

Warner, Alan Leonard

Age: 21

Nationality: English

Rank: Flying Officer

Unit: No. 32 OTU

Occupation: Pilot

Service No: 151705 (RAFVR)

Birth: 3rd Quarter 1922
Croydon, Surrey
England

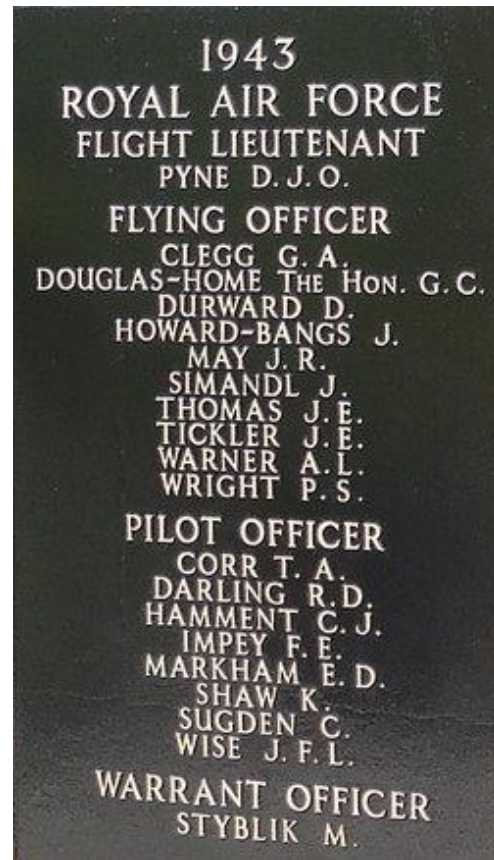
Home Town: Thornton Heath, Surrey
England

Death: 9 October 1943

Crash of Handley Page Hampden AN101
near Stuart Island, Washington, USA

Burial: Commemorated on Ottawa Memorial, Canada

Others: Sgt Francis Keith Maiden, WAG, RAAF; P/O Kenneth Shaw,
Navigator, RAFVR; Sgt Neville Oswald Weekes, WAG, RAAF.



Biography

Allen Leonard Warner was born between July and September 1922, in Croydon, Surrey, England, to Leonard George Crucifix Warner and Elizabeth Maud Allen. Leonard, who was born in 1892, was a piano tuner and married Elizabeth in August 1919.

Allen attended Edward Selhurst Grammar School, where he was a member of the cadet Corps and he was studying Engineering when he joined the Royal Air Force.

By 1943 Allen was an advanced student pilot training with No. 32 OTU at Patricia Bay, BC British Columbia. He was piloting Handley Page Hampden AN101 when it plunged into the sea while on exercises. Allen's body was not recovered from the crash site and he is commemorated in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, on the Commonwealth Air Forces Memorial.



Details of Crash

On 9 October 1943, at 1:25 pm, Handley Page Hampden AN101 took off on exercises with a crew of four:

Sergeant Francis Keith Maiden	423799 (RAAF)	WAG
P/O Kenneth Shaw	152316 (RAFVR)	Navigator
F/O Alan Warner	151705 (RAFVR)	Pilot
Sergeant Neville Oswald Weekes	413700 (RAAF)	WAG.

The object of the flight was light attack exercises with camera on shipping. The crew was briefed before take-off and instructed to return to base if weather conditions became unfit for the exercise.

At take off, the ceiling was unlimited, visibility four miles, and wind S.E. 17 mph. At the place and time of crash, visibility was good in the immediate vicinity with light fog patches in the area. The wind was easterly and light.

F/O Warner, the pilot, had a total flying time of 303 hours, 72 of which were on Hampdens. He was considered a good average pilot and the crew were experienced on the exercise, having made four such flights totalling 4:30 hours.

The aircraft was spotted in Haro Strait by SS Princess Alice at 1:35 pm. It made three attacks on the ship without any untoward incident being observed. After completing the third attack run it flew away to port of the ship and made a normal turn to starboard climbing to 100 ft. It then went into a tight turn to port and while in this turn the aircraft seemed to lose flying speed or stall and it dove into the sea. The ship put about and returned to the point where the aircraft had entered the sea. The bodies of two of the crew were found floating on the water along with a dinghy. These bodies were recovered and an unsuccessful effort made to revive one of them, who appeared to have some sign of life. The other crew members were never found.

The pilot who flew the aircraft on its last preceding flight stated that it had a tendency to slip inwards on steep port turns. The C.O. of the Flight testified that Hampdens lose height rapidly in turns due to slipping or skidding, particularly in steep port turns. He stated that pupils are constantly warned of this tendency and instructed in how to prevent it.

The recovered bodies, those of the Australian WAG's, were examined and found to have serious head wounds and not to have drowned. It was assumed that all four crew members had died on impact.

A Supermarine Stranraer, a Westland Lysander and a crash boat were despatched to the scene by Flying Control but found nothing.

The cause of the crash was determined to be pilot error. The pilot failed to make a turn to port with sufficient care and accuracy and failed to take proper corrective action when the aircraft lost height.

The recommendations of the Court of Inquiry were for more adequate and frequent instructions to be given to all student pilots at No. 32 OTU in the proper methods of making all types of turns in Hampden Aircraft. Particular reference should be made to steep turns to port, emphasizing the probable result if such instructions are not carried out accurately. It was also recommended that more adequate and repeated instructions be given students in the proper method of recovery when a Hampden aircraft started to lose altitude in a turn.



