

Flight Lieutenant Roy Mottram, Royal Air Force of Church Stretton

died 31 August 1941, France, aged 24.

Roy Mottram was born on 28 March 1917 in Willesden, London. Roy was the youngest son of the seven children of Richard Henry Mottram, a commercial traveller for sports and games and his wife Jennie [Jane] nee Wyke who were married in 1906.

Richard was born in Ridley in Cheshire Swansea. By 1901 he had moved to London where he worked as an Assistant in an Athletic Outfitters shop before his marriage. Jennie was born in Shrewsbury where her father worked on the railways.

In the 1911 census the Mottram family with their three children were living in West Drayton in London. On 29 September 1920 Roy was baptised at St Matthew's Church, Willesden along with his elder brother Douglas and younger sister Jean. At the time of the 1921 census the family had moved to Harlesden with all seven children, five sons and two daughters living at home. Richard Mottram died prematurely in September 1924 in Willesden. He does not seem to have left a will.



Flight Lieutenant Roy Mottram



Gravestone of Roy Mottram

Following her husband's death, Jennie moved the family to Church Stretton where she worked as a caterer based at the Chalet in Carding Mill Valley which was owned by her elder brother. The tea rooms were managed by her sister Florence in the 1920s.

Roy was educated in Church Stretton and then attended the Priory Grammar School for Boys in Shrewsbury. After school he worked as a dental technician in Church Stretton alongside his elder brother Dennis.

By the time of the 1939 register in September Roy was training as a pilot in Derby having joined the RAF in August 1939. He joined No. 92 Squadron at Croydon in April 1940. Following the outbreak of the Battle of Britain in July 1940, on the 15 September, he claimed to have destroyed a Heinkel aircraft and damaged a Dornier. He was wounded on 18 September when he crashed his spitfire over Kent and suffered minor burns.

Roy was transferred to No. 54 Squadron and had been promoted to Flight Lieutenant at the time of his death¹. He was killed during a sweep over northern France, part of the so-called Circus raids, on 31 August 1941. These raids of bombers, supported by fighters, aimed to engage the German Air Force in order to support the Russian front following the invasion of Russia in July 1941. However, the daytime raids proved costly in terms of fighters and their pilots.

Roy is buried in the Merville Communal Cemetery near the city of Lille in France, along with over 900 casualties from the First World War and 92 from the Second World War. He is also commemorated on the Church Stretton War Memorial and on the Roll of Honour at the Priory School, now part of Shrewsbury Sixth Form College.

Roy's will wasn't proved until the 30 July 1946 and was granted to his mother. His address is given as Brook Farm, Little Stretton. He left assets worth £135 5s 2d. Roy's mother Jennie died in Little Stretton in 1948.



Merville Communal Cemetery Extension, France

¹ For further details of Roy's service career see <https://allspitfirepilots.org/pilots/252-roy-mottram>