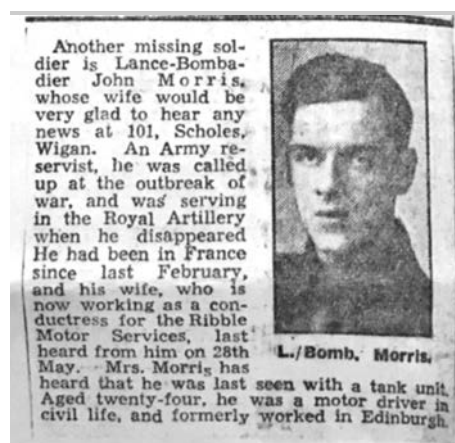


JOHN (JACK) MORRIS

POW 4224

BY RITA FELL

From an early age I had always known that my Uncle John, known as 'Jack', had been a prisoner of war (POW) in German hands and that he was captured in France on 28 May 1940 and interred in a camp in Upper Silesia, Poland.



I never met him as he was tragically killed before I was born. This happened on 25 April 1950, in a road traffic accident on Princes Street, Edinburgh. I have had a lifelong interest in his life, prompted by family photographs of him in uniform and I think some of them were taken in a POW camp. I began my research into Jack's Second World War service by contacting the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) Central Tracing Agency in 2009. After many months I received a covering letter from their office in Geneva along with the following Attestation information.

Gooderwerlat is given as the place of capture; I think this has been mistranslated and should be Godewaersvelde which is a village in France near the Belgian border. This fits in with research I have carried out into the fall of France between 10 May 1940 and 25 June 1940. Jack is recorded as being held firstly from 11 June 1940 in Stalag XX1B Szubin, and then transferred to Stalag V111B Lamsdorf, from 22 August 1944.

Jack was born on 17 September 1915 at 1 Fitzadam Street, Wigan. His Army Trace Card shows he first attested in Wigan on 8 November 1932 and was given the Service Number 824255. Three years later on 7 November 1935 he transferred from the Regular Army to the Army Reserve. Living at 52 Wigan Lane, the 1939 National Register also records that he was a Regular Army Reservist; this meant he was called up at the outbreak of the war.

In August 1940 an appeal was published in the Wigan Observer by his wife who was a Conductress for Ribble Motor Services and living in Scholes at the time. She was asking for any information concerning his disappearance. Jack had been serving in France since February 1940 and was last heard of on 28 May 1940. He was a Lance Bombardier in the 58th (Sussex) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, which was part of the 44th (Home Counties) Infantry Division, an all Territorial Army formation.

Jack was part of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) and was originally listed in the British Army Casualty Lists as missing on 14 June 1940, later to be listed as a POW, number 4224.

The Order of Battle for the BEF records that on the day of Jack's capture the 44th Division was located in an Abbey at Mont des Cats, about a mile from Godewaersvelde. The Germans were attacking around the area of Cassel and Hazebrouck. On 28 May, German forces broke through the defences. I think that this is when Jack was captured; I hope to discover more when I receive his Service Record.

Despite surviving The Long March and four years a prisoner, on liberation he remained a Class Z Reservist. This was a Reserve contingent of the British Army made up of previously enlisted soldiers, now discharged, that were available for recall if under 45 years of age.



Jack Morris (centre)

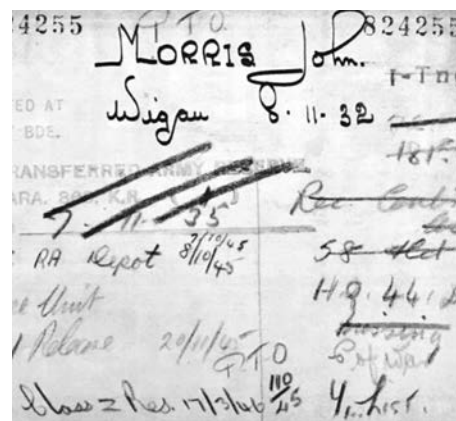
ICRC
DCIARCH/Inf
Geneva, 22.4.2009

ATTESTATION

The Central Tracing Agency has received the following information:

Name, first name	: Morris John
Date of birth	: 17.9.1915
Place of birth	: Wigan
Father's name	: William
Mother's maiden name	: Derbyshire
Family's address	: Mrs. Morris, 101 Scholes, Wigan, Lancs.
Rank	: "Gefr." or (and) LCpl (and) "L. Bomb."
Unit	: R.A.
Service number	: 824255
Date and place of capture	: 28.5.1940, Gooderwerlat
Place of detention	: - Prisoner of war in German hands. - Admitted to Stalag XXI B on 11.6.1940 (according to an information dated 11.6.1940). - Transferred from POW Camp Stalag XXI B to Stalag VIII B (according to an information dated 22.8.1944). - Reported held in POW Camp Stalag VIII B (according to an information dated 17.8.1944).
Prisoner of war number	: 4224
Liberation/Repatriation	: No records
Source document(s)	: - 2 information issued by the German authorities - 1 information issued by the acting senior British Officer in Stalag VIII B

International Committee of the Red Cross 18 Avenue de la Paix, 1201 Genève, Switzerland. T +41 22 734 8001 F +41 22 733 2007 www.icrc.org



Jack Morris' trace card