

A Whitley on the Kleiweg

In the archives of the municipality of Noordoostpolder a document was found by 'Historisch Marknesse in Woord en Beeld' showing that a plane wreck was located on the Kleiweg. Also, Mr. C. Buitenhuis took a picture of it in the winter of 1941/1942.



"On a plot on the Kleiweg, there was also a twin-engine fighter plane in 1941, which made an emergency landing, in the background the dredger that is making the Marknesse-Emmeloord canal at the depth near the Luttelgeesterweg". [photo mr. C. Buitenhuis - via Word and Image, Marknesse]

Historical aerial photographs are available on the site of the province of Flevoland. In 1947 the wreck can still be seen.

During field research on lot O-67 at the Kleiweg, very small fragments were found. It was indeed an Armstrong Whitworth Whitley, all shells were produced before 1940. Unfortunately no serial number of the plane was found.

The SGLO loss register, with all planes crashed in the Netherlands in the Second World War, indicated two Whitleys. One near Urk in the IJsselmeer and a second in the future Noordoostpolder (NOP). The crash near Urk soon fell off because this plane came down somewhere else. The information that the Whitley Mk.V - P4968 (SGLO T0785) was flying on the night of 19 to 20 August 1940 and had crashed in the NOP was based on the book 'And never was it quiet ... Chronicle of an air war' from Mr. G. Zwanenburg. He was a salvage officer in the Air Force in the 1970s and many aircraft wrecks were recovered under his command. It showed that a Whitley had made an emergency landing on the water early in the war. The 5-man crew had survived.

Contact was made with the "History Team" of No. 51 RAF Squadron and with the British Ministry of Defense (MOD). The families of three of the crew members were contacted, and from their stories it appeared that it had happened near Hoorn. The airmen were picked up by a fishing boat and brought to Den Helder. In a hotel they were eventually arrested by the Germans. The MOD also indicated that the Whitley had been positioned just before the 'ditch' on the west side. In short, the stories of the family do not correspond with the Dutch documentation.

As long as the serial number of the wreck at the Kleiweg has not been indisputably established, mentioning their names on the monument in Marknesse is not yet possible.

According 'Historic Marknesse in Word and Image' in 2014. [SGLO = Study Group Air War 1939 - 1945]

PROOF

'Historisch Marknesse in Woord en Beeld' received on December 2, 2018 an early Saint Nicolas gift from full-time WO2 researcher Teunis Schuurman (PATS). In February 2016 he also handed over an article from the 'News and Advertisement magazine for Zwartsluis and rural' of February 1975. It was a first indication towards the right crew. Now he revealed the place where the crew had been arrested.

Airgunner Kelham wrote in early 1975 and before, to various authorities in the Netherlands, asking them to locate the crash location of his Whitley Mk.V - P4968, and to store any surviving artifacts for the RAF Museum in London. In the Province of North Holland (Volendam) he received no response, he then wrote a letter to the post master in Vollenhove to find out more. Apparently he had remembered something of the place name where they had been arrested. Vol.....? Whether Kelham has ever received a suitable answer is unknown to me. In the same year he passed away at the age of 54. Not surprising given the hardships after almost five years of imprisonment. His four companions on 19 August 1940 did not fare much better. They also paid their price for peace, also dying years too early.

The English bomber was hit by air defense (FLAK) above Leipzig, because of this she lost petrol and was forced to make a "dive" in the IJsselmeer on her way back. After six hours they were picked up by a Dutch fishing boat and brought ashore. During the war, the crew members invariably wrote Zuider Zee in their reports and post-war reports. Pilot Peter Brodie (23), Co-pilot Theo Johnson (21), Observer Ron Entwistle (20) and Airgunner Walter Kelham (19) were once in the same vein.

Radio Operator George Peter White (24), however, gave with his M.I.9. questionnaire (3 May 1945) the final push in this study. Captured in Fuldhaven, Holland. A nice 'English' interpretation of Vollenhove.

16 December 2018 - Teunis Schuurman (PATS)

PART I. *18 Dec* M.I.9/Gen/ MIS-X *62*

GENERAL QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BRITISH/AMERICAN EX-PRISONERS OF WAR.

1. No. *746987* RANK *W/O* SURNAME *WHITE*
CHRISTIAN NAMES *GEORGE PETER*

8. PLACE AND DATE OF ORIGINAL CAPTURE *FULDHAVEN HOLLAND 19th August 40*

9. WERE YOU WOUNDED WHEN CAPTURED? *No*

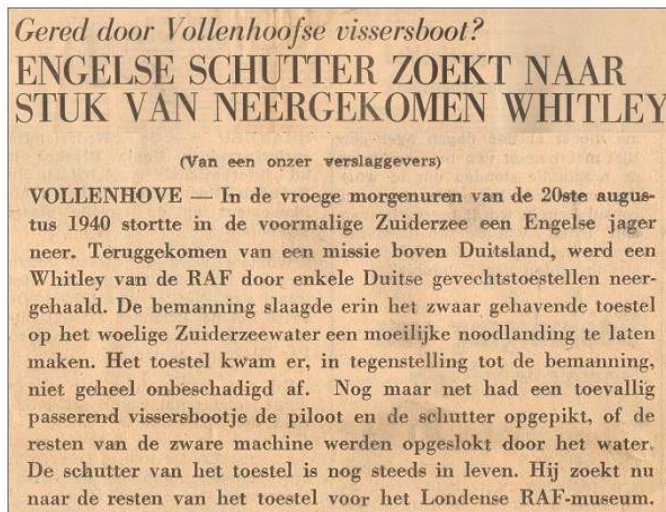
10. MAIN CAMPS OR HOSPITALS IN WHICH IMPRISONED.

Camp No.	Location	From	Till
<i>STALAG LUFT I</i>	<i>BARTH</i>	<i>8 9 40</i>	<i>4 42</i>
<i>STALAG LUFT III</i>	<i>SAGAN</i>	<i>6 42</i>	<i>1 1 45</i>
<i>STALAG LUFT III</i>	<i>TARMSTEDT</i>	<i>4 2 45</i>	<i>10 4 45</i>

Date *3 Dec MAY 1945* Signature *George Peter White*

COLLECTED PATS 2018

WHITE - 1945



KELHAM - 1975