



ROSELLE HAILS AN HEROIC BROTHER

By Therasa Paul

A forgotten local hero was remembered recently when his sister was traced as a result of an appeal for help. Leading Aircraftsman Roy Percival Godfray was killed aged 26, on June 15, 1940, during the Battle of France.

A book publisher, calling themselves After the Battle, contacted the Journal with an appeal for help in finding any living relatives of the airman. And we found his sister, Roselle Jones (97), at Buckland Court nursing home in Amesbury. She said: "There were five of us. Four of us were born in Jersey. We came to Amesbury at the end of 1919." When the war started, her father, originally a farmer, was called up. "I ran the poultry farm for about four years - on the top of Beacon Hill," she added.

Roselle was the eldest of five children. She and one of her sisters are the last known remaining relatives of Roy Godfray. His parents, Percy and Alice died several years ago. Elsie, Roselle's youngest sister, lives somewhere in London.

Roy Godfray was an ex-pupil of Bishop Wordsworth's Grammar school in Salisbury, and appears on their roll of honour. He joined the RAF as a mechanic shortly after leaving school. "He got a scholarship to Bishop's school then worked at Pitts garage in Amesbury. The garage is still there, but not run by Pitts. Then he got bored and joined the RAF," explained Roselle.

Everyone knows The Few' in the battle of Britain in 1940 saved this country - and the world - from German domination. That four-month conflict cost the lives of more than 500 RAF aircrew and pilots but, before that, an equal number of young airmen lost their lives in the Battle of France.

Roy Godfray was killed when a bomb fell on the camp of the road party of No. 12 squadron, who were moving from place to place in France. He lies at rest in Source-Sur-Braye communal cemetery at Loir-et-Cher in France. "Mum felt he didn't suffer and died straight away. It was a relief for her. The rest of us were lucky," said Roselle. Now, the publishers are trying to find portrait photos of five more Wiltshire boys.

William Donald Boyle (19) was the son of William and Caroline who lived in Chippenham. He was serving with No. 142 squadron when he was killed on May 19, 1940.

Another casualty was Alfred William Eggington (25). He was the son of Ernest and Eliza of Durrington and was killed on September 20, 1939 with No. 88 squadron.

Then, there was John Howard Keith Gegg (20), of No. 88 squadron, killed on May 14, 1940. His parents were Lambert and Aileen of Calne.

Robert Edward Harris was killed on May 19, 1940 while serving with No. 17 squadron. Aged 22, he was the son of Edward and Althea living in Stert.

Finally, Richard Guy Hulse (24) lost his life on June 8, 1940 while flying with No. 501 squadron. He lived in Marlborough with his wife, Ruth. He was the son of Richard and Maude.

Anyone with any information about the men is asked to contact the editor-in-chief, Winston Ramsey, on 01279 418833.

(Salisbury Journal – Wednesday 15 November, 2006)

©Wiltshire OPC Project/Cathy Sedgwick/2014