Eric Henry BARRETT (1920 - 1942)





R/94714 Flight Sergeant
E.H.BARRETT

Pilot
Royal Canadian Air Force

1521 Beam Approach
Training Flight

2nd November 1942 Age 22

NOT JUST TODAY
BUT EVERY DAY



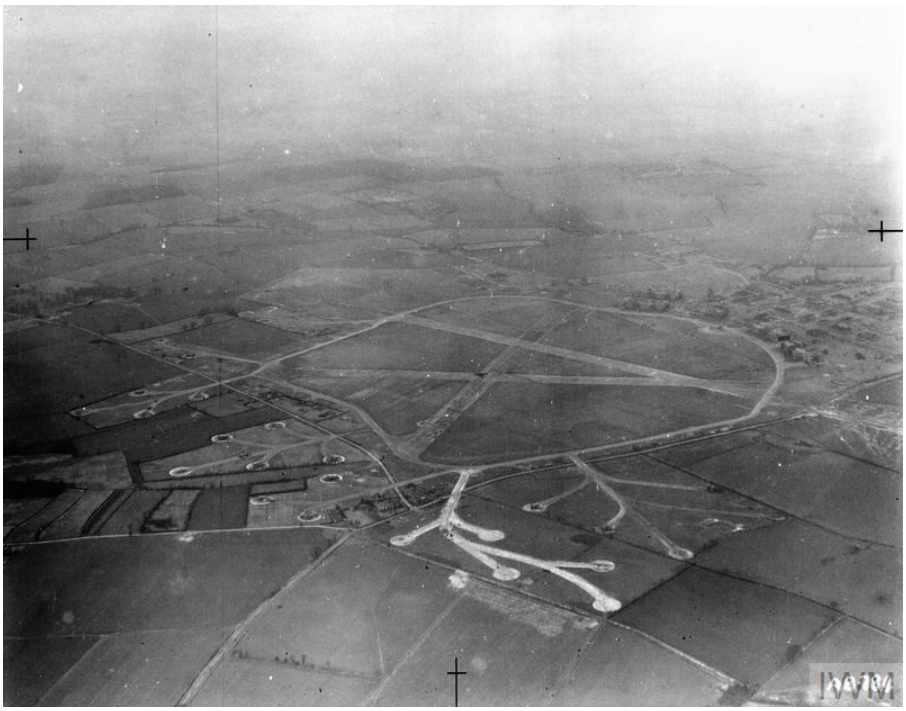


Eric Henry Barrett was born on 7 April 1920, the son of farmer Wilson and Ada (nee Holgate) Barrett of Coronach, Saskatchewan, Canada.

Although Canadian citizens, his father originally came from Lancashire and his mother from Yorkshire. Wilson, a veteran of the Boer and Great Wars, was a homesteader in 1909.

Eric graduated from Mountain Cedar, Poplar Creek and Coronach schools. He was working for his father who was a mechanical farmer, when he enlisted at Regina early in 1941.

In his attestation papers, Eric declared that he was well acquainted with all types of engines and that he had some electrical experience. Keen on sport, he played baseball, softball, curling and hockey. He was able to speak some French but stated that he was not fluent.



Eric served as Fight Sergeant, Pilot in the Royal Canadian Air Force and was posted to England where he joined the 1521 Beam Approach Training Flight that was based at RAF Stradishall from October 1941. Left: RAF Stradishall from East-South-East

It is not known whether Eric was serving as a trainer or completing a course in Beam Approach Landing.

An Airspeed Oxford with the yellow triangle livery of the Beam Approach Training Flight.



Devised to help pilots land safely in poor visibility the beam approach (sometimes known as Blind Approach) system relied on two audible signals, Morse A (dit dah) and N (dah dit) which originated from differing parts of the airfield, which was "divided" into four quadrants.

Listening to the signals, the pilot knew which side of the airfield he was flying in from. When he started hearing both signals of different strengths, he was aware of how close to the centre line he was. When both signals merged and became a continuous sound, he knew he was "on the beam".

At the end of October 1942 Eric's Oxford I, AT765 of No 1521 Flt, crashed in a forced landing at Glemsford, Suffolk during a training exercise. He died several days later on 2 November 1942 at St. Leonard's Hospital, Sudbury from injuries sustained. He was aged 22 years.

Eric Henry Barrett was buried at Haverhill cemetery, Suffolk, England, grave 143, section U.

In 1947, the Saskatchewan Geo-Memorial Project began and an island, Barrett Island, in Cybulski Lake, Saskatchewan was named in his memory. The Saskatchewan Virtual War Memorial website has images of his attestation record and service records. Eric is commemorated on the memorial at Coronach Cemetery in his hometown.

