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Bro. MONTAGUE (MONTY) CHARLES CARRINGTON COTTON

The following letter to the editor was published in the Sydney Morning Herald on 18 October 2006:

I went to the funeral of an old friend the other day. He was buried in the local cemetery with a loving family and a host of friends present and he was given an RSL and a Masonic farewell. He was a man who had served his country and his community with courage and sincerity-in fact he had done more than that. He went to the war in 1940 and was in the first group of young men to be selected for the Empire Air Training Scheme. Because of his skill and application he was accepted as a pilot with one of England's most famous fighter squadrons, the 43rd Squadron. He fought through the Battle of Britain and became a squadron leader, was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and finished his war service as a commander of a flight of Hurricanes in Burma.

He continued to serve his country and was appointed a member of the Order of Australia for services to his community. He was one of those people whom I believe Ben Chifley spoke of when he said words to the effect that a grateful government and a grateful nation will never forget you.

As his coffin was lowered into the ground I looked around to see what a grateful country had done to remember this warrior. There was no honour guard, no catafalque party, no air force bugler to play *The Last Post* and not even an air force flag to drape over the coffin. I don't know if the widow even requested one but surely she shouldn't need to.

I wonder who will be the next person to be given a state funeral and if they will have done as much for this country as my friend did. Will it be footballer, an actress or even a radio talkback guru?

I wonder who the government will consider to have been of greater worth to the nation than my friend?

Ian Brewer, Bathurst

The writer was Bro Ian Brewer, a member of Lodge Barham, No. 561. He was referring to Bro. Montague, (Monty), Charles Carrington COTTON. Monty Cotton died on 30 September 2006 and the following tribute was kindly supplied by Sydney Legacy from their Bulletin of November 2006.

