

Leading Aircraftsman WILLIAM HENRY CLIFFORD

1296192, 227 Sqdn., Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve

who died age 22 on 3 August 1943

Son of Harry and Winifred Hilda Clifford, of Apperley, Gloucestershire.

Remembered with honour in BENGHAZI WAR CEMETERY

The Register provided a report but no photograph:

APPERLEY AIRMAN'S DEATH: L.A.C. W. H. Clifford

We regret to learn that Mr. and Mrs. H. Clifford, of Box Tree Farm, Apperley, have received the sad news that their elder son, L.A.C. William H. Clifford R.A.F. has died in the Middle East from injuries sustained whilst fighting a fire. He passed away in hospital shortly after his admission.

L.A.C. Clifford was one of a very and much respected Apperley family with the record of many generations in the parish. He was 22 years of age and was educated at Deerhurst School; well-known and much like in the village, the news of his death is received with general regret.

His father¹ served in the last war and his brother is in the R.A.F.

We have a clue to the circumstances of his death from the website of his 227 Squadron.² Formed in Italy, in April 1918., it did not become operational before war ended and was disbanded in 1918. It was reformed in Malta, in August 1942, when No. 235 Squadron with *Beaufighters* was re-numbered 227. Then it possessed a long-range fighter role and was mainly employed on operations against enemy shipping and convoy escort duties in Mediterranean and Aegean areas. Moving to North Africa in March 1943, it operated over the Eastern Mediterranean until moving to Italy in August 1944. We can surmise, therefore, that L.A.C. Clifford, who would presumably have been ground crew, lost his life, either in an accidental fire or as a result of an enemy counter-attack on his airfield during one of those operations.



¹ Henry Clifford of Box Tree Farm for 45 years, who died aged 84 in September 1944.

² Website <http://www.rafweb.org/Sqn226-230.htm>