
Subject: Dodenherdenking and an educational watch
Posted by [Jenneke](#) on Wed, 04 May 2022 20:06:09 GMT
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Today is Nationale Dodenherdenking ("Remembrance of the Dead") in the Netherlands. A moment to commemorate all victims (resistance fighters, soldiers and civilians) of the Second World War and other wars. I always look at the impressive silent moment on the Waalsdorpervlakte (see link, best to start around 12 mins).

I would say the best time to show a pocket watch that taught me more about these victims. I got it because of my love for watches and watchmaking. The pocket watch of the father-in-law of a friend from my mother's. It is not a Gruen but an Omega.

The first hint of its history is the incredibly high radioactivity. Radium markers and numbers on the enamel dial and plenty on the hands too. Unbreakable Plexiglas crystal.

The second hint is the case back. The nickel plated brass case is engraved with a broad arrow G.S.T.P. (General Service Trade Pattern) with an army registration number starting with Y. The English RAF in fact.

Inside the Omega calibre 38.5 L T1 with special adjustment in four positions to within 10 seconds a day (as for a chronometer). And inside the case the reference ML 1140. Known to be delivered from March 1944 to the English army.

File Attachments

1) [4B0DCB00-D983-4F3E-AF59-8BF591B21BCF.jpeg](#), downloaded 1893 times



2) [D433351F-ACE7-4ED0-BC8C-09E623699823.jpeg](#), downloaded 1866 times



3) [21BEE673-5D35-45CE-ABD3-7219E200B46B.jpeg](#), downloaded 1891 times



4) [529F8C5B-8D63-47D1-ACCB-727E4FAE7874.jpeg](#), downloaded 1897 times



Subject: Re: Dodenherdenking and an educational watch
Posted by [Jenneke](#) on Wed, 04 May 2022 20:07:17 GMT

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The first info I got was that the watch belonged to one of the airplane crew from a crashed plane in Tongeren (near Epe in the Netherlands). It was received from 1 of them as a thank you after the crash.

A search for a crashed aircraft in the correct period let us conclude it must be the one on location 14. On June 13, 1944 the aircraft Lancaster Mk III LM581 A-X was shot down by a night-fighter from the German Luftwaffe. The pilot was T.W. Boyce from New Zealand. It took a while before

the fire brigade found it in the dark woods.

A present would be crazy, there were no survivors from this plane... Confirmed by several police reports. There is a greater chance this watch has been “found” shining in the night and taken opportunistically. The finder was a person in hiding (“onderduiker”) who had been detained at the police station, but had to help the police recover the bodies.

It is impossible to say for sure who this pocket watch belonged to. Not the pilot though. His wristwatch turned up after the war. It was turned in to a mayor along with a shadowy tale of a chopped of wrist. The most logical owner is het navigator Andrew Burgess Leonard who used a pocket watch when navigating in the dark.

What did I learn (or was really a shock)... The amount of planes that didn't make it. Average flying time for a crew was 1 month. The age of these brave men, or should I say boys, all 20 - 25 years. Volunteers from countries where the war didn't take part. That makes me quiet.

File Attachments

1) [8A595732-E4E7-4C5A-A595-5678742ECD0C.jpeg](#), downloaded 1783 times



2) [25674FBF-34C9-41FA-AABB-5A7E2947612F.jpeg](#), downloaded 1694 times

		2 3 4 1 2 4 8 1 2 4 8 16				1 2 4 1 2 4 7 1			
		HUNDREDS				TENS			
NON OP.	YEAR	MONTH		DAY		SQUADRON			
OC	DATE	TYPE	SERIAL No.	GP.	SQ.	L	TIME OFF	BASE	
GAR	REF.	MODS.	SPEC. EQUIP.		TIME OF FIXES		POSITION OF FIXES		
DAY	229/70-70		see 1FF H25 704200				see		
SPEC.									
R. OUT	CREW—NAME RANK NO.								
T.A.	PILOT	Boyce, T. W.		Dead				Captured from buried 15.6.4.	
R. HOME		H2422047. P/O							
R.	NAV.	Leonard, E. B.		Dead					
SEA		152791 P/O							
D.A.	W. OP.	Allan, S.		Dead					
		1132284 Sqr.							
	FL	Garth, S. B.		Dead					
	BA.	Hanks, A. R.		Dead.					
		152996 P/O							
	A.G.	Rothwell M.		Dead					
		2306323 Sqr.							
	A.G.	Roso, I. M.		Dead.					
		1273632 Sqr.							
		SPECIAL EQUIPMENT				SOURCES OF INFORMATION			
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10				1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9			

3) 3F1D9B54-C01D-44FE-8020-25D977154CD7.jpeg, downloaded 1765 times



Subject: Re: Dodenherdenking and an educational watch
Posted by [Case](#) on Thu, 05 May 2022 13:18:22 GMT

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Thank you for sharing this with us—a reminder of a grim reality of that war. Remarkable that it survived the crash in such condition.
