

THE EXCEPTIONAL IMMEDIATE SINKING OF THE TIRPITZ D.F.C. GROUP TO A NAVIGATOR WHO WOULD TAKE PART IN 26 OPERATIONAL SORTIES WITH 617 SQUADRON DURING 1944. THESE INCLUDING 'OPERATION TAXABLE' ON D-DAY, SAUMAR TUNNEL; THE FIRST TALLBOY ATTACK, OPERATION CROSSBOW; THE ATTACKS ON GERMAN V1 AND V2 ROCKET INSTALLATIONS AND A COUPLE OF SORTIES AS WING COMMANDER WILLIE TAIT'S NAVIGATOR BEFORE BEING CREWED WITH F/L BOBBY KNIGHTS FOR ALL THREE TIRPITZ ATTACKS. DURING THE LAST OF WHICH, THEIR TALLBOY FELL TEN YARDS OFF PORT QUARTER AND AFTERWARDS THEIR LANCASTER REMAINED OVER THE TARGET UNTIL THE END OF THE ATTACK. BOTH PILOT AND NAVIGATOR BEING AWARDED IMMEDIATE AWARDS A WEEK LATER; DSO AND DFC RESPECTIVELY. HE HAD PREVIOUSLY TAKEN PART IN 30 OPERATIONAL SORTIES WITH LANCASTER'S OF 619 SQUADRON, INCLUDING NO LESS THAN 9 ATTACKS ON BERLIN BEFORE VOLUNTEERING FOR SPECIAL DUTIES SERVICE WITH 617 SQUADRON. IN LATER LIFE, HE WAS INTERVIEWED IN THE 1973 BBC TELEVISION DOCUMENTARY "TARGET TIRPITZ"



DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS, G.V.I.R., THE REVERSE OFFICIALLY DATED 1945, WITH CASE OF ISSUE, 1939-1945 STAR, AIR CREW EUROPE STAR, CLASP FRANCE AND GERMANY, DEFENCE MEDAL.

D.F.C. *London Gazette* 12 January 1945. The original recommendation for an immediate award, dated 19 November 1944:

"Flying Officer Playford has now completed fifty-two operational sorties which have included eight attacks against Berlin during the winter offensive of 1943/44. After completing his first tour, he volunteered for employment with a Special Duties Squadron. His Captain then withdrew from operational flying after a few months, but this officer again elected to remain with his Squadron. Over

the past four months he has taken part in precision bombing attacks carried out by a small force of aircraft both day and night and the targets have frequently been defended by strong concentration of heavy anti-aircraft guns. He has proved himself to be an outstanding navigator and for this reason, he has frequently been selected to navigate the leading aircraft of the formation. In September 1944, this officer acted as Navigator in one of the aircraft which operated against the German Battleship "Tirpitz" from an advanced base in Russia. In spite of lack of navigational aids and up to date maps, he navigated his Captain with great accuracy to this base without incident. Only about half the force which took off actually landed at the correct airfield. The complete operation involved the flight to the Advanced Base, the sortie against the "Tirpitz" in Alten Fiord, and the return to this country, which was a round trip of some 4,500 miles.

Flying Officer Playford also operated on the further two attacks against "Tirpitz" from a base in Scotland. His accurate navigation undoubtedly played an important part in the final destruction of the Battleship.

This officer has proved himself to be an exceptionally keen and efficient navigator, and he has always shown the greatest enthusiasm to operate against the enemy. I recommend him for the immediate award of the Distinguished Flying Cross."

Signed by Group Captain Philpott

Playford's pilot, Flt Lt Knights, was awarded an Immediate DSO for the Tirpitz raid at the same time as Playford, this a week after the last Tirpitz raid.

The shortened published recommendation:

"Flt.Lt. Terence Henry John Playford (133731). R.A.F.V.R. 617 Sqn. This officer has participated in a large number of sorties, including 8 attacks on Berlin; he also took part in the 3 attacks on the German battleship Tirpitz. Flight Lieutenant Playford is a highly efficient navigator, whose ability has played a prominent part in the success of many operations. This officer has displayed exceptional keenness and devotion to duty and has set a fine example to all."



THE KNIGHTS CREW 617 SQUADRON FOR TIRPITZ ATTACK. TERRY PLAYFORD SECOND FROM LEFT

TERRY PLAYFORD

Terence Henry John Playford was born in Edmonton, Middlesex on 24 March 1922, his logbook listing his first training flight aboard an Avro Anson at No.7 A.O.S. on 26 July 1942. Listing numerous other flights over the next few months, he qualified as a Navigator at on 6 November 1942. Attending 6 E.F.T.S. between 8 January and 6 February 1943, he was posted to 29 O.T.S. between 6 May and 21 June, during which time he became part of the crew of Pilot Officer Thompson flying Wellington III's. However in July 1943, Playford and the Thompson crew were posted to 1660 Conversion Unit where they converted to Lancaster's, training on this type until mid August when the crew were posted to 619 Squadron at Woodhall Spa. Completing his first operational sortie on 30 August 1943; an attack on the nickelling works at Munchen Gladbach, Playford and the Thompson crew would take part in a further 29 operational sorties between then and 11 April 1944. Of these operations, a large proportion were to highly defended targets in Germany with no less than 9 against Berlin, twice being 3 attacks in a row to this city.

With Playford's tour with 619 Squadron over, he volunteered for service with a Special Duties Squadron and was posted to the famed 617 Squadron, the 'Dambusters', on 8 May 1944. Initially crewed as 2nd Navigator with Flying Officer Knights (another ex 619 Squadron man), flying one non-operational flight on 9 May 1944, he then joined the crew of Flying Officer Willshire, with whom he would be crewed with for the following 3 months. Playford's first operational sortie with 617 Squadron was a Special Operation on 5/6 June 1944, this being the famous D-Day operation, 'Operation Taxable', carried out by 617 Squadron:

<https://617squadronassociation.org/d-day-617-squadron>

Two Days later, Playford would take part in the first sortie carrying the Barnes Wallis's new giant 14,000lb 'Tallboy' earthquake bomb on 8 June 1944, when 19 specially equipped Lancasters from 617 Squadron, bombed Saumar rail tunnel. His next 10 raids were all with Tallboy's, 7 of which as part of Operation Crossbow; the attacks on German V1 and V2 rocket installations. See

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tallboy_\(bomb\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tallboy_(bomb))

He would take part in various other special operations with 617, joining the crew of Wing Commander Tait for two missions against the U-Boat pens at La Pallice in August 1944, before teaming up with Flying Officer Knights again on 27 August.

TIRPITZ

Playford's final three operations with 617 Squadron were undoubtedly the most famous, being those against the German battleship Tirpitz, each of which requiring exceptional navigational skills.

The first, Operation Paravane was carried out against the Tirpitz at Alten Ford, Norway, on 15 September 1944. This operation (as was the next two) was carried out by 617 and 9 Squadron's, the two squadrons that operated with 'Tallboys'. Due to the location of Tirpitz, the bombers were required to fly to Yagognik in the Soviet Union on 11 September, where they would prepare for the attack:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Paravane

Led by highly experienced and decorated 617 Squadron commander; Wing Commander Willie Tait DSO and 3 Bars DFC and Bar, 26 Lancaster's armed with Tallboys took off for the attack, 6 of these having to abort. However on reaching Alten Ford, Tirpitz was found to be hidden by protective smoke and only 17 Tallboy's were dropped, all missing. Knights subsequently reported:

"In spite of doing three bombing runs we were unable to see the target owing to smoke screen. Tallboy returned to Yagognik"

Playford's aircraft apparently had an issue with one of its engines and was the last Lancaster to arrive back in Britain on 21 September, most of the others arriving between 17th and 18th.



On 29 October, Playford would take part in the 2nd attack on Tirpitz; Operation Obviate:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Obviate

Since the last attack, Tirpitz had been moved to the South of Haakoy Isle, Norway, which being closer to Scotland, allowed an attack to be made from Lossiemouth. Again led by Wing Commander Tait, 36 Tallboy armed Lancaster from 617 and 9 Squadron formed the attacking force. Cloud obscured Tirpitz and though most bombs were dropped none were direct hits on the target. However there were several very near misses and the shock waves from the explosions caused damaged Tirpitz's propeller shaft and rudder, leaving the ship so damaged that it would need repair in a drydock. This was of course impossible and left Tirpitz as all but a 'floating battery' and no longer a threat. Of his own attack, Knights subsequently reported:

"Bomb seen to enter water and explode about 20 yards off starboard bow and ship rocked considerably. Made several circuits after bombing and saw thick brown smoke billowing from vicinity of mid-ships. Shortly after bomb exploded, observed explosion from starboard bow, followed by thick black smoke."

Unaware of the damage caused to Tirpitz in the 2nd attack, the final attack was carried out on the 12 November 1944, this codenamed, Operation Catechism. 18 Avro Lancasters of 617 Squadron and 13 from 9 Squadron, again led by Wing Commander Tait, took off that evening from Lossiemouth and Milltown airfields in northern Scotland.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Catechism

Unlike the previous attacks, on reaching their target, there were no issues with visibility so bomb aimers had a clear target, though on the flipside, Tirpitz also had a clear view for her guns. Knights

piloting PB415 was among the first four Lancasters to drop a Tallboy, the bomb falling just 10 yards off port quarter and whether pre-arranged or on his own initiative, unlike the other Lancasters, after his bombing run, Knights remained over the target until the end of the attack and was able to give a clear description of the hits on Tirpitz and her listing heavily to port. Knights subsequently reported:

Our bomb fell about ten yards off port quarter. We saw the first four bombs go down as follows: On near starboard quarter; starboard bow; port bow near funnel. We remained near target area until end of the attack and saw a large explosion at 0851 hrs and a smaller one at 0853 hrs. Before we left we saw Tirpitz listing heavily to port. Bombing by 617 was concentrated and accurate. Four of 9 Squadron's bombs (using Mk14 Bombsight) fell approx. 200 yards, 500 yards, ¾ mile, 1 mile.

In a 1973 interview in the BBC Television documentary "Target Tirpitz", Terry Playford added:

"Oh I should think we could see the Tirpitz from about 30 miles out. Gin-clear sky and we could see the ship sitting there naked and we knew we were going to get her. As we neared the target, everyone was opening their bomb doors, and the gaggle was still complete - we'd forgotten all about the fighters they warned us about. Over the target we could see the bombs of the other aircraft going down - you can't really see your own bomb going down, only the other ones. They were mighty close - and the splashes were tremendous - even at 15,00 feet they seemed to be coming right up at us. Then our bomb-aimer shouted, "We've hit her" and I was so pleased, and we went into orbit to try and see what damage had been done. And then to our delight we saw her gradually going over - though her guns were still firing which impressed us very much. We knew we had got her then. It made our day"

<https://www.memorialflightclub.com/blog/sinking-tirpitz-%E2%80%93-12th-november-1944>

Playford, who had been promoted Flight Lieutenant on 6 November 1944, was posted from 617 Squadron to RAF Hurn (as was F/L Knights) on 1 December 1944. Both men, along with 4 other members of 617 Squadron were decorated in December also, most for the Tirpitz attacks. The final attack on Tirpitz was Playford's 56th and last operational sortie of the war.



MISSION ACCOMPLISHED BY MARK POSTLETHWAITE

A photograph from one of Playford's crewmates during the first Tirpitz op:

<https://ibccdigitalarchive.lincoln.ac.uk/omeka/files/original/442/7827/PTwellsE15070004.2.jpg>

Playford's logbook next shows a single flight in an Oxford, piloted by F/L Knights on 3 January 1945 with V44 Transport Command, before being posted to 6LFS where he flew a number of flights up until April 1945. On 11 May 1945, Playford joined British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) as a Navigator and Instructor Navigator, flying in Lancaster's until the end of October 1945. He saw no more flights with BOAC until May 1946, so was presumably instructing during this period. He flew a large number of flights in Avro 685 York's in October 1946, reuniting with the now Captain Knights, who had also joined BOAC post war. Playford's last entries in his logbook end in October 1946.

Post War he appeared at some veteran events and was interviewed in 1973 for the BBC Television documentary "Target Tirpitz". Terry Playford died in Surrey on 24 March 1985

Flight Lieutenant Bob Knights

Pilot who bombed the Tirpitz three times and became a training captain with British Airways

FLIGHT LIEUTENANT BOB KNIGHTS, who has died aged 83, flew his Lancaster bomber of No 617 Squadron on the three major attacks against the *Tirpitz* that culminated, on November 12 1944, in the sinking of the powerful German battleship which had dominated British and American naval strategy in the European theatre.

With a firm foothold on the European continent, the Allies were anxious to deploy their naval forces to other theatres, but the threat posed by the *Tirpitz* prevented this. Churchill pressed incessantly for the destruction of the "beast", as he called her. Bomber Command and the Royal Navy had mounted many attacks against the battleship, and some damage had been inflicted; but the ship was still capable of making dangerous forays against the convoys to Russia.

In September 1944 Lancaster bombers of Nos 9 and 617 Squadrons were sent to attack the battleship with the 12,000-lb Tallboy bomb and mines. *Tirpitz* was moored in Alten Fjord in the extreme north of Norway, beyond the range of the Lancasters operating from Scotland, so the force flew to Vagödnik, near Archangel, on September 11.

Knights and his crew were accommodated on a houseboat, where bedbugs were their main companions. Four days later, Wing Commander Willie Tait, the CO of No 617, led the force to attack the battleship, but their efforts were thwarted by a dense smokescreen. Knights lost an engine over the target and returned to Vagödnik with his bomb still on board.

The Germans moved *Tirpitz* south to Tromsø, which put her just within range of the airfields in northern Scotland, from where another attack was mounted on October 29. The bombers faced heavy anti-aircraft fire, but Knights was able to drop his bomb, which landed very close and rocked the battleship. He remained circling the target as other bombs fell around the ship. Reconnaissance photographs suggested that the battleship remained intact, but, unknown to the Allies, she had sustained sufficient damage to render her no longer a threat.

On November 12 the bomber



Knights (third from left) with his crew from 619 Squadron at Woodhall Spa on December 20 1943, just before taking off for a raid on Frankfurt

force carried out their third attack, this time in perfect weather. Knights dropped his Tallboy, which was "a very near miss", then descended to low level and flew around the ship, which he saw roll over on to her side after three direct hits. Short of fuel, Knights landed at a small fighter airfield at Peterhead. It was his last bombing operation of the war.

The crews of Nos 9 and 617 received a number of decorations, with Knights being awarded the DSO.

The son of a carpenter, Robert Edgar Knights was born on January 18 1921 at Fulham, London. He attended Fulham School for Boys, where he excelled at football. He played for the London Schoolboys' XI that won the schoolboys' cup at Stamford Bridge, Chelsea, in 1935. He volunteered for service as a pilot with the RAF and was called up in March 1941.

Knights was trained in America under the "Arnold Scheme". When flying over Florida, his instructor managed to get them lost and

Knights was forced to bale out – a farmer thought he was a German. After returning to England to complete his training, he was forced to bale out again, badly injuring his hand, when his aircraft crashed through the roof of a barn. He was commissioned six months later.

In June 1943 Knights joined No 619 Squadron flying the Lancaster. Soon afterwards the Battle of Berlin began, and Knights made eight attacks against the "Big City" – Bomber Command's losses were particularly high. On another occasion he was en route to bomb Hamburg when one of his engines failed shortly after reaching the Dutch coast, and he would have been justified in turning back; but he pressed on and bombed the target successfully. Within six months he had completed his tour of 30 operations and was awarded the DFC.

He and his crew were due for a six-month rest, but decided that they wanted to "do something more challenging". They volunteered for service with No 617

(Dam Busters) Squadron, and, after an interview with Leonard Cheshire, No 617's CO, they were taken on.

Cheshire had developed low-level target-marking techniques with No 617 and, with the arrival of Barnes Wallis's new Tallboy bomb, the squadron specialised in attacking pinpoint targets such as concrete U-boat and E-boat shelters, aero-engines works and the V1 flying bomb sites.

During the lead-up to the Normandy invasion, Knights bombed tunnels, rail marshalling yards and bridges to block German reinforcement routes to the invasion area. The Tallboys, dropped with great accuracy on the target markers by Cheshire and his fellow marker-crews, caused devastating damage. Once the Allies were firmly established in north-west Europe, No 617 turned its attention to the *Tirpitz*.

After flying 67 bombing operations, Knights was rested, and in June 1945 he was seconded to BOAC to fly converted Lancasters on routes to the Middle

East and Australia, which the airline was re-establishing. Knights left the RAF at the end of 1946 to join BOAC, and over the next few years he flew the Argonaut and the Boeing Stratocruiser, the latter on the North Atlantic route. After a spell on the Britannia, Knights converted to jets; he flew the inaugural VC 10 flight to Montreal in 1966. Later he flew the Boeing 747 and was one of the fleet's training captains. He retired from British Airways in 1976.

A very modest man, Knights gave strong support to RAF charities. He was president of the Guildford branch of the RAFA and a long-standing member of the Aircrew Association. He developed a keen interest in bell-ringing and became captain of the bell tower at St Peter and St Paul at Albury, near Guildford. A good golfer and tennis player, he was also a lifelong supporter of Fulham FC.

Bob Knights died on December 4. In 1947 he married a serving WAAF, Helen Maloney, who survives him with their two sons and a daughter. *RAF Digital Archive*



SOLD WITH THE FOLLOWING ORIGINAL ITEMS:

- 1) Playford's Observer's and Air Gunners Logbook, giving all flights 26.7.42 - 23.10.46
- 2) Named Buckingham Palace D.F.C. forwarding letter
- 3) D.F.C. case of issue
- 4) 2 x medal ribbon bars, all medals, both worn
- 5) DFC ribbon bar
- 6) Set of miniature medals, mounted as worn
- 7) Bomber Command clasp in named case of issue
- 8) British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) bullion navigator wing

Included with the digital research is a copy of the original DFC recommendation, shortened published LG recommendation, a newspaper article from 1978, 619 Squadron Operational logs, various other research and a PDF copy of '617 Squadron, The Operational Record Book 1943-1945' by Tobin Jones, is included with the research. This details each operation by the squadron, aircraft that took part, their crew and individual notes made by each aircraft commander after each sortie. This can be used in conjunction with Playford's own logbook to add further notes.

Additionally, all of Playford's 56 operational sorties have been extracted from the operational logs into their own 6 page PDF. A print out of this is also supplied



| Date | Hour | Aircraft Type and No. | Pilot | Duty | REMARKS (Including results of bombing, gunnery, exercises, etc.) | Time carried forward:- | |
|--|-------|--------------------------|----------------|-------------|---|------------------------|-------|
| | | | | | | 22640 | 29735 |
| | | | | | | Flying Times | |
| | | | | | | Day | Night |
| 1.8.44 | 1503 | LANC. W | F/O WILLISHER | Navigator | Operations. SPIRACOURT. (TUNNEL) | 3.25 | |
| 3.8.44 | 1450 | LANC. P. | F/O KNIGHTS. | Navigator | BASE - SYRSTONE - U. NEYFORD. BASE (FERRY SERVICE) | 2.05 | |
| 4.8.44 | 0855 | LANC. Q | F/O WILLISHER | Navigator | Operations ETAPLES (BRIDGE) | 3.30 | |
| 5.8.44 | 10.05 | LANC. Q | F/O WILLISHER | Navigator | Operations BREST. (U-BOAT PENS) | 4.10 | |
| 6.8.44 | 16.00 | LANC. W. | F/O WILLISHER | Navigator | Operations. LORIENT (U-BOAT PENS) | 4.30 | |
| 7.8.44 | 18.00 | LANC. W. | F/O WILLISHER | Navigator | Operations. LORIENT (ABORTIVE SORTIE) | 4.35 | |
| 11.8.44 | 11.30 | LANC. W. | F/O WILLISHER | Navigator | Operations LA PALlice (U-BOAT PENS) | 6.15 | |
| 13.8.44 | 0830 | LANC. R. | F/O WILLISHER. | Navigator | Operations. BREST. (U-BOAT PENS) | 4.15 | |
| 14.8.44 | 0835 | LANC. X | F/O WILLISHER | Navigator | Operations BREST (SHIPPING) | 4.15 | |
| 16.8.44 | 1630 | LANC. D | W/COR. TRAIT. | Navigator * | Operations LA PALlice (U-BOAT PENS) | 6.00 | |
| 18.8.44 | 11.30 | LANC. D. | W/COR. TRAIT | Navigator * | Operations LA PALlice (U-BOAT PENS) | 5.50 | |
| 19.8.44 | 11.00 | LANC. O | F/O KNIGHTS. | Navigator | AUTO CONTROLS TEST. | .50 | |
| 21.8.44 | 14.00 | LANC. O | F/O KNIGHTS. | Navigator | BASE - WHINTHORPE - BASE (FERRY SERVICE) | 1.05 | |
| 24.8.44 | 11.05 | LANC. O | F/O KNIGHTS. | Navigator | H-L-B. MAINFLEET | 1.25 | |
| 26.8.44 | 11.00 | LANC. O | F/O KNIGHTS. | Navigator | H-L-B. | 1.55 | |
| 27.8.44 | 14.00 | LANC. O | F/LT. KNIGHTS | Navigator | BREST HARBOUR - SHIP (FERRY SERVICE) | 4.25 | |
| 29.8.44 | 13.30 | LANC. O | F/LT. KNIGHTS. | Navigator | BASE - WHINTHORPE - SPEKE - BUSTEN WOOD - WHINTHORPE | 1.30 | |
| 29.8.44 | 20.00 | LANC. R. | F/LT. STOUT | Navigator | WHINTHORPE - BASE | .20 | |
| 30.8.44 | 10.30 | LANC. J | B/L. FANKE | Navigator | BASE - WHINTHORPE | .25 | |
| 30.8.44 | 11.00 | LANC. O | F/LT. KNIGHTS | Navigator | WHINTHORPE - BASE | .25 | |
| SUMMARY FOR AUGUST 1944. UNIT: 617 SQDN. | | | | | | | |
| DAY: 6110 | | | | | | | |
| DATE: 31.8.44 | | | | | | | |
| SIGNED: W. P. [Signature] | | | | | | | |
| 13.7.44 | | | | | | | |
| O.C.'S IN. | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL TIME: 267.50 | | | | | | 297.35 | |

PLAYFORD OPERATIONS 619 SQUADRON

30/8/43 – Bombing & Nickelling Munchen Gladbach

| | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------|------|--|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson. J.G. | Bombing & | 2352 | 0511 | The primary target, MUNCHEN GLADBACH, was attacked and bombed from 19,000-ft. at 0242 hours. Weather conditions: 6-7/10ths. cloud at 6-10,000-ft. The target was identified by red T.I's (no green's being seen), bombs being dropped on glow from single red T.I. seen in bomb-sight. This T.I. cascades at approx. 0234/39 hours. Number of fires seen going well; fires from both targets appeared to have merged. Nickels were dropped. First T.I.'s appeared well North of target so were ignored. Next T.I. midway between Munchen and Rheinfelt, and as no more seen, this was bombed. Photographic failure due to cloud and incendiary tracks: |
| JB.125. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. | Nickelling. | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | | | | |
| | P/O. Jack. K. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W.J. | MUNCHEN GLADBACH. | | | |
| | P/O. Sharpe. J.G. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Underhill. P.W. | | | | |

2/9/43 – Gardening – Nectarine I

| | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|--------------|------|------|---|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson. J.G. | GARDENING. | 2020 | 2318 | Vegetables were planted on GEE fix B 5.95 G 40.46 at 2148 hours from 6,000-ft. Weather conditions: 10/10ths. cloud at 6,7,000-ft. |
| JB.131. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. | | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | NECTARINE I. | | | |
| | P/O. Jack. K. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W.J. | | | | |
| | P/O. Sharpe. J.G. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Underhill. P.W. | | | | |

5/9/43 – Mannheim

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|---------------|-----------------------|-------------|------|------|---|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson. J.G. | Bombing & | 1951 | 0244 | The primary target, MANNHEIM, was attacked and bombed from 20,000-ft. at 2345 hours. Weather conditions: Clear of cloud, but much smoke. The target was identified by red and green T.I's, bombs being dropped in centre of cluster of green T.I's. There were numerous fires seen, well concentrated. Nickels were dropped. Photographic failure due to fires and smoke. |
| JB.125. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. | Nickelling. | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | | | | |
| | P/O. Jack. K. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W.J. | MANNHEIM. | | | |
| | P/O. Sharpe. J.G. | | | | |

23/9/43 – Mannheim

| | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|-------------|------|------|---|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson. J.G. | Bombing & | 1903 | 0136 | The primary target, MANNHEIM, was attacked and bombed from 21,000-ft. at 2203 hours. Weather conditions: Clear base, otherwise clear. The target was identified by red, yellow, and green T.I's, and river identified visually, bombs being dropped in centre of cluster of 5 green T.I's. There were concentrated fires on East bank of the river; glow of fires seen 150 miles away on return journey. Nickels were dropped. Photographic failure due to fire-tracks. |
| JA.867. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. | Nickelling. | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | | | | |
| | P/O. Jack. K. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W.J. | MANNHEIM. | | | |
| | P/O. Sharpe. J.G. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Underhill. P.W. | | | | |

27/9/43 – Hanover

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|---------------|-----------------------|-------------|------|------|--|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson. J.G. | Bombing & | 1929 | 0150 | The primary target, HANOVER, was attacked and bombed from 20,000-ft. at 2305 hours. Weather conditions: Clear, with slight haze. The target was identified by concentration of green T.I's, and markings seen distinctly, bombs being dropped on cluster of 2 green T.I's. Good fires were seen. Photographic failure due to fires and smoke. Landed at Wharfedale Common at 0150 hours. |
| KL.110. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. | Nickelling. | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | | | | |
| | P/O. Jack. K. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W.J. | HANOVER. | | | |
| | P/O. Sharpe. J.G. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Underhill. P.W. | | | | |

29/9/43 – Bochum

| | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|-------------|------|------|--|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson. J.G. | Bombing & | 1834 | 2305 | The primary target, BOCHUM, was attacked and bombed from 20,500-ft. at 2047 hours. Weather conditions: Clear, with slight haze. The target was identified by red T.I's and Wagonway flares, bombs being dropped on single red T.I. Large explosion seen in target area at 2058 hours. Nickels were dropped. Plotted BOCHUM 2305/23 miles from aiming point. Photo showed faint ground detail of built-up area. |
| ME.110. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. | Nickelling. | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | | | | |
| | P/O. Jack. K. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W.J. | BOCHUM. | | | |
| | P/O. Sharpe. J.G. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Underhill. P.W. | | | | |

3/10/43 – Kassel

| | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|-------------|------|------|---|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson. J.G. | Bombing & | 1819 | 0014 | The primary target, KASSEL, was attacked and bombed from 20,000-ft. at 2108 hours. Weather conditions: Slight haze. As we ran up to target saw yellow T.I's on our port. Then a red went down followed by greens. Bombs were dropped on red T.I. but subsequently red and green T.I's were seen to the south; other aircraft were bombing same T.I's that we bombed. Photographic failure due to fire-tracks. |
| 'X' JA.867. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. | Nickelling. | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | | | | |
| | P/O. Jack. K. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W.J. | KASSEL. | | | |
| | P/O. Sharpe. J.G. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Underhill. P.W. | | | | |

26/11/43 – Berlin

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|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------|------|---|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson. J.G. | Bombing. | 1726 | 2029 | The mission was abandoned at position Beachy Head at 1829 hours due to starboard inner overheating - cooling system being unworkable. Bombs were jettisoned at position 51°48' 02" N at 1856 hours at 11,500-ft., with the exception of 7 (1500lb.) which were brought back. Landed at Spilsby at 2039 hours. |
| 'Y' EE.134. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. | B E R L I N. | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | | | | |
| | P/O. Jack. K. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W. | MISSION ABANDONED. | | | |
| | Sgt. Borden. D. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Underhill. F.W. | | | | |

2/12/43 – Berlin

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|---------------|-----------------------|--------------|------|------|--|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson. J.G. | Bombing. | 1644 | 2347 | The primary target, BERLIN, was attacked and bombed from 20,500-ft. at 2024 hours. Weather conditions: 7/8/10ths. low cloud. The target was identified by wanganui flares and green T.I's, bombs being dropped between two green T.I's. Markers fairly well concentrated, and glow of fires seen. Photographic failure due to technical fault. Landed at Cominsgate at 2347 hours. |
| 'Y' EE.134. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. | B E R L I N. | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | | | | |
| | Sgt. South. J.H. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W. | | | | |
| | P/O. Sharpe. J.C. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Underhill. F.W. | | | | |

16/12/43 – Berlin

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|---------------|-----------------------|--------------|------|------|--|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson. J.G. | Bombing. | 1629 | 0001 | The primary target, BERLIN, was attacked and bombed from 21,000-ft. at 2055 hours. Weather conditions: 10/10ths. cloud; tops at 8-10,000-ft. The target was identified by wanganui flares which were bombed. Wanganui flares very effective. Bombs 4's after target; caused by wind - caught in aerial. Two 500 lb. bombs seen at Rostock on way back. Photographic failure due to weather conditions. |
| 'Y' EE.134. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. | B E R L I N. | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | | | | |
| | P/O. Jack. K. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W. | | | | |
| | P/O. Sharpe. J.C. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Underhill. F.W. | | | | |

20/12/43 – Frankfurt

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|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------|------|--|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson. J.G. | Bombing. | 1706 | 1827 | The mission was abandoned at position immediately after take-off due to Port Outer engine bursting into flame on becoming airborne. Bombs were jettisoned at position:- 1450 x 4lb. Inc. 5225N 00378 at 1,000-ft. at 1759 hours, and 30 x 50 lb. Inc. at 5345N 00302 at 1,500-ft. at 1802 hours. 370 gallons of fuel also jettisoned. 1 x 4,000 lb. could not be jettisoned due to being unable to gain sufficient height. |
| 'Y' EE.134. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. | F R A N K F U R T. | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | | | | |
| | P/O. Jack. K. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W. | MISSION ABANDONED. | | | |
| | P/O. Sharpe. J.C. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Underhill. F.W. | | | | |

29/12/43 – Berlin

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|---------------|-----------------------|--------------|------|------|--|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson. J.G. | Bombing. | 1649 | 2340 | The primary target, BERLIN, was attacked and bombed from 21,000-ft. at 2307 hours. Weather conditions: 10/10ths. cloud; tops about 8,000-ft. The target was identified by P.F.F. markers, bombs being dropped on one wanganui flare. Five flares seen covering 1/2 mile, looked as if dropped in a string; bombed centre flare. Glow seen on cloud which was believed to be from good fires. Photographic failure due to weather conditions. |
| 'Y' EE.134. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. | B E R L I N. | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | | | | |
| | P/O. Jack. K. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Danham. W. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Underhill. F.W. | | | | |

1/1/44 – Berlin

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|---------------|-----------------------|--------------|------|------|--|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson. J.G. | Bombing. | 0002 | 0816 | The primary target, BERLIN, was attacked and bombed from 21,000-ft. at 0310 hours. Weather conditions: 10/10ths. cloud; tops about 21,000-ft. The target was identified by wanganui flares, red with green stars, which were bombed. Monica worked well. Photographic failure due to weather conditions. |
| 'Y' EE.134. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. | B E R L I N. | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | | | | |
| | P/O. Jack. K. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Danham. W. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Underhill. F.W. | | | | |

14/1/44 – Brunswick – Flew with P/O Knights Crew

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|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|------|------|---|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Knights. R.E. | Bombing. | 1657 | 2223 | The primary target, BRAUNSCHWEIG, was attacked and bombed from 21,000-ft. at 1920 hours. Weather conditions: 10/10ths. cloud. The target was identified by wanganui flares and red and green T.I's, bombs being dropped on single wanganui flare. Target poorly marked with insufficient number of flares. Photographic failure due to cloud and fires. |
| 'T' JR.131. | Sgt. Twells. E. | B R A U N S C H W E I G. | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | | | | |
| | P/O. Bell. J.E. | | | | |
| | P/O. Daniels. F.J. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Hobbs. A.W. | | | | |
| | P/O. Berham. P.W. | | | | |

20/1/44 – Berlin

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|---------------|-----------------------|----------|------|------|---|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson. J.G. | Bombing. | 1647 | 2356 | The primary target, BERLIN, was attacked and bombed from 21,000-ft. at 1947 hours. Weather conditions: 9-10/10ths. cloud; tops about 16,000-ft. The target was identified by wanganui flares, which were bombed. On large orange glow on cloud base seen. Route markers seen at all positions, but too few to be useful. Monica working intermittently, occasionally jamming. Cameras were not carried. |
| 'Y' EE.134. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. | | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | BERLIN. | | | |
| | P/O. Jack. K. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W. | | | | |
| | P/O. Sharpe. J.C. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Underhill. F.W. | | | | |

21/1/44 – Magdeburg

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|---------------|-----------------------|------------|------|------|--|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson. J.G. | Bombing. | 1955 | 0255 | The primary target, MAGDEBURG, was attacked and bombed from 21,000-ft. at 2314 hours. Weather conditions: 7/10ths. low cloud. The target was identified by red and green T.I.'s, and red flares with green stars, bombs being dropped on northeast of green T.I.'s. Position of fires suggested that raid was creeping back or fresh T.I.'s going down. About 10 aircraft overshoot before markers fell. Fires appeared to be quite good. Photographic failure due to fire-tracks and cloud. |
| 'Y' EE.134. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. | | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | MAGDEBURG. | | | |
| | P/O. Jack. K. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W. | | | | |
| | P/O. Sharpe. J.C. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Underhill. F.W. | | | | |

27/1/44 – Berlin

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|---------------|--------------------------------|----------|------|------|---|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson. J.G. | Bombing. | 1721 | 0219 | The primary target, BERLIN, was attacked and bombed from 21,000-ft. at 2032 hours. Weather conditions: 10/10ths. cloud; tops about 12,000-ft. The target was identified by P.P.F. markers, bombs being dropped in centre of green flares, with red stars. Flares well concentrated, but cloud prevented any further observations, until after leaving target when glow of fires seen. Photographic failure due to weather conditions. |
| 'Y' EE.134. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. | BERLIN. | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | | | | |
| | P/O. Jack. K. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W. | | | | |
| | P/O. Sharpe. J.C. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Underhill. F.W. | | | | |
| | P/O. Loranger. (2nd A/Bomber.) | | | | |

28/1/44 – Berlin

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|---------------|-----------------------|----------|------|------|--|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson. J.G. | Bombing. | 0025 | 0813 | The primary target, BERLIN, was attacked and bombed from 21,500-ft. at 0326 hours. Weather conditions: 10/10ths. cloud; tops about 12,000-ft. The target was identified by wanganui flares, bombs being dropped in centre of three flares. P.P.F. marking excellent. Many large fires seen in target area. Route home completely 'foxed' the enemy; apparently expecting us to leave target from the South. Photographic failure due to fire-tracks and cloud. |
| 'Y' EE.134. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. | BERLIN. | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | | | | |
| | P/O. Jack. K. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W. | | | | |
| | P/O. Sharpe. J.C. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Underhill. F.W. | | | | |

15/2/44 – Berlin

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|---------------|-----------------------------------|----------|------|------|--|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson. J.G. (CAN:J.20880) | Bombing. | 1718 | 0037 | The primary target, BERLIN, was attacked and bombed from 21,200-ft. at 2131 hours. Weather conditions: 10/10ths. cloud. The target was identified by red and green T.I.'s and wanganui flares, bombs being dropped in centre of cluster of four wanganui flares. Large reddish glow seen on base of clouds. Red markers effective at both positions. Photographic failure due to weather conditions. |
| 'Y' EE.134. | P/O. Johnston. J.I. (CAN:J.19259) | BERLIN. | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | | | | |
| | P/O. Jack. K. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W. | | | | |
| | P/O. Sharpe. J.C. (CAN:J.17283) | | | | |
| | Sgt. Underhill. F.W. | | | | |

19/2/44 – Leipzig

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|---------------|--|----------|------|------|--|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson. J.G. (CAN:J.20880) | Bombing. | 0018 | 0642 | The primary target, LEIPZIG, was attacked and bombed from 22,900-ft. at 0405 hours. Weather conditions: 10/10ths. cloud. The target was identified by red and green T.I.'s and wanganui flares, bombs being dropped in centre of three wanganui flares. Fires appeared to be well concentrated. Visual Monica went u/s at position 5243N 0730E. Photographs only showed T.I.'s on frame 4. |
| 'Q' EE.116. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. | LEIPZIG. | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | | | | |
| | P/O. Jack. K. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W. | | | | |
| | P/O. Sharpe. J.C. (CAN:J.17283) | | | | |
| | Sgt. Underhill. F.W. | | | | |
| | P/S. Asmell. A.B. (CAN:R.141507) 2nd A/Bomber. | | | | |

20/2/44 – Stuttgart

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|---------------|-----------------------------------|------------|------|------|---|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson. J.G. (CAN:J.20880) | Bombing. | 0010 | 0645 | The primary target, STUTTGART, was attacked and bombed from 22,500-ft. at 0402 hours. Weather conditions: 7/10ths. cloud; tops about 4-5,000-ft. The target was identified by P.P.F. markers; bombed M.P.I. or five wanganui flares. Incendiary fires seen whilst over target, and good red glow seen when 100 miles away on return trip. Photographic failure due to magazine failure. |
| 'Q' EE.116. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. | STUTTGART. | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | | | | |
| | P/O. Jack. K. | | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W. | | | | |
| | P/O. Sharpe. J.C. (CAN:J.17283) | | | | |
| | Sgt. Underhill. F.W. | | | | |



24/2/44 – Schweinfurt

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|---------------|--------------------------------------|------|------|--|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson, J. G. (CAN: J. 20880) | 1956 | 0347 | The primary target, SCHWEINFURT, was attacked and bombed from 22,000-ft. at 0104 hours. Weather conditions: Clear, with smoke haze. The target was identified by green F.I.'s at 0105 hours followed by red T.I.'s, bombs being dropped in centre of cluster of green F.I.'s. P.P.F. marking reasonable, though not too plentiful. Plotted 205°. 2 1/2 miles from 'A'. Photographs showed ground detail. Landed at Tangmere due to shortage of fuel. |
| 'Q' EE.116. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. Bombing. | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | | | |
| | P/O. Jack. K. SCHWEINFURT. | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W. | | | |
| | P/O. Sharpe, J. G. (CAN: J. 17283) | | | |
| | Sgt. Underhill. P.W. | | | |

10/3/44 – Chateauroux

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|---------------|--------------------------------------|------|------|--|
| Lancaster III | P/O. Thompson, J. G. (CAN: J. 20880) | 2007 | 0139 | The primary target, CHATEAUROUX, was attacked and bombed from 9,000-ft. at 2253 hours. Weather conditions: Slight haze, but no cloud. The target was identified by visual of buildings, bombs being dropped in estimated centre of block of buildings. Appeared to be a highly concentrated and successful raid. Plotted Aiming point. Photographs showed ground detail. |
| 'Y' EE.116. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. Bombing. | | | |
| | P/O. Playford. T.H.J. | | | |
| | P/O. Jack. K. CHATEAUROUX. | | | |
| | Sgt. Jones. A.W. | | | |
| | P/O. Sharpe, J. G. (CAN: J. 17283) | | | |
| | Sgt. Underhill. P.W. | | | |

15/3/44 – Stuttgart

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|---------------|--|------------|------|---|
| Lancaster III | F/L Thompson, J.G. (CAN:J.20880) | 1843 | 0235 | The primary target, STUTTGART, was attacked and bombed from 21,500-ft. at 2315 hours. Weather conditions: 10/10ths cloud; tops about 6-7,000-ft. The target was identified by single wanganui flare, bombs being dropped on estimated position of this flare which had just gone out. No results of bombing seen. Arrived over target at 2305 hours; first flare seen at 2314, so bombed at 2315 hours. Photographic failure due to weather conditions. |
| 'Y' EE.134. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. Bombing. F/O. Playford. T.H.J. F/O. Jack. K. F/S. Jones. A.W. F/O. Sharpe, J.C. (CAN:J.17283) Sgt. Underhill. P.W. | STUTTGART. | | |

18/3/44 – Frankfurt

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| Lancaster III | F/L Thompson, J.G. (CAN:J.20880) Bombing. | 1851 | 0044 | The primary target, FRANKFURT, was attacked and bombed from 20,000-ft. at 2200 hours. Weather conditions: Hazy, but no cloud. The target was identified by P.P.P. markers, bombs being dropped in centre of six green T.I's. P.P.P. marking appeared to be fairly well concentrated. Monica w/c. Photographic failure due to cloud and T.I's. |
| 'Y' EE.134. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. F/O. Playford. T.H.J. F/O. Jack. K. F/S. Jones. A.W. F/O. Sharpe, J.C. (CAN:J.17283) Sgt. Underhill. P.W. Sgt. Hall. (2nd A/Bomber.) | FRANKFURT. | | |

22/3/44 – Frankfurt

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|---------------|--|------------|------|---|
| Lancaster III | F/L Thompson, J.G. (CAN:J.20880) | 1847 | 0021 | The primary target, FRANKFURT, was attacked and bombed from 22,000-ft. at 2155 hours. Weather conditions: 5/10ths cloud at 8,000-ft. The target was identified by green and red T.I's. bombs being dropped on wanganui flares, red with yellow stars seen in bomb-sight. Appeared to be a good raid, good glow from fires being seen. Decey red and green T.I's seen about 9 miles to East, but they didn't attract any bombing. Photographic failure due to cloud and fire-tracks. |
| 'Y' EE.134. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. Bombing. F/O. Playford. T.H.J. F/O. Jack. K. F/S. Jones. A.W. F/O. Sharpe, J.C. (CAN:J.17283) Sgt. Underhill. P.W. Sgt. Rice, S.D. (2nd Navigator.) | FRANKFURT. | | |

26/3/44 – Essen

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|-------------|--|--------|------|--|
| Lancaster I | F/L Thompson, J.G. (CAN:J.20880) | 1937 | 0110 | The primary target, ESSEN, was attacked and bombed from 21,500-ft. at 2200 hours. Weather conditions: 10/10ths cloud; tops 5-6,000-ft. The target was identified by glow of red T.I's and wanganui flares, bombs being dropped on single red T.I. Whitish glow seen on cloud base, and a large explosion seen at 2203 hours. Photographic failure due to weather conditions. |
| 'W' LL.784. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. Bombing. F/O. Playford. T.H.J. F/O. Jack. K. F/S. Jones. A.W. F/O. Sharpe, J.C. (CAN:J.17283) F/S. Underhill. P.W. | ESSEN. | | |

5/4/44 – Toulouse

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|---------------|--|-----------|------|--|
| Lancaster III | F/L Thompson, J.G. (CAN:J.20880) | 2027 | 0355 | The primary target, TOULOUSE, was attacked and bombed from 14,000-ft. at 0023 hours. Weather conditions: No cloud; good visibility. The target was identified by markers, also visually, bombs being dropped on red spot fires. Incendiaries seen burning in the town; fires on North-East appeared more concentrated than those to South West. Monica and W/T w/c. Photographs showed aiming point. |
| 'Y' EE.134. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. Bombing. F/O. Playford. T.H.J. F/O. Jack. K. F/S. Wiltshire. P.A. F/O. Sharpe, J.C. (CAN:J.17283) F/S. Underhill. P.W. | TOULOUSE. | | |

10/4/44 – Tours

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|---------------|--|--------|------|--|
| Lancaster III | F/L Thompson, J.G. (CAN:J.20880) | 2223 | 0339 | The primary target, TOURS, was attacked and bombed from 18,500-ft. at 0133 hours. Weather conditions: Ground haze, otherwise clear. The target was identified by red spot fires, also visually, bombs being dropped on estimated centre of target area. Earlier bomb burst illuminated marshalling yards; bombs released in approx. same position. Large explosion seen at 0138 hours. LHM w/c. Photographs showed aiming point, but due to another aircraft coming in at same height causing me make a diving turn to port camera will not show correct position. |
| 'Y' EE.134. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. Bombing. F/O. Playford. T.H.J. F/O. Jack. K. F/S. Jones. A.W. F/O. Sharpe, J.C. (CAN:J.17283) F/S. Underhill. P.W. | TOURS. | | |

11/4/44 – Aachen

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|---------------|--|---------|------|--|
| Lancaster III | F/L Thompson, J.G. (CAN:J.20880) | 2041 | 0020 | The primary target, AACHEN, was attacked and bombed from 18,500-ft. at 2215 hours. Weather conditions: 5/10ths cloud; tops about 8,000-ft. The target was identified by P.P.P. markers, bombs being dropped on a single red T.I. About 30 aircraft bombed before zero hour. Bombing fairly concentrated though incendiaries covered an area of about a mile long. Photographic failure due to cloud and fire-tracks. |
| 'Y' EE.134. | Sgt. Baker. A.B. Bombing. F/O. Playford. T.H.J. F/O. Jack. K. F/S. Jones. A.W. F/O. Sharpe, J.C. (CAN:J.17283) F/S. Underhill. P.W. | AACHEN. | | |

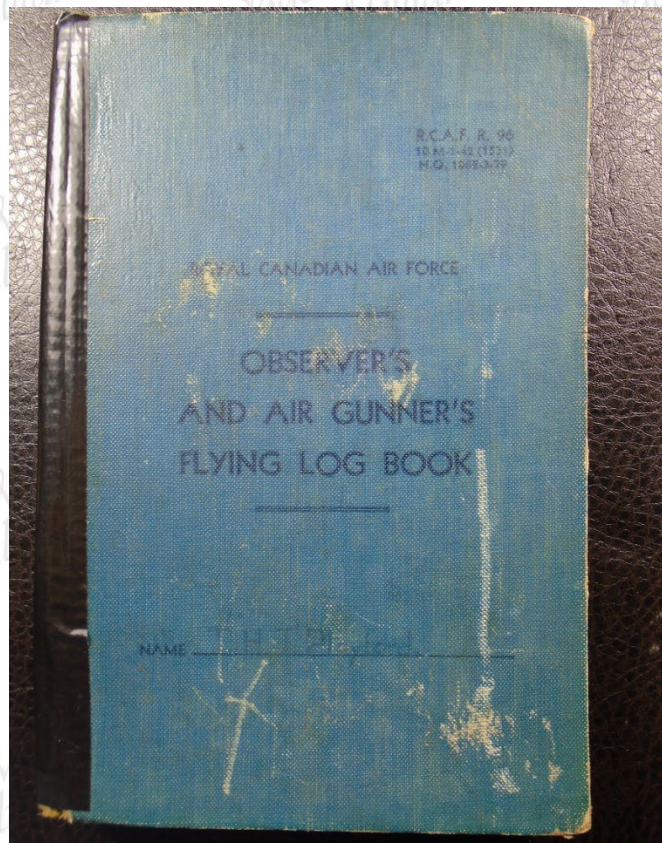
FIRST TOUR EXPIRED – 30 Operational sorties with 619 Squadron, all but one with F/L Thompson

SECOND TOUR - 617 SQUADRON – Posted from 619 Squadron - 8 May 1944

All with F/O Willsher Crew until 16/8/44

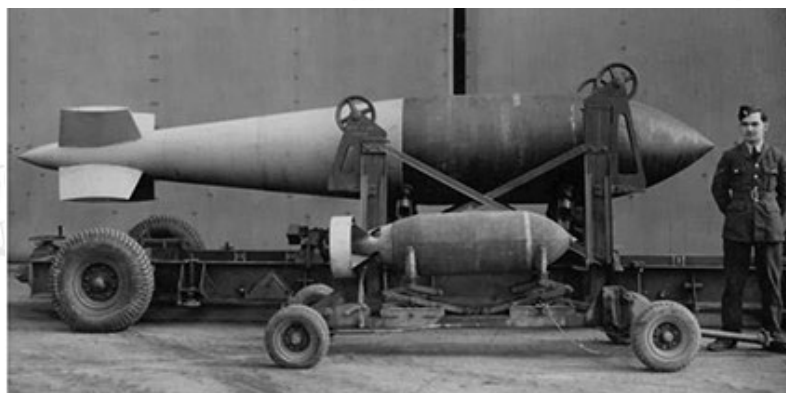


WILLSHER CREW 617 SQUADRON, PLAYFORD FIRST ON LEFT



5/6/44 - Special Op – D-Day – ‘Operation Taxable’ - <https://617squadronassociation.org/d-day-617-squadron>

8/6/44 - Saumar railway tunnel – ‘1 x Tallboy bomb’ This was the first 14,000lb ‘Tallboy’ raid. *Bomb fell on Red Spot fire.* See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tallboy_\(bomb\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tallboy_(bomb))



Bigger, better bombs. The 12,000 lb TALLBOY and the standard 1,000 pounder.

14/6/44 -Le Harve – ‘1 x Tallboy bomb’ U-Boat pens attacked – *Bomb fell to burst on Jetty*

15/6/44 - Boulonge - ‘1 x Tallboy bomb’ – This bombing E-Boats pens

19/6/44 - Watten, Pas De Calais – ‘Rocket installation ‘1 x Tallboy bomb’ This the start of Operation Crossbow; the attacks on German V1 and V2 rocket installations. *Bomb bust 150 yards north of target*

20/6/44 - Wizernes, Pas De Calais – ‘1 x Tallboy bomb’. *Operation abandoned; mix of Lancaster’s and Mosquito’s*

24/6/44 - Wizernes, Pas De Calais – ‘1 x Tallboy bomb’. *Bomb bust on mouth of the tunnel entrance to the aiming point*

25/6/44 – Siracourt construction works - 1 x Tallboy bomb’. *Bomb fell 50 yards south of aiming point*

4/7/44 – Crei, Area Dumps - 1 x Tallboy bomb’. *Box barrage of Heavy Flak over aiming point*

6/7/44 –Mimoyecques construction works - 1 x Tallboy bomb’.

17/7/44 – Wizernes, Pas De Calais – ‘1 x Tallboy bomb’. *Bomb fell just north of the tunnel.*

31/7/44 – S Rilly La Montagne – ‘1 x Tallboy bomb’.

1/8/44 – Siracourt (Tunnel) – *Operation abandoned*

4/8/44 – Etaples (Bridge) – ‘12 x 1000lb bombs.’ *The stick went across the bridge*

5/8/44 – Brest – U-Boat Pens– ‘1 x Tallboy bomb’. *Result of bomb not observed*

6/8/44– Lorient– U-Boat Pens– ‘1 x Tallboy bomb’. *Made a good run but bomb burst not observed*

7/8/44– Lorient – U-Boat Pens– ‘1 x Tallboy bomb’. *Operation abandoned*

11/8/44– La Pallice– U-Boat Pens – ‘6 x 2000 lb bombs’. *Good concentration*

13/8/44– Brest – bombing derelict cruiser ‘Gueydon’ ‘12 x 1000lb bombs.’ *Bombs fell just off the northern end of the ship*

14/8/44– Brest – bombing derelict cruiser ‘Gueydon’ ‘12 x 1000lb bombs.’ *Results of stick not observed due to flak evasion after bombing run.*

16/8/44 – La Pallice– U-Boat Pens – Wing Commander Tait – ‘6 x 2000 lb bombs’ *Accurate bombing impossible due to cloud cover*

18/8/44– La Pallice– U-Boat Pens – Wing Commander Tait – ‘1 x Tallboy bomb’.

27/8/44 – Brest Harbour –Bombing Shipping - F/O Knights - ‘12 x 1000lb bombs.’ *Bombing cluster round ship. Some hits seen and target on fire.*

TIRPITZ ATTACKS

ATTACK 1

11/9/44– To Archangel USSR (Yagognik) - F/O Knights

16/9/44 – Tirpitz, Alten Ford, Norway- F/O Knights– ‘1 x Tallboy bomb’. *In spite of doing three bombing runs we were unable to see the target owing to smoke screen. Tallboy returned to Yagognik*

20/9/44 - Archangel USSR – Base - Diverted- F/O Knights

21/9/44 – Lossiemouth – base - F/O Knights



617 SQUADRON LANCASTERS AT YAGOGNIK

ATTACK 2

28/10/44– Lossiemouth (advanced base) - F/O Knights

29/10/44 – Tirpitz S of Haakoy Isle- F/O Knights– ‘1 x Tallboy bomb’. *Bomb seen to enter water and explode about 20 yards off starboard bow and ship rocked considerably. Made several circuits after bombing and saw thick brown smoke billowing from vicinity of mid-ships. Shortly after bomb exploded, observed explosion from starboard bow, followed by thick black smoke.*

30/9/44 – Lossiemouth – base- F/O Knights

FINAL ATTACK

11/11/44– Lossiemouth (advanced base) - F/O Knights

12/11/44– Tirpitz (sunk!) S Haakon Isle – Tromsø, Norway - F/O Knights– '1 x Tallboy bomb'. *Our bomb fell about ten yards off port quarter. We saw the first four bombs go down as follows: On near starboard quarter; starboard bow; port bow near funnel. We remained near target area until end of the attack and saw a large explosion at 0851 hrs and a smaller one at 0853 hrs. Before we left we saw Tirpitz listing heavily to port. Bombing by 617 was concentrated and accurate. Four of 9 Squadron's bombs (using Mk14 Bombsight) fell approx. 200 yards, 500 yards, ¾ mile, 1 mile.*

12-13/11/44– Peterhead to Lossiemouth - F/O Knights

| | | | |
|-----|--|------|--|
| for | H.L.B. | 1.40 | |
| for | BASE - LOSSIEMOUTH (ADVANCE BASE) | 1.40 | |
| for | OPERATIONS - "ADMIRAL VON TIRPITZ." | | |
| for | S. HAAROV ISLE - TROMSOE, NORWAY "SUNK?" | 7.35 | |
| for | PETER HEAD TO LOSSIEMOUTH | .20 | |
| for | LOSSIEMOUTH - BASE | 2.05 | |

SECOND TOUR EXPIRED - 26 Operational sorties with 617 Squadron

Posted to RAF Hurn – 1/12/44 and recommended for DFC that month

January – May 1945 at 6 LFS Ossington

11 May 1945 – 23 October 1946 – Navigator with B.O.A.C.

TOTAL 56 WARTIME OPERATIONAL SORTIES

