

Sgt. T. H. Gill (RAF Volunteer Reserve)

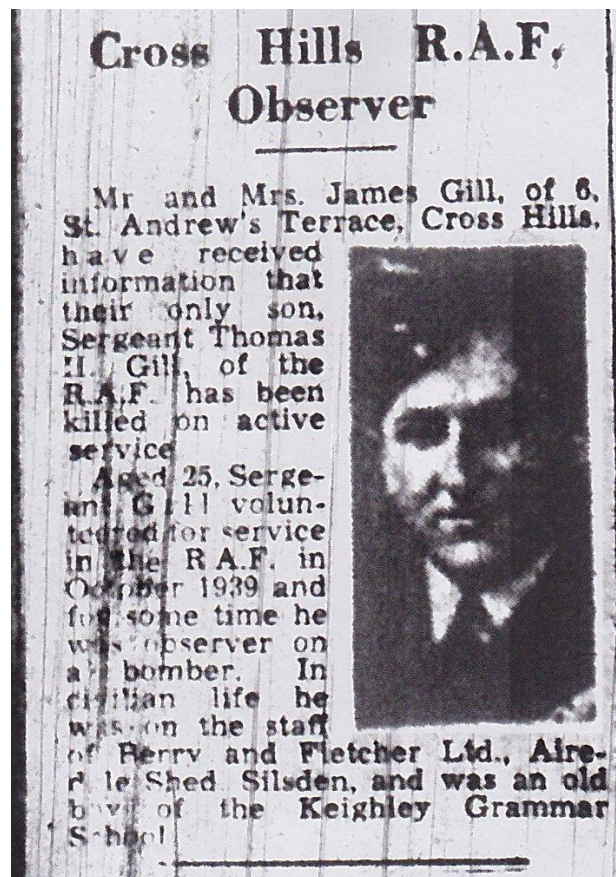
Thomas Herman Gill volunteered to join the RAF at the very start of the war, in October 1939¹. He was killed, whilst on active service, on February 15th 1941 and is buried in the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery in Ismailia (Egypt)².

Between September 1939 and July 1941, Ismailia was the headquarters of No. 250 Bomber Wing, the Desert Air Force³. The only unit stationed there at the time of Sgt. Gill's death was No 70 Operational Training Unit⁴. This was involved in the training of pilots to operate in Middle Eastern conditions and as such was equipped to train twin-engine crews, single seat fighter pilots and crews for communications duties⁵.

It is possible that Sgt. Gill had previously served with other units in the Wing³. These included:

- No. 30 Squadron (Blenheim fighter-bombers): In August 1939, 30 Sqd moved to Egypt and following Italy's entry into the war, on June 10th 1940, it carried out escort missions in the Western Desert and fighter defence of Alexandria. In November 1940, it was set to Greece where it operated its Blenheims in both the bomber and fighter roles⁶.
- No. 55 Squadron (Blenheims): In June 1940, 55 Sqd began to carry out operations against Italian targets in Libya and remained in the Western Desert when the other day bomber units were sent to Greece in early 1941⁷.
- No. 113 Squadron (Blenheims): Following the Italian declaration of war, 113 Sqd ran operations against targets in Libya, later moving to Greece⁸.

His death was reported in the Keighley News⁴:



References

- 1 Keighley News, March 1941.
- 2 <http://www.cwgc.org/find-war-dead/casualty/2114201/GILL,%20THOMAS%20HERMAN>
- 3 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desert_Air_Force
- 4 <http://www.rafweb.org/Stations/Stations-1.htm#Ismailia>
- 5 http://www.rafweb.org/OTU_4.htm
- 6 <http://www.rafweb.org/Sqn026-30.htm>
- 7 <http://www.rafweb.org/Sqn051-55.htm>
- 8 <http://www.rafweb.org/Sqn111-115.htm>