

DUNSFOLD – SURREY'S MOST SECRET AIRFIELD
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AN EXTRACT FROM THE BOOK RELATING TO F.O. H. PAYNE.

"Wing Commander Lynn completed his second tour on the 29th August 1944 at which time he was obliged to relinquish his post as Wing Commander (Flying) for the Wing. Lynn's Dutch navigator, Lieutenant Cees Waardenburg, DFC, had just completed his 100 operations as navigator to Lynn and therefore, at long last, was allowed to claim his own aircraft in order to continue operations as a pilot. Keith Cudlipp, one of Lynn's gunners, takes up the story of the events of the 30th August."

'Cees, Johnny Pritchard and I were in our tent between the control tower and the Ops room. With us was Flying Officer Harry Payne who had just been posted to the Wing as an air gunner, and didn't yet have a crew. In the meantime, Alan Lynn had told him to come along with us until he was sorted out.

That day, Cees and Harry had bowled into the tent to find Johnny and I listening to the radio, a short play called, I think 'Beetle Doctor', which was quite interesting. Alan Lynn walked in and asked Cees if he would take our aircraft up for an air test and Cees jumped up, looked at us and said "O.K., any of you coming?" Harry Payne, who hadn't yet flown much on Mitchell's, showed his willingness to go, but Johnny and I decided to stay, in order to listen to the end of the play. They were only going around the houses, so off they went. I think it was about twenty minutes later when someone ran out of the control tower and shouted that an aircraft had gone down near Godalming. There was only two aircraft up that afternoon and a few minutes later the other one landed, so we realised then that it was Cees who had come to grief. I think that finished us for quite a while, as we were a very close crew. Even Alan Lynn said he wasn't interested in doing any more operations.'

Details received later showed that the exuberant Dutchman had been flying low over the grounds of Peper Harrow House, a stately home where Land Army girls were at work. An eye witness watching from the road had first seen the aircraft when it roared up from behind a line of trees but on a second pass the Mitchell had dropped too low and its tail clipped a tree. The aircraft, FW268 EV-O, flicked over onto its back and spun into the ground by a Canadian Army vehicle park on Shackelford Heath. The wreck immediately caught fire and burned out, both men were killed instantly. On 2nd September the two airmen were interred in the village graveyard of Rudgwick, some five miles from the aerodrome. This was a break from tradition as normally, fatalities were either sent home to their families or buried at Brokwood Military Cemetery. In the case of Cees Waardenburg and Harry Payne, Lynn wanted them buried close to where he lived in Rudgwick with his wife. The Dutchman's remains were later moved in 1964 to the Dutch section of Mill Hill Cemetery in London, but the grave of Harry Payne remains there as a testament to the tragic and accidental loss of two young lives."