

Robert Graham Godfrey English (1917 - 2001)

Royal Air Force Officer

~ **1917**

Robert Graham Godfrey English was born on September 14, 1917 at Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, England.

Father: **Irwin Marcus Douglas English**

Mother: **Constance Vincente Taylor.**

~ **the earlier English family**

Robert G. G. English came from a long line of timber merchants going back to the 1700's.

His father, **Irwin Marcus Douglas English**, was a Timber Merchant.

His grandfather, **Arthur William English**, was a Timber Merchant.

His great-grandfather, **Henry Hampden English**, was a Timber Merchant.

His great-great-grandfather, **Thomas English**, was a Timber Merchant.

~ **1937**

Robert English was interested in becoming a pilot since he was a teenager. By the time he was 19 years old he was granted an Aviator's certificate on February 16, 1937.

It is noted that in his Royal Aero Club Aviator's Certificate, his birth is September 14, 1912. That is probably an error or an attempt by Mr. English to be a pilot sooner than the required age for it.

Robert English was granted short service commission as Acting Pilot on probation in the Royal Air force on May 18, 1937.

~ **1938**

Robert English was promoted to Pilot Officer in the Royal Air Force according to a newspaper listing dated March 22, 1938.

~ **late 1930's or early 1940's**

At the English home in The Grange, North Runcton, the English family had a house servant living with them named Ellen Micklewhite. Her son Michael was also living with them too.

Michael Micklewhite is better known to the world as the famous actor Michael Caine.

The following is a snippet from a book. It mentioned that Michael Caine later in life located and visited Robert English.

Raising Caine: the authorized biography, 1981:

"Michael met up with the surviving member of the English family, Mr Robert English, a wartime Squadron leader in RAF Bomber Command, who remembers Ellen Micklewhite as an absolute Mrs Mopp, she not only ran the house.. "

~ **1939**

World War II begins for Great Britain in September of 1939 when the Germans of the Third Reich invaded Poland.

Robert English was promoted to Flying Officer in the Royal Air Force on October 15.

~ **1940**

With World War II in the background, Robert English met a woman who was from another Military family. The engagement announcement was mentioned in the newspaper, The Times, on March 27, 1940 .

Robert English married **VALERIE MARGARET STAFFORD ROBINSON** on May 21, 1940, at St. John the Baptist Church, Burley, Hampshire.

The marriage was mentioned in the newspaper, The Times, on May 28, 1940.

~ **1940 to 1945**

Robert English was a pilot under the Bomber Command and was part of the 214 "Federated Malay States" Squadron in the Royal Air Force during the war. He flew bombers and was a Squadron leader.

~ **1940**

Robert English was mentioned in the London Gazette, 19 November, 1940

~ **1941**

Robert English received a promotion in the R.A.F.

This was mentioned in the London Gazette, December 16, 1941

~ **1942**

Robert English was the squadron leader of a Stirling bomber aircraft that crashed on the return to Stradishall air base on August 6/7, 1942.

~ **1943**

Valerie and Robert had a son born on [-----] 1943 in the Malmesbury Hospital in Wiltshire. This was mentioned in the Times, Tuesday, Jul 13, 1943

~ **1945**

Squadron Leader Robert English at the end of the war received the Campaign Medals, 1939-45 War Medal and the 1939-45 Star.

~ 1947

Robert and Valerie English are living in Mayfly Cottage in Fordingbridge, Hampshire.

They had a daughter born in the Fordingbridge Cottage Hospital. This was mentioned in the Times, Thursday, May 22, 1947.

~ 1948 to 1951

Robert English and his family moved to Walnut Tree Farm in Ufford in Northamptonshire. According to the British Phone Books they were there from 1948 to 1951.

~ early 1950's

It appears that Robert and Valerie English drifted apart and their marriage probably ended in a divorce. That is because within 15 days of each other in July to August of 1953 both Robert English and Valerie English got remarried - to other people .

~ 1953

Valerie M. English married 2nd **ANTHONY or ANTONY WITHERBY** on July 31, 1953 in Ringwood, Hampshire.

Robert English married **MARY MONICA BURNS** in 1953. On the marriage certificate she listed herself as a 'widow'. However, her ex-husband, Peter E. Barnes, actually lived until 2002.

~ 1971

Robert English and Mrs. Valerie Witherby were mentioned in the engagement announcement of their son in the newspaper, The Times, Tuesday, December 21, 1971. Robert was of Barningham, Yorkshire.

~ 1972

Robert English and Monica English were mentioned in the engagement announcement of his son and her stepson in the newspaper, The Times, Monday, December 4, 1972.

~ 2001

Robert English died at the age of 83 in April 2001 in North Yorkshire, England.

Researched and compiled by William Wallworth.