

NASH William Charles Edward

Name: William Charles Edward Nash

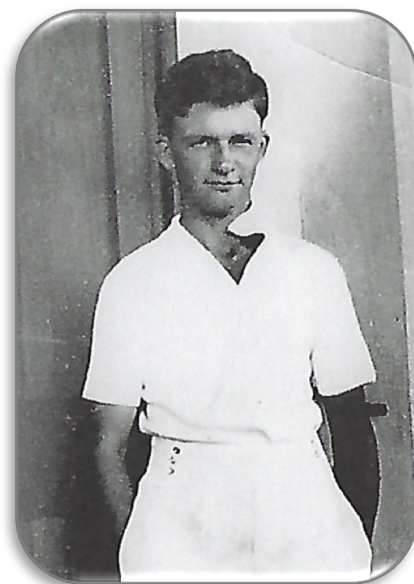
Born: 15 April 1917

Rank: Gunner

Service Number: 868241

Regiment: 7th Battery, 9th Coastal
Regiment, RA

Died: 23 November 1995



Pre War:

Bill (as he was known) came from East Ham, London. After a sad childhood, living in an orphanage, he joined the army in 1937. He was posted to Malaya, arriving in Singapore on 3 December 1937 and was based at the Johore Battery on No. 3 of the three 15 inch guns.

Wartime experience:

Bill confirmed that his gun did turn north and fired on the Japanese approaching Singapore. He was captured when Singapore fell on 15 February 1942 and sent to Changi prison, then later to Sime Road camp. He worked on clearing up war damage of Singapore. In April 1943 he was sent as part of 'F' Force to work on the Thai/Burma railway. After a long march he fell asleep and woke to find his group had moved on, this helped his survival; 'F' Force suffered more casualties than other forces. He ended up in Tamarkan camp and was assigned to the 'Southern Area Wood Cutters' to gather fuel for the trains running on the Thai/Burma railway. He returned to Singapore in December 1943, just one of 30 who survived out of 72 from his group. Here he worked on extending Changi airfield. At the end of the war, he weighed under 6 stones. He believed that small amounts of marmite had helped his survival. Bill arrived home on 8 October 1945

Civilian life after return:

After the war Bill married a war widow, Rose, whose first husband had been killed in France during the re-invasion of Europe and left her with two daughters to look after. His son, Malcolm, was born in 1948 and in 1953 they moved from London to Romford, Essex. Bill worked as an interior decorator at the Grosvenor House Hotel in Park Lane, London up until his retirement.



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Around 1980 he told Malcolm, that he and Rose were visiting Australia to stay with a friend for a few months.

What he did not say was the 'friend' was a chap called Stanley Durstan who was with Bill as part of the same gun crew in Jahore – see photograph below.

On route to Australia they stayed for a few days in Singapore to visit some of the locations he had known during the war, however, he found it had changed so much that he had difficulty getting his bearings and finding the places he used to know.

Sadly, Bill passed away on 23 November 1995 at the age of 78.



Bill is sitting 3rd from the right on No.3 Gun of the Jahore Battery and Stanley Durstan is sitting next to him 4th from the right.



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