

Cockcroft, Robert Vernon

Age: 21

Nationality: British

Rank: AC1

Unit: No. 32 OTU

Occupation: Not Known

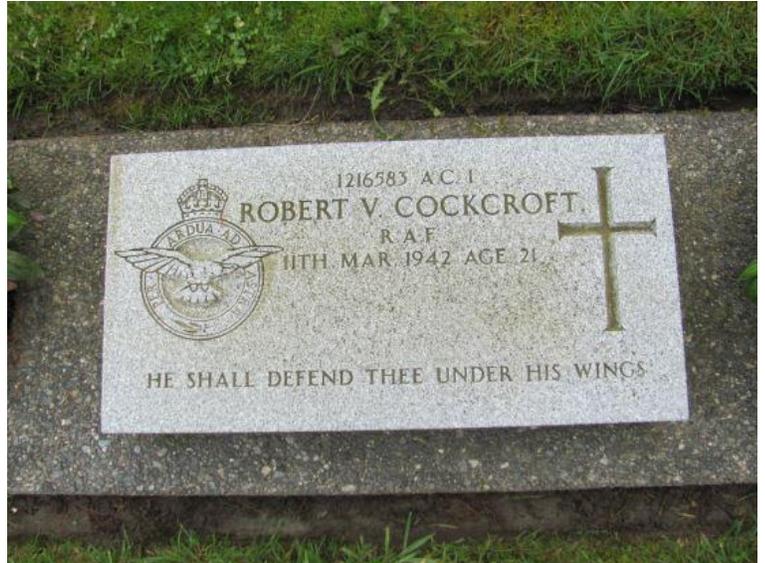
Service No: 1216583 RAF

Birth: 21 October 1921
Halifax, Yorkshire, UK

Home Town: Clifton, Bedfordshire, UK

Death: 11 March 1942
Wound From A Firearm

Burial: Royal Oak Cemetery, Victoria, BC Canada



Biography,

Robert Cockcroft was one of the RAF servicemen sent to No. 32 OTU, Patricia Bay Station for training. Not being Canadian, records of his service are not available to the general public. Robert was born on 21 October 1920 to Robert Vernon and Florence Elizabeth Taylor. He had one younger sister and one brother, Gordon, born in 1931. At the time of Robert's death, his father was a Flight Sergeant.

By 1926, the family had moved to Clifton in Bedfordshire. In 1939 Florence and the three children were living in Biggleswade, Bedfordshire. Robert gave his occupation as an assistant in a clothes shop but was at that time unemployed. Robert's father was not living with the family. According to his probate record he died on 27 September 1942 and was engaged in war service administration, so it is likely he was posted elsewhere at this time. His death was in Lincolnshire.

During or after 1939 Robert enlisted in the RAF and was sent to Patricia Bay, where he died of a bullet wound to the head on 11 March 1942. According to the Circumstances of Casualty report, he went to the Main Stores of the unit to collect his rifle. Later, a shot was heard from the Equipment Officer's outer office and AC1 Cockcroft was found with a bullet wound to the head.

A Court of Inquiry was convened on 13 March 1942. The rifle was in possession of the airman for Station defence purposes and he was on duty at the time of his death. The Court determined that the bullet was fired with suicidal intent and in their opinion, that the mind of the deceased was temporarily deranged prior to the shooting and that he was not fully conscious of what he was doing or completely appreciative of his actions leading to his death. No blame could be attached to any other person or persons.

Robert was buried at the Royal Oak burial Park, Victoria, BC with full military honours.

The day after Robert's death a second young airman at Patricia Bay, William Nixon, also shot himself in the head. These were the only two suicides recorded at the station.



Clifton War Memorial