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Taken from a reference book which lists every Bomber Command loss in WWII; both operational and training. Bomber Command lost c 55,000 aircrew, a staggering total.....

Sergeant (Air Gunner) Arla George was in Lancaster III ME326 of 460 Squadron, RAAF, from Binbrook. Operations to Wiesbaden, Germany. Homeward bound, Arla's Lancaster collided with another, PD286 of 626 Sqn, at 19,000 ft at 2300 hrs. Both aircraft fell at St Maxent (Somme) 8 km S of Abbeville. Arla's pilot was Group Captain K R J Parsons, RAAF - he may well have been the station commander as it was most unusual for a high ranker to be flying ops (normally the CO of a bomber squadron was a Squadron Leader or a Wing Commander).

All the airmen in both aircraft died. One, Flight Sergeant Human, in Arla's crew, is listed in the book as injured with a note saying he succumbed to his injuries.

Arla is buried with his colleagues at Abbeville Communal Cemetery Extension, Plot 6, Row F, Grave 1.

His RAF serial number is listed on the War Graves site as 1709173, rank Sergeant (Air Gunner), 460 Squadron, RAAF, died 20th February 1945. Son of Clifford George and Violet Alexsandra George, of Llangwm.

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The *West Wales Guardian* of 16th Feb 1945 reported Arla's loss.

His parents, of Lower Black Tar, first received word he was missing and then on the Thursday heard the tragic news from the Air Ministry that their son had lost his life.

Sgt George volunteered for the RAF in August 1942. He was a gifted painter and in a museum where he received his training, at Settle in the north of England, is his painting of the bombing of the Eder Dam.

He is the first serviceman from the parish to pay the supreme sacrifice in World War II....His grandfather, Stephen Arla George, was recalled for service in 1914 and was drowned on *HMS Aboukir* at the age of 45.

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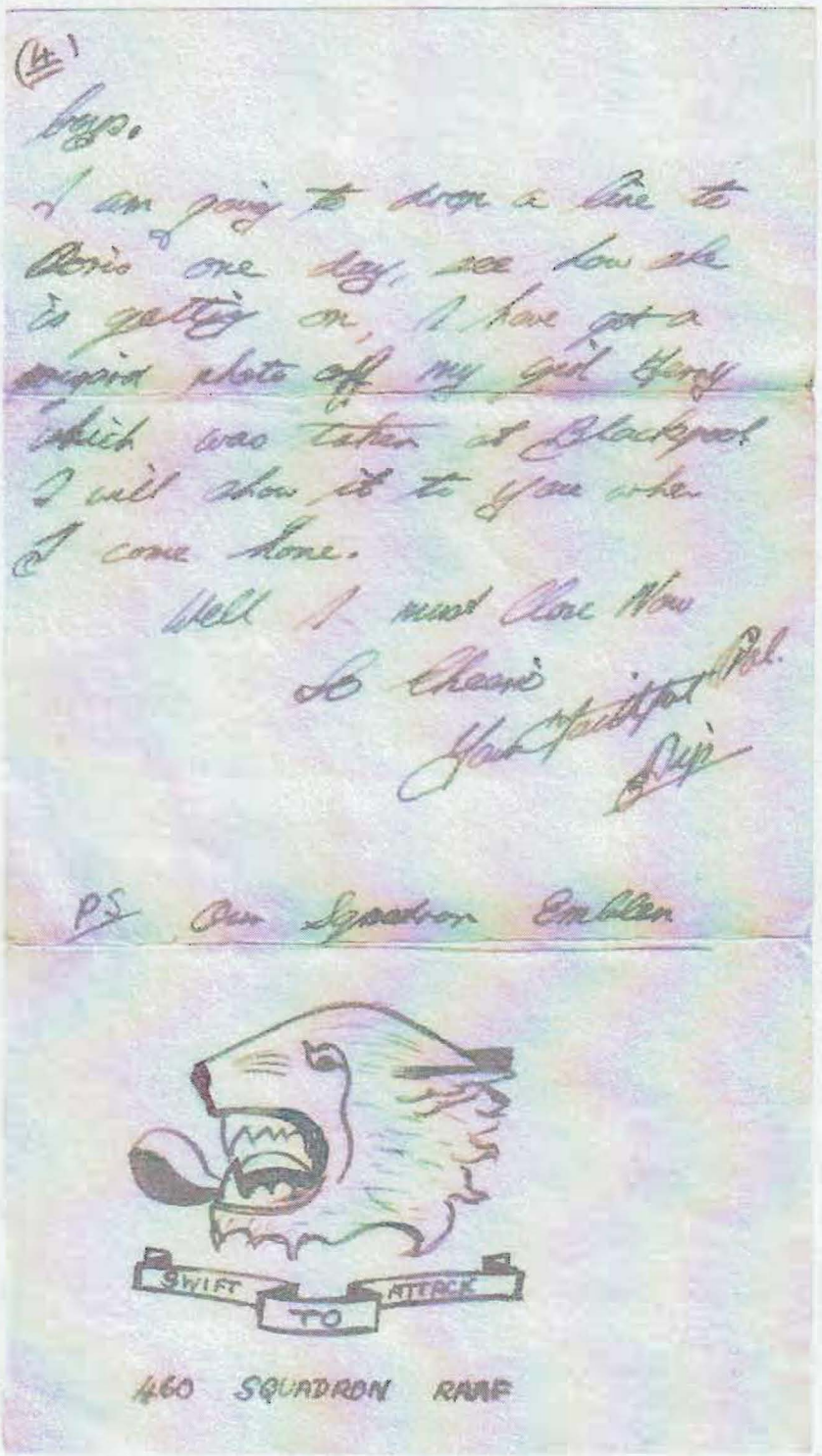
Arla's great friend Viv Jones of Freystrop (formerly of Llangwm) recalls how they spent Arla's last leave together, boating, fishing and swimming in the river. Arla did not want to go back to his squadron that summer - he had a premonition, and knew that the odds were stacked against him.

One of our exhibits shows a letter previously sent by Arla to Viv. As ever, Arla adds a drawing - that of his squadron's badge and emblem:-

460 Squadron RAAF "Swift to Attack".

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(Page 4 of Arla George's letter to Viv Jones. He signs off by his nickname 'Pip'.
A complete copy of the letter is in the Llangwm History archive.)


(4)

boys.

I am going to drop a line to Doris one day, see how she is getting on, I have got a original photo off my god Dog which was taken at Blackpool I will show it to you when I come home.

Well I must close Now

So Cheers

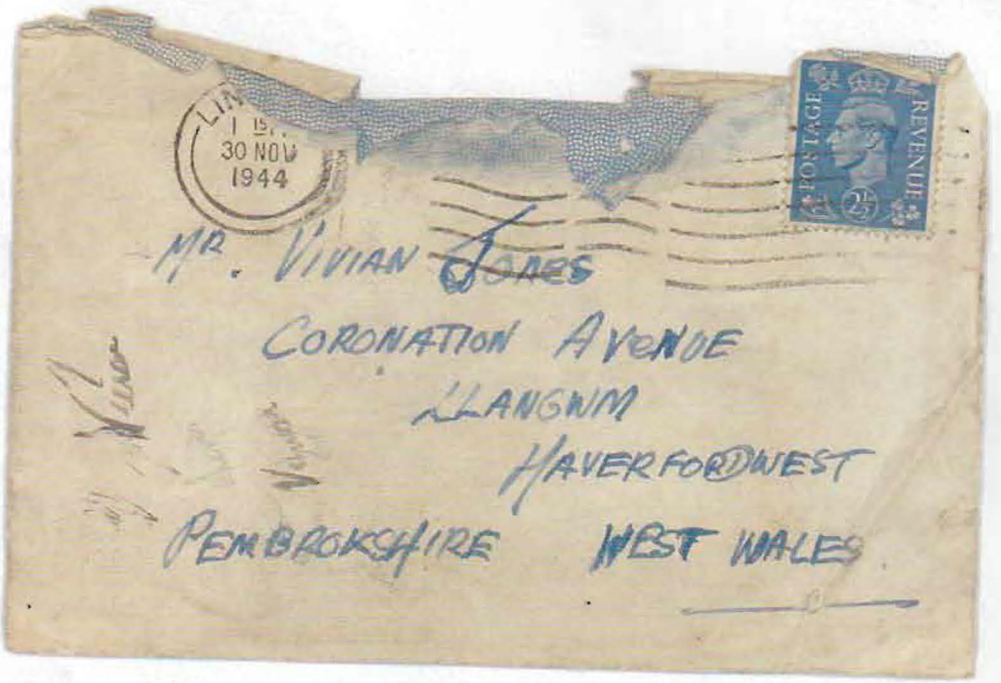
Yours faithfully Pal.

Pip

PS Our Squadron Emblem

460 SQUADRON RAAF

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30 NOV
1944
POSTAGE REVENUE
Mr. Vivian Jones
CORONATION AVENUE
LLANGWM
HAVERFORDWEST
PEMBROKESHIRE WEST WALES



(3)

taken.

You said you would have liked to have been with me on a raid, I don't think you would, believe me it is not a nice sight to see a plane blow up just behind you, and fall to pieces, the whole time, you are missing death by seconds when a shell explode in front of your plane, a few seconds earlier and you would have had it, the whole time you can feel the plane shaking with the flak, no it is not nice at all, but very dangerous you see it not so much glamour as it do when used to think, when he used to call the R.A.F. glamour

(4)

170 9173 Sgt GEORGE WA
% 9 Sqn MESS
RAF STATION
BINBROOK.
LINCOLN
LINES

11/12/44

MONDAY.

Dear Vic

Thank so much for your letter, I hope these few lines find you OK. and in the pink as it leaves me. Well I shall be home for six days on the 20th of this month. I wrote to Hodgkiss the other day.

Well I have done another raid last wednesday, on the Leuna oil works and Chemical factories Merseburg, one of the largest in Germany, I expect you read it in the papers. It was an 8 hour trip, ready to Berlin, and the weather was

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7.07.

(4)

boys.

I am going to drop a line to Doris one day, see how she is getting on, I have got a snapshot photo off my girl Gerry which was taken at Blackpool I will show it to you when I come home.

Well I must close Now

So Cheerio

Your Sweetheart Pat.

Love Pat

PS Our Squadron Emblem



460 SQUADRON RAAF

(2) been awful, electric storms and severe cold and icing. We had a hell of a hot time over the target, flak was very heavy, 400 big guns defended it, I saw one plane disappear as with a wing on fire, but it got back OK. We left the target a colloal mass of flame.

I was on two more ops one tonight but they have been cancelled to bad weather, cant tell where we were going careless talk you know. It has been snowing very heavy here, and freezing too. We had a party last night our flight with all our ground crews, it was a good do, we all had our photo