

Alfred Robert Rackett

Isle of Wight County Press – 2 October 1943

NEWPORT

An Air Raid Victim. – The death took place on Saturday at St. Mary's Hospital of Mr. Alfred Rackett, of 29 New-street, as a result of enemy action in April. For the last 20 years he had been employed by Messrs. Morey and Sons, Ltd. as a timber checker. The funeral took place on Wednesday in Carisbrooke Cemetery, preceded by a service in the Pyle-street Methodist Church, conducted by the Rev. H. M. Jackson, B.A. The mourners were the widow, Mr. and Mrs. H. Morey and Mr. and Mrs. A. Bonham (daughters and sons-in-law), Mr. T. Rackett, of Bitterne Park (brother). Mr. S. H. Rackett, of Leamington Spa, was unable to be present owing to important Government work. Fellow workers of deceased acted as bearers. There were 24 floral tributes, including those from neighbours and friends of New-street; the staff of Messrs. Morey and Sons; their Helping Hand Fund. The funeral arrangements were carried out by Messrs. Hamilton and Son.

Mrs. A. Rackett and family wish to thank Dr. Liesching, matron and staff of St. Mary's Hospital, Nurses Kirkup and Cooper, and friends and neighbours for gifts of fruit, cigarettes, etc., also for expressions of sympathy and for beautiful floral tributes.

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NEWPORT BOMBING VICTIM ALFRED RACKETT OFFICIALLY RECOGNISED

18th March 2024 15:57 - Warren Whitmore - Community and Sports Reporter

Alfred Rackett has been officially recognised as a victim of the bombing of Newport on the morning of 7th April 1943.

On that fatal and tragic morning, 8 Luftwaffe planes dropped bombs on Newport causing devastation.

There has always been debate about whether it was 20 or 21 lives lost, as 1 man was seriously injured, dying 5 months later, meaning he was often not included in memorials. However, as of January 2024, nearly 81 years later, Alfred Rackett has received official recognition.

When a bomb exploded at timber merchant Moreys (now Jewsons) in Trafalgar Road, Alfred Rackett suffered a broken back in the blast. He died at his home, 29 New Street, on 25th September 1943, with his wife Elizabeth by his side.

His death certificate cites a broken back, enemy action and suspected carcinoma, which was under investigation and may have been exacerbated by his injuries. His occupation was described as a 'timber checker'; however, despite being injured close to Moreys, his name is not recognised by those that worked there, and he may have worked in another timber merchant.

Situated at Carisbrooke Cemetery, the cleaning of his grave was paid for by a personal donation, and discussions began with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) to see if Alfred could

be recognised as an official victim of the bombing. In January 2024, the CWGC confirmed they had investigated Alfred's case, and he would now be officially included in the war dead.

Gary Newman of Eyes On Hands On Project/Public speaker from the CWGC said:

"As a Newportonian, I was honoured to have been asked to make a case of 'non commemoration' to the CWGC on behalf of Newport & Carisbrooke Community Council for Alfred and very pleased that it was accepted & upheld.

"This means that Alfred's name will, in due course, be added to the Commission's online public database but more importantly, added to the National Roll of Honour at Westminster Abbey. Furthermore, his story will be told on the CWGC website"

Island Memorials are kindly engraving a brick with Alfred's name, and his name will now been added to the Newport & Carisbrooke Community Council memorial in Church Litten alongside the names of the 20 other lives that were lost.

Newport & Carisbrooke Deputy Clerk, Lucinda Bradley said "I am delighted that Alfred Rackett has finally been recognised as a victim of the bombing. My thanks go to Gary Newman of the CWGC for his kind help and Island Memorials, for once again showing generosity and ensuring the victims of that tragic day are still remembered, all these years later."

Transcription (with minor corrections) by Tony Barton for the Friends of Newport & Carisbrooke Cemeteries © 2020/24

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