

Ronald Frederick Sokell	
Rank	Flight Lieutenant
Service No.	132014
Date Of Death	26/11/1944
Regiment/Service	Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve 27 Sqdn.
Panel Reference	Column 413
Memorial	SINGAPORE MEMORIAL

The Singapore memorial stands in the Kranji War Cemetery overlooking the Straits of Johore.

Historical Information

Before 1939 the Kranji area was a military camp and at the time of the Japanese invasion of Malaya it was the site of a large ammunition magazine. On 8th February 1942 the Japanese crossed the Johore Straits in strength, landing at the mouth of the Kranji river within two miles of where the cemetery now stands. On 9th February they launched an attack and during the next few days fierce fighting ensued, in many cases hand to hand, until their greatly superior numbers and air strength necessitated a withdrawal. After the fall of the island, the Japanese established a prisoner of war camp at Kranji. After the reoccupation of Singapore the Kranji War Cemetery was developed. The Singapore Memorial bears the names of over 24000 casualties of the Commonwealth land and air forces who have no known grave. Many of these have no known date of death and are accorded within War Grave Commission records the date or period from when they were known to be missing or captured. The land forces commemorated died during campaigns in Malaysia and Indonesia or in subsequent captivity, many of them during the construction of the Burma-Thailand railway, or at sea being transported into imprisonment elsewhere. The memorial commemorates the airmen who died during operations over the whole of southern and eastern Asia and the surrounding seas and oceans.

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During the last hours of the Battle of Singapore, wounded civilians and servicemen taken prisoner by the Japanese were brought to the Singapore Civil Hospital in their hundreds. The number of fatalities was such that burial in the normal manner was impossible. Before the war an emergency water tank had been dug in the grounds of the hospital and this was used as a grave for more than 400 casualties. It was decided after the war to leave the grave undisturbed.