

In Memory of
Flight Lieutenant ROBERT NATHAN SHARD
D F C, D F M
155256, 78 Sqdn., Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
who died, age 23, on 16 February 1944
Son of Sidney and Muriel Shard;
Husband of Vera Joyce Shard, of Faringdon, Berkshire.
Remembered with honour
Faringdon War Memorial and
RUNNYMEDE MEMORIAL



Commemorated in perpetuity by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

This Memorial overlooks the River Thames on Cooper's Hill at Englefield Green between Windsor and Egham on the A308, 4 miles from Windsor.

The Air Forces Memorial at Runnymede commemorates by name over 20,000 airmen who were lost in the Second World War during operations from bases in the United Kingdom and North and Western Europe, and who have no known graves. They served in Bomber, Fighter, Coastal, Transport, Flying Training and Maintenance Commands, and came from all parts of the Commonwealth. Some were from countries in continental Europe which had been overrun but whose airmen continued to fight in the ranks of the Royal Air Force. The memorial was designed by Sir Edward Maufe with sculpture by Vernon Hill. The engraved glass and painted ceilings were designed by John Hutton and the poem engraved on the gallery window was written by Paul H Scott.

DFC Citation

Air Ministry, 15th February, 1944.

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the following awards in recognition of gallantry displayed in flying operations against the enemy: —
(continued)

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Acting Flight Lieutenant Robert Nathan SHARD, D.F.M. (155256), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 78 Squadron.

Distinguished Flying Medal.

Can/R69999 Flight Sergeant Ross Barrett IRWIN, Royal Canadian Air Force, No. 78 Squadron.

This officer and airman were pilot and flight engineer respectively of an aircraft detailed to attack Magdeburg one night in January, 1944. During the operation the aircraft was attacked by a fighter and sustained much damage. The astro-dome was shot away, the mid-upper and rear turrets were put out of action and the hydraulic gear was damaged; the port inner propeller blade was also damaged. The fighter made repeated attacks but Flight Sergeant Irwin, standing with his head protruding through the aperture which had been previously covered by the astro-dome, gave the necessary directions to his pilot who was thus able to out-manoeuvre and eventually evade the attacker. Later, one of the starboard engines had to be feathered. Nevertheless, Flight Lieutenant Shard flew the aircraft back to this country where he landed the bomber safely in spite of badly damaged flaps and burst tyres on two of the landing wheels. This officer and airman displayed great courage, determination and devotion to duty.

DFM Citation

The DFM was gazetted on 22 Jan 1943 when he was with 40 Sqn

Sgt Shard has a long and distinguished record of operation, flying in sorties against targets in Italy and North Africa. One night in September. 1942 he was detailed to attack enemy concentrations in the battle area. He released his bombs, starting a fire on a petrol dump and another among enemy transport After returning to base and resting for 40 minutes, he returned and attacked the same target.

He was posted into 78 Sqn on 23 Oct 43 and flew his first op as a second pilot on the night of 03/04 Nov 43 to Dusseldorf. He then flew as captain to:

23/24 Nov Frankfurt; 26/27 Nov Stuttgart; 03/04 Dec Leipzig; 20/21 Jan Berlin
21/22 Jan Magdeburg - did not attack target as bombs jettisoned when attacked by enemy aircraft, Rear gunner killed two others wounded.

Robert flew from 78 Sqn RAF Breighton Yorks in a Halifax Bomber Mk V, Ser: LV798, XID: EY-A

On the night of 15th Feb 1944 on Op Berlin, they were airborne at 1718hrs. Whilst over the target, probably due to flak, the under carriage fell down and could not be retracted. As a result the fuel consumption was excessive and on nearing the English coast the Halifax ran out of fuel. After the crew had baled out, he ditched into the sea at 0039hrs; only one of the crew made it ashore. Robert's body has never been found and he is remembered on a plaque at the Runnymede Memorial Number 203 info at CWGC.

F/L RN Shard, DFC DFM, KIA. Sgt KE Clark, KIA. WOI JB Fowler RCAF, KIA. F/O W Uyen RCAF. SGT JR Forder, KIA. SGT N Walton, KIA. SGT W Iddon, KIA.

The plane lies 17miles NNE of Flamborough Head.

Robert also flew on Op Hydra on 17/18 Aug 1943 Bombing Peenemunde the V2 Research centre.

