

## **Sergeant ALGERNON GUY STRICKLAND**

904495, 15 Sqdn., Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve

who died age 22 on 9 May 1942,

son of Algernon Walter Strickland, and of Mary P. M. S. Strickland, of Gloucester.

Remembered with honour at the KIEL WAR CEMETERY

We could find no information about **Sgt. Strickland's** death in the Register: except that his will was published in which he left £54,347.01p.<sup>1</sup> He left two sisters. The *CWGC* website helps us learn more about the context of his death by recording that most of those buried in **Kiel War Cemetery** were airmen lost in bombing raids over northern Europe, whose graves were brought in from cemeteries and churchyards throughout North-Western Germany. The cemetery contains 983 Commonwealth burials of the Second World War, 96 of them unidentified.



The internet<sup>2</sup> allows us to learn more about **15 Squadron** and gives a hint how Sgt. Strickland may have lost his life: **15 Squadron** was formed in 1915 and gained experience in the *Battle of Cambrai* and during the 1918 German *Spring Offensive* until it was finally disbanded on 31 December 1919.

After disbandment and reformation in the interwar years, it saw little action in World War II until 10 May 1940 when the squadron was heavily engaged, losing many aircraft in the Nazi '*blitzkrieg*'. It was later converted to [Wellington bombers](#) and took part in the offensive against Germany by night. It was then chosen as the second squadron to fly the first of the new generation of four-engine bombers, the [Short Stirling](#) which bombed Berlin, Kiel and Hamburg. Operations continued in ones and twos, **the first loss being on 10 May** when the CO failed to return. **Was Sgt. Strickland killed during this mission?**

Sgt. Strickland's will confirms that he was the son of Mr. Strickland of Apperley Court, a banker who died in 1938 after marrying **Lady Mary**, the second daughter of the Earl of Wemyss in 1915. Her sister Cynthia married H.H. Asquith, the British Prime Minister at the start of the Great War. She was very active in local social life, acting as stage manager for the famous Pageant of 1931 which raised money to build the present hospital in Tewkesbury. In 1943, she married Major John Lyon and died in 1991 aged about 90. This picture reveals the beauty of youth.



<sup>1</sup> Register of 13/05/1944. In modern values, the will was worth approximately £1.3m.

<sup>2</sup> Website: <http://freespace.virgin.net/paul.hunt3/units/15Sq.html>: my summary.