

## **Pte John Robert Smith**

**4-B-4**

He was the son of John Robert and Violet Smith; husband of Florence Smith, of Grantham, Lincolnshire, England

John originally enlisted in the Durham Light Infantry in 1941. He volunteered for Airborne Forces in 1943 and was on parachute course 70 in July 1943 at R.A.F. Ringway. Upon completion he was posted to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Parachute Battalion.

By September 1944 he was in 3<sup>rd</sup> platoon under the command of Lt Col A. J. McDermont. On Sunday September 17 1944 he took from Saltby airfield in a U.S.A.A. F-Dakota aircraft bound for Drop Zone (DZ) 'X' in Holland as part of Operation Market-Garden.

As they approached the DZ there was a problem with John's equipment. His Section Commander Sgt R. Dennis stated: "Smith got entangled with his static line and rifle attachment on reaching the door and thereby caused considerable delay which of course took the a/c off the DZ before Smith dropped. I persuaded the pilot to make a fresh run in, which he did but I have heard nothing and did not see Pte Smith again".

Pte John Robert Smith was taken as a POW by the Germans to the castle of Ruurlo. There were the SS of the Frundsberg Division. He died probably on September 18 1944 of wounds, age 22 and was temporarily buried near the coachhouse of the castle together later with two English and one Canadian soldier. He was reburied in 1946 in Holten.

