

## Pilot Officer Alwyn Thomas Charles Benson, Royal Air Force of Little Stretton

died 11 January 1944, India, aged 33.

Alwyn Thomas Charles Benson was born on 15 June 1909 in Aberdare, South Wales. Alwyn was the eldest son of four children of Alwyn Llewelyn Thomas Benson, a fishmonger and his wife Amelia nee Howell who were married in 1906.

Alwyn senior was born in Swansea where his father Thomas was also a fish merchant, and he lived there until he married. Amelia's father was a printer based in Aberdare.

In the 1911 census the Benson family of Alwyn and his sister Rachael are living in Sketty near Swansea. At the time of the 1921 census the family had moved into Swansea itself living at Brunswick Street and the family had grown with a pair of twins, a girl and a boy born in 1913. Alwyn senior was working for the family business Benson Brothers, Wholesale and Retail Fish merchants. Alwyn senior's father Thomas died in 1928 and that appears to have resulted in a change of fortune for the family.



Old Hall Farm, Little Stretton

In the 1939 register the parents and the two daughters were living at Old Hall Farm in Little Stretton and Alwyn senior was working for Shropshire County Council and described as a 'Forman White Lines'. At this time the Church Stretton bypass was being constructed so it is possible Alwyn was employed on that project.

We know little of Alwyn's career before the war, or indeed of his war service. At the time of his death, he was a Pilot Officer with 135 Squadron based at what was then called RAF

Drigh Road in India. This was one of the most important air stations on the sub-continent and is now part of Karachi in Pakistan.

Alwyn was killed in January 1944. He was killed when his plane, a Vengeance dive bomber, crashed at Ahmednagar about 60 Miles northeast of Poona during a ground attack exercise. The plane would have had a crew of two, but it has not been possible to identify the other person.

Alwyn is buried in the Kirkee War Cemetery near the city of Poona in India, along with over 1,600 casualties from the Second World War. He is also commemorated on the Church Stretton War Memorial and on the Little Stretton Roll of Honour.

Alwyn's will was proved on 28 August 1944 to his father Alwyn senior. His address is given as Old Hall Farm, Little Stretton. He left assets worth £115 7s 10d. Alwyn's mother Amelia died in Shropshire in 1948. Alwyn senior died in Brighton in 1969.



Kirkee War Cemetery