

## Francis Charles William BULL

**Born:** 1925

**School Years:** 1936-1940 House - St Wilfrid's - Chichester High School for Boys  
Oxford School Certificate – Passed – July 1940  
Athletic Sports Day - Regular participant

**Civilian Occupation:** Joined the Royal Air Force as an apprentice - RAF Halton  
'Martlet' 'Roll of Service' – Aircraftman 2, R.A.F.

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### Armed Forces Record

**Service Rank:** Sergeant

**Service Number:** 578353

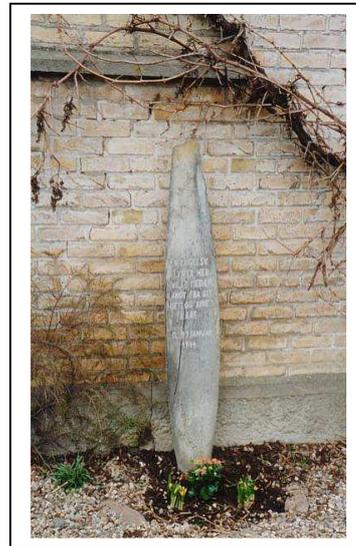
**Service Record:** 463 Squadron (Australian)

**Service Base:** R.A.F. Waddington

**Date of Death:** 29 January 1944



*Roadside sarsen near crash site*



*Here lies an English airman  
Far from his home and loved ones  
29<sup>th</sup> January 1944*

**Old Boy** Francis Charles BULL trained as an apprentice at RAF Halton, Bedfordshire which was the training school that provided the hard core of efficient non-commissioned officers and airmen.

At about midnight on 28/29<sup>th</sup> January 1944, he was the flight engineer aboard Lancaster HK-537 of 463 Squadron (Australian) one of 700 bombers flying from Eastern England to penetrate deep into Germany – their target was Berlin ("The Big City"). Number 83 Squadron (Pathfinders) from RAF Wynton together with 463 Squadron and 467 Squadron based at RAF Waddington all took part in this sortie. Whilst over the Danish island of Als above the Augustenborg Fjord HK537 was struck by "friendly bombs". Seriously damaged, the pilot decided to try and return to England in order to save crew and aircraft. In a cloudy airbase whilst turning back into the bomber stream HK537 collided with Lancaster JA967.

Following the collision, HK537 crashed into open countryside close to the village of Mjels. JA967 plummeted towards Broballe and exploded in a field. All fourteen crew members from the two aircraft were killed.

*Old Boy* Francis Charles Williams BULL's body was found some weeks later by the owner of Pommersgaard Farm whilst ploughing a field. The farmer buried the remains in the corner of a field and used one of HK-537's propeller blades as a temporary headstone, engraving on it a text, which loosely translated reads .....

"Here lies an English airman,

Far from his home and loved ones.

29<sup>th</sup> January 1944"

Francis BULL's body was exhumed in 1946 and reburied together with the two aircrews in Aabenraa Cemetary, Denmark. Allied Mil. Plot. Row 4 Coll. Grave 21.

The crews are remembered annually at the crash site on 29<sup>th</sup> January in the village of Broballe by the faithful Danes.

School Notes -'The Martlet' – March 1945

"It is with the greatest regret that we learn that Francis Bull, who had been reported missing after an R.A.F. raid on Germany, is now reported presumed dead. Francis Bull was one of those quiet, cheerful dependable lads whose School career and service in the R.A.F. were uniformly excellent. To his parents and relatives, we extend our deepest sympathy".

Commemorated

Chichester High School for Boys

Chichester War Memorial

Broballe, Island of Als, Denmark – HK- 537 Crew list engraved on a roadside sarsen close to the crash site.

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"In memory of our dear son Francis Bull RAF reported 'missing' after a raid on Berlin"

Chichester Observer

Commemorated

Chichester High School

Runnymede