

Second World War - Flight Lieutenant D T St H Dawes, Sergeant R Chantry missing record

The following is from the National Archives Air 81/4560

27A

P.356534/40/P.4. Cas.

20 July, 1945.

Base Personnel Officer,
Royal Air Force,
Middle East,
Cairo.

37936 Flight Lieutenant D.T.St.H. Dawes and
939105 Sergeant R. Chantry.

1. The above personnel took off from an advanced landing ground near Matruh, in Lysander L.6877 of No.6 Squadron, at 0850 hours on 14th December, 1940, to carry out a reconnaissance of Maddalena but failed to return (B.P.O. M.E. Signal M. 767 15/12/40 referred).
2. The only news ever received was an unofficial report said to have been received by a relative of Sergeant Chantry in February, 1941, from a member of No. 208 Squadron, to the effect that the aircraft was seen to be shot down just over the Libyan border and that the two members of the crew were buried by soldiers where they had fallen. After investigation it was finally stated in June 1941 (by B.P.O.) that the information about the burial could not be confirmed.
3. As the matter has now been raised again by the relatives may enquiries be made of the Graves Registration or other authorities to ascertain whether the graves of these men have ever been found.

H. M. CAMPBELL

Squadron Leader,
for Director of Personal Services.

16. Death Book		X	272	X	OK
17. Missing Book		X	2075 41 24 F 149	X	2075 41 24 F 149
18. Benevolent Fund	RA. 2/11/45	X	2075 41 24 F 149	X	2075 41 24 F 149
19. Royal Letter.		X	2075 41 24 F 149	X	2075 41 24 F 149

A.3145L.

26A

Gerrard 9234

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INQUIRY FORM

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

P.356534/P.4.Cas.

(Casualty Branch),
73-77 Oxford Street,
London, W.1.

20 July, 1945.

Dear Mr. Johnstone,

With reference to your recent visit here I now have the papers relating to the casualty to your son in front of me.

These show that in February, 1941, Sergeant Chantry's mother told us by letter that she had just heard from a friend of her son in Egypt to the effect that the aircraft was seen to be shot down just over the Libyan border and that the two members of the crew were found later by our soldiers and buried where they had fallen. No such information had been given in the official casualty report, dated 16th December, which, after reporting the failure of the aircraft to return from a reconnaissance of Maddalena, merely added:- "No further definite information can be obtained as to the whereabouts of the aircraft or as to what happened to the occupants."

On receipt of Sergeant Chantry's mother's letter, enquiries were put in hand by us and these went on for several months until finally in June 1941, Middle East Headquarters informed us that the information could not be confirmed. No action could therefore be taken on what might have been merely an idle rumour and you were not informed.

/Had

E.C. Johnstone, Esq., O.B.E.,
c/o Barclay's Bank,
Benet Street,
Cambridge.

Book		X	28	X	28
W. Book			28	X	28
lent Fund			28	X	28
Letter.			28	X	28

Had these graves been subsequently discovered they should have been automatically reported and the relatives told. I have however addressed a special enquiry to Cairo just in case anything has come to light without being reported.

With regard to the possibility of our communications not having been received by you, this does not appear likely, as the only time we asked for a reply, namely when we asked for formal confirmation that you had received no further news in view of forthcoming presumption of death, an answer was received. The papers here contain no letters from you which seemed in any way to call for answer beyond what was given.

Your new address has been noted in our records. I am very sorry we had your initials wrong before. They are now correctly recorded.

If your son's grave is found you will be told. I sincerely hope that this letter will be of use in clarifying the matters which we discussed. Do please let us know if there is any other point about which you are doubtful.

Yours very sincerely,

L. H. EL CAMP

4
From:- Officer Commanding,
No. 6 Squadron Detachment,
Egypt.

To: Base Personnel Staff Officer,
Royal Air Force,
Middle East.

Date:- 16/12/40.

Ref:- 6S/L/2/Air.

SECRET.

Flying Battle Casualty - Lysander L6877.

The following report is forwarded in amplification of
Signal A44 dated 14th. November 1940 -

On 14/12/40 P/Lt.D.T.St H.Daves and Sgt. F.Chantry proceeded
from Qasaba to the advanced landing ground (Matruh 1/500,000
611334) in Lysander L6877 to stand by to carry out any
reconnaissances as might be detailed.

At 0850 hours he was detailed to carry out a reconnaissance
of Maddalena and then to return to the advanced landing
ground on completion of his task. The aircraft failed to
return and after a sufficient time had been allowed to cover
the endurance of the machine, it was deemed to have been
lost or force landed.

No further definite information can be obtained as to the
whereabouts of the aircraft or as to what happened to the
occupants.

LeWood.

Flight Lieutenant,
Officer Commanding,
No.6 Squadron Detachment,
Egypt.

Copies to:- H.Q.M.E. and No.6 Squadron.

2A
(Dept. G. S.)

40/P.4. Casualties.

19 December, 1940.

Sir,

I am commanded by the Air Council to express to you their great regret on learning that your step-son, Flight Lieutenant Denzil Thomas St. Hugh Dawes, Royal Air Force, is missing as the result of air operations on 14th December, 1940.

I am to explain that this does not necessarily mean that he is killed or wounded, and if he is a prisoner of war he should be able to communicate with you in due course. Meanwhile enquiries will be made through the International Red Cross Society, and as soon as any definite news is received, you will be immediately informed.

In the event of any information regarding your step-son being received by you from any source it would be appreciated if you would kindly communicate it immediately to the Air Ministry.

The Air Council desire me to express their sincere sympathy with you in your present anxiety.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(Sgd.) CHARLES EVANS.

Johnstone, Esq., O.B.E.,
P.O. Box 284,
Zanzibar,
East Africa.

34083. * Encl 25A.
Amendments issued 11/1/45
are enclosed

W. F. M. E. (M.P. 20).

X. 1568

IMMEDIATE. **ACTION COPY** Received A.M.T.S. 1839 hours 15.12.40.

M. 767 15/12. (P.B.)

(A) Lysander 15877 (B) 6 Squadron (C) Believed Maddalena.

14/12. time not known (D) 37936 P/Lt. D.T. St. Hugh Daves missing.

929103 Sgt. E. Chantry missing (G) Not known (H) Not known. Request

third addressee notify next of kin of 37936 P/Lt. D.T. St. Hugh Daves,

name and address as follows: H.R. Johnstone Esq., O.B.E.

(Stepfather) c/o P.O. Box 284, Zanzibar, E. Africa.

Time of Origin:- 1828 hrs/15

Passed by T/P to Buialip.

WASH CIRCULATION

RECEIVED

CASUALTY VERIFICATION SHEET.

Pilot

of officer

DAWES

DENZIL THOMAS ST HUGH

Date of Birth 22-7-16

Rank & No. F/LT 37936 ✓

Place of birth Swanage Dorset.

Unit

6 Sqdn

Type of commission S.S.C.

Date of casualty

14/12/40

Date and reference of report

Name & address of wife (if any)

none

If to be informed of casualties

Particulars of next-of-kin (other than wife)

(STEP FATHER)

* B.C. JOHNSTONE Esq.

Barclay's Bank
Benef Street, Cambridge

(Step Father)

B.C. JOHNSTONE Esq.

(Circled)

Johnstone Esq.

P.O.

Box 284

Zanzibar

Africa

Any other persons to be informed of casualties.

A. 34083. * Encl 25A.

Amendment issued 11/1/45
AR & un-issued

