

SHAVINGTON-CUM-GRESTY'S FORGOTTEN HERO

RICHARD PRYCE HUGHES

1906 - 1942



'GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS, THAT
A MAN LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS'



SHAVINGTON
CUM
GRE^{STY}

Reflecting on the events of June 6, 1944, it is important to understand the profound impact they had on shaping our world. The freedoms we enjoy today, including democracy and the ability to make choices freely, are owed to the selfless service and sacrifice of those who participated in the international alliance. We warmly invite everyone to join us in honouring and paying tribute to the veterans of D-Day, recognising their remarkable courage and unwavering commitment.

So, to honour the 80th Anniversary of D-Day, the Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council is leading various activities to commemorate this important moment in our history and to celebrate the brave individuals who fought for our freedom. One of those is this booklet, which celebrates the life and story of Shavington-cum-Gresty's Forgotten Hero, Richard Pryce Hughes. The council extends heartfelt gratitude to Mark Potts and The Wybunbury War Group for writing this booklet and for making it available to all residents of Shavington-cum-Gresty and the students and staff of Shavington Primary School.

For further details on these events, please visit our Facebook page, 'Shavington Online', or explore our website at shavingtononline.co.uk/d-day-80-in-shavington-cum-gresty. Additionally, information can be found on our Parish noticeboards.

Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council.



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SHAVINGTON-
CUM-GRESTY'S
FORGOTTEN
HERO

RICHARD PRYCE HUGHES

1906-1942

Mark A. Potts



Prance 11½ Russian Peasant
Dick 9 - Royal Flying Corp.
Dilys 2 - Powder puff.
Fancy dress ball. Crewe
5.1.1916

Even at an early age, Richard was interested in aviation. Here he is pictured as a Royal Flying Corps pilot, with his sisters at a fancy dress ball in Crewe on January 5, 1916.

PILOT OFFICER RICHARD PRYCE HUGHES
No. 10 Squadron, R.A.F. Royal Canadian Air Force
December 1, 1906 - April 15, 1942

Richard Pryce Hughes was born at Gresty Lodge in Shavington on December 1, 1906 to parents Pryce Edward and Ethel Bessie Hughes (nee Williams).

He married his sweetheart and Captain of Cornwall's hockey team, Jane Elizabeth Gillian James on September 3, 1932 in Probus, Cornwall. They would have two children - Michael James (born October 5, 1934) and Susan Lynne (born August 27, 1938).

Richard moved to Buenos Aires, Argentina to work on the family's cattle ranch, firstly as a pupil (1923-25), then under manager (1926-1932), before finally becoming ranch manager in 1932, and remained in this position until he enlisted. Such was his determination to become a pilot, he added two years to his birth date and dyed his hair jet black.

Richard attested at Ottawa, Canada on October 17, 1940 and was sent to No.1 Manning Depot in Toronto, Canada for training. On gaining his wings on April 7, 1941, he left Canada four days later as a Pilot Officer and returned to England on June 1, eventually joining No.10 Squadron at R.A.F. Leeming in Yorkshire on September 3.

On April 14, 1942 at 22.05, eight aircraft from No.10 Squadron took off for a raid on Dortmund. Pilot Officer Hughes, on his ninth mission, was Captain of a Halifax Mk.II (R9492, Z AG), but during the raid, the pipeline on the No.5 starboard tank was damaged by flak, and already low on fuel due to problems locating the target area (26 minutes in the vicinity of the target waiting to release their bombs), his aircraft began to run out of fuel as it returned home. While at a sufficient height, Richard ordered his crew of six to bail out, while he heroically attempted to find a suitable place for an emergency landing, well away from any residential areas. However, when both starboard engines stopped at approximately 04.55, the Halifax spiralled out of control from 7,000 feet and crashed into the ground on the outskirts of Liss Forest in Hampshire.

Richard's body was recovered from the wreckage and four days later, he was buried, with full military honours, in Wybunbury Church Cemetery Extension in Cheshire. Richard is commemorated on the Wybunbury and Shavington war memorials and also at the crash site. His parents were later interred in his grave. His cousin, Flight Lieutenant George Pryce Hughes of No.105 Squadron (R.A.F.), Royal Canadian Air Force, who was at Richard's funeral, was killed in action on July 11, 1942, while flying his Mosquito in Denmark.



Richard c1926. He had attended Kingsland Grange School in Shrewsbury (1916-1918) and was a renowned sportsman and excelled at rugby, cricket, horse riding, sailing, golf, tennis, squash and shooting. He was also a keen photographer. While in Argentina, he became a member of the Belgrano Athletic Club, was taught Spanish, which he could speak fluently, and also learnt to fly light aircraft.



Richard as ranch manager in Buenos Aires, Argentina.



'SHAVINGTON-CUM-GRESTY'S FORGOTTEN HERO'

1310 (REVISED) 1/26, 11/26, 4/31/42.

Name of Ship "HIGHLAND PRINCESS" Date of Departure 17th JULY 1937. P.M. 21.

Steamship Line ROYAL MAIL LINES LIMITED. Where Bound BUENOS AIRES.

NAMES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF BRITISH PASSENGERS EMBARKED AT THE PORT OF LONDON.

(1) Contract Ticket Number	(2) Port at which Passengers have contracted to land	(3) NAMES OF PASSENGERS	(4) CLASS (Whether 1st, 2nd, Tourist or 3rd)	(5) AGES OF PASSENGERS						(6) Last Address in the United Kingdom	(7) Profession, Occupation, or Calling of Passengers	(8) Country of last Permanent Residence*						(9) Country of Intended Future Permanent Residence*
				Adults of 12 Years and upwards	Child- ren under 12	In- fant	Male	Female	Infants			Male	Female	Infants	Male	Female	Infants	
943	BUENOS AIRES	HOLLAND, Herbert	1st	37						112, Princes House, Kensington Park Rd, W.11.	Engineer	1					Argentina	
"	"	HOLLAND, Coenelina	"	28						"	None	1					"	
6167	"	HUGHES, Richard Pryce	"	29						Gresty, Cross, Gheehre.	Stock Breeder				1		"	
2900	"	LUNGAN, Robert	"	61						Pitportre, Dundee	Farmer		1				Scotland	
1441	"	MCELBOOM, Dennis	"	22						46, Queens Gate Gardens, S.W.7, C.A.	"	1					Argentina	
948	"	HEDDERMAN, Patrick	"	34						11, James Street, Old Ferry, L. 14, N.	Clerk in Holy Orders.	1					England	
845	"	BROCKFIELD, John	"	37						Small House, Cockover, Shropshire.	None	1					"	
811	"	MACGILLIVRAY, John	"	57						Gabscie, Fife, Scotland.	Farmer			1			Scotland	
713	"	HADNICK, John	"	25						6, Ulster Road, Ainsty, Lincs.	Student						England	
2746	"	SKILDEN, Ezekiah	"	51						Heleigh, Godminster, Herts.	Importer					1	Argentina	

(Above) His name (third down) on a passenger list to Buenos Aires. He sailed from London on July 19, 1937 on the 'Highland Princess.' His profession is listed as 'Stock Breeder.' (Below) Richard enjoying a day out by the river.



148207 Comm

AIR FORCE No. R-74289 POSTED TO Manungo Regt TRADE wireman
Canada

ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE

(ATTESTATION PAPER)

(Pages one and two, only, are to be completed in Applicant's own Handwriting)

- Surname HUGHES FULL Christian Names RICHARD PRYCE
- Present Address Ottawa Telephone _____
- Permanent Address Bongallo 456, Buenos Aires Argentina S.A.
- Place of Birth Brewe England Citizenship British Subject
- Date of Birth December 1, 1908 Married, Single, Widower, Separated, Divorced married
- Particulars of Children Boy 5 yrs old. girl 2 yrs old.

Name	Date of birth	Name	Date of birth
<u>Michael James</u>	<u>6th 5 1934</u>		
<u>Susan Lyrene</u>	<u>4th 12 1938</u>		

- Occupation Stock breeder 8. Religion Church of England
State denomination
- Languages English - Spanish (fluent)
- Next of Kin (Full Name) Elizabeth Gillian Hughes Relationship wife
State designation
 Address Bongallo 456, Buenos Aires S.A.
- Father (Full Name) Pryce Edward Hughes Birthplace Montgomery Eng.
 Address Bongallo 456 B. A. S.A. Citizenship British Subject
 Occupation Stock breeder
- Mother (Full Maiden Name) Ethel Bessie Williams Birthplace Montgomery England
 Address Bruni Bath Hotel, Mankwick Eng. Citizenship British Subject

13. Details of any Naval, Military or Air Force Service:

Unit	Place	Rank	Trade	Date		Reason for discharge
				From	To	
/	/	/	/	/	/	/

- Honours, Awards, Mentions no
- Are you now on any Naval, Military or Air Force Reserve? no
- Have you previously made application to join the R.C.A.F.? no If so, where? no
 When? no Result no no no no no
- Were you ever discharged from any branch of His Majesty's Forces as Medically Unfit? no
 If so, state nature of disability no
- Have you ever been or are you now in receipt of a Disability Pension? no
 If so, state nature of Disability no
- Have you ever been convicted of an indictable offence? no If so state nature no
- Are you in debt? no If so, state particulars no

R.C.A.F. Records Office

Rec'd no **OCT 22 1940**

D.K. no C.I.B. no M.H. no

R.C. no S.L. no P.A. no

EPR

R.C.A.F. Form R. 100
 100M-2-40 (3924)
 H.Q. 1092-3-33

Richard's attestation paper into the Royal Canadian Air Force. His date of birth is recorded as 'December 1, 1908' making him two years younger than he really was.



Pilot Officer Richard Pryce Hughes, after gaining his wings in 1941. On December 29, 1941, he was innocently involved in an incident at R.A.F. Leeming, where two airmen were killed. Two Halifax aircraft collided at 15.10 on the intersection of the runway when taking off. Richard who was a passenger on one of the aircraft, was uninjured.

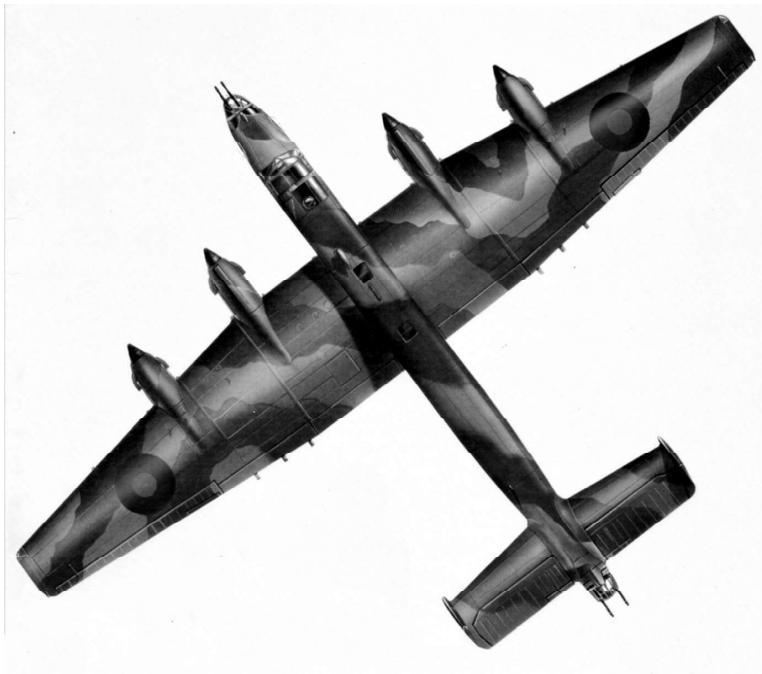


*Two photographs of Richard, while on leave, on the lawns of the Brine Baths Hotel in Nantwich, where his mother was residing after the R.A.F. took over Gresty Lodge in 1940. In the above photo he is with his sisters, Nancie and Dilys and with Nancie's husband, John Halsall. (**Below**) Richard sitting next to his mother, Ethel Bessie Hughes.*





(Above) A Handley Page Halifax Mk.II of No.10 Squadron, photographed here on December 12, 1941. A Navigator of the later Halifax aircraft stated that the Mk.IIs were known as 'Widow Makers' or 'Death Traps' as they were underpowered and very difficult to recover from a stall, hence the change from triangular tail fins to large rectangular ones later on. *(Below)* A birds-eye view of a Handley Page Halifax Mk.II.



DETAIL OF WORK CARRIED OUT							
FORM NO. 242/1000. 1936. REV. P.L. 51. 21/37.		By No. 10 Squadron.		SECRET		Page No. 1	
FOR THE MONTH OF April, 1942.							
DATE	AIRCRAFT Type & Number	CREW	DUTY	TIME		DETAILS OF SORTIE OR FLIGHT	REFERENCE
				Up	Down		
14 Apr 4, 42.		Bombing attack on DORCHAM. Night Aircraft detailed.		2211	-----	Identified the docks and bombed at 0229hrs. from 17,000ft. Some ground haze was experienced but bomb bursts were observed. Very little opposition was encountered over the target but considerable flak and searchlight activity was encountered en route. On the return journey this aircraft ran out of petrol and forced landed in the sea at 0730hrs. three miles south east of Beer Head, Colyton. All the crew were picked up uninjured.	A- C377
"	Halifax II. R9492 'G'.	PO. Hughes OMP Sgt. Atkinson 2nd P PO Ganderton Obs. Sgt Stubble 1st W/O Sgt Triggles 2nd W/O Sgt Tyson Tail Gunner Sgt Trembath Flt Sg.	Bombing	2207	-----	Owing to high petrol consumption this aircraft was unable to reach the primary target and the Rhur area was bombed from 18,000ft. at 0220hrs. Weather was good apart from ground haze and the bomb flashes were seen. At this point the Navigator's sextant was unserviceable and the crew experienced difficulties with the oxygen supply. On the return journey the Flight Engineer reported to the Captain that the petrol situation was serious and at 04.55hrs. the engines cut at 7,000ft. over Surrey. The Captain ordered the crew to abandon the aircraft by parachute and six members of the crew landed safely. The Captain who apparently endeavoured to land the aircraft, was killed when the aircraft crashed three miles south of Whitehill, Greatham Moor, Hindhead, Surrey.	B- C377

(Above) Details of the crash of Richard's aircraft on the morning of April 15. It states:

'Owing to high petrol consumption this aircraft was unable to reach the primary target and the Rhur area was bombed from 18,000ft. at 02.20hrs. Weather was good apart from the ground haze and the bomb flashes were seen. At this point the Navigator's sextant was unserviceable and the crew experienced difficulties with the oxygen supply. On the return journey the Flight Engineer reported to the Captain that the petrol situation was serious and at 04.55hrs. the engines cut at 7,000ft. over Surrey. The Captain ordered the crew to abandon the aircraft by parachute and six members of the crew landed safely. The Captain who apparently endeavoured to land the aircraft, was killed when the aircraft crashed three miles south of Whitehill, Greatham Moor, Hindhead, Surrey.'

The six crew who bailed out from the aircraft were:

2nd Pilot ROBERT ATKINSON
 1st Wireless Operator EDWARD ARTHUR STUBLEY
 2nd Wireless Operator JAMES SPIRO ALFRED SAMUEL TRIGGLE
 Tail Gunner JOHN WILSON TYSON*
 Flight Engineer LOUIS CHARLES TREMBATH
 Navigator JOHN RAYMOND FRANCIS GANDERTON**

*John Wilson Tyson was killed on October 23, 1942, aged 22. His name is commemorated on the Alamein Memorial.

**John Raymond Francis Ganderton was killed on June 2, 1942, aged 27. He is commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial.



(Left) John Wilson Tyson, son of Robert Wilson and Eliza Maggie Tyson of Keswick, Cumberland.



*Richard's grave in Wybunbury Cemetery, following his burial on April 19. It is virtually opposite to the Red Lion public house (top left). **(Above)** Looking at the floral tributes the day after the funeral are his sister, Nancie, with her husband, John Halsall, and their daughter Jenifer. For many years they resided at Shade House in Betley. **(Below)** His other sister, Dilyls, with Richard's cousin, Flight Lieutenant George Pryce Hughes, of No.105 Squadron (R.A.F.), Royal Canadian Air Force, who are in conversation in Wybunbury Cemetery, with Richard's mother, Ethel Bessie.*





(Above left) His cousin George, who was killed on July 11, 1942. Flying in a Mosquito FB.IV from R.A.F. Horsham St. Faith, he died when his aircraft crash landed in a field close to the River Rejsby in Denmark. The initial target was the U-boat pens at Flensburg, but the attack was switched to the railway yards at Tonder. *(Above right)* His original grave marker in Esbjerg (Fourfelt) Cemetery, Denmark. *(Below)* Richard's grave and C.W.G.C. headstone in Wyburnury (St. Chad) Churchyard Extension.



P.A.

J4825 (R.2-2-1)

REGISTERED

OTTAWA, Canada, February 27th., 1946.

Mrs J.E.G. Hughes,
El Inea, Bonifacio, F.C.S.,
Argentina, South America.

Dear Mrs Hughes:

It is a privilege to have the opportunity of sending you the Operational Wings and Certificate in recognition of the gallant services rendered by your husband Pilot Officer R.P. Hughes.

I realize there is little which may be said or done to lessen your sorrow, but it is my hope that these "Wings", indicative of operations against the enemy, will be a treasured memento of a young life offered on the altar of freedom in defence of his Home and Country.

Yours very sincerely,

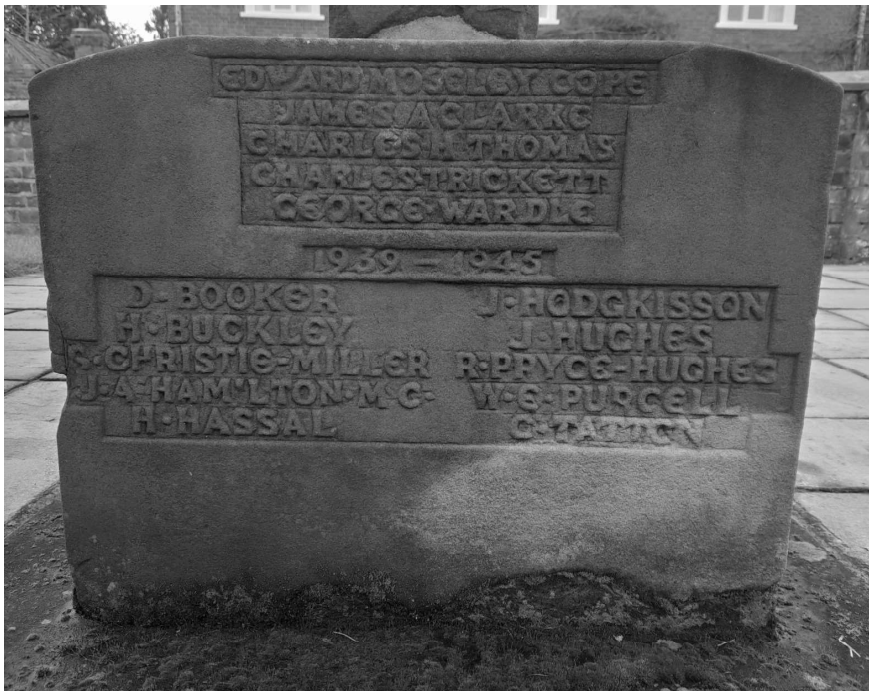
J.R.T.

(T.K. McDougall) G/C
R.C.A.F. Records Officer.

A letter sent from the Royal Canadian Air Force to Richard's wife in 1946.



(Above) Richard's name commemorated on the Shavington-cum Gresty's war memorial (right hand tablet) and on the Wybunbury war memorial, in the grounds of St. Chad's Church.





(Above) His sister Nancie at the crash site memorial unveiling on April 15, 1992 - the 50th anniversary of Richard's death.



(Above) A replacement memorial was unveiled on April 15, 2011, by family members, Neil Carter and David Spear. During his research in 1991, David managed to trace Mr. Ernest Berryman, who was the first at the crash site in 1942, and discovered Richard's body. (Below) Family relatives at the unveiling (from left to right) - Malcolm Carter (great nephew), Diana Jelinek (niece), Neil Carter (nephew), Jenifer Spear (niece), Joanna Bundy (great niece) and David Spear (great nephew). Standing centre is Major Tony Grant of the Liss Forest Residents Association.





The updated memorial.

‘COMMEMORATING THE LIFE OF RICHARD PRYCE HUGHES -
A TRUE HERO OF WORLD WAR TWO. LEST WE FORGET.’



SHAVINGTON
CUM
GRESTY

Printed by the Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council.



At 10.05 pm on April 14, 1942, Pilot Officer Richard Pryce Hughes took off from R.A.F. Leeming, on what would be his ninth and final operational flight. His actions during this flight would not only save his crew, but also the residents of Liss.

Printed by Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council.