

WW II Men & Women of Whitewater Region Project

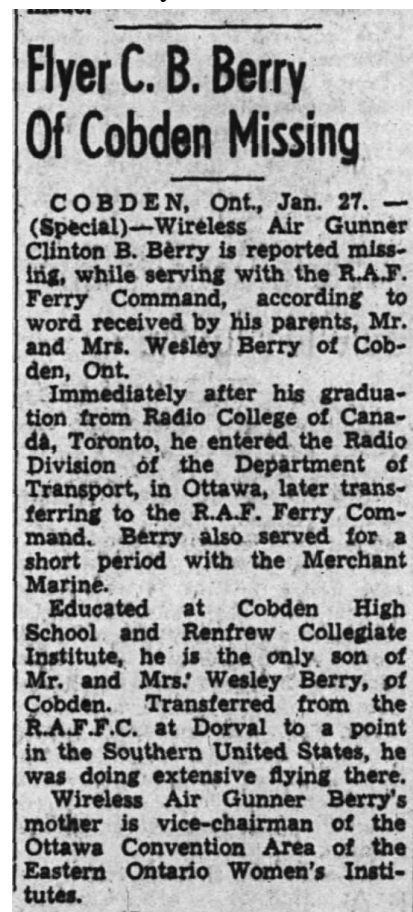
RADIO OFFICER CLINTON BLACKWELL BERRY

Radio Officer Clinton Blackwell BERRY, son of **Wesley BERRY** and **Essie Isobel PEEVER**, was born on 26 Feb 1921 in Westmeath Twp., Renfrew, Ontario, Canada. In the 1921 Census, they were living at Lot 1, Con 1 Westmeath Twp. (just outside of Cobden). Clinton's father Wesley was born at Cobden and his mother Essie was born in Ross Twp. Her mother's surname was Blackwell. Clinton was an only child. He attended school in Cobden and later RCI in Renfrew.^{1,2}

According to the newspaper clipping 'Flyer C.B. Berry of Cobden Missing', Clinton graduated from the Radio College of Canada in Toronto and entered the Radio Division of the Department of Transport in Ottawa.³ As RO Berry's service in the Royal Air Force Ferry Command was a Civilian position, as many were, a military service record is not available to determine details of his service. His base was in Dorval, QC. *Image 1: Clinton Berry*²

Radio Officer Berry died on 17 Jan 1943 when the plane went missing at Sea, over the South Atlantic Ocean between Accra, Gold Coast and Natal, Brazil.^{4,5,6,7} RAF Ferry Command aircrew flying United States Army Air Force Air Transport Command Consolidated Liberator C-87 Express aircraft 41-11708 had a flight crew of (Nav) F/O PC Zoephel (RCAF), (Pilot) F/L HJ Martin (RCAF), (Nav) Sgt JH Warman (RCAF), (RO) FS NP Drury (RCAF), (Pilot) F/O GA Clegg (RAF), (Nav) Sgt JL Bell (RAF), (Nav) P/O WTW Smithson (RAAF), (RO) Sgt HV Lamb (RAAF), (Cdn Civilian RO) CB Berry, (Cdn Civilian Pilot) WR Nixon, (Cdn Civilian RO) OC McCombie and (US Civilian Pilot) PB Makepeace. Available information indicates that there were 6 crew members and 20 passengers aboard this aircraft at the time it crashed. A more detailed list of names of all of those lost has not been found but indications suggest they could have been US service personnel.⁷

The Royal Air Force Ferry Command was a secretive command formed on 20 July 1941 to ferry urgently needed aircraft from their place of manufacture in the United States and Canada, to the front-line operational units in Britain, Europe, North Africa and the Middle East during the World War II. It was secretive for the safe delivery the new aircraft. Prior to the new command, aircraft were delivered by ship in pieces and had to be re-assembled upon arrival. The RAF Ferry Command also transported people between operational sites.⁸



*Image 2: Newspaper Clipping 'Missing'*³

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RO Clinton Berry's name is listed on the Ottawa Memorial which is located on the north-eastern point of Green Island in Ottawa.⁹ Engraved on the memorial is:

1939 – 1945 In honoured memory of the men and women of the air forces of the British Commonwealth and Empire who gave their lives in Canada, in the United States of America and neighbouring lands and who have no known grave.

Radio Officer Berry's name is also engraved on his parents' gravestone in Cobden Union Cemetery^{10,11} and listed on the WWII Honour Rolls of Renfrew Collegiate Institute¹² and St. Paul's Anglican Church¹³, Cobden. His name is also commemorated on the Westmeath¹⁴, Beachburg¹⁵ and Pembroke War Memorials¹⁶.

Word has been received today by Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Berry that their son Clinton B. Berry, who was reported missing Jan. 17 while serving with the R.A.F. Ferry Command, is now listed as having lost his life on the return flight from Africa.

Clinton was born Feb. 26, 1921, and lived most of his life in this community. He received his education in local schools and was a member of St. Paul's Church, Cobden. As a boy he was a member of the Boy Scouts and when a student at Cobden High school was a member of the Hockey Club and stood high in athletic events in the school.

Image 3: Notice of death¹⁷



Image 4: The Ottawa Memorial⁹



Image 5: Berry family gravestone¹⁰

Sources:

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2. *Photograph of Clinton Berry*, Centennial Harpooner, RCI 1881-1981
3. "Flyer C. B. Berry of Cobden Missing", Newspaper article, *The Ottawa Journal*, Jan 27, 1943 p. 19
4. The Canadian Virtual War Memorial: Veterans Affairs Canada. "The Canadian Virtual War Memorial (CVWM)." Database. Veterans Affairs Canada. www.veterans.gc.ca/eng. <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/canadian-virtual-war-memorial/detail/2622452>

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7. *Clinton Blackwell Berry Rank: Civilian Status: Killed in Flying Accident 1943-01-17*. (n.d.). Canadian Warplane. <https://caspir.warplane.com/bin/warplanero.exe?action=webprograms&subaction=personneldocument&personnelno=600001375>
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9. *Ottawa Memorial*. (2022, June 28). Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ottawa_Memorial
10. Bennett, Fay. *Photograph of Berry Gravestone*. Cobden Union Cemetery, Cobden, Ontario. Sept 2016
11. *Radio Officer Clinton Blackwell Berry (1921-1943) - Find a Grave Memorial*. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/18427751/clinton-blackwell-berry>
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13. Hill, Leslie. *Photograph of the WWII Honor Roll*. St. Paul's Anglican Church, Cobden, Ontario. 2022.
14. Bennett, Fay. *Photograph of The Westmeath War Memorial*. Westmeath, Ontario. November 2022.
15. Bennett, Fay. *Photograph of The Beachburg War Memorial*. Beachburg, Ontario. November 2022.
16. Bennett, Fay. *Photograph of The Pembroke War Memorial*. Beachburg, Ontario. November 2022.
17. Newspaper clipping from the scrapbook collection of Harold Bennett