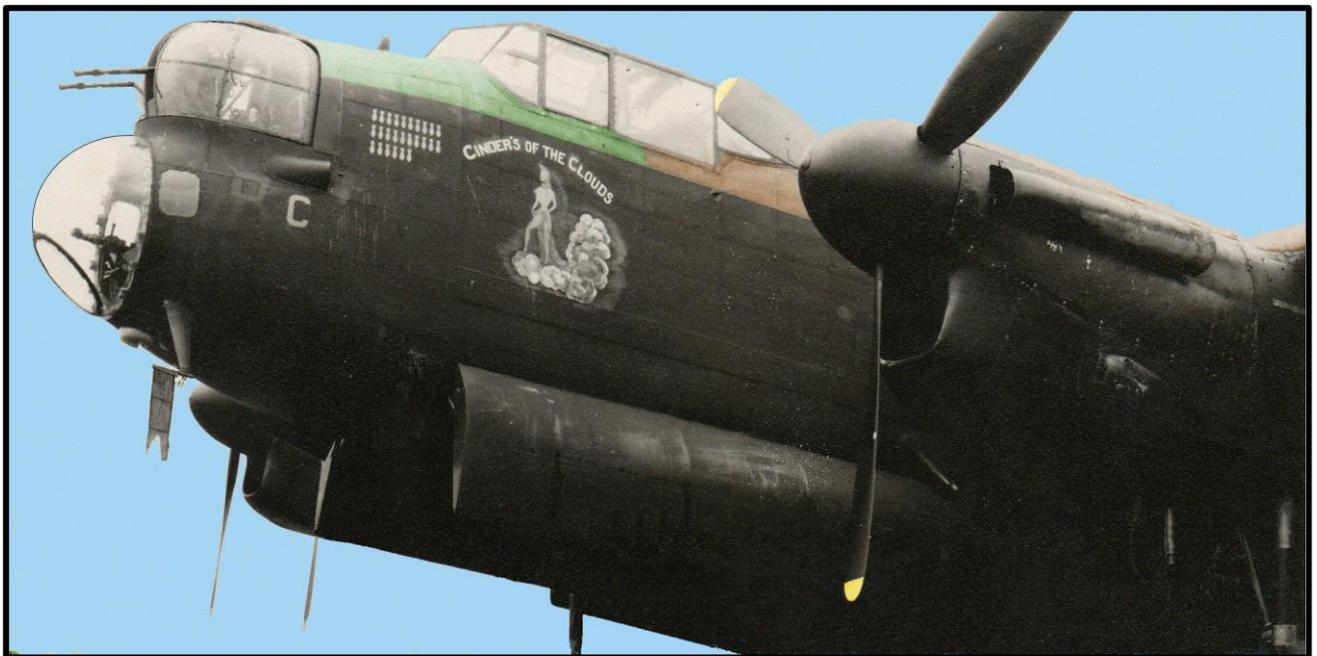


The History of Lancaster LL783

'Cinder's of the Clouds'

PG-C Charlie

RAF 619 Squadron



by Hugh South 2022

Introduction

RAF Bomber Command controlled the Royal Air Force's bomber Squadrons from 1936 to 1968. It played a central role in the strategic bombing of Germany in World War II supported by the USA Air Force. After the bombing of London by the German Luftwaffe and the Battle of Britain over South East England the government realised its bomber force was inadequate with Handley Page 'Hampden', Armstrong Whitworth 'Whitley', Short 'Stirling' and Handley Page 'Halifax' bombers. It put out for tender designs for a new breed of bomber that could fly faster and higher and could support a larger bomb load. The first of these to emerge was the Avro Manchester Bomber but its two Vulture engine design and engine failure rate soon curtailed its operational use. Roy Chadwick from Avro redesigned it for a longer wingspan and four Rolls Royce Merlin engines and it was an immediate success. It was called 'The Lancaster'

It was first manufactured in Chadderton in Cheshire by Avro and later at Woodford and Yeadon. Armstrong Whitworth at Whitley in Coventry and Metropolitan-Vickers at Trafford Park in Manchester were also major producers. Austin Motors of Longbridge and Vickers Armstrong of Castle Bromwich and Chester were minor producers. Even Canadian company Victory Aircraft built some under licence. In total 7377 were built but 3736 were lost in action. Lancasters had a crew of 7. Lancasters, Sterlings, Halifaxes and Wellingtons formed the majority of WW II Bomber Aircraft.

The first production Lancaster L7527 flew for the first time on 31st October 1941. No 44 Squadron at RAF Waddington received its first Lancaster in late 1941 and became the first squadron to convert completely to them.

From 1942 onward, the British bombing campaign against Germany became less restrictive and increasingly targeted industrial sites and the civilian manpower base essential for German war production. In total 364,514 operational sorties were flown, 1,030,500 tons of bombs were dropped and 8,325 aircraft lost in action. Bomber Command crews also suffered a high casualty rate: 55,573 were killed out of a total of 125,000 aircrew. A 44.4% KIA death rate. A further 8,403 men were wounded in action, and 9,838 became prisoners of war. The decision to blanket bomb Germany was controversial then and still is today but the story of WW II is however for others to tell.

Post war Jet power was developing fast and Bomber Command stood at the peak of its military power in the 1960s. The V bombers held the United Kingdom's nuclear deterrent with a supplemental force of Canberra light bombers.

Chapter One

Lancaster LL783

This aircraft was made at the Armstrong Whitworth factory at Whitley in Coventry. Among others this is the production record for the batch in which LL783 was included. In total they produced 1329 Lancasters

Type:	Avro Type 683 – Lancaster Mk. I
S/N Range:	LL740-LL758, LL771-LL813 , LL826-LL867, LL880-LL923, LL935-LL977, LM100-LM142, LM156-LM192, LM205-LM243 and LM257-LM296.
Data:	Part of the third production batch of 350 aircraft built by Sir W.G. Armstrong Whitworth Aircraft Ltd., Whitley, Coventry, being the third part of Contract No. 239/SAS/C4(C). LL740-LL758, LL771-LL813, LL826-LL867, LL880-LL923, LL935-LL977, LM100-LM142, LM156-LM192, LM205-LM243 and LM257-LM296. Deliveries commenced Nov 43; completed Aug 44 (average rate of production, approximately 10 aircraft per week).

Deliveries of this batch commenced in November 1943 and if you look at the Secker Crew Log Books you will see that they took delivery for Test flights on 1st February 1944 at 619 Squadron stationed at RAF Coningsby and took it for a fuel consumption test flight. It was not until 15th February that it was taken on its first official Operation bombing raid over Berlin in Germany (more later) but this delay was mostly on account of poor weather

619 Squadron was formed on 18th April 1943 as part of 5 Group Bomber Command at RAF Woodhall Spa in Lincolnshire. Its Sqn code was PG. The crew accommodation was at Thorpe Camp. On 9th Jan 1944 the Sqn moved to RAF Coningsby as 617 Sqn Dambusters took over at Woodhall Spa. Later, on the 17th April 1944 the Sqn moved for a third time to Dunholme Lodge. Although the crew of LL783 made Operations in other Lancasters from Woodhall Spa, the aircraft itself only flew from Coningsby and Dunholme Lodge. 44 Sqn (Rhodesia) was also based at Dunholme Lodge at the same time

Unlike the other Squadrons it did not have an official badge. One was designed but not adopted by the College of Heralds in time before the Squadron was disbanded. The unofficial badge is a Heron holding an Axe based on the Stork Coat of Arms of Hackthorne Hall at RAF Strubby where the Sqn was stationed from 28th Sept 1944. The Sqn actually underwent a further move to RAF Skellingthorpe from where it was disbanded on 19th July 1945



Of course LL783 wasn't the first PG-C. This particular one was the 2nd but not the last. The aircraft identity 'C' Charlie was replaced as one was 'struck off charge' (lost). There were usually 20 Lancasters in a Squadron all with PG and a different identification letter

Aircraft with PG-C markings were

ED839 Lost 09.10.43 LL783 Lost 06.06.44 ME846 Lost 22.06.44 JA847 Lost 03.12.44

The crews designed the individual Nose Art. It was part of being 'lucky' and averting disaster.

LL783 was named 'Cinder's of the Clouds'. Cinders for short. But during radio communications it responded as C-Charlie



There were 7 crew members

Pilot, Flight Engineer, Navigator

Bomb Aimer (Air Bomber & Front Gunner)

Wireless Operator, Mid Upper Gunner, Rear Gunner

They are listed in Operation Records in that order.

Crews generally banded/bonded together by natural selection during training, mainly if they got on well together

Most of the crews had an average age of 22 which meant that they all joined as volunteers when they were 20. They had to undergo RAF Basic Training before being posted to Air Training Schools (very often abroad) then to Operational Training Units and then to Operational Conversion Units for the type of aircraft they were to fly. The first LL783 crew seemed to have bonded at 17 OTU RAF Silverstone in July 1943 flying Wellington Bombers and both crews in this story at Heavy OCU 1661 based at RAF Winthorpe near Newark (now the Aircraft Museum and Showground) where they flew Manchester and Lancasters bombers

It's worth mentioning that all aircrew were considered Volunteers and enlisted from the RAF Volunteer Reserves (VR). They were given the Rank of Sergeant and were given a Sgt's pay. Many rose through the ranks as their careers developed. A pilot was usually considered an Officer but many started flying as Sergeants.

RAF Woodhall Spa, Lincolnshire

The crew below were posted to RAF Woodhall Spa on 22nd October 1943. Their first flight was on 11th November and their first Operation was over Berlin on 22nd November. However it is mentioned in passing because LL783 never flew from Woodhall Spa

For October 1943 the Operations Record Book for 619 Squadron records

"The following crews were posted to this unit during the month of October" (Woodhall Spa)

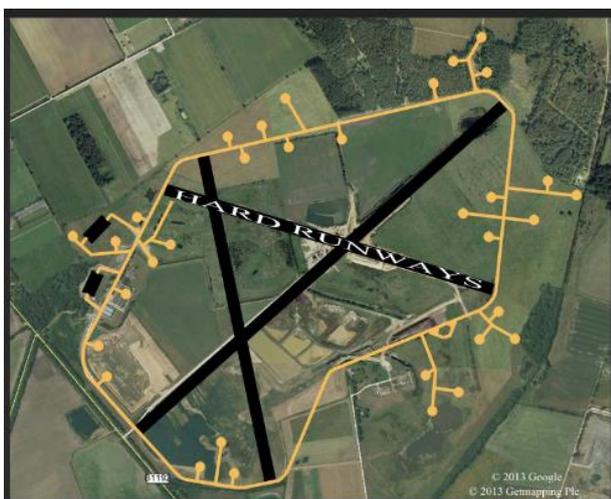
Among others crews ...

Their Common names and positions (in blue) were not listed in that record.

Pilot	158071	P/O Secker FG	Freddie	Pilot	Frederick Gordon
F/E	1850454	Sgt Gillespie JW	Jack (Giles)	Flight Engineer	Jack Wilson
Nav	1324970	Sgt Cave WJC	Jack	Navigator	William John Capstick
A/B	1391862	Sgt South JH	Sam	Air Bomber	John Hugh
W/Op	1119192	Sgt Currie WH	Bill	Wireless Operator	William Henry
MU/G	1601781	Sgt Hole DE	Doug	Rear Gunner	Douglas Edward
R/G	1318062	Sgt Shortt D	Don	Mid Upper Gunner	Donald

From 1661 Conversion Unit wef. 22/10/43 (with effect from)

So this was the team that went on to fly 29 Operations before their Tour of Duty ended (normally 30 see later) but crews were swapped around occasionally making up numbers. LL783 was handed over to Pilot Officer Freddie Secker's Crew for test flights on 1st February 1944 about 3 weeks after they had moved from Woodhall Spa to Coningsby. Between 22nd November and 1st February the crew had made seven other Operational Bombing sorties in various Lancasters from RAF Woodhall Spa. Photos of Woodhall Spa are scarce but here is a stylised one of the runway and another, a wildlife sanctuary as it is today after gravel extraction works



RAF Coningsby, Lincolnshire

February 1944

So now with a brand new Lancaster which turned out to be good to handle and respond they set about coordinating and honing their skills together on their new RAF Station at Coningsby.

On the 5th, 6th, 8th, 9th they went on High level Bombing practice runs combined with Photography, Formation and practice with the new radar system called 'Monica'. On the 11th and 12th they flew in another Lancaster before coming back to PG-C, Cinders of the Clouds permanently. The crew designed the 'Nose Art'.

Now I have been lucky in my previous researches and have managed to obtain copies of six out of the seven crew member's Flying Log Books. On the 15th Feb 1944 they each record their 8th Operational sortie as Operations or 'Op' Berlin and the Bomb Aimer records 10300 lbs of Bombs aboard. Of course there was a huge team of ground crew who prepared and repaired the aircraft before ever it could take off. For every aircraft there were probably only 6 (often less) ground crew responsible for servicing, repairing, refuelling, arming all three guns and loading the bombs. Fuel had to be calculated for the distance they were to fly and get them back. They mostly considered it their aircraft but on loan to the aircrew.

The mission Target was not released until hours before the take-off time. Briefing plans had to be made with Navigational compass bearings, Flight speed and height, Decoy flights, call signs, fighter escort, formations for the Bomber Stream. At the target zone there were different coloured target flares dropped in advance by Pathfinders. At what point did they drop their bomb-load? Then what route did they take to get back home? Of course the weather played a big part. Clear nights made them easy targets for German Fighters but made the target easier to find. Too much and too low cloud cover made the target visibility poor. Generally non-rainy but 50-60% cloudy nights were considered best. In a non-heated Lancaster flying at 20000 feet temperature could get to below minus 40°C. Warm clothing and many layers were needed especially for the Rear Gunner. Oxygen was also needed at that height.

Here are some comparisons of their log book entries for that mission in Cinders

15th Feb 1944 Lancaster 'C' LL783. Coningsby

N indicates a night time mission

Position	Name		Notes	Take Off	Flight Time
Pilot	P/O Secker FG	Op 8 Berlin	Crew		7.35 N
Flight Engineer	Sgt Gillespie JW	Op 8 Berlin		16.18	7.35 N
Navigator*	Sgt Cave WJC	Op 8 Operations Berlin		17.12	7.35 N
Air Bomber	Sgt South JH	Op 8 A/B Ops Berlin	10300 lbs		7.35 N
Wireless Operator	Sgt Currie WH	Op 8 Berlin		17.10	7.35 N
Rear Gunner	Sgt Hole DE	Op 8 Berlin		16.18	7.35 N
Mid-Upper Gunner	Sgt Shortt D	Records not known			

* One such entry line looks like this from Bill Cave Navigator

No. 619 SQUADRON, CONINGSBY					Time carried forward: 157-50 154-30	
Date	Hour	Aircraft Type and No.	Pilot	Duty	REMARKS (including results of bombing, gunnery, exercises, etc.)	
					Flying Times	
					Day	Night
15/2/44	1712	LL.783	P/O. SECKER.	NAVIGATOR.	OPERATIONS - BERLIN. (8) 7-35	

And another by Rear Gunner Doug Hole

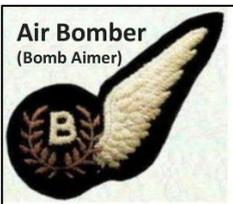
15.2.44	1618	LL. 783.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS BERLIN. 8.	7-35.
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So who were this crew? Here's a photo looking very relaxed, probably before they started Operations.

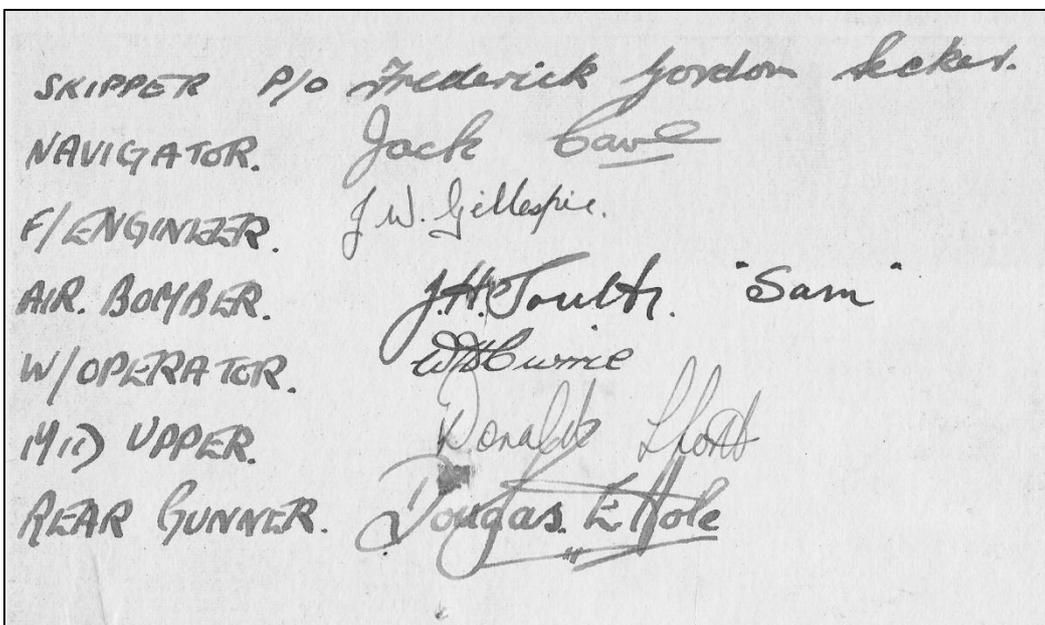


Back Row:- Jack Cave, Bill Currie, Sam South, Jack Gillespie Front Row:- Doug Hole, Freddie Secker, Don Shortt

The Pilot has a double wing badge (brevet). The other aircrew a single wing with a letter denoting their role....
 E Flight Engineer, N Navigator, B Bomb Aimer (Air Bomber), RO Radio/Wireless Operator, AG Air Gunner.



And to make this photo really personal they all signed it on the back



Obviously this is the story of one particular Lancaster LL783 so it's important to list all of its flights.... Sort of, like a diary. We'll do that as the story unfolds. The Operational Record Book (ORB) records that first PG-C flight (Crew Op 8).

15.2.44	Lancaster I	P/O. Secker.	P.C.	Bombing.	1712	0047	The primary target, BERLIN, was attacked and bombed from 21,500-ft. at 2138 hours. Weather conditions: 10/10ths, cloud. The target was identified by P.F.F. markers, bombs being dropped on green T.I.'s. P.F.F. markers appeared to be rather scattered. Thick pall of smoke seen over North-Eastern part of target area. Photographic failure due to photo flash failure.
	'C' LL783.	Sgt. Gillespie. J.W.	J.W.				
		Sgt. Cava. W.J.C.	R.R.R.L.I.N.				
		Sgt. South. J.H.					
		Sgt. Currie. W.H.					
		Sgt. Shortt. D.					
		Sgt. Hols. D.E.					

This is from Public Archives Catalogue Ref Air/21/2131 Operation Log Book 619 Squadron February 1944

PFF Markers are Pathfinder Flares TI's are Target Indicators 10/10th Clouds means 100% Cloud cover 1712 is Take-off time and 0047 was return landing the next day. February would have been very cold. Traditionally, after de-briefing the crew got a Bacon and Egg breakfast (despite wartime rationing) but not necessarily in that order as they were famished. They were tired, stressed and probably shell shocked but nevertheless happy to return safely. They did not fly again until 19th February

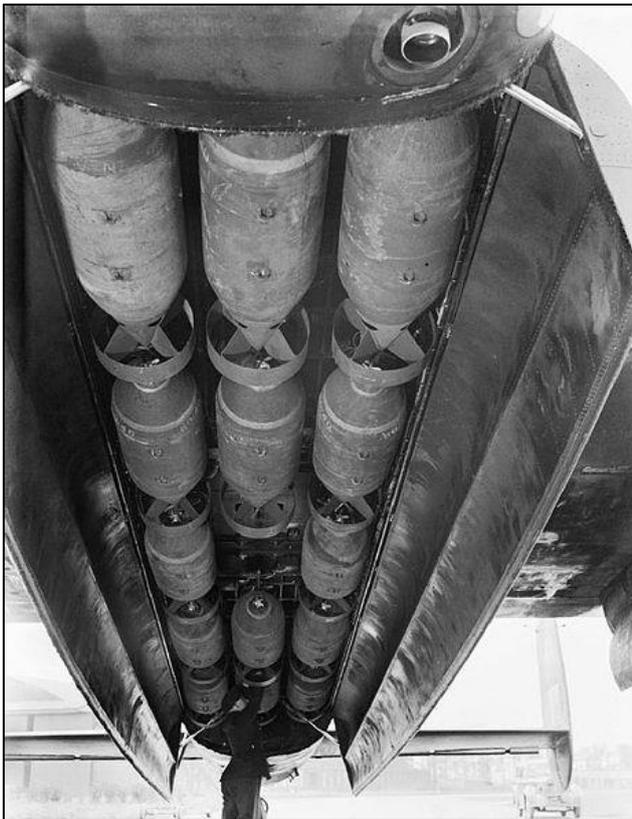
On that night.....20 Lancasters from 610 Sqn took off on this raid. PG-L had to Boomerang (turn back) 1 FTR (Failed to Return PG-O F/O Rumble). It was on this raid that P/O Roberts crash landed on return (see later) 20 Lancasters at once was the maximum recorded for 619 Sqn

Bomber Command records show that 891 Aircraft went on this raid. 561 Lancasters, 314 Halifaxes and 16 Mosquitos. The largest force sent to Berlin. 43 FTR. 26 Lancasters and 17 Halifaxes representing 4.8% casualties.

So what did they do in their few days off and before their next sortie? To start with the ground crew would have to overhaul the air craft. Check for flack and bullet damage, patch and repair the aluminium shell of the aircraft. Then there were the engines. Rolls Royce Merlin XX 22 or 24 versions needed maintenance and TLC. The Manchester Aircraft only had two Vulture engines and if one failed the other could not support flight. With the more powerful and more reliable Merlin engines even if two failed the aircraft could still 'limp' home. The Oxygen cylinders needed refilling and the on-board toilet needed 'service'. The three gun turrets need re-arming but the Bomb loads were not done until just before the next sortie. The Aircrew needed to check that everything was to their satisfaction. After their professional responsibilities then maybe there was time for a little relaxation. They had a reputation of 'over doing the alcohol quotas' in the pubs around eg Bluebell at Tattershall Thorpe or The Still, The Peacock and Queen of India in Boston. They were after all just young men.

So 19th February arrives, they have their C.O Briefing the Target is Leipzig. The Ground crew immediately check the bomb load and type requirement and refuel the aircraft according to the flying distance.

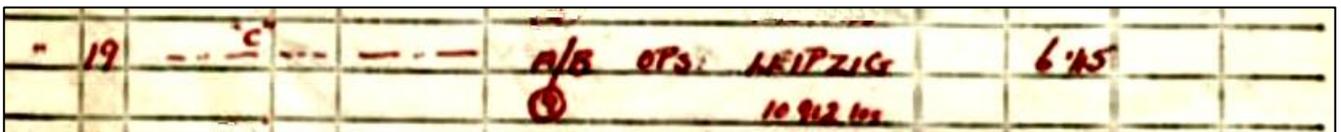




Bomb loading and refuelling by Ground Crew



This time The Air Bomber Sam South records the flight. It was their 9th Operation with 10,912 lbs of Bombs



And the ORB records

19.2.44	Lancaster I 'C' LL 783	P/O. Secker. F.O. Sgt. Gillepsie. J.W. Sgt. Cove. W.J.O. Sgt. South. J.H. Sgt. Currie. W.H. Sgt. Sherriff. D. Sgt. Hole. D.H.	F.O. Bombing.	0017	0752	The primary target, LEIPZIG, was attacked and bombed from 25,500-ft. at 0418 hours. Weather conditions 7/10ths cloud; tops about 6,000-ft. The target was identified by red and green F.I.'s and wanganul flares, bombs being dropped on single green C.I. P.P.F. markers very concentrated at the opening of attack; later seemed to be spasmodic. Large fires seen in target area together with smaller fires; glowing red. Photographic failure due to weather conditions.
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19 619 Lancasters took off on this raid. The attack was successful. All returned

Their next Operation No 10 was the very next night 20th February. Barely enough time to catch up on sleep. In fact here are the next six entries from Pilot Freddie Secker's Logbook

FEB 15	LANCASTER LL 783	SELF	CREW	OPS BERLIN NO 8
FEB 19	LANCASTER LL 783	SELF	CREW	OPS LEIPZIG NO 9
FEB 20	LANCASTER LL 783	SELF	CREW	OPS STUTTGART NO 10
FEB 24	LANCASTER LL 783	SELF	CREW	OPS SCHWEINFURT NO 11
FEB 25	LANCASTER LL 783	SELF	CREW	OPS AUGSBURG NO 12
FEB 28	LANCASTER LL 783	SELF	CREW	N.F.T.

March 1944

The 1st March was their 13th Operation was to Stuttgart. Flt Engineer Jack 'Giles' Gillespie's log book recalls .

Date	Hour	Aircraft Type and No.	Pilot	Duty	REMARKS (including results of bombing, gunnery, exercises, etc.)	Flying Times	
						Day	Night
1-2/3/44	2325	LA 783	P/O SECKER	ENG/ENG.	OPS - STUTTGART (13)		8-35

And as verified by Wireless Operator Bill Currie's Log Book

Date	Hour	Aircraft Type and No.	Pilot	Duty	REMARKS (including results of bombing, gunnery, exercises, etc.)	Flying Times	
						Day	Night
1/3/44	2330	LANCASTER LA 783	P/O Secker	W/Op	Ops to Stuttgart (13)		8-35

The ORB also records this sortie

Date	Aircraft	Pilot	Remarks	Time	Remarks	
1.3.44	Lancaster I 'C' LA. 783.	P/O. Secker. Sgt. Gillespie. J.W. Sgt. Caws. W.J.C. Sgt. South. J.H. P/O. Currie. W.H. P/O. Sbertt. D. P/O. Hole. D.E.	Bombing. STUTTGART.	2325	0759	The primary target, STUTTGART, was attacked and bombed from 21,000-ft. at 0314 hours. Weather conditions: 10/10ths clouds; tops at 10,500-ft. The target was identified by green V.I.'s seen at 0237 hours followed by red T.I.'s and waggam (flares) bombs being dropped in centre of four waggam flares. P.F.F. marking good at first, but trailed off badly. A large explosion was seen at 0320 hours. Photographic failure due to weather conditions.

16 619 Lancasters took off on this raid. Bombing was not totally accurate and woodland was burned. All returned

The Crew must have had some time off for 2 weeks now because their next flight together is not recorded until 14th March. On research though it turns out that the first week stand-down was due to the moon period. Also some contests in Football and Clay pigeon shooting were organised. Evidently the Pilots beat the Air gunners at shooting. The Squadron also started fitting a Mid-Under Gun on some aircraft to counter the upward firing cannons of the German Night Fighters. They made one flight on the 10th March involving 10 aircraft combined with others from 54 Base (Coningsby, Woodhall Spa and Metheringham) on an Operation to bomb Marshalling Yards at Chateauroux near Tours. The Secker crew were not on this sortie. However on the 14th test flights are recorded with 3 other Lancasters before setting off on Opn 14 to Stuttgart that night. I'll show it but it's not really the story of LL783. Again, Bill Currie's Logbook entry. It's funny how Bill records the High Level Bombing practice as a 'good sleep'.

14/3/44	1100	LANCASTER JB 134	P/O Secker	W/Op	Air to Sea Firing	50	50
14/3/44	1900	LANCASTER LM 378	G/Capt E. Evans	W/Op	Circuits & Landings		1-25
14/3/44	0018	LANCASTER JB 134	P/O Secker	W/Op	H. L. B. (good sleep)		2-20

Doug Hole RG also records these. Note the change of Pilot for the 1900 hours take off

14-3-44	1100.	JB. 134.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	AIR/SEA. FIRING 1000. ROUNDS ⁴⁷ NO STOPP'S	50.	
14-3-44	1900.	LM 378.	G/C EVANS-EVANS.	REAR GUNNER.	LOCAL FLYING. CIRCUITS + LANDINGS		1-25.
14-3-44	0018.	JB 134.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	HIGH LEVEL BOMBING. D.C.O.		2-20.

So now we are on 15th March when the target was Stuttgart again and Operation number 14 for the crew Bill Currie Wireless Operator records

15/3/44	1907	LANCASTER LA 783	P/O Secker	W/Op	Ops to Stuttgart (14)		8-15
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And also Bomb Aimer Sam South records with 10, 210 lbs of Bombs

"	15	LL 783	A/B OPS: STUTTGART	8.15
			(14)	10210 lbs

And the Pilot Freddie Secker

MARCH 15	LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	CREW	OPS STUTTGART N°14
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The ORB records the Squadron sortie

15.3.44	Lancaster I	P/O. Secker, F.G.	Bombing.	1907	0320	The primary target, STUTTGART, was attacked and bombed from 23,000-Ft. at 2333 hours. Weather conditions 1/100th cloud; clear over target area. The target was identified by Redburn marking; also visually; bombed N.P.L. of single red T.I. Ground markings good; later wanganal flares seemed rather scattered - mostly N.E. of target. Large fires seen burning North and South of target. Photographic failure due to weather conditions.
	'C' LL 783.	Sgt. Gillspie, J.W.	S.T.U.T.G.A.R.T.			
		Sgt. Cave, W.J.C.				
		Sgt. South, J.H.				
		P/S. Currie, W.H.				
		P/S. Shurtliff, D.				
		P/S. Hale, D.B.				

16 619 Lancasters took off on this raid. All returned but an interesting story on this raid was that Australian Pilot P.O Kim Roberts Lancaster LM378 PG-J Jig was attacked by a JU88 Fighter. He went into a corkscrew escape but all the gunner's guns jammed simultaneously. Rear Gunner Australian Sgt Gill King managed to free one gun and shot down the Fighter. For this action Kim was awarded the DFC and Gill the DFM. This crew is very much involved in this story later so a copy of this event is recorded in F/Eng Jack Forrest's Logbook

Log Book of Jack Forrest					
16.3.44	LM 378	P/O. ROBERTS	ENGINEER	OPS STUTTGART	05.15.
				10612 lbs	
				20000'	
				PORT RUDDER BRIDLEY DAMAGED BY F1A	DFM
				7088 F1A SHOT DOWN BY R/G 1/ST KING	DFC

The Secker crew's 15th Operation was the bombing of Frankfurt on 18th March 1944
Pilot Freddie Secker records

MARCH 18	LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	SGT HICKLING CREW	OPS FRANKFURT N°15
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This time with a Sgt Hickling on board as an extra to full crew as a 2nd Air Bomber, probably training. Sgt Hickling is not listed before today but his next Operation was on 22nd March on JB134 PG-G with Pilot Aitkens crew to Frankfurt. He unfortunately FTR on the Gennervilliers raid on 9th May 1944

Navigator Jack Cave records

18-19/3/44	1850 L.L. 783	P/O SECKER	"	OPERATIONS - FRANKFURT (15)	5-40
				TOTAL TIME ...	159-10 219-30

The ORB records this

18.3.44	Lancaster I	P/O. Secker, F.G.	Bombing.	1090	0033	The primary target, FRANKFURT, was attacked and bombed from 23,000-Ft. at 2359 hours. Weather conditions: Clear, with some haze. The target was identified by P.P.P. markers; bombed N.P.L. of several green T.I's. Results of bombing were not observed. Photographic failure due to cloud and T.I's.
	'C' LL 778.	Sgt. Gillspie, J.W.	F.R.A.N.K.F.U.R.T.			
		Sgt. Cave, W.J.C.				
		Sgt. South, J.H.				
		P/S. Currie, W.H.				
		P/S. Shurtliff, D.				
		P/S. Hale, D.B.				
		Sgt. Hickling, (2nd A/Bomber.)				

15 619 Lancasters took off on this raid. All returned (one returned early with engine trouble PG-D P/O Buttar)

One thing I've noticed is that the ORB now records some of the crew as Flight Sergeants. It's not always consistent but as they gained experience and others were killed in action (KIA) then the existing personnel moved up through the ranks. This was also due to operational merit. Keep an eye on the ORBs that follow.

Time to show off the Ground Crew with the Aircrew. (Colourized)

The Ground crew would have remained with the aircraft if the flying crew changed.



Each aircraft theoretically had 6 Ground staff (4 engine fitters and 2 riggers but very often only 3), So the picture is a combination of several ground crews with the Secker flight aircrew.

The Secker crew's 16th Operation was four nights later on 22nd March and with good weather another successful attack was made on Frankfurt with no 619 losses

The ORB records this

22.3.44	Lancaster I	P/O Secker, P.G.	Bombing.	1859	0106	The target was identified primary target, FRANKFURT, was attacked and bombed from 23,000-ft. at 2159 hours. Weather conditions: 5/10ths cloud at 4,000-ft. The target was identified by red P.I.'s and winged flares; bombed N.P.I. of two red P.I.'s seen in bomb-sight. Believed to have seen built-up area in light of photo-flash. Considered to be a good raid. Photographs failure due to cloud and fire-flashes.
	'C' LL 783.	Sgt. Gillespie, J.W.	FRANKFURT.			
		Sgt. Cava, W.J.C.				
		Sgt. South, J.H.				
		P/S. Currie, W.H.				
		P/S. Shortt, D.				
		P/S. Hiles, D.R.				

18 619 Lancasters made this Operation and the attack was considered an excellent result

Jack Gillespie's log book also shows this as Opn 16

22/3/44	18-59	LL 783	1/6 SECKER	FTR/ENG	OPS. FRANKFURT(16)	6-10.
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On the night of 24th March, despite very poor take-off weather another raid was made to the 'Big City' Berlin. PG-E (F/L Moore) Boomeranged due to engine trouble. PG-L (P/O Thompson) FTR. Conditions were not good with very high winds making navigation difficult. Many were blown off track in heavily defended areas. There was no cloud but they had to bomb down wind. However, bombing resulted in a 6 mile fire in Berlin so fairly successful.

This was the Secker crew's 17th Operation and the ORB records it

24.3.44	Lancaster I	P/O Secker, P.G.	Bombing.	1829	0205	The primary target, BERLIN, was attacked and bombed from 23,000-ft. at 2259 hours. Weather conditions: 5-7/10ths cloud. The target was identified by red and green P.I.'s and red and yellow winged flares, bombs being dropped on fires. Scattered fires were seen over a large area. Photographic failure due to aircraft not being level - no flash. Failed at 0205 hours.
	'C' LL 783.	Sgt. Gillespie, J.W.	BERLIN.			
		Sgt. Cava, W.J.C.				
		Sgt. South, J.H.				
		P/S. Currie, W.H.				
		P/S. Shortt, D.				
		P/S. Hiles, D.R.				

And Doug Hole's Logbook entry confirms

24-3-44	1820	L.L.783	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS	BERLIN.	LANDED SEETHING USAAF (17).	7.45.
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However landing conditions in the UK must have also been bad as LL783 landed at US base at Seething which is 9 miles S.E of Norwich

The next day they completed their return to Coningsby Base (Doug Hole)

25-3-44	1425	L.L.783	P/O SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	SEETHING - BASE.		30.	5.10
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On the 26th March they completed their 18th mission with a bombing raid on Essen. 13 aircraft took off. One returned with a suspected fire in the bomb bay. They jettisoned their bombs and returned (F/S Paterson PG-D) However there was so much cloud and the general opinion was that bombing was not very concentrated.

26.3.44	Lancaster I	P/O. Secker.	F.G.	Bombing.	1941	0047	The primary target, ESSEN, was attacked and bombed from 22,500-ft. at 2204 hours. Weather conditions: 10/10ths. cloud. The target was identified by P.P.P. markers, bombs being dropped on a single red T.I. We were too early in the attack to observe any results. Handled by Photographic failure due to weather conditions.
	'C' LL.783.	Sgt. Gillespie, J.W.		R.H.B.M.V.			
		Sgt. Gave, W.J.C.					
		Sgt. South, J.H.					
		F/S. Gurney, V.H.					
		F/S. Short, D.					
		F/S. Hole, D.E.					

Freddie Secker's entry reads

MON 26	I LANCASTER	LL783	SELF	CREW	OP'S	ESSEN	NO 18
--------	-------------	-------	------	------	------	-------	-------

There were no 619 losses

On one sortie (date not known) Pilot Phil Buttar recorded in his diary that "Freddie Secker had a cookie hit his leading edge one night along with some incendiaries that stuck in his wing. Had he have been 3 feet further ahead BOOM" Lucky escape !

At this point one of the regular crew members sustained knee injuries playing football. Sam South was treated first at Station Sick Quarters and later at RAF Rauceby where he had cartilages removed in both knees. He was unfit to fly in the cramped Bomb Aimer space for some time and consequently missed the last 11 of the Secker Crew's Tour of Duty. As he was my father, I thought I would show his RAF record and his Logbook entries. He always said he was disappointed but apart from showing me the scars on either side of both knees, he wouldn't speak about the operational side of bombing.

His logbook record records the Essen raid as Opn 18 but then adds "Sick in SSQ" which is Station Sick Quarters. I will show his recovery progress as it coincides with other crew Ops and of course his replacements.

MAR 26	I LANC	CALL 783	P/O SECKER	A/B. OPS: ESSEN		5-10	
				(8) MUS: PARAMATTA.			
				SICK IN SSQ.			

Musical Paramatta was a term describing the use of Target Indicators with Oboe Radar (hence musical)

Here's the picture of the Squadron Football team



Back row: Bill Currie 5th from left, Sam South 6th from left. Who's that 2nd from left ?

A Test flight was carried out on 29th March. From Freddie Secker's logbook he notes the two new crew stands-ins as training was necessary

MARCH 29	LANCASTER	LL783	SELF	LAC CAVES F/O BUTLER CREW	AIR TEST.
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A variety of Bomb Aimers now filled in the vacant position

Their 19th Operation was on 30th to Nuremburg (Nurnberg) on the last operation of the month. 17 619 Lancasters were involved. However PG-E (P/O Whitely) had radio failure and returned early. PG-T (F/O Thompson) did not take off as the Radio Operator became ill while taxiing out. There were a lot of German night fighters about and PG-S (Sgt Parker) was attacked at 20,000ft and two starboard engines were disabled. The pilot dived, lost the fighter and limped home to RAF Woodbridge. Alas he crash landed and the Lancaster caught fire but fortunately the crew escaped without injury.

Here is the ORB entry for that night

30.3.44	Lancaster I	P/O Secker. P.G. Sgt. Gillespie. J.W. Sgt. Cave. V.J.U. W/O Butler. P.H. P/S Currie. W.H. P/S Sherriff. D. P/O Hammond. J.	Bombing.	2226	0601	The primary target, NUREMBERG, was attacked and bombed from 22,000-ft. at 0122 hours. Weather conditions: 10/10th cloud; tops at 10,000-ft. The target was identified by three wanganul flares, bombs being dropped on these flares. Little P.P.P. making seen, but judging from glow through cloud, assumed there to be a reasonable concentration of fire. Photographic failure due to cloud and faint fire tracks.
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Note Hammond replacing Doug Hole and Butler as Bomb Aimer (he was on the 29th March test flight)

Bill Currie's logbook recalls

30/3/44	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/O	O/O Nuremburg (19)
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The Squadron record for March recalls 9 Operations 124 Sorties 1 Aircraft missing 3 Early returns. The success index was 95% and the casualty rate only 0.8%

April 1944

Operation 20 was to Toulouse

5.4.44.	Lancaster I	P/O, Secker, F.G.	Bombing.	2024.	0350	The primary target, TOULOUSE, was attacked and bombed from 15,000-ft. at 0025 hours. Weather conditions: Clear, with good visibility. The target was identified by a single red spot fire, which was bombed. Target area covered by smoke, the red spot fire being partially obscured. Many bombs seen to explode near to marker. An explosion was seen in target area. Considered to be an excellent raid. Photographs showed shrapnel five miles from 130°. Landed at Wellesbourne Mountford at 0350 hours.
	'C' LL783.	Sgt. Gillespie, J.W.	T O U L O U S E			
		Sgt. Cave, W.J.C.				
		P/L Walmsley, P.S.E.				
		P/S Currie, W.H.				
		P/S Shortt, D.				
		P/S Hole, D.B.				

Note Walmsley as Bomb Aimer. One aircraft failed to take off due to failed generators and one returned early due to Radio failure. The raid was successful but the weather at Coningsby on return was very poor and most landed away from base. LL783 was diverted to Chipping Warden

The Pilots Log book entry shows

APRIL	5	I LANCASTER LL783	SELF	F/L WALMSLEY CREW	OPS TOULOUSE AIR FIELD N°20
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As does Giles Gillespie as he recorded Chipping Warden as 12 OTU located near Banbury, Northamptonshire

Date	Hour	Target No.	Pilot	Duty	REMARKS (including results of bombing, gunnery, exercises, etc.)	Day	Night
5/4/44	2025	LL783	P/O SECKER	FLT/ENG.	OPS. TOULOUSE. (20) LANDED. 12 OTU.		7-25

That night 15 aircraft from 619 were detailed for Ops but PG-N (F/L Morrison) had radio generator failure and PG-W (P/O Griffiths) returned early due to Radio failure.

On 6th April they returned to base. Freddie Secker records

APRIL	6	I LANCASTER LL783	SELF	F/L WALMSLEY CREW	RETURN CHIPPING WARDEN - BASE
APRIL	8	I LANCASTER LL783	SELF	UP HOWARTH CREW	BASE - FORD
APRIL	8	I LANCASTER LL783	SELF	UP HOWARTH CREW	FORD - BASE

And so does Jack Cave

Jack Cave							
Date	Time	Target	Pilot	Duty	Remarks	Day	Night
6/4/44	1354	LL.783.	P/O. SECKER.	"	CHIPPING WARDEN - BASE.	1-10	
8/4/44	1142	LL.783.	P/O SECKER.	"	BASE - FORD.	1-00	
8/4/44	1613	LL.783.	P/O. SECKER.	"	FORD - BASE.	-55	

In between the Toulouse Operation and the next Operation two non-ops flight were made. That was to RAF Ford and back on the same day. This was located on the south coast near Littlehampton and it may be indicative (no proof) that they went to pick up other 619 crew from the diverted Toulouse operation Both of those flights are recorded above.

They did not fly with the rest of the squadron on 10th April in which 18 Lancasters bombed the Marshalling Yards at Tours. One boomeranged but a successful raid overall. This was an offensive to bomb the German Rail network and this action begins to occur more often.

Operation 21 was Aachen, again rail marshalling yards

11.4.44	Lancaster I	P/O. Secker.	P.G.	Bombing.	2020	0036	The primary target, AACHEN, was attacked and bombed from 20,000-24. at 22.15 hours. Weather conditions: Clear. The target was identified by several red T.I.'s. Bombs being dropped in centre of three red T.I.'s. Appeared to be a good raid, marking and bombing being well concentrated. A.C.I. u/s from take-off. Bombed at 1,000-ft. above height briefed due to revt and boost surge which was eliminated at this height. Photos showed faint ground detail, cloud, and fires.
	'C' LL.781.	Sgt. Gillespie. J.W.					
		Sgt. Dave. W.J.O.	A.A.C.H.E.N.				
		P/L Walmsley. P.S.P.					
		P/L Black. F.					
		P/S. Smart. D.					
		P/S. Hole. D.B.					

Note Walmsley as Bomb Aimer and Black as Wireless Operator

Freddie was given a Green Endorsement on this Operation. On take-off his airspeed indicator which was needed for take-off speed went wrong. However displaying fine airmanship he took off successfully. Jack Gillespie (F-Eng) fixed it in flight and the mission was completed.

Doug Hole's Log Book Entry shows as his 20th mission because he missed one but it was the crews 21st sortie.

Doug Hole	11.4.44. 2020	LL.783.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS AACHEN*	(20).	4:15.
	13.4.44. 1102	LL.783.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	N.F.T AND A.I. TEST. - LOCAL.		:55.
	17.4.44. 1404	LL.783.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	CONINGSBY TO DUNHOLME LODGE		:20.

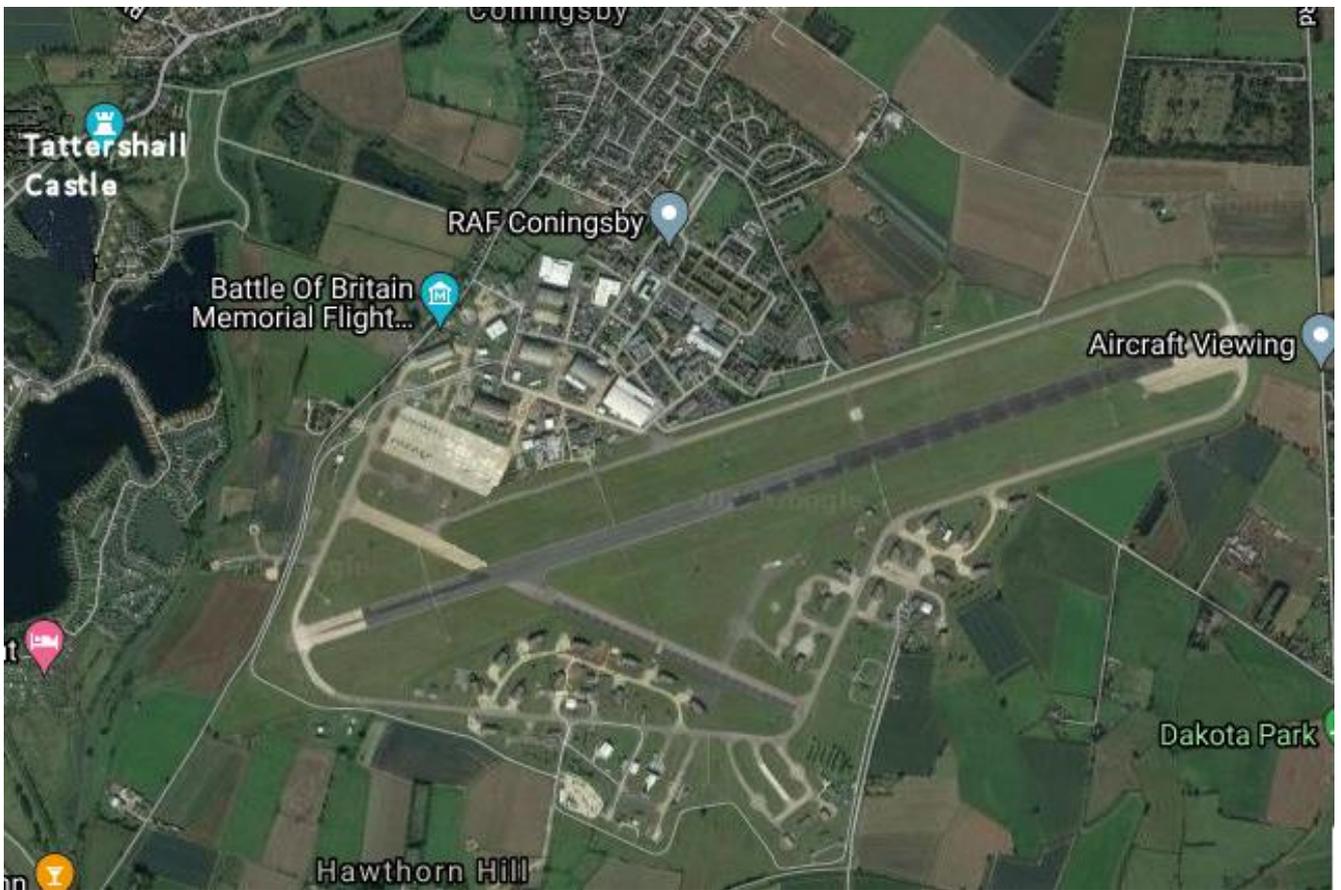
16 619 aircraft attacked marshalling Yards at Aachen. Not much opposition but PG-W (S/L McGilvray) and PG-Q (F/L Moore) FTR . These were 'B' Flight Commander and Deputy respectively on the same night.

However that was their last Operational flight from what they considered was their most comfortable of RAF stations. Conditions at Coningsby were good compared to their other postings. On the 13th April Doug Hole records a Normal Flight Test (above) and then the move to Dunholme Lodge on the 17th. The injured footballer re-joined them for that flight but I think as a passenger. More of him later.

Here are two pictures of Coningsby as it is today with Tattershall Village just off centre left.

It is still an active Operational RAF Station today and houses modern Fighters and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight (BBMF)



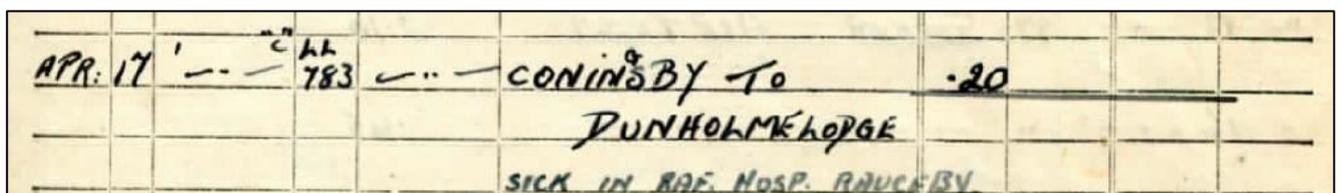


RAF Dunholme Lodge, Lincolnshire

This was an even more remote posting than Woodhall Spa. An advanced party set off with their personal kit on the 16th April 1944 and most of the Sqn's equipment and the aircraft flew there on the 17th.

Dunholme Lodge was also occupied by 44 Rhodesia Sqn. The nearby village of Welton only had two pubs but Lincoln was a better proposition than Boston

The injured footballer did fly with the crew but only 4 days later was transferred to RAF Rauceby Hospital for his knee operations. That must have been the shortest posting ever as he never re-joined them at Dunholme Lodge as his discharge date indicates 1st June. There was no key hole surgery in those days and I suspect any surgery was a bit 'brutal'. Incidentally Rauceby Hospital specialised in wartime plastic surgery procedures.



His RAF record shows

53/43	619 Sqn	22-10-43	
4/44	Admitted RAF Hosp. Rauceby	21-4-44	
	discharged " " "	1-6-44	
4/44	52 Base M/E	27-3-44	66/44

RAF Dunholme Lodge

The old runways are superimposed on a modern map as very little remains today



The very next day 18th, they were on their 22nd Operation. The ORB shows the target as the Marshalling Yards at Juvisy, a rail junction 20 miles south of Paris

10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100	Lancaster I	P/O. Becker.	H.O.	Bombing.	2029	G156	The primary target, JUVISY, was attacked and bombed from 8,000-ft. at 2354 hours. Weather conditions: No clouds; a lot of smoke haze. The target was identified by green T.I.s, flashes and red spot fires. Bombs being dropped in centre of five or six red spot fires. Haze and town seen by light from photo flashes. If markers were right it should have been a good raid. Plotted aiming point. Photographs showed ground detail.
	201 15, 283	Sgt. Gillespie, J.W.	V.J.C.	JUVISY			
		P/O. Kennedy, V.F.					
		P/O. Currie, W.H.					
		P/S. Shurtliff, D.					
		P/S. Hols, D.Z.					

Note Kennedy as Bomb Aimer

Bill Currie records this

17/4/44 1104	LANCASTER P/O Secker	W/af	Coming by to Dunholme Lodge	20
11 783				
No 619	SQDRN DUNHOLME LODGE			
18/4/44 2030	LANCASTER P/O Secker	W/af	OPS Juvisy - Paris (21)	5 05
11 783				
20/4/44 1150	LANCASTER P/O Secker	W/af	N.F.T	55
11 783				

14 Aircraft took off and all returned safely. However P/O Warner in PG-R was taken ill shortly before take-off and P/O John Whitely took the Lancaster on the sortie. It was a successful raid.

On the 20th they flew a normal flying test and on the same night they also flew their 23rd Operation. Again to marshalling yards but at La Chapelle also near Paris. Another successful raid with 15 aircraft from 619 but P/O French in PG-D FTR and P/O K. Roberts in PG-J was unable to take off due to faulty brakes on the taxi run out.

20.4.44	Lancaster I	P/O. Secker. F.G.	Bombing.	2145	0256	The primary target, LA CHAPELLE, was attacked and bombed from 8,000-Ft. at 0033 hours. Weather conditions: 7/10ths cloud at 1-5,000-ft. The target was identified by red spot fires, bombs being dropped on a single red spot fire. Considerable fires and smoke observed in target area. A large explosion seen at 0036 hours. Considered a fairly successful attack. Plotted aiming point. Photographs showed ground detail.
	'C' LL.783.	Egt. Gillespie. J.W.	LA CHAPELLE.			
		Sgt. Cave. F.J.G.				
		F/S. Smithson. D.L.				
		F/S. Currie. W.H.				
		F/S. Shortt. D.				
		F/S. Hoie. D.B.				

Note Smithson as Bomb Aimer

20/4/44.2145	LL.783	P/O SECKER.	Jack Cave	OPERATIONS. - LA CHAPELLE, NR. PARIS. (23)	5-10
22/4/44.1715	LL.783	P/O SECKER.	"	AIR TEST.	-20

Jack Cave also records this as his 23rd Operation. A normal Flight test was carried out on the 22nd.

This picture was taken while my father was in Hospital. I have taken a liberty of photo editing him in on the right and colourising the photo. I think he deserves to be there



So moving on from my father's part in this, the rest of the crew continued with a Flight test on the 22nd April and on the same day their 24th mission to Brunswick. Pilot Freddie Secker's log book shows this

APRIL 21	LANCASTER LL 783	SELF	F/S AUMELL CREW	AIR TEST
APRIL 22	LANCASTER LL 783	SELF	Sgt SMITHSONS CREW	OP'S BRUNSWICK N°24

And the ORB

22.4.44	Lancaster I	P/O. Secker. F.G.	Bombing.	2249	0553	The primary target, BRUNSWICK, was attacked and bombed from 22,000-Ft. at 0502 hours. Weather conditions: Ground haze and smoke. The target was identified by a red spot fire and a green F.I., bombs being dropped on a single red spot fire. Bombing good around red spot fire, but scattered around green F.I. One large fire seen in target area, and two others starting. Attack considered fair. Target not plotted. Photographs failure due to target conditions.
	'C' LL.783.	Egt. Gillespie. J.W.	BRUNSWICK.			
		Sgt. Cave. F.J.G.				
		F/S. Aumell. A.D. (CAN R. 141507)				
		F/S. Currie. W.H.				
		F/S. Shortt. D.				
		F/S. Hoie. D.B.				

Note Aumell Canadian AF as Bomb Aimer

14 Lancasters from 619Sqn took part and all returned safely. PG-G (F/S Wadsworth) was attacked by a JU88 night fighter but the crew managed to shoot it down. As aircraft developments evolved luckily this Lancaster had been fitted with a mid-under gun. This was to counter the night fighter's ability to sneak up under the Lancasters with upward facing guns. A newer aircraft radar detecting system called 'Lulu' was also being trialled and this detected the approach of the German fighter. Being warned of its approach the pilot corkscrewed left but at the same moment the fighter activated his guns. Only one cannon shell inflicted serious damage to the port elevator and splinters damaged the port fin. It was at this point the gunners shot the night fighter. Sgt Wadsworth limped back to Dunholme Lodge but the shock of landing caused the elevator to completely snap. Sgt Wadsworth was subsequently awarded a DFC and his commission. Sgt Brady and the two gunners, Sgts Maltby and Joy received DFMs and promotion to F/Sgts .

The ORB for them is shown purely out of interest

22.4.44	Lancaster III	Sgt. Wadsworth. D.	Bombing.	2311	0553	The primary target, BRUNSWICK, was attacked and bombed from 20,500-ft. at 0204 hours. Weather conditions: No cloud; some haze. The target was identified by flares, red spot fires, and green T.I.'s, bombs being dropped on green T.I.'s in the midst of flares. Attack aimed rather scattered with a large patch of fire going well. Target not plotted. Photographic failure due to target conditions.
	'G' JR 134.	P/O. Shenton. A.G.	BRUNSWICK.			
		Sgt. Bengpton. J.				
		Sgt. Brady. H.				
		Sgt. Maltby. J.K.				
		Sgt. Joy. P.K.				

Jack Cave's Logbook entry for the 24th April records a Normal Flight test and their 25th Operation on the same night, this time to Munich. However this was not in LL783 and is mentioned only in interest

24/4/44 1213.	L.L.778	P/O. SECKER.	"	N.F.T.	-25.
24/4/44 2044	L.L.778	P/O. SECKER	NAVIGATOR.	OPERATIONS - MUNICH. (25)	10-10

The Operation that same night was in 'Sister manufactured' Lancaster LL778 PG-A.

24.4.44	Lancaster I	P/O. Secker. F.G.	Bombing.	2045	0655	The primary target, MUNICH, was attacked and bombed from 15,000-ft. at 0450 hours. Weather conditions: No cloud, but ground haze. The target was identified flares and red spot fires, and confirmed visually of river and built-up area, bombs being dropped on a single red spot fire, marking good, and bombing excellent. Concentrated fires around markers, visible 100 miles away. Photographic failure due to fire-tracks.
	'A' LL.778.	Sgt. Gillespie. J.W.	M U N I C H			
		Sgt. Cave. V.L.C.				
		P/O. Kennedy. V.P.				
		P/S. Currie. W.H.				
		P/S. Shortt. D.				
		P/S. Hede. D.E.				

Note. Kennedy as Bomb Aimer

15 aircraft took part and it was regarded as successful but PG-X (F/O Schofield) FTR.

On the 26th April their 26th Operation was to Schweinfurt again. The forecast winds were hopelessly inaccurate. Many were blown off course and ended up in heavily defended areas. 13 aircraft took part but PG-W (F/L Gunzi) and PG-S (F/S Whinfield) FTR

The ORB shows

26.4.44	Lancaster I	P/O. Secker. F.G.	Bombing.	2120	0628	The primary target, SCHWEINFURT, was attacked and bombed from 17,500-ft. at 0240 hours. Weather conditions: No cloud; some haze and smoke. The target was identified by flares, and red and green spot fires, bombs being dropped in the centre of a group of red spot fires, marking not up to usual standard. If centre group of reds were accurate, should have been an effective raid. Photographic failure due to target conditions.
	'G' LL.783.	Sgt. Cave. V.L.C.	SCHWEINFURT.			
		P/S. Aumell.A.D. (GAM:LL 141507)				
		P/S. Currie. W.H.				
		P/S. Shortt. D.				
		Sgt. Woodcock. J.H.				

Note Aumell as Bomb Aimer and Woodcock as Rear Gunner

Jack Gillespie recalls

26/4/44 2120	LL 783	P/O SECKER.	"	OPS. SCHWEINFURT. (26)	9-05
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The 28th Operation saw their last flight for April on the 28th. It started with a Flying test for the day and then the Operation that same night was to bomb an aircraft factory at Kjeller near Oslo.

Jack Gillespie's logbook records this as their 27th Operation

28/4/44 12.00	LL783	P/O SECKER	.	NIT	-40
28/4/44 21.12	LL783	P/O SECKER	.	OPS. KJELLER	(27) 7.35.

And the ORB

28.4.44	Lancaster I	P/O. Secker, F.O.	Bombing.	2111	0417	The primary target, OSLO, was attacked and bombed from 5,500-ft. at 0415 hours. Weather conditions: No cloud; some smoke. The target was identified by flares and red spot fires, confirmed visually of aerodrome runways, bombs being dropped on a single red spot fire. One large explosion seen at 0445 hours. Sighting point too near, causing congestion. Flares unnecessary and too numerous. Plotted 690 yards 35 deg. from aiming point. Photos showed ground detail.
	'C' LL 783.	Sgt. Gillespie, J.W.	O.S.I.O.			
		Sgt. Carr, W.J.C.				
		P/S. Booth, E.				
		P/S. Currie, W.H.				
		P/S. Shortt, D.				
		P/S. Birch, J. (A/C 141507)				

Note Booth as Bomb Aimer (eventually FTR 7th July 44) and Birch Aus AF as Rear Gunner

10 Lancasters set out but PG-P (F/S Patterson) had to turn back due to intercom failure but the target was almost wiped out.

April's records show 9 Operations, 102 sorties, 6 Air craft missing (one on cross country**), 5 Boomerangs
The success index was down to 89% and casualties up to their highest at 5.9% including Sgt Broomfield**

May 1944

For the 1st May The ORB shows their 28th mission

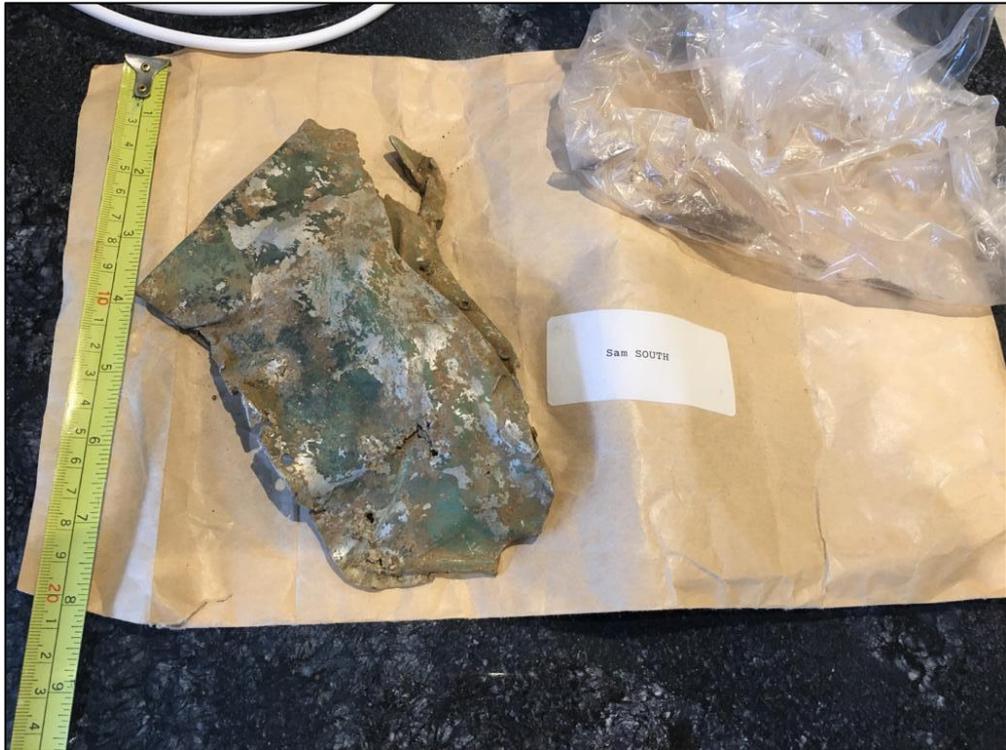
1.5.44	Lancaster I	P/O. Secker, F.O.	Bombing.	2109	0537	The primary target, TOULOUSE, was attacked and bombed from 5,500-ft. at 0415 hours. Weather conditions: No cloud; some visibility. The target was identified by green T.I's and red spot fires, bombs being dropped on a single red spot fire. Plenty of smoke and explosions observed in target area. Appeared to be a very successful raid. Plotted 1600 yards O/S from aiming point. Photographs showed ground details.
	'C' LL 783.	Sgt. Gillespie, J.W.	T O U L O U S E			
		Sgt. Carr, W.J.C.				
		P/S. Aumell, A.D. (A/C 141507)				
		P/S. Currie, W.H.				
		P/S. Shortt, D.				
		Sgt. Woodcock, J.H.				

Note. Aumell as Bomb Aimer (eventually FTR 23rd July 44) and Woodcock as Rear Gunner

12 Lancasters took off and all returned safely.

That was the last flight that the Secker crew did in LL783 and their 28th Operational flight. It evidently sustained some damage on this flight and the next and final flight for their Tour was in a different aircraft. Sam South must have been re-joining the crew about this time but never actually flew from Dunholme Lodge, however he has a piece of the damaged aircraft before the aircraft was patched up and handed on to the next crew. My brother has this but it may be donated to Thorpe Camp Museum in the future. Note the green and brown camouflage paint is still there. Terry Secker, the son of Freddie also has two pieces of Cinders. The Forrest family whose story will be told shortly also have pieces of the aircraft but these were recovered at a different time.

The pictures on the next page are genuine damaged parts of LL783. The first is probably the part sustained as reported above. The others are parts retrieved from the crash site as reported later



Interestingly the sign offs for April were done by Kim Roberts who stood in for the Sqn Leader Jack Cave and Freddie Secker both record this in their Logbooks respectively

<u>SUMMARY FOR APRIL 1944.</u>	11-10. 55-30
<u>No. 619 SQUADRON.</u>	
<u>DATE: 1/5/44.</u>	
<i>Kim Roberts</i> <u>for S/LDR.</u>	<i>Freddie Secker</i> <u>CAPTAIN.</u>
<u>O.C. "A" FLIGHT.</u>	<i>FO</i>

Summary for	PARIS 1944 LANCASTER	9:00	50	55:30	26:30
No. 619 SQUADRON					
Date	1-5-44				
Signature	Freddie Secker				

So their final and 29th Mission with 619 Sqn was on 3rd May 1944. The ORB records in PG-M

3.5.44	Lancaster III	P/O Secker. F.G.	Bombing.	2202	0341	The primary target, MAILLY-le-CAMP, was attacked and bombed from 5,000-ft. at 0028 hours. Weather conditions: clear. The target was identified by red spot fires, and green & blue bombs being dropped on a cluster of red spot fires. Bombing goes fairly good, bombing appearing to be well placed. A.P.I. 4/3 from take-off. Plotted 1050 yards 010° from aiming point. Photographs showed ground detail.
	'M' IN 484	Sgt. Gillespie. J.W.	MAILLY-le-CAMP			
		Sgt. Cava. W.L.G.				
		P/S Booth. E.				
		P/S Cava. W.L.G.				
		P/S Shortt. D.				
		P/S Holt. D.R.				
		P/O Adams. (2nd A/Bomber.)	REG. 422167.			

Note Booth and Adams and NOT LL783, as it was an alternate aircraft for their last flight as their Tour of Duty now ends.

It is mentioned only to round off their story. There is a note in Bill Currie's Logbook about damage to this Lancaster

3/5/44	2200 LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/O	OPS MAILLY	28	5:40
	LN 484	Bill Currie		MAILER PANEL SHOT OFF		

That would be part of the cockpit

MAY 3	LANCASTER LN484	SELF	CREW	OPS MAILLY (CAMP) N°29
Freddie Secker Logbook				

On this occasion the target was Mailly-le-Camp, an army camp, 40 miles south of Reims, a Panzer Tank Division HQ. PG-G (P/O Wadsworth) FTR.

However, of 360 bombers on this Bomber Command mission 42 Lancasters were shot down. In one report five were on fire at the same time. The main Radio Operators message to attack was not heard and they held back. Luftwaffe Night Pilots had time to take off and counter-attack. However the second wave of bombers did destroy the Camp.

It was supposed to be easy raid as it wasn't heavily defended.

Freddie Secker records that as the 29th Operation. Some of the crew may have missed the odd trip for one reason or another or even made an extra sortie with another crew. A Tour of Duty usually lasts for 30 Operations but upon further researching we find that the crew did an Operation to Arras in a Wellington whilst still training at 17 OTU Silverstone. It is recorded here on 23rd August 1943. It counts as an Operation and so they achieve their Tour of Duty total of 30.

17 OTU Silverstone while Training				
AUG 23	WELLINGTON NE880	SELF	SGT CURRIE SGT CAVE SGT SOUTH SGT. HOLE	(NICKED) 'ARRAS'
Freddie Secker Logbook				

One of Freddie Secker's Ops was as 2nd Pilot on 18th Nov 1943 so making 30 Operations and his Tour complete. However it was not the end of their war efforts as they went on to 52 Base Bomber Command at Scampton and later 56 Base at Coningsby to Test Fly new Lancasters before handing them on to other crews.

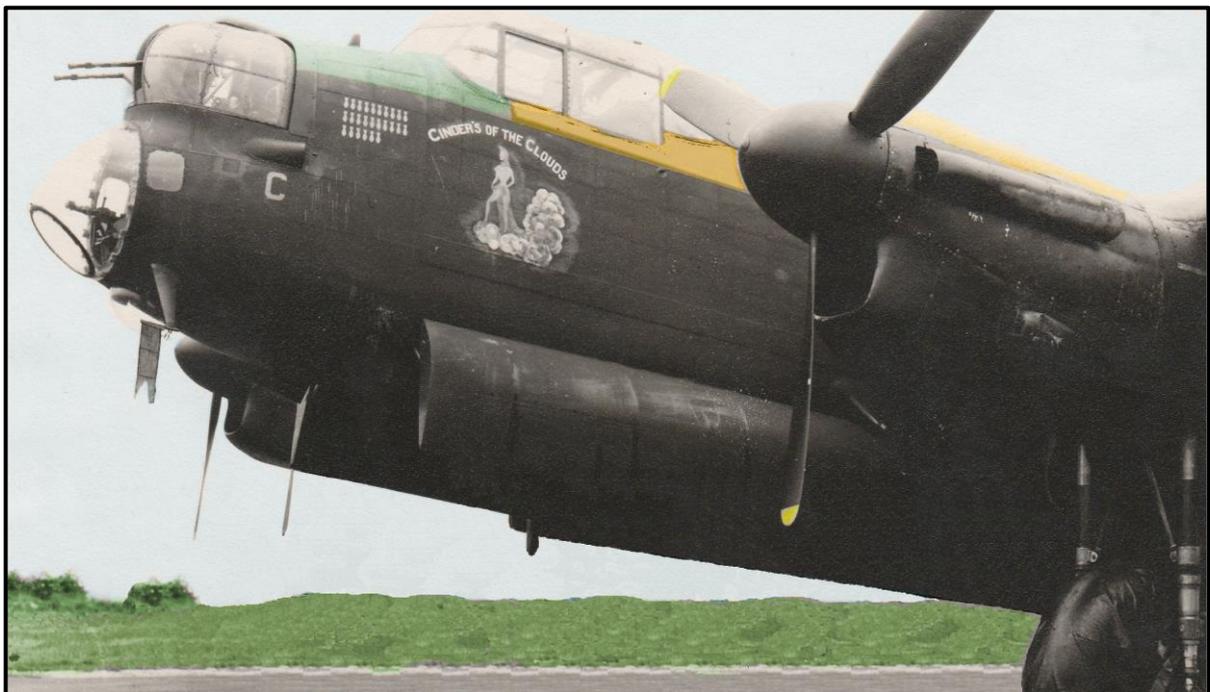
So at this point we leave the Secker Crew as the aircraft is handed over to new aircrew and we say farewell to their stewardship of Cinders of the Clouds, PG-C. LL783 was certainly their 'lucky' aircraft.

Freddie Secker was awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross in August 1944. It was given on 23rd Sept 1944.



20

Crew Photo and Cinders



Here they are in coloured pictures, all proud young men about 23/24 years old by now



Freddie Secker



Don Shortt



Bill Currie



Doug Hole



Jack Gillespie



Jack Cave



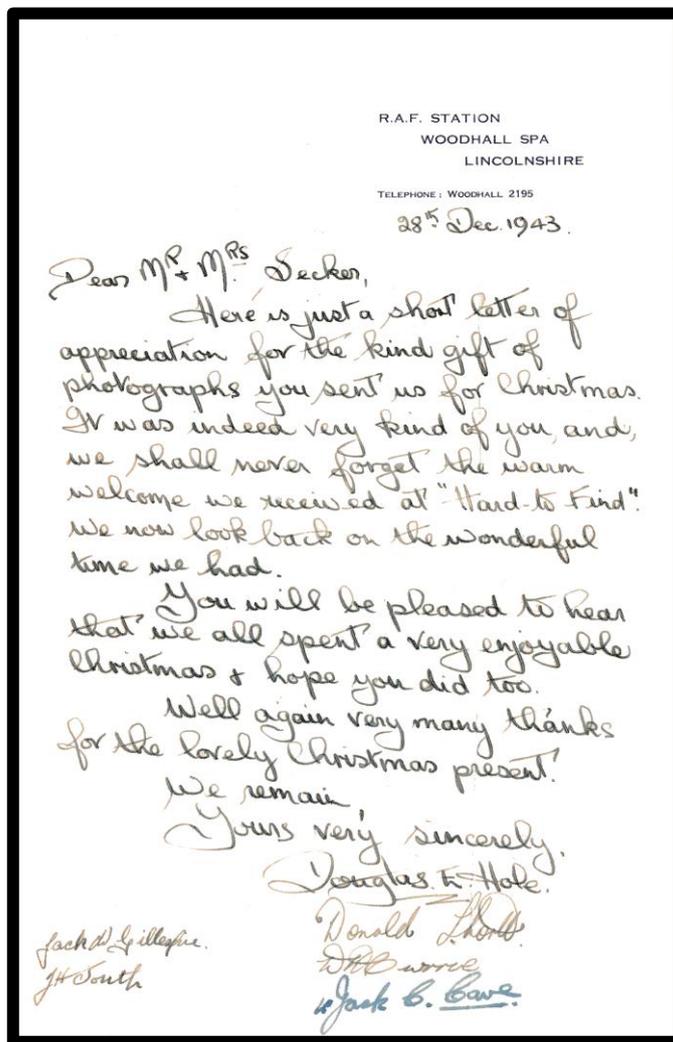
Sam South

And finally their 'Crew photo' that has been colourised



FG Secker DFC Pilot Don Shortt M/U Gunner Bill Currie Wireless Opr Doug Hole Rear Gunner Jack Gillespie Flt Engineer Jack Cave Navigator Sam South Air Bomber

Just one more thing..... In the camaraderie of war, this crew must have bonded so well that I must record the Christmas of 1943 when they met with the parents of Freddie Secker for a few days rather than with their own families. It was a lifetime of mutual respect as judged by their frequent 619 Sqn re-union meetings



Chapter Two

RAF Dunholme Lodge

So now let's take up the story as LL783 passes over to the new crew. First, who were this NEW CREW. Well, they were not 'new boys'. They came through OTU 1661 at RAF Winthorpe at Newark on the course immediately after the Secker Crew. They joined 619 Squadron at Coningsby on 8th January 1944 and became an experienced crew who were operational alongside the Secker Crew and on the same nights. Their first flight in 619 Sqn was on 13th Jan 44 recorded in Lancaster JB 134 as 'Bullseye'.

Their first Operational flight was on 21st Jan 44 in ME569 to Magdeburg with a Bomb Load of 10,820 lbs. They continued to fly in Operations with the Squadron but in different Lancasters and as mentioned alongside the Secker Crew. Eventually they regularly flew Lancaster LM378 PG-J, J-Jig. The Roberts crew had flown in LL783 before in an Air Test on 23rd March 44 as recorded in the Flt Engineer's (Jack Forrest) log book and then the Bomb Aimer's (Reg DeVuell) log book.

Date	Hour	Aircraft Type and No.	Pilot	Duty	REMARKS (including results of bombing, gunnery, exercises, etc.)	Flying Times	
						Day	Night
23.3.44		LL 483	P/O ROBERTS	ENGINEER	AIR TEST.	00	15

23.3.44		LL 783 C. LM 783	P/O ROBERTS	-	Reg DeVuell AIR TEST.	00	15
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Reg got picked up because he recorded LM instead of LL. An understandable typo as PG-J was LM

They continued to fly LM378 when the Squadron moved to Dunholme Lodge in April 44. Here they inherited LL783 with an Operational flight on 7th May 1944 to Salbris.

Part of LM378 PG-J is in the museum at William Farr School, Welton. It was lost in action in July 1944. It is coincidental that their old aircraft LM378 had the same numbers as LL783 but in different order. There is a picture of that damaged part later

For 8th January 1944 the Operations Record Book for 619 Squadron records their joining the Squadron

Place	Date	Time	The following Crews were posted to this Unit during the month:-	SECRET.	References to Appendix
Coningsby, January, 1944.	31st. (Cont:)		Pilot: P/O Roberts, K. P/Eng: Sgt. Forrest, J.F.J. Nav: Sgt. Lott, J. A/Bomber: Sgt. DeVieill, W. W/Operator: Sgt. Tucker, J.H. M.U. Gunner: Sgt. Williams, L.E. Rear Gunner: Sgt. Virgo, L.F.		
			FROM NO. 1661 CONVERSION UNIT wef. 2.1.44.		

Their Common names and position (in blue) was not listed in the record. RAAF is Royal Australian Air Force

Pilot	415358	P/O Roberts K	RAAF Kim	Pilot	Kimberley
F/E	1583098	Sgt Forrest J F J	Jack (Showman)	Flight Engineer	Jack Frederick James
Nav	178572	Sgt Lott J E	Jack	Navigator	John Ernest
A/B	1384585	Sgt DeVieill W H	Reg (Curly)	Air Bomber	Wilfred Herbert
W/Op	1321777	Sgt Tucker J H	John	Wireless Operator	John Henry
MU/G	1628306	Sgt Williams L E	Johnny	Mid Upper Gunner	Leslie Edward
R/G	*****	Sgt Virgo L F	RAAF Lucky	Rear Gunner	Lionel Frank James

Kimberley Roberts records their first 619 flight together on 13th January as a 'Bullseye', a term referring to practice navigation to a large British city. His second flight was as 'Second Dickie' or 2nd Pilot to Berlin with the Morrison Crew in PG-L. He then records their first Operational flight together to Magdeburg on 21st January 44

619 SQUADRON						
JANUARY	13	LANCASTER III	"G"	SELF	CREW	BULLSEYE
"	20	"	"L"	F/O MORRISON	SELF	OPS. BERLIN
"	21	"	"X"	SELF	CREW	OPS. MAGDEBURG

He also records their flight times

		5:35	5:35				
				7:30			
		6:30					

Jack Forrest also records their first 619 flight crew together on 13th January and their first Operation on 21st Jan.

619 SQUADRON CONINGSBY					Time carried forward :-
Date	Hour	Aircraft Type and No.	Pilot	Duty	REMARKS (including results of bombing, gunnery, exercises, etc.)
13.1.44	02.22	LANC. G. JB. 134	F/Sgt. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER	BULLSEYE
21.1.44	20.20	LANC X. ME. 569	F/Sgt. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS - MAGDEBURG. 10 820 LBS. 21000'

This is the ORB for 21st Jan 44 Footnote: The crew and the ORB below lists Kim Roberts as F/Sgt. The ORB could be 'PS' a typo for 'PO'. The ORB on him joining at Coningsby lists him as Pilot Officer(PO). From May 44 he is listed as F/Lt. An anomaly

21.1.44	Lancaster I	F/S. Roberts, K.	Bombing.	2015	0304	The primary target, MAGDEBURG, was attacked 21,000-Ft. at 2313 hours. Weather conditions visibility very good. The target was identified by markers; bombed M.P.I. of three green T.I. seen concentrated around green T.I's. Was leaving target. One w/s. Photographic fa technical fault.
	'X' BX.569.	Sgt. Forrest. J.P.				
		Sgt. Lott. J.	MAGDEBURG			
		Sgt. DeVill. V.				
		Sgt. Tucker. J.M.				
		Sgt. Williams. L.E.				
		Sgt. Virgo. L.V.				

Reg DeVill's record of this is

21. 1. 44. 2020	X	F/Sgt ROBERTS.	AIR BomBER.	OPERATION.	MAGDEBURG.	21000'	10820 lb	06. 30
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However this is before their flights in LL783 and the crew flew in other aircraft between this date and the takeover of LL783. It is used to set the scene similarly to the Secker Crew's start. Lionel Virgo as Rear Gunner was severely injured in a landing crash at East Kirkby on 15th Feb 44 due to bad weather and tiredness. The borrowed aircraft clipped a tree while being returned to 630 Sqn. All survived. Lionel did fly again but not until 26/11/44 with J.M.Grant Crew. The aircraft, LE-J M ED655 was written off. Lionel was replaced as Rear Gunner by Australian Gil King who flew many missions with them. Gil completed his 30 Ops 'Tour' on 3rd May 1944 on the mission before LL783 handover. As mandated by the Australian Government he was not allowed to do any more Operations, despite pleas. Although he is mentioned in the Pilots crew lists he technically misses this LL783 story by just a few days. His daughter is Margaret Lewis who lives in Nelson Bay, Australia who has provided a picture to include in this story

Evidently Kim Roberts thought it was unlucky to have a group photo so the pictures I have of them are from the families of the individual crew members. For that I am grateful. I have also included a few Photoshop adjustments and colourisations. The next two pictures are completely fictitious. I hope that does not cause offence. It is done out of respect.



Jack Forrest Les Williams Johnny Tucker Jack Lott Reg DeVill Kim Roberts Lionel Virgo



Jack Forrest Les Williams Johnny Tucker Kim Roberts Reg DeVill Jack Lott Gill King

They do however have real faces. The pictures are made up to appear as they **might** have been. Authors edit

May 1944

So now the story of Cinders of the Clouds continues. We jump forward to 7th May 1944 as the Roberts crew take on their new Lancaster. They had by now completed 22 Ops in various aircraft. They are straight into an Operation, no practice flight. Operation 23

The ORB records this

7.5.44	Lancaster I	P/L. Roberts, K. (AUSIA 415358) Bomber	2207	0327	The primary target, SALBRIS, was attacked and bombed from 6,300 ft. at 01.30 hours. Weather conditions clear. The target was identified by three red spot fires, bombs being dropped on top spot fire, - overshot by one second, as instructed. Landing well concentrated, and bombing seemed to be good. Large explosion seen just before bombing. Plotted 600 yards from aiming point. Photographs showed ground details
	'C' LL 783.	W/O. Lott. J. S.A.L.B.R.I.S.			
		Dgt. DeVill. P.			
		Dgt. Tucker. J.H.			
		P/O. Graves. T.H.			
		Dgt. Dickson. A.			
		Dgt. Griffiths. (2nd Navigator.)			

Note Graves as M-U Gunner, Dickson as Rear Gunner and Griffiths as 2nd Navigator

Kim Roberts Logbook. May 7	" I LL 783	SELF	CREW	OPG. SALBRIS (S/L FULLER MISSING)
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Jack Forrest recalls in his logbook

7.5.44	LL 783	F/LT ROBERTS	ENGINEER.	OPS. SALBRIS.	05.35.
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And in Reg DeVill's log book

7.5.44	C. LL 783 LANC.I.	F/LT ROBERTS	-	OPERATION. SALBRIS. EXPLOSIVE WORKS & DEPOT 6500' @ 01.30 hrs.	05.35
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The successful Op to Salbris was to bomb the railway between Orleans and Bourges. 13 aircraft took off but PG-O (S/L Fuller) FTR. Kim has recorded that in his logbook. Other aircraft were involved in fighter skirmishes but without damage.

Two nights later on the 9th May the raid was to Gennevilliers just northwest of Paris and was considered successful. 12 aircraft started the mission but PG-P (P/O Baker) had to boomerang due to hydraulic failure in the port outer engine which drove the rear turret motion and PG-H (P/O Aitkin) FTR. This was Roberts crews 24th Operation

Reg DeViell records

9.5.44	C 4783 LANC	F/LT. ROBERTS		OPERATIONS GENNEVILLIERS (PARIS) ENGINE RHOSE ENGINE WORKS. 7250' 8 x 1000 AC. 3 x 1,000 GP. 5 x 1000 YANCS A.P.	04.20
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And the ORB

9.5.44	Lancaster I	F/Lt. Roberts, K. (AUS: A. 415358)	Bombing	2212	0229	The primary target, GENNEVILLIERS, was attacked and bombed from 7,250-ft. at 0357 hours. Weather conditions: Clear, with slight haze. The target was identified by red spot fires, bombs being dropped on a single red spot fire. Bombing seemed accurate, and bombing concentrated along side of river. Plotted 300 yards 360° from aiming point. Photographs showed ground detail.
	'C' LL 783	W/O. Loft, J.	GENNEVILLIERS			
		F/S. DeViell, W.				
		Sgt. Tucker, J.H.				
		Sgt. Williams, I.E.				
		P/O. Birch, L.J. (AUS: A. 429263)				
		F/S. Harris, (2nd. A/Bomber.)				

Note Birch as substitute Rear Gun and Harris as 2nd A/B experience

On the morning of 11th May they took Cinders up for some High Level Bombing practice and on the same day they flew their 25th Operation (sortie) listed in Jack Forrest's log book as Bourg-Leopold between Antwerp and Liege. 15 Aircraft took off but 8 were told not to bomb. Station Commander W/C Jeurwine returned early with an engine feathered. This was Jeurwine's last day with the Squadron as he moved on to Pathfinder Force (617) as the Group Captain.

11.5.44	C LL 783	F/LT. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	H. L. B.	01.30
11.5.44	LL 783	F/LT. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS. BOURG-LEOPOLD.	03.40

And Reg DeViell

11.5.44	C LL 783	F/LT. ROBERTS	AIR BOMBER	OPERATIONS BOURG-LEOPOLD. Re-called, did not bomb.	03.40
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In Kim's logbook he records that F/Lt Knox was Second Pilot

The ORB

11.5.44	Lancaster I	F/Lt. Roberts, K. (AUS: A. 415358)	Bombing	2258	0145	This aircraft proceeded to the primary target, BOURG-LEOPOLD, but on arrival NOTHING was seen only flares. Dropped until II = 13 and returned to Base without bombing. 1 x 1000 lb. bomb jettisoned at position 5152N 0350E at 0044 hours from 11,000 ft. the remainder of the bombs being brought back to Base.
	'C' LL 783	W/O. Loft, J.	BOURG-LEOPOLD.			
		Sgt. DeViell, W.				
		Sgt. Tucker, J.H.				
		P/O. Graves, T.K.				
		Sgt. Williams, I.E.				
		F/S. Knox, (2nd. A/Bomber.) (AUS: A. 418433)				

Note Graves as M-U Gunner and Knox as 2nd Air bomber for experience

On the 15th and 18th they completed two Air Tests but note one flight was with their old aircraft LM378 and the second with Cinders LL783

15.5.44	LM 378	F/LT. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	AIR TEST.	00.25
18.5.44	LL 783	F/LT. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	LOCAL FLYING.	00.40

Jack Forrest

Reg DeVell also records

15-5-44		5 M328	F/LT ROBERTS		AIR TEST	00:25
18-5-44	1420	C LL783	F/LT ROBERTS		LOCAL FLYING	00:40

Reg seems to have inserted the wrong date but the person who checks has made a note of it with 'D'

Operation 26 was to Amiens on 19th May 1944 to bomb important road and rail junctions. 16 Lancasters took off but only 3 bombed. The rest were told not to. If this happened the lead Master Bomber made that decision because the target was destroyed enough and more would be a waste of bombs. The target could also have been wrongly identified.

Kim's logbook shows this raid but also that F/S Morcom accompanied them as Second Pilot. The Squadron Operational Record Books show that these second pilots flew missions with their own crews after these 'experience' flights.

"	19		C M328	SENT	F/S Morcom 2nd Pilot CAGW	OPS AMIENS.
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And the ORB

19.5.44	Lancaster I	F/Lt Roberts, E. (AIN: 415358)	Bombing.	2319	0236	The primary target, AMIENS, was attacked and bombed from 6,000-ft. at 0122 hours. Weather conditions: 9/10ths cloud at 2,000-ft. The target was identified by flares and one red spot fire, the latter being bombed. An explosion seen at 0124 hours. Marking appeared to be alright, though difficult to see anything due to bad visibility. Plotted marshalling yards at AMIENS (Longueval). Photographs showed ground details.
	1st IL 783	W/O Lott. J.	A M I E N S			
		Sgt. DeVell. W.				
		Sgt. Tucker. J.H.				
		Sgt. Hills. V.K.				
		F/O Williams. L.K.				
		F/O Morcom (2nd Pilot.)				

Note Hills as substitute M-U Gunner and Morcom as 2nd Pilot.

LL783 did not fly with the Squadron sortie on 21/05/44 to Duisburg. Maybe there was some damage that needed repairing or just routine maintenance?

Their 27th Operation was to Brunswick on 22nd May. 15 aircraft took off but PG-O (P/O Runnells) returned early as the Pilot was taken ill during the flight. The attack had no further losses but some reports suggest the PFF marker flares accuracy was in question

22.5.44	Lancaster I	F/Lt Roberts, E. (AIN: 415358)	Bombing.	2225	0450	The primary target, BRUNSWICK, was attacked and bombed from 19,000-ft. at 0129 hours. Weather conditions: 7-10/10ths patch or cloud over target: tops 6-8,000-ft. The target was identified by flares, bombs being dropped on a single green I.I. Marking rather poor, and bombing very scattered. We saw fires at DOMMUND on way home. Photographic failure due to armament failure.
	1st IL 783	W/O Lott. J.	BRUNSWICK			
		Sgt. DeVell. W.				
		Sgt. Tucker. J.H.				
		Sgt. Knowles. P.				
		F/O Williams. L.K.				
		F/O Coop. (2nd Pilot.)	AIN: J.16260.			

Note Knowles as substitute M-U Gunner and Coop as 2nd Pilot for experience

This was followed by a High Level Bombing test on the 24th and on the same night as a "Special Exercise" Jack Forrest recalls

22-5-44	LANCASTER	C LL783	F/LT ROBERTS	ENGINEER	OPS: BRUNSWICK	05:50
24-5-44		C LL783	F/LT ROBERTS	ENGINEER	H.L.B.	1:45
24-5-44		C LL783	F/LT ROBERTS	ENGINEER	SPECIAL EXERCISE	01:50

And so does Reg DeVell

22-5-44	2315	C LL783	F/LT ROBERTS		OPERATION BRUNSWICK	05:50
24-5-44	01:31	C LL783	F/LT ROBERTS		H.L.B. SPECIAL VECTOR BOMBING, WAINFLEET	01:45

Kim Roberts Logbook. May	22	"	LL783	SELF	No Coop CREW	OPS BRUNSWICK
"	24	"	LL783	SELF	CREW	MOSAIC SCAMPTON.
"	24	"	LL783	SELF	CREW	SPECIAL EVALUATE

LL783 did not fly with Sqn sortie on 27/05/44 to Cherbourg or 31/05/44 to Maisey near Bayeux (no bombing)

The squadrons monthly tally for May 44 is reported as :

10 Operations, 137 sorties, 3 A/C missing 7 early returns giving a 93% success rate and 2.2% casualty rate

June 1944

The Roberts crew also did not fly on 2nd June 44 to a 14 strong raid on Wimereux, 8 miles north of Boulogne.

The 14 aircraft on this raid were told not to bomb

Had they flown on those 3 Operations the outcome of future events may have changed

On the 5th June we reach a busy time for the crew

That day they did an air test and their night time sortie was to La Pernelle, a coastal battery near Cherbourg.

Several did not bomb. It was their 28th mission. At that very moment the invasion of Normandy was beginning and as they were returning they must have seen the invasion fleet making their journey across the Channel in the other direction.

D-Day had begun.

Jack Forrest's logbook shows

5-6-44	LL783	F/LT. ROBERTS	ENGINEER	AIR TEST	00-25
5-6-44	LL783	F/LT. ROBERTS	ENGINEER	OPERATIONS. LA PERNELLE.	04-10

And Reg DeViells

Reg DeViell					
5-6-44	LANC. C LL783	F/LT. ROBERTS	AIR BOMBER	AIR TEST	00-25
5-6-44	LANC. C LL783	F/LT. ROBERTS	AIR BOMBER	OPERATIONS. LA PERNELLE	04-10

The ORB

5.6.44	Lancaster I	F/Lt. Roberts, N. (ANS) LL783	Bombing	0135	0513	The primary target, LA PERNELLE, was attacked and bombed from 8,500-ft. at 0312 hours. Weather conditions: 6/10ths cloud at 6,000-ft. The target was identified by two red and several green T.I.'s, bombs being dropped on a single red T.I. Bombing appeared to be well concentrated around the red T.I. Photographs showed ground detail.
		Sgt. Penroot. J.P.F.				
		W/C. Lott. F.	LA PERNELLE			
		W/S. DeVeill. F.				
		F/S. Tucker. G.B.				
		F/O. Graves. P.I.				
		F/S. Williams. L.S.				

Graves seems to appear more so than others but 6 of the original crew were still there

The 6th June 1944 was D-day as the British and American armies landed in France but this was also a sad day for our crew after all they had been through. They were on their 29th Operation (Kim on 30th) and with only one more to go after this one to complete their Tour of Operations, the magic 30th. The squadron that day were supporting the army by night bombing road and rail links near Caen to assist British para-troops attacking German defended positions near Caen. 17 aircraft took part but PG-C (F/L Roberts) was shot down and FTR. The stand in rear gunner Guy Wyand was on his first flight of his second tour. It was the only aircraft lost to the Squadron on that day. A report follows later.

They had dropped their bombs and were heading home towards the Cherbourg Peninsular. They were unusually below the cloud base at 1800ft. When John Tucker the Wireless Operator said to the Rear Gunner "Could he see an enemy fighter behind us". He could see something on the Fishpond Radar. Guy Wyand replied "All he could see was Lancasters". Neither of the gunners could see anything. Within seconds there was a tremendous bang and crash. Kim immediately corkscrewed but there was a second attack. There was a scream from the Rear Gunner and both starboard engines caught fire. Kim called the crew but there was no reply from the two gunners or the Wireless Operator. Jack operated the fire extinguishers but the fighter attacked again and the inner port engine caught fire. Kim snapped "Abandon aircraft chaps" adding "Where's my parachute Showman". Flames were streaking out 40ft behind as Reg opened the Bomb Aimers escape hatch and dropped out. Jack Forrest was next with Jack Lott behind shouting "Go on Showman, get mobile"

Jack Forrest recalls the silence of the parachute descent from 1700ft into a marsh and up to his neck in water but then hearing Reg DeViell splashing about. They subsequently evaded capture for a few days but were eventually taken as Prisoners of War. Their survival in prison camps is part of another horrific story. After the war and back in England they learned they were the only two survivors from C-Charlie. A fifteen year old boy remembers the blazing bomber with Kim at the controls desperately trying to avoid buildings and land but it broke up as it smashed into the ground. The cockpit became an inferno and Kim's body was cremated inside and never recovered. Two others had bailed out but died. A third and fourth body were found at Hameau Drieu 200yds behind a castle. The four were buried by resistance fighters in the cemetery at Auvers but later transferred to military cemeteries, three at Bayeux and the other at Tilly-sur-Seulles.

A second version is told by Reg DeViell from his wartime diaries
Extracts from "A Wartime Log for British POWs" by WH 'Reg' Deviell

Night of 6/7 June 1944 about 3.30am

"I reckon that it's our turn this time – it certainly was a fighter.

Phew, what smoke! Copped a packet in the back somewhere, smoke beginning to issue out of the inspection door, looks pretty bad.

The Captain's voice on the intercom "Bale out chaps". Yes, that's it, no time to lose. Where the hell is my chute..... in the front turret; the bloody harness clips seem elusive. After what seems like an age have the chute on, then up with the escape hatch – no trouble there, thank God. Don't fancy going out head first, but nothing to be done except get out smartly, however, but in doing so lost my flying boots.

No immediate sensation of falling, but had better pull the ripcord pretty smartly, here it is..... Good Lord, it's opened!! This is simply a grand sensation, gently swinging to & fro: there goes the kite, seems well alight but not going down too quickly, just in a gentle glide – yes, another chute, hope some more get out, wonder who it is, probably Jack ('Showman'). Hell, there is a fighter snooping around, wonder if he is going to have a go at us? No, he turns and disappears into the darkness, much to my relief.

"Reg", a voice from nowhere, somewhere behind me... now how does one turn round? Marvelous, right first time, there he is. And quite close too. Thank goodness I shall have some company, but can't quite make out who it is.

Must be the marsh below there, still looks a good way down; must remember to heave on the suspension lines as the deck comes up, be some little time – what the hell! Down already and devilish wet. Better empty the chute pretty smartly, not particularly comfortable being dragged through this mire on ones back, must have landed bang in the marsh; that's better, and here's 'Showman', he's ok too, guess we had better hide our chutes pretty smartly."

In 1992 Jack Forrest and Reg DeViell made an emotional visit to the recently discovered crash site in a field near the Carentan-Cherbourg railway and met the now farmer Roger Montmellien. He showed them bits of the mangled aircraft he had collected. They also collected rusty mementoes and components of the aircraft which was made in Coventry where Jack lived. Other relics are in Normandy museums. They later visited the 4 graves of their crewmates where they stood heads down and weeping. In 1996 they made a second visit to Auvers where a memorial to Kim Roberts was unveiled by Kim's family. A pilot with no grave.

The memorial at Auvers 1996



Parts of PG-C Cinders of the Clouds from crash site



Courtesy of Anni Forrest Ex-RAFA Club Coventry



Courtesy of Terry Secker. Inset how they were found



Courtesy of David Forrest's collection in a plastic bag in his garage

A Distinguished Flying Cross and a Distinguished Flying Medal

Kim Roberts was awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) and Gil King a Distinguished Flying Medal (DFM). On 15th March 44 in LM378 over Stuttgart their aircraft was severely damaged by a German JU88 fighter. Kim corkscrewed port and then regained control but the fighter attacked again. All the gunner's Guns had jammed but Gil King managed to free his and shoot the attacking fighter. Then the aircraft with 90 bullet holes and the port tail fin and rudder barely connected, they limped home after ditching the bomb load. After landing back at Coningsby Kim was bawled out by the Station Commander in the Officers Mess that he was improperly dressed. "Why Sir?" he replied. The Group Captain jabbed him on the chest and said "You should have a DFC Ribbon up there" for getting them back. Gil got the DFM for shooting the fighter aircraft down.

I believe this was the first instantly awarded DFC in the Squadron



A small tribute to LM378 PG-J Jig.
Gil King second from left when he flew in the Gordon 'Tich' Taylor Crew.
LM378 failed to return on a raid to Revigny on 19th July 1944 with the F. Molinas crew. Only one survivor

Kim always flew with a German Iron Cross round his neck. He was given it by a neighbour (Frank Slee) back home in Bunbury near Perth, Australia. He was in the RAAF (Australia) but flew with 619 Sqn RAF when he came across to England. That neighbour was a WW1 pilot that was shot down on his first mission by a German Pilot. The pilot landed, shook Slee's hand and in a remarkable gesture of aircrew camaraderie presented him with his Iron Cross. The name Hermann Goering was engraved on the back. Slee was his 7th victim and Goering went on to destroy another 20 British Aircraft.

Imagine that if Kim Roberts had survived or his body had not been incinerated in that crash of 7th June. What would the Germans have made of an Australian flying a British four engine bomber and wearing a German Iron Cross

Here they are in coloured pictures, young men about 22 to 24 years old



Kim Roberts .Pilot



John Tucker .Wireless Operator



John 'Jack' Lott . Navigator



Leslie 'Johnny' Williams. Air Gunner



Guy Wyand. Air Gunner

The two survivors



Jack Forrest. Flight Engineer



Reg DeViell. Air Bomber

And the two other crew members who were Rear Gunner's but not on PG-C



Lionel Virgo. Previous Rear Gunner



Gil King. Previous Rear Gunner

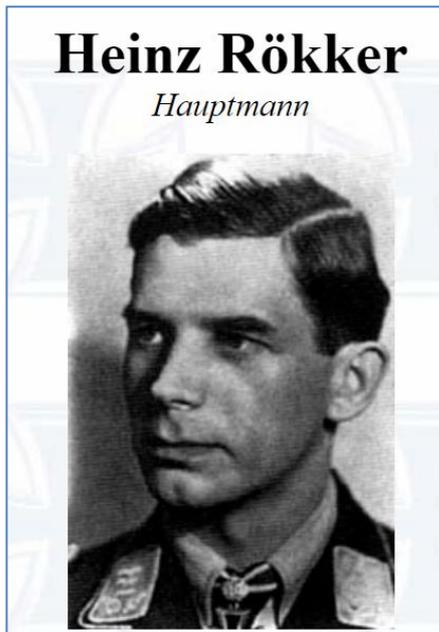
Heinz Rokker

I was led to this by Richard Newell whose Grandfather Reg DeViell was a member of the second Cinders crew

Heinz Rokker joined the Luftwaffe in October 1939. He shot down his first RAF Beaufort twin engine aircraft on 20th June 1942 in daytime . He is credited with 64 victories in 161 missions. He recorded the other 63 victories at night including 55 four-engined bombers (Viermot in German is Lancaster). He was a very successful JU88 Night fighter pilot, the 3rd most successful in German WW2 history and the 8th in all air-warfare history.

His record shows 5 aircraft shot down on the night of 6/7th June 1944.

One was most probably PG-C, Cinders of the Clouds, LL783. Evidence is in the timings of both logs



Ref: Reg DeViell's log book timings 0300hours



Heinz Rokker's records are shown in two references:

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

and

<http://www.luftwaffe.cz/rokker.html>

Aces of the Luftwaffe - Heinz Rökker

Heinz Rokker's 'victory' log list. Caen battle of 6/7th June 1044 highlighted in pink'

28	28.5.1944	2:08	Halifax	2./NJG 2	20-40km NW Eindhoven
29	7.6.1944	2:42	Viermot	2./NJG 2	10-50km SW Caen
30	7.6.1944	2:48	Viermot	2./NJG 2	10-50km SW Caen
31	7.6.1944	2:51	Viermot	2./NJG 2	W Caen
32	7.6.1944	3:01	Viermot	2./NJG 2	W Caen
33	7.6.1944	3:08	Viermot	2./NJG 2	W Caen
34	25.6.1944	0:16	Viermot	2./NJG 2	S Dieppe

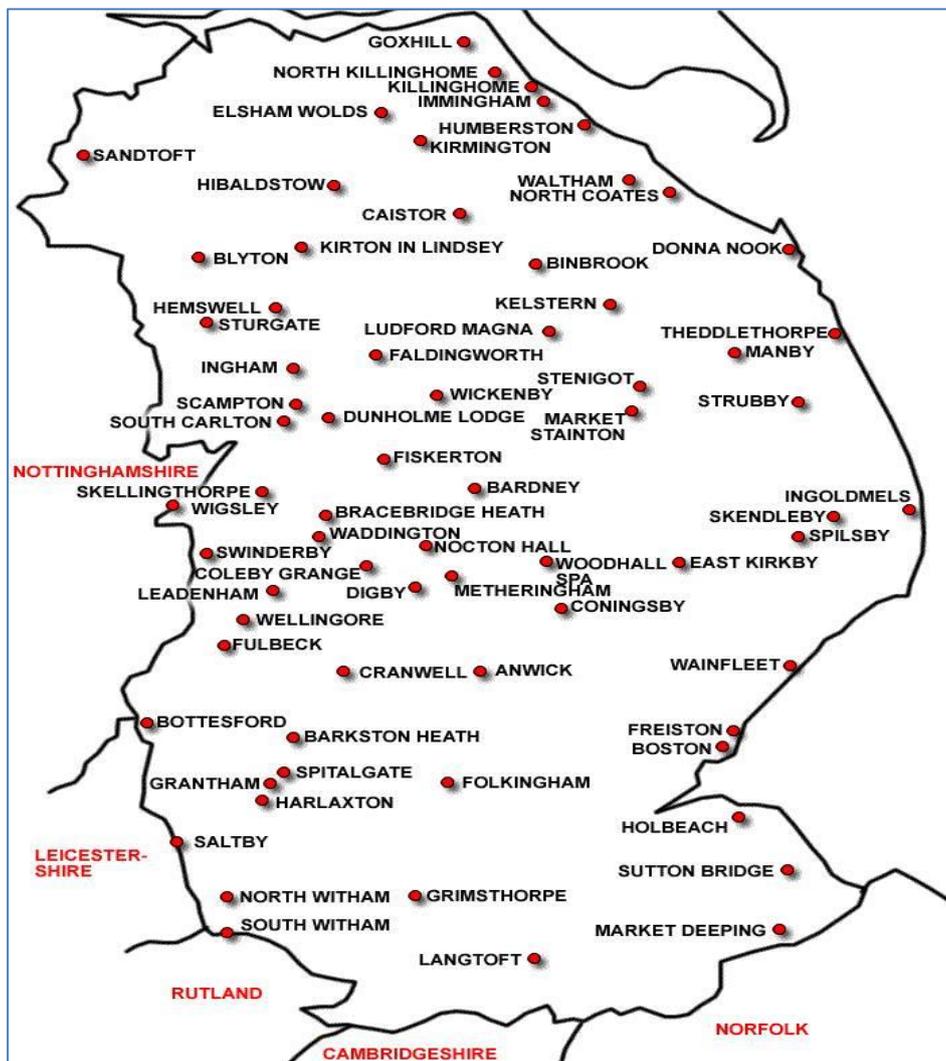


A Junkers JU88 Night fighter crewed by a Pilot, Navigator and two gunners

Some of 619's Bombing Locations in Germany. A Navigator's course map is shown towards the end



Maps of the UK Bomber Base airfields in Lincolnshire (Bomber County)



Flights of LL783	PG-C	Cinders of the Clouds
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Date	1944	Activity	Destination	Flight Time	Notes
	RAF Coningsby			Hours.mins	Freddie Secker Pilot
1 st	FEBRUARY	Fuel Consumption Test		2.00	D = Daytime
5		High Level Bombing HLB		1.50	D
6		HLB		2.00	D
8		HLB Monica, BEAM		2.05	D
9		Monica, Beam		1.25	D
15		Operation	Berlin	7.35	N = Nighttime
19		Operation	Leipzig	6.45	N
20		Operation	Stuttgart	7.45	N
24		Operation	Schweinfurt	8.40	N
25		Operation	Augsburg	8.20	N
28		Normal Flight Test NFT		0.30	D
1 st	MARCH	Operation	Stuttgart	8.35	N
15		Operation	Stuttgart	8.15	N
18		Operation	Frankfurt	5.40	N
22		NFT		0.40	D
22		Operation	Frankfurt	6.10	N
23		Air Test		0.15	P/O Kim Roberts as Pilot
24		Operation	Berlin	7.45	N Landed Seething
26		Return Seething to Base		0.40	D
26		Operation	Essen	5.10	N
29		Air Test		0.30	D
30		Operation	Nurnburg	7.35	N
1 st	APRIL	Fighter Affiliation, Firing		0.50	D
5		NFT		0.20	D
5		Operation	Toulouse	7.25	N Lands Chipping Warden
6		Return Chipping W -Base		1.10	D
8		Base – RAF Ford		1.05	Extra Crew onboard
8		RAF Ford - Base		0.55	Same extra crew
11		Operation	Aachen	4.15	N +ve Endorsement Given
13		NFT		0.55	D
17		Move - Dunholme Lodge		0.20	D
		Dunholme Lodge			
18		Operation	Paris	5.05	N
20		NFT		0.55	D
20		Operation	Paris	5.10	N
22		Air Test		0.20	D
22		Operation	Brunswick	6.45	N
26		Operation	Schweinfurt	9.05	N
28		NFT BEAM		0.40	D
28		Operation	Oslo	7.35	N
1 st	MAY	NFT		0.20	D
1 st		Operation	Toulouse	8.30	N. End of Secker Crew
		Crew Handover on 7th			Kim Roberts Pilot
7		Operation	Salbris	5.35	N = Night
9		Operation	Gennevilliers	4.20	N
11		HLB		1.30	D = Day
11		Operation	Bourg-Leopold	3.40	N
15		Air Test		0.25	D
18		Local Flying		0.40	D
19		Operation	Amiens	3.35	N

22	Operation	Brunswick	5.50	N
24	HLB		1.45	D
24	Special Exercise		1.50	N
5 th JUNE	Air Test		0.25	D
5 th	Operation	La Pernelle	4.10	N
6 th	Operation	Caen	?	Did not return. Missing
				Crashed at Auvers
Total Flights	54			
Total Operations	27			
Ops with Pilot	20 Secker 7 Roberts			
Total Flying hours	195 hours 35 mins +			
Daylight Fly hrs	24hrs 30 mins			
Night Fly Hours	171hrs 05 mins			
Names of crew				
Who flew LL783	P/O F G Secker	Pilot	Permanent	
	Sgt J W Gillespie	Flight Engineer	Permanent	
	Sgt W J Cave	Navigator	Permanent	
	Sgt J H South	Bomb Aimer BA	Permanent	Leaves Crew end Mar 44
	F/S W H Currie	Wireless Opr	Permanent	
	F/S D Shortt	Rear Gunner	Permanent	
	Sgt D E Hole	M-U Gunner	Permanent	
	Sgt Hickling	2 nd B-A 18/03		
	F/O P R Butler	B-A 30/03		
	P/O J Hammond	M-U Gun 30/03		
	F/L P S Walmsley	B-A 05/04x2		
	P/O V F Kennedy	B-A 18/04		
	F/S D L Smithson	B-A 20/04		
	F/S A D Aumell Can AF	B-A 22/04		
	F/S E Booth	B-A 28/04		
	F/S L J Birch Aus AF	M-U Gun 28/04		
	Sgt J H Woodcock	M-U Gun 01/05		
	F/O K Roberts Aus AF	Pilot	Permanent	
	Sgt J Forrest	Flight Engineer	Permanent	
	W/O J Lott	Navigator	Permanent	
	Sgt W DeViell	Bomb Aimer BA	Permanent	
	Sgt J Tucker	Wireless Opr	Permanent	
	F/O T Graves	Rear Gunner		
	Sgt A Dickmon	M-U Gunner		
	Sgt Griffiths	2 nd BA 07/05		
	Sgt L Williams	Rear Gunner		
	F/S L Birch Aus AF	M-U Gun 9/05		
	F/S Harris	2 nd B-A 9/05		
	F/S Knox Aus AF	2 nd B-A 14/05		
	Sgt W Hills	Rear Gun 19.05		
	F/S Morcom	2 nd Pilot 19.05		
	F/S F Knowles	Rear Gun 22/05		
	F/O Coop Can AF	2 nd Pilot 22/05		
	F/O G Wyand	MU Gun 06/06	D-Day	1 st Op of Second Tour

Freddie Secker Crew members on their Operations in LL783 only in black (other Ops not in PG-C are in blue)

Op No	Date	Target	Lancaster Aircraft	PILOT	FLIGHT ENGINEER	NAVIGATOR	BOMB AIMER	WIRELESS OPERATOR	MU-GUNNER	REAR GUNNER	OTHERS
				Freddie Secker	Jack Gillespie	Jack Cave	Sam South	Bill Currie	Don Shortt	Doug Hole	
1	23.08.43	Arras Nickeling	Wellington HE686-X	X		X	X	X		X	
	18.11.43	Berlin	EE170-N	X 2nd Pilot Sandison Crew EE170-N		X 2nd Nav Churcher crew ED977-A					
2	22.11.43	Berlin	JB134-G	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	26.11.43	Berlin	DV335- Buttar							X	Buttar Crew
	02.12.43	Berlin	EE134-Y Thompson				X				Thompson Crew
3	16.12.43	Berlin	ED866-E	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
4	29.12.43	Berlin	ED866-E	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	01.01.44	Berlin	JB134-G Cox					X			Cox Crew
5	06.01.44	Stetin	LM378-J	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
6	27.01.44	Berlin	ME569-X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
7	28.01.44	Berlin	ME569-X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	01.02.44	Berlin	JB134-G Cox							X	Cox Crew
8	15.02.44	Berlin	LL783-C	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
9	19.02.44	Leipzig	LL783-C	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
10	20.02.44	Stuttgart	LL783-C	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
11	24.02.44	Schweinfurt	LL783-C	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
12	25.02.44	Augsburg	LL783-C	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
13	01.03.44	Stuttgart	LL783-C	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
14	15.03.44	Stuttgart	LL783-C	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
15	18.03.44	Frankfurt	LL783-C	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
16	22.03.44	Frankfurt	LL783-C	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
17	24.03.44	Berlin	LL783-C	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
18	26.03.44	Essen	LL783-C	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
19	30.03.44	Nuremburg 'Nurnburg'	LL783-C	X	X	X	Injury Butler PR A-B	X	X		Hammond J. R-Gun
20	05.04.44	Toulouse	LL783-C	X	X	X	Walmsley P. A-B	X	X	X	
21	18.04.44	Juvisy, Paris	LL783-C	X	X	X	Kennedy V. A-B	X	X	X	
22	20.04.44	La Chapelle	LL783-C	X	X	X	Smithson D. A-B	X	X	X	
23	22.04.44	Brunswick	LL783-C	X	X	X	Aumell A A-B Can AF	X	X	X	
24	24.04.44	Munich	LL783-C	X	X	X	Kennedy V A-B	X	X	X	
25	26.04.44	Schweinfurt	LL783-C	X	X	X	Aumell A A-B Can AF	X	X		Woodcock J. R-Gun
26	28.04.44	Kjellor, Oslo	LL783-C	X	X	X	Booth E A-B	X	X		Birch L Aus R-Gun
27	01.05.44	Toulouse	LL783-C	X	X	X	Aumell A A-B Can AF	X	X		Woodcock J. R-Gun
28	03.05.44	Mailley-le- Camp	LM484-M	X	X	X	Booth E A-B	X	X	X	Adams NZ 2ndAB
	Missions	Served	End of tour	30	27	28	19	28	27	24	

Kim Roberts Crew members on their Operations in LL783 only in black (other Ops not in PG-C are in blue)

Op No	Date	Target	Lancaster Aircraft	PILOT	FLIGHT ENGINEER	NAVIGATOR	BOMB AIMER	WIRELESS OPERATOR	MU-GUNNER	REAR GUNNER	OTHERS
				Kim Roberts	Jack Forrest	Jack Lott	Reg DeViell	John Tucker	Johnny Williams	Lionel Virgo	
	20.01.44	Berlin	DV328-L ME568-E	X _{PG-L} 2 nd Pilot Morrison			X _{PG-E} 2 nd A-B Vickerstaffe				Morrison Vickerstaffe
1	21.01.44	Magdeberg	ME569-X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	27.01.44	Berlin	LM378-J				X 2 nd A-B				With P/O Taylor Crew
2	28.01.44	Berlin	JB134-G	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
3	30.01.44	Berlin	LM378-J	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
4	15.02.44	Berlin	ED655 LE-J	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	E.Kirkby 630 Sqn Wrecked
5	24.02.44	Schweinfurt	LM378-J	X	X	X	X	X	X		Sheresby H R-Gun
6	25.02.44	Augsburg	LM378-J	X	X	X	X	X	X		Lang HG R-Gun
7	01.03.44	Stuttgart	LM378-J	X	X	X	X	X	X		Bayntum FH R-Gun
8	10.03.44	Chateauroux	LM378-J	X	X	X	Walsmley P A-B	X	X		Powell EN R-Gun
9	15.03.44	Stuttgart	LM378-J	X	X	X	X	X	X	Gil King	DFC.Roberts DFM King
10	18.03.44	Frankfurt	LM378-J	X	X	X	X	X	X	Gil King	Whitely 2 nd Pilot
11	22.03.44	Frankfurt	LM378-J	X	X	X	X	X		Gil King	Powell E MU-Gun
12	26.03.44	Essen	LM378-J	X	X	X	X	X		Gil King	Powell E MU-Gun
13	30.03.44	Nurnburg	LM378-J	X	X	X	X	X	X	Gil King	
14	10.04.44	Tours	LM378-J	X	X	X	X	X		Gil King	Powell E MU-Gun
15	11.04.44	Achen	LM378-J	X	X	X	X	X	X	Gil King	
16	18.04.44	Juvisy	LL778-A	X	X	X	X	X	X	Gil King	
17	22.04.44	Brunswick	LM378-J	X	X	X	X	X	X	Gil King	
18	24.04.44	Munich	LM378-J	X	X	X	X	X	X	Gil King	
19	26.04.44	Schweinfurt	LM378-J	X	X	X	X	X	X	Gil King	
20	28.04.44	Kjeller (Oslo)	LM378-J	X	X	X	X	X	X	Gil King	
21	01.05.44	Toulouse	LM378-J	X	X	X	X	X	X	Gil King	
22	03.05.44	Mailley Le Camp	LM378-J	X	X	X	X	X	X	Gil King	Leeson 2 nd Pilot
23	07.05.44	Salbris	LL783-C	X	X	X	X	X	Graves M-UG	Dickson R-Gun	Griffiths 2 nd A-B
24	09.05.44	Gennevilliers	LL783-C	X	X	X	X	X	X	Birch L R-Gun	Harris 2 nd A-B
25	11.05.44	Bourg Leopold	LL783-C	X	X	X	X	X	X as R-Gun	Graves T MU-Gun	Knox 2nd A-B
26	19.05.44	Amiens	LL783-C	X	X	X	X	X	X as R-Gun	Hills W MU-Gun	Morcom 2nd Pilot
27	22.05.44	Brunswick	LL783-C	X	X	X	X	X	X as R-Gun	Knowles F MU-Gun	Coop 2 nd Pilot
28	05.06.44	La Pernelle	LL783-C	X	X	X	X	X	X as R-Gun	Graves T MU-Gun	
29	06.06.44	Caen	LL783-C	X	X	X	X	X	X	Wyand G R=Gun	DeViell lists shot down 0300 hrs
	Missions	Served		30	29	29	30	29	25	LV 4	GK 14(30)

These are extracted copies of the Operations entries in each of the PG-C Aircrews individual Log books

WW2 Operations P/O. F/O Freddie Secker Pilot

AUG 23 1943	^X WALLINGTON	NE890	SELF	Sgt CURRIE Sgt CAVE Sgt SOUTH Sgt. HOLT	(NICKEL) "ARRAS"
NOV 18	^{III} LANCASTER	EE170	FATSANPERSON	SELF CREW	OPS BERLIN N° 1
NOV 22	^{II} LANCASTER	JR134	SELF	CREW	OPS BERLIN N° 2
DEC 16	LANCASTER	ED866	SELF	CREW	OPS BERLIN N° 3
DEC 29	^{III} LANCASTER	ED 866	SELF	CREW	OPS BERLIN N° 4
JAN 5	^{III} LANCASTER	LM378	SELF	CREW	OPS STETTIN N° 5
JAN 27	^I LANCASTER	NE569	SELF	CREW	OPS BERLIN N° 6
JAN 28	^I LANCASTER	NE501	SELF	CREW	OPS BERLIN N° 7
FEB 15	^I LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	CREW	OPS BERLIN N° 8
FEB 19	^I LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	CREW	OPS LEIPZIG N° 9
FEB 20	^I LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	CREW	OPS STUTTGART N° 10
FEB 24	^I LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	CREW	OPS SCHWEINFURT N° 11
FEB 25	^I LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	CREW	OPS AUGSBURG N° 12
MARCH 1	^I LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	CREW	OPS STUTTGART N° 13
MARCH 15	^I LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	CREW	OPS STUTTGART N° 14
MARCH 18	^I LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	Sgt HICKING CREW	OPS FRANKFURT N° 15
MARCH 22	^I LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	CREW	OPS FRANKFURT N° 16
MARCH 24	^I LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	CREW	OPS BERLIN N° 17
MARCH 26	^I LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	CREW	OPS EISEN N° 18
MARCH 30	^I LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	P/O AMOLD Sgt BUTLER CREW	OPS NURNBERG N° 19
APRIL 5	^I LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	F/O WANSLEY CREW	OPS TOULOUSE ^{OPS} Field N° 20
APRIL 11	^I LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	P/O WANSLEY P/O BLACK CREW	OPS ARCHEN N° 21
APRIL 18	^I LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	F/O KENNEDY CREW	OPS PARIS N° 22
APRIL 20	^I LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	Sgt SMITHERS CREW	OPS PARIS N° 23
APRIL 22	^I LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	Sgt SMITHERS CREW	OPS BRUNSWICK N° 24
APRIL 24	^I LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	F/O KENNEDY CREW	OPS MUNICH N° 25
APRIL 26	^I LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	Sgt ARMELL CREW	OPS SCHWEINFURT N° 26
APRIL 28	^I LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	CREW	OPS OSLO (KJELLER) N° 27
MAY 1 st	^I LANCASTER	LL 783	SELF	CREW	OPS TOULOUSE (POW WORKS) N° 28
MAY 3	^{III} LANCASTER	LM 484	SELF	CREW	OPS MAILLEY (Camp) N° 29

WW2 Operations Sgt Jack Gillespie. Secker Crew

619.		SQUADRON		WOODHALL SPA.	
22/11/43	16 55	JD 134	P/O SECKER	FLT/ENG	OPS. BERLIN (1)
3/12/43	00 20	JAY 67	P/O LONEY	FLT/ENG	OPS. LEIPZIG (2)
6/12/43	16 20	ED 866	P/O SECKER	FLT/ENG	OPS. BERLIN (3)
29/12/43	17 03	ED 866	P/O SECKER	FLT/ENG	OPS. BERLIN (4)
5/1/44	00 15	LM 378	P/O SECKER	FLT/ENG	OPS. STETTIN (5)
27/1/44	17 30	ME 569	P/O SECKER	FLT/ENG	OPS. BERLIN (6)
28/1/44	08 22	ME 569	P/O SECKER	FLT/ENG	OPS. BERLIN (7)
15/2/44	16 18	LL 783	P/O SECKER	FLT/ENG	OPS. BERLIN (8)
19/2/44	00 17	LL 783	P/O SECKER	FLT/ENG	OPS. LEIPZIG (9)
20/2/44	00 05	LL 783	P/O SECKER	FLT/ENG	OPS. STUTTGART (10)
24/2/44	20 28	LL 783	P/O SECKER	FLT/ENG	OPS. SCHWEINFURT (11)
25/2/44	18 17	LL 783	P/O SECKER	FLT/ENG	OPS. AUBSBURG (13)
1 2/3/44	23 25	LL 783	P/O SECKER	FLT/ENG	OPS - STUTTGART (13)
5 11 3/44	19 05	LL 783	P/O SECKER	"	OPS. STUTTGART (14)
18/3/44	18 50	LL 783	P/O SECKER	"	OPS. FRANKFURT (15)
22/3/44	18 59	LL 783	P/O SECKER	"	OPS. FRANKFURT (16)
24/3/44	19 20	LL 783	P/O SECKER	"	OPS. BERN/DIVERTED TO SEETHING (713 USAAF 800) (17)
25 3/44	17				
24/3/44	19 40	LL 783	P/O SECKER	"	OPS. ESSEN (18)
24/3/44	22 26	LL 783	P/O SECKER	"	OPS. NURNBERG (19)
5/4/44	20 25	LL 783	P/O SECKER	FLT/ENG	OPS. TOULOUSE (20) LANDED. 12 00h
11/4/44	20 20	LL 783	P/O SECKER	"	OPS. AACHEN (21)
14/4/44	20 30	LL 783	P/O SECKER	"	OPS. JUVISY (22)
20/4/44	21 45	LL 783	P/O SECKER	"	OPS. LA. CHAPPEL (23)
22/4/44	22 50	LL 783	P/O SECKER	"	OPS. BRUNSWICK (24)
24/4/44	20 44	LL 783	P/O SECKER	"	OPS. MUNICH (25)
26/4/44	21 20	LL 783	P/O SECKER	"	OPS. SCHWEINFURT (26)
28/4/44	21 12	LL 783	P/O SECKER	"	OPS. KJELLER (27)
1/5/44	21 10	LL 783	P/O SECKER	"	OPS. TOULOUSE (28)
3/5/44	22 00	LM 484	P/O SECKER	"	OPS. MALLY LE CAMP (29)

WW2 Operations Sgt Jack Cave. Secker Crew

18/9/43	1700	E.D. 977	S/LDR CHURCHER.	2 ND NAVIGATOR.	<u>OPERATIONS. BERLIN. (1)</u>
22/11/43	1655	J.B. 134.	P/O. SECKER.	"	<u>OPERATIONS. BERLIN. (2)</u>
16/12/43	1620	E.D. 866	P/O. SECKER	NAVIGATOR.	<u>OPERATIONS. BERLIN. (3)</u>
29/12/43	1703	E.D. 866	P/O. SECKER	"	<u>OPERATIONS. BERLIN. (4)</u>
6/1/44	0015	L.M. 378	P/O. SECKER.	"	<u>OPERATIONS - STETTIN. (5)</u>
27/1/44	1732	M.E. 569	P/O. SECKER	NAVIGATOR.	<u>OPERATIONS - BERLIN (6)</u>
29/1/44	0022	M.E. 569	P/O. SECKER	"	<u>OPERATIONS - BERLIN. (7)</u>
15/2/44	1712	L.L. 783	P/O. SECKER.	NAVIGATOR.	<u>OPERATIONS. - BERLIN. (8)</u>
20/2/44	0017	L.L. 783.	P/O. SECKER	"	<u>OPERATIONS - LEIPZIG. (9)</u>
21/2/44	0005	L.L. 783	P/O. SECKER.	"	<u>OPERATIONS - STUTTGART. (10)</u>
24/25/2/44	2025	L.L. 783	P/O. SECKER	"	<u>OPERATIONS - SCHWEINFURT (11)</u>
25/26/2/44	1817	L.L. 783	P/O. SECKER.	"	<u>OPERATIONS - AUGSBURG. (12)</u> BOMBED 28 MINS. LATE. - AIMING POINT.
1-2/3/44	2325	L.L. 783.	P/O. SECKER.	NAVIGATOR.	<u>OPERATIONS - STUTTGART. (13)</u>
15-16/3/44	1905	L.L. 783	P/O. SECKER.	"	<u>OPERATIONS. - STUTTGART. (14)</u>
18-19/3/44	1850	L.L. 783	P/O. SECKER.	"	<u>OPERATIONS - FRANKFURT. (15)</u>
22-23/3/44	1859	L.L. 783.	P/O. SECKER.	"	<u>OPERATIONS. - FRANKFURT. (16)</u>
24/3/44	1820	L.L. 783.	P/O. SECKER.	"	<u>OPERATIONS. - BERLIN. (17)</u>
26/3/44	1940	L.L. 783.	P/O. SECKER	"	<u>OPERATIONS - ESSEN. (18)</u>
30/3/3/44	2226	L.L. 783.	P/O. SECKER.	"	<u>OPERATIONS. - NURNBERG. (19)</u>
5/4/44	2025	L.L. 783.	P/O. SECKER.	NAVIGATOR.	<u>OPERATIONS - TOULOUSE. (20)</u>
11/4/44	2020	L.L. 783.	P/O. SECKER.	"	<u>OPERATIONS - AACHEN. (21)</u>
<u>No. 619 SQUADRON. DUNHOLME LODGE.</u>					
18/4/44	2030	L.L. 783	P/O. SECKER.	NAVIGATOR.	<u>OPERATIONS - JUVISY, NR. PARIS. (22)</u>
20/4/44	2145	L.L. 783	P/O. SECKER.	"	<u>OPERATIONS. - LA CHAPELLE, NR. PARIS. (23)</u>
22/4/44	2250	L.L. 783.	P/O. SECKER.	"	<u>OPERATIONS. - BRUNSWICK. (24)</u>
24/4/44	2044	L.L. 778	P/O. SECKER	"	<u>OPERATIONS - MUNICH. (25)</u>
26/4/44	2120	L.L. 783	P/O. SECKER	"	<u>OPERATIONS - SCHWEINFURT (26)</u>
28/4/44	2112	L.L. 783	P/O. SECKER.	"	<u>OPERATIONS - KJELLER, NR. OSLO. (27)</u>
1/5/44	2110	L.L. 783	P/O. SECKER	"	<u>OPERATIONS - TOULOUSE. (28)</u>
3/5/44	2200	L.M. 484.	P/O. SECKER.	"	<u>OPERATIONS - MAILLY LE CAMP (29)</u>
23/24/8	2020	H.E. 686	SGT. SECKER.	NAVIGATOR.	<u>SPECIAL EXERCISE. BASE - ST. ALBANS</u> <u>HEAD - ARRAS - ST. ALBANS HD - BASE.</u>

WW2 Operations Sgt J.H. South. Secker Crew

Year		No 619 SQUADRON.			WOODHALL SPA.					
Month	Date	Aircraft		Pilot	DUTY (Including Results and Remarks)	Time in Air				
		Type	No.			Day	Night	Day	Night	
NOV.	22	---	58 134	---	A/B BOMBER ① WAR OPS BERLIN	7.00				
DEC.	2	---	58 134	---	A/B OPS BERLIN ② WAR OPS	7.05				
-	16	---	58 134	---	A/B OPS BERLIN ③ 10.1.14	8.35				
-	29	---	58 134	---	A/B OPS BERLIN ④ 10.2.14	7.15				
1944	JAN 6	---	378	SECKER	A/B OPS STETTIN ⑤ 9.4.14	9.00				
<u>COMING BY.</u>										
-	27	---	569	SECKER	A/B OPS BERLIN ⑥ 1.7.14	8.55				
-	28	---	---	---	A/B OPS BERLIN ⑦ 1.7.14	8.00				
FEB	15	---	783	SECKER	A/B OPS BERLIN ⑧ 15.2.14	7.25				
-	19	---	---	---	A/B OPS LEITZIG ⑨ 10.2.14	6.45				
-	20	---	---	---	A/B OPS STUTTGART ⑩ 10.2.14	7.25				
FEB.	24	---	783	SECKER	A/B OPS SIEGENFURT. ⑪ 10.3.14	8.40				
-	26	---	---	---	A/B OPS AUGSBURG ⑫ 10.3.14	8.20				
MAR	1	---	783	SECKER	A/B OPS STUTTGART ⑬ 10.3.14	5.35				
-	15	---	783	---	A/B OPS STUTTGART ⑭ 10.3.14	8.15				
"	18	---	783	---	A/B OPS FRANKFURT ⑮	5.40				
"	"	---	783	---	A/B OPS FRANKFURT. ⑯	6.10				
-	24	---	783	---	A/B OPS BERLIN ⑰ DIV. SEETHING (USAF)	7.45				
MAR	26	LANC	783	SECKER	A/B OPS ESSEN ⑱ 10.3.14 SICK IN 55 G.	5.10				
APR.	17	---	783	---	COMING BY To PUNHOLMHOPE SICK IN 55 G. HOSP. AUCKLAND.	.30				
APR	23	---	686	---	NICKEL. (ARRAS) (X.C.O.)	1.50				

WW2 Operations Sgt Bill Currie. Secker Crew

22/1/43	1700	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. BERLIN ①
10/2/43	1620	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. BERLIN ②
	ED 866				
29/2/43	1703	ED 866	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. BERLIN ③
1/2/44	2855	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. Berlin ④
5/1/44	0015	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. STETTIN ⑤
27/1/44	1730	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. Berlin ⑥
28/1/44	0032	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. Berlin ⑦
15/2/44	6610	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. Berlin ⑧
	LL 783				
19/2/44	0010	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. Leipzig ⑨
20/2/44	3330	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. Stuttgart ⑩
	LL 783				
24/2/44	2035	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. Schweinfurt ⑪
	LL 783				
26/2/44	1818	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. Augsburg ⑫
1/3/44	2380	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. Stuttgart ⑬
	LL 783				
15/3/44	1907	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. Stuttgart ⑭
	LL 783				
18/3/44	1850	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. Frankfurt ⑮
22/3/44	1859	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. Frankfurt ⑯
	LL 783				
24/3/44	1820	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. Berlin 17 ⑰
	LL 783				Diversion Landed at Seething
06/4/44	30	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. Eosen ⑱
	LL 783				
10/4/44	2226	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. Thurnburg ⑲
	LL 783				
5/4/44	2025	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. Toulouse ⑳
	LL 783				Diverted to Chipping Warden
18/4/44	2030	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. Jersey - Paris ㉑
	LL 783				
20/4/44	2145	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. La Chappelle - Paris ㉒
	LL 783				
22/4/44	2250	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. BRUNSWICK ㉓
24/4/44	2044	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. MUNICH ㉔
	LL 102				
26/4/44	2120	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. SCHWEINFURT ㉕
	LL 102				
28/4/44	2112	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. KJELLER, NR 0360 ㉖
1/5/44	2109	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. TOULOUSE ㉗
	LL 783				
3/5/44	2200	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	OPS. MALMAY ㉘
	LL 484				BLISTER PANEL SHOT OFF
5/5/44	0810	LANCASTER	P/O Secker	W/OP	Wicket Last Target Area

WW2 Operations Sgt Doug Hole. Secker Crew

619. SQUADRON. WOODHALL SPA.

22/11/43	1655	J.B.134.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS. BERLIN. (1)
26/11/43	1722	D.V.335.	P/O. BUTTAR.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS. BERLIN (2). <small>CRASH LANDED ELVINGTON. 1/12</small>
10.12.43	1620	ED 866.	P/O. SECKER	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS BERLIN. (3).
29.12.43.	1703	EJ. 866.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS BERLIN (4).
5/6.1.44	0015	L.M. 378.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	<small>R.F.I. KOCHL.</small> OPERATIONS STETTIN. (5).
27.1.44.	1730	ME.569.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS BERLIN. (6).
29.1.44.	0022	ME.569.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS BERLIN. (7).
15.2.44.	1618	LL. 783.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS BERLIN. 8.
19.2.44	0017	LL.783.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS LEIPZIG. 9.
20.2.44	0005	LL. 783.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS STUTTGART. 10.
24.2.44	2029	LL.783	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS SCHWEINFURT. 11.
25.2.44	1817.	LL. 783	P/O. SECKER	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS AUGSBURG* 12.
1.3.44.	2525.	<small>LANCASTER</small> LL. 783.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS STUTTGART. (13).
15.3.44.	1907.	LL. 783.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS STUTTGART. (14).
18.3.44	1550.	LL.783.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS FRANKFURT. (15).
22.3.44.	1559	LL.783.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS FRANKFURT. (16).
24.3.44.	1820	LL.783	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS BERLIN. <small>LANDED SEETHING USAAP.</small> (17).
26.3.44	1945	LL.783.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS ESSEN. (18).
5.4.44	2025	LL.783.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS TOULOUSE* (19).
11.4.44.	2020	LL.783.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS AACHEN* (20).
18.4.44	2030	LL.783.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS JUVISY* (21)
20.4.44	2154	LL.783.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS. PARIS* (22).
22.4.44.	2245	LL. 783.	P/O. SECKER.	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS BRUNSWICK. (23).
24.4.44	2040	LL. 775	P/O. SECKER	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS MUNICH. (24).
4.5.44.	5800	<small>LANCASTER J.</small> LL.484.	F/O. SECKER	REAR GUNNER.	OPERATIONS. MAILLY LE CAMP. (25).
23.8.43	2020	<small>LANCASTER J.</small> LL.686.	Sgt. SECKER	AS REAR GUNNER NICKELLING.	J.C.O.

WW2 Operations PO Kimberley Roberts

Coningsby Jan 1944						
JANUARY	20	"	I	"L"	PO MORRISON	SELF. OPS. BERLIN
"	21	"	I	"X"	SELF	CREW. OPS. MAEDRIBURG
"	28	"		OB134	SELF	CREW OPS. BERLIN.
"	30	"		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. BERLIN.
FEBRUARY	15	"		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. BERLIN (PO WILLIAMS MISSING) PO WOODS, PO LEE, PO HANCOCK
"	24	"		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. SCHWENFURAT
"	25	"		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. AUGSBURG
MARCH	1	LANCASTER III		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. STUTTGART
"	10	"		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. CHATEAUXROUX.
"	15	"	III	LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. STUTTGART (PO KING, PO BENT)
"	18	"		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. FRANKFURT
"	22	"		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. FRANKFURT.
"	26	"		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. ESSEN
"	30	"		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. MURSBURG. (PO MISSING)
APRIL	10	"		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. TONRS.
"	11	"		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. AACHEN (Sgt MURPHY MISSING) PO HODGE
"	16	"		LM378	SELF	CREW TO DUNHOLME LODGE
"	18	"		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. PARIS (PO FRENCH MISSING)
"	22	"		LM378	SELF	CREW O.P.S. BRAUNSWICH
"	24	"		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. MUNICH (Sgt WATFIELD MISSING)
"	26	"		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. SCHWENFURAT (PO GIBBS MISSING) PO HODGKINS
"	28	"		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. KSELER (OSLO)
MAY	1	"		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. TONKENSE
"	3	"		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. HAILLY-LE-CHAMP (PO WOODS MISSING)
"	7	"	I	LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. SALAIS (Sgt FULLER MISSING) PO BROWN
"	9	"	I	LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. GENNEVILLERS (PARIS)
"	11	"		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. BONAC-LEOPOLD
"	14	"		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. AMIENS.
"	22	"		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. BRAUNSWICH
JUNE.	5	LANCASTER		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. LA-PANELLE.
JUNE	6	LANCASTER		LM378	SELF	CREW OPS. CAEN.

WW2 Operations Sgt Jack Forrest . Roberts Crew

Coningsby

27-1-44	20-30	LANC X ME 569	F/Sgt. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS - MAGDEBURG.	10 320 LBS 21000'
28-1-44	00-20	LANC C J.B. 134	F/O. ROBERTS	ENGINEER.	OPS. - BERLIN.	9882 LBS 25000'
30-1-44	09-17	LANC J LM 378	P/O. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS - BERLIN.	9872 LBS 20000'
15-2-44	19 18	J	P/O ROBERTS.	ENGINEER	OPS. BERLIN.	CASHED ON RETURN AT EAST KIRKBY
14-2-44	18-30	J LM 378	P/O. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS. SCHWIEFURT.	14158 LBS 22000'
25-2-44	18-30	J LM 378	P/O ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS. AUGSBURG	10 212 LBS 21000'
1-3-44	23-00	LANC J LM 378	P/O ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS. STUTTGART	LANDED WING
9-3-44		J LT. 378	P/O. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS. CHATEAUXOUX.	SPECIAL OP. 8000'
16-3-44		J LM 378	P/O. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS. STUTTGART	10619 LBS 20000'
18-3-44		J LM 378	P/O. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS. FRANKFURT.	PORT RUBBER COVER DAMAGED BY 2/4. 70 RS 1/10 SHOT DOWN BY RG 1/10 WING 3.5M DEC 13216 LBS. 20500'
22-3-44		J LM 378	P/O ROBERTS	ENGINEER.	FRANK FURT.	12702 LBS. 21000'
26-3-44		F ME 568	P/O. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS. ESSEN.	19500'
30-3-44		J LT. 378	P/O ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS. NÜRNBERG.	11 074 LBS 21500'
10-4-44		J LM 378	P/O. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS. TOURS.	12490 LBS. 6250'
11-4-44		J LM 378	P/O. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS. AACHEN.	17000 LBS. 19000'

Dunholme Lodge

18-4-44		J LL 778	P/O. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS. PARIS. (JUVISY)	16560 LBS. 7000'
22-4-44		J LM 378	P/O. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS. BRUNSWICK.	8320 LBS 19500'
24-4-44		J LM 378	P/O ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS. MUNICH.	8785 LBS 16000'
26-4-44		J LM 378	F/O ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS. SCHWEINFURT.	9214 LBS 16000'
28-4-44		J LM 378	F/LT. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER	OPS. OSLO. (KJELLER)	11980 LBS 8250'
1-5-44		J LM 378	F/LT. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER	OPS. TOULOUSE.	10673 LBS 7000'
13-5-44		J LM 378	F/LT. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS. MAILLY-LE-CAMP	11800 LBS. 3350'
17-5-44		J LL 783	F/LT ROBERTS	ENGINEER	OPS. BALBRIS.	STAR 20.1 FULL TANK DAMAGED BY 2/4 580 GALS FUEL LOST.
19-5-44		J LL 783	F/LT. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER	OPS. GENNEVELLIERS (PARIS).	
21-5-44		J LL 783	F/LT. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS. BOURG-LEOPOLD.	
29-5-44		J LL 783	F/LT. ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS. AMIENS.	
32-5-44		J C 14783	F/LT ROBERTS.	ENGINEER.	OPS. BRUNSWICK.	
24-5-44		J E LL783	F/LT. ROBERTS	ENGINEER	SPECIAL EXERCISE	
5-6-44		J LL 783	F/LT. ROBERTS	ENGINEER	OPERATIONS. LA PARNELLE.	
6-6-44		J LL 783	F/LT ROBERTS	ENGINEER	OPERATIONS CAEN (MISSING)	

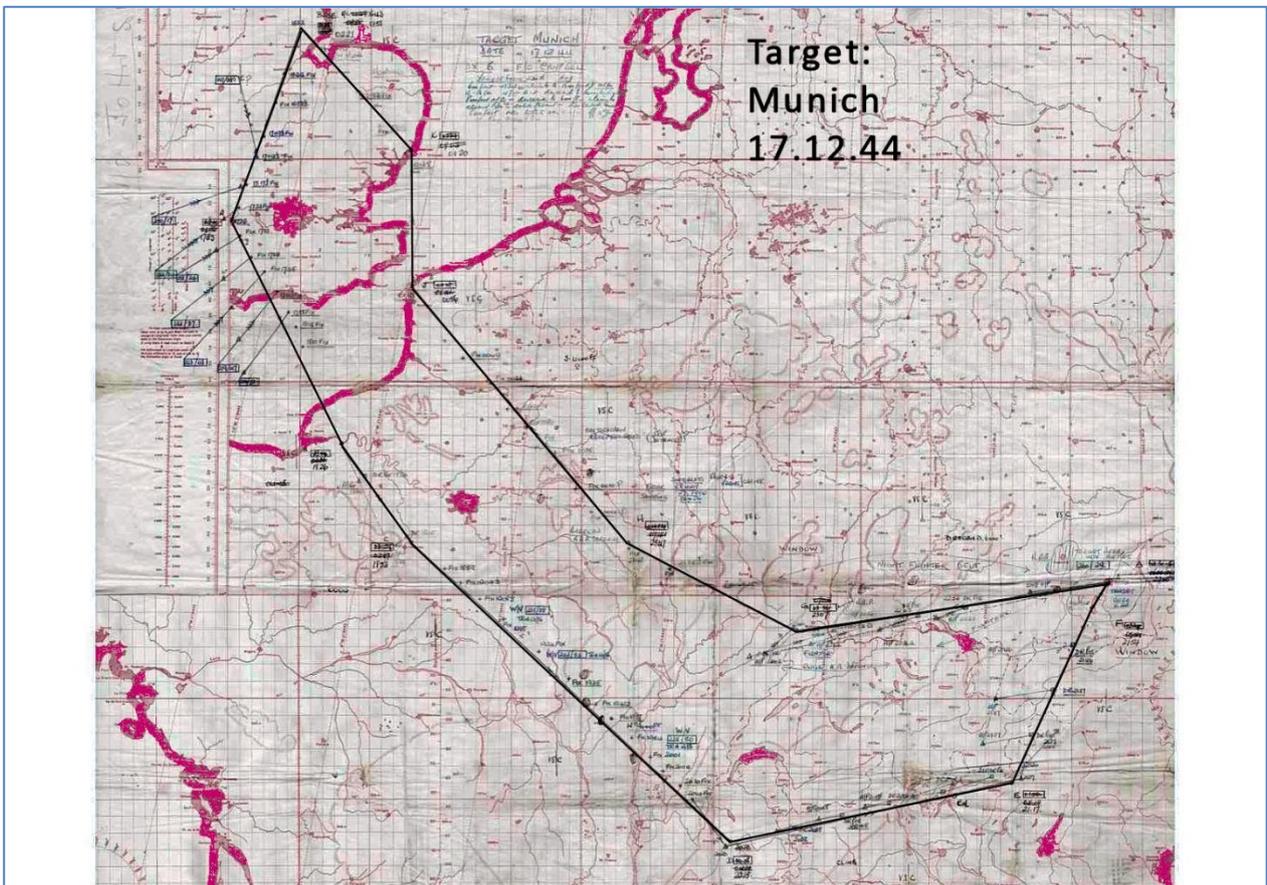


A piece of LM378 PG-J Jig at William Farr School in Welton, Lincs

A history of Dunholme Lodge Airfield can be found at William Farr School at Welton in Lincolnshire. The school hosts a 619 Sqn Re-union lunch each year. The airfield history link is

<http://www.williamfarr.lincs.sch.uk/about-us/royal-air-force-heritage/the-history-of-raf-dunholme-lodge>

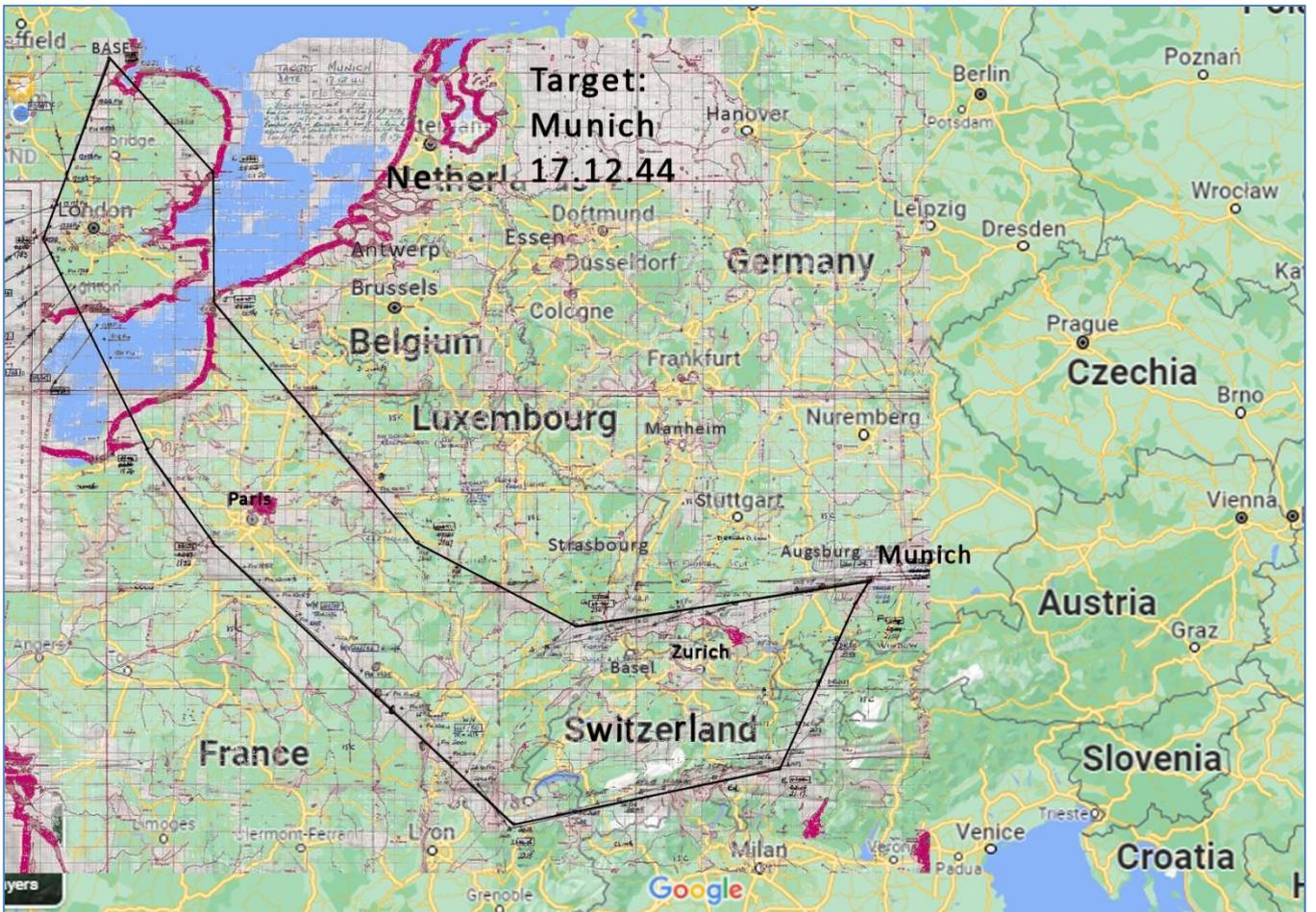
An RAF Navigator's map 17th December 1944. Target Munich. Route out south and back north route.



A modern day map of the same area



Then a merged map (partially superimposed)



Several other targets are shown. Targets like Munich, Dresden and Berlin were near the Lancaster range limit.

In Memoriam.

- ❖ In August 2006, a memorial to Bomber Command was unveiled at Lincoln Cathedral.
- ❖ A memorial in Green Park in London was unveiled by Queen Elizabeth II on 28 June 2012 to highlight the price paid by the Bomber Command aircrews.
- ❖ Between 2020 and present date a half size scale Lancaster is to be built alongside the A46 going into Lincoln at Hill Holt Wood near Norton Disney. It is just south of the former RAF airfield of Swinderby on Brill's Farm. It will be higher than the Angel of the North at Newcastle

Construction of A46 Lancaster Bomber sculpture will begin in January 2022 (thelincolnite.co.uk)

<https://thelincolnite.co.uk/2021/12/construction-of-a46-lancaster-bomber-sculpture-will-begin-in-january/>

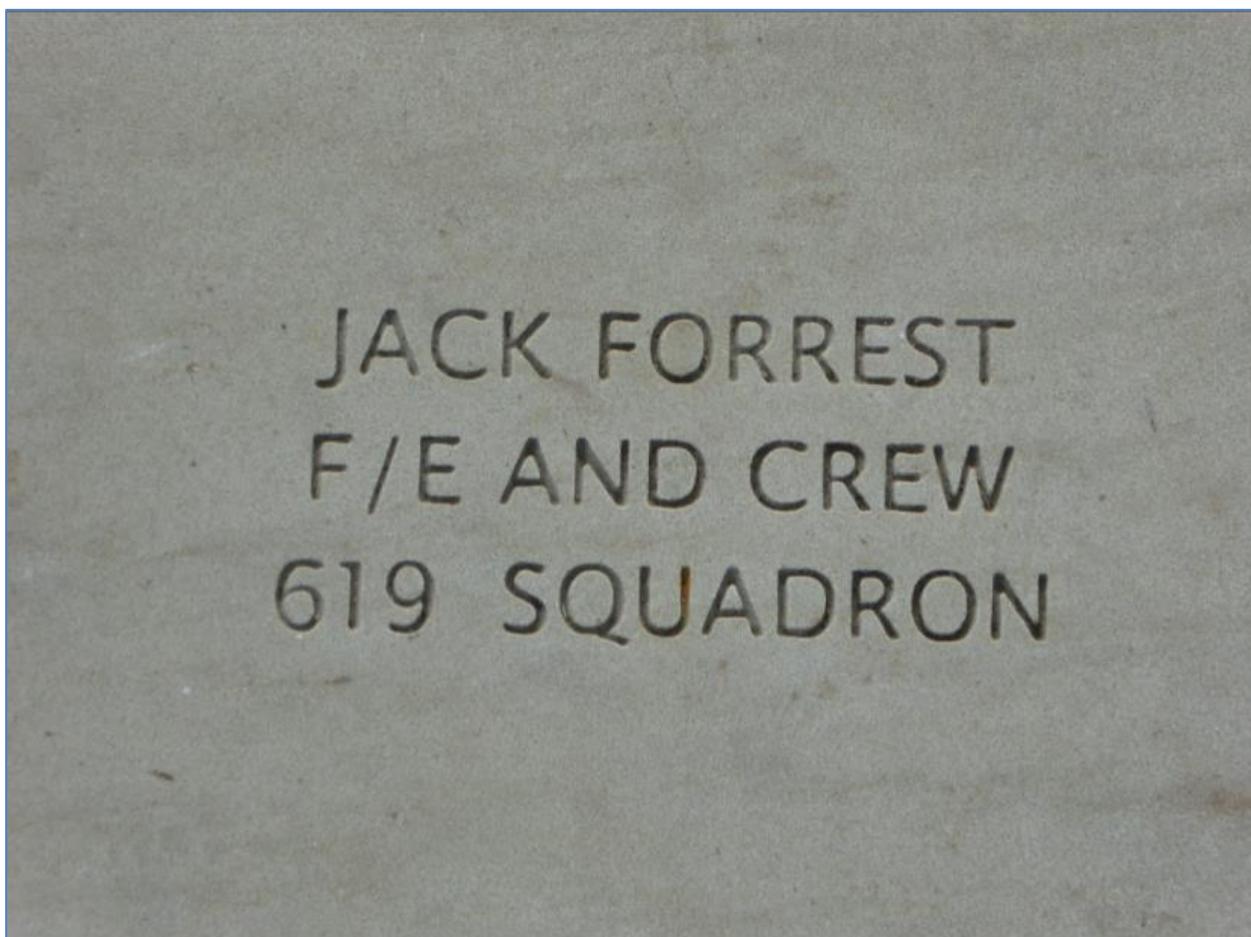
❖ The International Bomber Command Centre IBCC was opened in Lincoln in April 2018 It has a Bomber Command Museum and hollowed out in thick steel plates are the names of nearly 58,000 people, both men and women who lost their lives serving with Bomber Command

<https://internationalbcc.co.uk/>

In July 2018 The Forrest Family had a memorial stone laid here to their father Jack Forrest. The on-site location of these stones is a broad pathway called "The Ribbon of Remembrance" There is also an on line story that accompanies them called "Stories behind the Stones"

<https://internationalbcc.co.uk/about-ibcc/news/category/ibcc-stones/>

Ribbon of Remembrance IBCC Lincoln



In late January 2022 the sons of JH 'Sam' South also had a memorial stone laid on the 'Ribbon of Remembrance'. It specifically mentions Lancaster LL783 as Cinders of the Clouds and 619 Squadron. It was just before what would have been his 100th Birthday in February 2022



Stories behind the Stones

John South was a Londoner who volunteered for the RAF when he was 20 in 1942. He completed RAF Basic Training and then went to South Africa for his aircrew instruction, as an Observer and Air Bomber. When he returned to the UK he went to Operational Training Unit 17 at RAF Silverstone and later to Heavy Conversion Unit 1661 at RAF Winthorpe near Newark where they flew the ill-fated Manchester and then the Lancaster. By now the Crew team had formed and it would remain together where possible throughout their Tour of Duty (30 Ops) and after

They were

Freddie Secker Pilot,

Jack Gillespie Flt Engineer,

Jack Cave Navigator,

Bill Currie Wireless Operator,

Doug Hole Rear Gunner,

Don Shortt Mid Upper Gunner

and of course John 'Sam' South as Air Bomber and Front Gunner

They were posted to 619 Squadron RAF Woodhall Spa in October 1943 where they completed 5 Operations (sorties) in a variety of Lancasters before the Squadron was moved to RAF Coningsby. Here they were united with what was their lucky favourite Lancaster LL783 PG-C which they called 'Cinders of the Clouds' and they completed their Tour of Duty with it. Sam was unfortunately injured during this time and missed out on a few missions, however he re-joined the same crew at 52 Base Scampton after their Tour ended and later at 56 Base Syerston where they continued to test fly new Lancasters before sending them out to the other Squadrons

After the war Sam stayed on in the RAF and became a Warrant Officer Master Navigator flying Lincolns and Sunderlands. When these were stood down he joined Transport Command flying Ansons which funnily enough he started his pre war training in. At age 45 he was retired from flying and he retrained as an Air Traffic Controller serving at RAF Cottesmore with the V-Bomber force, El Adem in Libya, Coningsby (now the home of BBMF) and later Scampton with Phantom Fighter-Bombers.

Alas at age 55 the RAF retire you but very near the end of his RAF career he was asked to land an incoming unidentified aircraft. It turned out to be Lancaster PA474 The City of Lincoln. The aircraft disobeyed parking instructions and pulled up outside the Control Tower where upon Sam's boss told him that he was going to fly again as a retirement present. As Second Navigator he flew in the Lancaster from Scampton to Coningsby. It is recorded as his last flight in his Log Book

<https://internationalbcc.co.uk/about-ibcc/news/m-nav-jh-sam-south/>

1976						Time carried forward: 4594.25	
Date	Hour	Aircraft Type and No.	Pilot	Duty	REMARKS (including results of bombing, journey, exercises, etc.)	Flying Times	
						Day	Night
21-10-76	1300z	LANCASTER PA 474	SAV HWR JACKSON	SECOND NAV.	SCAMPTON - CONINGSBY	00.15	
SUMMARY FOR OCTOBER 1976							
ONE ENTRY AS ABOVE.							
SIGNED <i>Jackson</i>							
Sam South's last RAF Flight						3691.20	903.20
						TOTAL 4594.40	

Three Families visit the Crash site

A very nice newspaper tribute to the Roberts Crew was made in June 2014 at Auvers in France. André and Terry Newell representing The DeViels, Roger Olden representing Jack Lott and Ann, David and Mary representing the Forrests all attended and laid flowers at the Roberts memorial. For David this was his third visit. They were presented with a 70th Anniversary Plaque which is now kept at William Farr School.

It reads 'France, June 2014.' The rough translation is as follows:

A tribute to the seven airmen of Lancaster LL783

David Forrest, son of one of the airmen and Guy Foucher, the Mayor, have deposited a wreath at the foot of the memorial to Lieutenant Roberts.

History

On the night of 6 to 7 June 1944, returning from a mission to Caen and caught by the German fighters, a British Lancaster bomber LL783, was shot down in the swamp the Shore; Auvers. On board, seven people including the Australian pilot, Lt. Kimberley Roberts, the memory of which a memorial stone was erected in the cemetery.

Before crashing to the ground, two airmen escaped by parachute out of the plane. Sergeant (corr: F/Sgt) Wilfred DeViell, Radio Operator (corr: A-B) and Sergeant Jack Forrest, Flight Engineer, were the only survivors. They now have both sadly died.

In 1996, they returned to Auvers to the scene of the crash and were able to retrieve debris from the plane near the railway line as evidenced by the cuts of the era newspapers.

A few months ago, David Forrest, the son of the Flight Engineer, had contacted the municipality to organize a ceremony in honour of his father and the entire crew of the aircraft. On Saturday at the cemetery before the memorial stone of Lieutenant Roberts, family, friends came to pay tribute to its airmen.

"They came to fight with us to make us our freedom" stressed Guy Foucher, the mayor. David Forrest pronounced a few words and his thanks "To be here with [his] family to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the crash. I am always amazed that the town remembers the fighting spirit of the seven men. In 1996, my dad and Wilfred DeViell had been surprised at the recognition that their Auversois had testified"

Come Herout, the former mayor, who has invested heavily in this story and had received the fliers in 1996 unfortunately could not meet these visitors. Maybe they will cross in the lobby of the ferry terminal at Cherbourg on Sunday night, one returning from England, the others starting again to Britain...

This was the French Newspaper article



Inset: The Plaque that was presented

This is the crash site at Auvers



Inset. A map that Reg DeViell was given after visiting the site in 1992

A link to the French war graves for the lost crew is

<http://39-45.auzeau.fr/france/14-calvados/14-tilly-sur-seules-war-cemetery/>



Bomber Command Memorial, London



BBMF of Coningsby, Lincolnshire



IBCC Lincoln. 57,861 names are recorded on the panels.

Among them are

• ROBERTS K 358 •

• WILLIAMS LE •

• LOTT JE •

• TUCKER JH •

• WYAND GH •



My tribute to the late David Young who helped me in my original researches into 619 Squadron



Reg DeViell in Canadian AF Uniform. His family were a late discovery in the writing of this story



The Forrest family photographic tribute to their Father's crew of PG-C, Cinders of the Clouds LL783



Billy Rose's Diamond Horseshoe nightclub 1943



The aircraft and crews that flew side by side with 619 Squadron

BOMB DOORS OPEN With doors
 agape, B1, LL783, C-Charlie of 619
 Squadron, Coningsby, shows to advan-
 tage its capacious bomb bay - 33 feet
 long and almost half the fuselage length.

And finally, in the morning. Maybe..... coming home ?? Two reconstructed pictures.... If only !
 Brave men..... all. Lest we forget





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As a measure of respect and friendship for each other, the crews of 619 Sqn continued to meet at annual gatherings of the 619 Squadron Association. It still goes on today with the children and relatives of those crew.

There is also a dedicated Facebook page. Search Facebook "619 Squadron RAF WW2(Private Group)" Here are a few of those meetings



619 Squadron Reunion at RAF Coningsby - 1989

Back row (left to right)

George Hexter, Bill Coop, Pete Bowditch, Allen Pool, Ray Searle, Jeff Ripley, Jack Forrest, Gil King, Jim Fowler, Rex Booth, Trevor Wright, Steve Rew, Jim Sheath, Peter Cooper, Sam South, John Bell

Third row (left to right)

Colin Taylor, Albert Brookes, Maurice Murray, George Curtis, George Chatterton, Jack Holmes, Bob Dyball, John Stockdale, Reg De-Viell, Thomas Clark, Ken Hickmott, John Robley, Frank James, Ken Phillips

Second Row (left to right)

Norman Morrison, Jack Mills, Pat Miles, John Kemp, Ken Cookson, Frank Seazell, Philip Coleman, John Bache, Jack Cave, Peter Marshall, Bert Ashdown, Joe Dutton, Tommy Clynes, Chopper Powell

Front Row (left to right)

Jack Gillespie, Bill Thomas, Ian Fraser, Bob Knights, F/O John Binding (RAF Coningsby), Charles Clarke, Douglas Coomber, Jack Franks, John Whiteley, Albert Bowden, Reg Hutton, Freddie Thomas, Pete Bailey, Rocky Thornton

619 Squadron ReUnion 1989



**619 Squadron Reunion 1993
Petwood Hotel Woodhall Spa**

Standing Back Row L to R
T Jones, Sam Malik, Don Washington,
Fred McMillan, Jack Holmes, Ed Pennels

Standing Middle Row L to R
Bus Martin, Stan Walker, Don Baker,
John Cracknell, Norm Morrison,
Maurice Murray, Ken Hickmot, Jim Bengston
Sam South, Bill Breeze, Arthur Sharman
Jack Forrest, Bob Knights, Freddie Cole
Jack Speers, Jim Sharpe, Bill Berry
Jeff Ripley, Reg DeViell, John Whiteley
Tommy Thompson, Ralf Boyce, Bill Storr
Les Parker, Frank Smith, Ed Deschaine
Trevor Wright, John Crisp, Dan Danielson
Freddie Thomas, Ken Rix, Brian Atkinson
Ron Booth

Seated Front Row L to R
George Hexter, Joe Dutton, Bob Dell
John Kemp, Jack Gillespie, Freddie Secker
Mac Hamilton, Jack Murray,
Douglas Coomber, Charles Clarke
Ron Churcher, Brock Jordan, Pete Bailey
Ken Phillips, Bill Thomas, Peter Marshall
Bert Ashdown

As listed on the back of the photo



Back Row L-R
Robt Millward, John Cracknell,
Tommy Thompson, Les Parker, John Kemp,
Jack Franks, Ken Phillips, Clint Johnson,
Wolfgang Muller, Fred Cole,
Jack Cave, Brian Atkinson, Tony Jones,
Jim Bengston, Jeff Hird, John Walton-Cole
Ralph Boyce, Pete Marshall, Norm Gamp,
Bert Ashdown, Bill Storr, Gil King,
Brock Jordan, Jack Gillespie, Ken Hickmot,
Jack Forrest, Pete Bailey, Sam South,
Reg DeViell, Chopper Powell, Bob Dell,
Unknown, Ron Booth, Charles Clarke,
John Whiteley, Terry Secker,
Freddie Secker, George Hexter,
Joe Dutton, Ed Pennels

Front Row L-R
Rosalind Millward, Inez Cracknel,
Molly Thompson, Olive Parker,
Sheila Kemp, Penelope ?, Doris Phillips,
Irgard Muller, Dorothy Atkinson,
Edith Bengston, Christine Hird,
Renee Boyce, Margaret Gampe,
Brenda Storr, Beryl Jordan,
Margaret Coomber, Gwen Bradley,
Josie Bailey, Anne Grimshaw,
Elizabeth Dell, Mary Coop, Jennifer Dell
Betty Booth, Eileen Clarke, Mary Whiteley
Joan Secker, Bette Hexter, Dorothy Pennels

619 Reunion Petwood Hotel 1996



Hugh South (Author) is the eldest son of Sam South

I am indebted to the following for providing copies of their parent's Flying Log Books, stories that make the text more interesting and for correcting errors that I made along the way. Two late additions to this history were the discovery of the Reg DeViell logbook and right at the 11th hour before print the Kimberley Roberts logbook

- Terry Secker the son of Freddie Secker
- Stuart & Maureen Hodgson the son-in law & daughter of Bill Currie
- Karen Stokes the daughter of Jack Gillespie
- David Hole & Ian Hole the sons of Doug Hole
- Kim Roberts the nephew of Kimberley Roberts
- Ann Davies & David Forrest the daughter and son of Jack Forrest
- Andree Newell & Richard Newell the daughter and grandson of Reg DeViell

My family had the Logbook of Jack Cave, given to my father before Jack's death

And also for references about 619 Squadron by Steve Rew who was a 619 ground crew veteran

619 Squadron lost a total of 94 Lancasters and 602 Crew members in its lifetime. That was a high price to pay along with the total losses of Bomber Command. In April 2022, 619 Squadron Association will unveil a stone to 619 Sqn at the IBCC in Lincoln

To me, it is important that the log books used in this history should not be lost as the current generation passes away. They should be broadcast as far and as wide as possible so that future generations can read them and give those crews the respect that they deserve. I hope I have played a part in that.

Thorpe Camp at Tattershall Thorpe is a developing Museum. It has a dedicated 619 Squadron section. It was the first airfield that 619 Squadron flew from at Woodhall Spa. They will accept memorabilia. <https://thorpecamp.wixsite.com/visitors> centre

Despite several proof readings, there might still be a few mistakes My apologies but please do correct them yourselves. I wonder if any more log books will turn up ?

Hugh South hugh.south@sky.com March 2022