

## MY WARTIME EXPERIENCES

It is now forty-seven years since World War II ended and books describing wartime experiences are coming out more and more frequently. It has been suggested to me that I should record my wartime experiences in some form. The life of a pilot trainee, flying instructor and bomber pilot has been already described in many books. Therefore to present a sort of diary of my experiences would make for very dull reading.

However, there are a few aspects and events in my wartime career that were not run-of-the-mill and might prove interesting to a reader. I propose, herefore, to present a chronological account of my enlistment and my postings with a more detailed account of any special or unusual events which occurred along the way.

When Hitler invaded Poland I was on the train returning to St. Anthony Gold Mine to begin my second year of teaching. Very soon I decided that I would join the air force as soon as I could. But of course I was obligated to complete the school year which would not finish until the following June.

I planned to visit the recruiting centre in Toronto on the way back from a holiday at home during the 1940 Easter holidays. The recruiting centre was closed the day I was in Toronto. As soon as I returned to St. Anthony I wrote to the recruiting centre in Winnipeg and asked for an appointment for the first available Saturday. I received an appointment for May 6.

May 6 was not a good choice. Normally, to get from St.

Anthony to the railway station, Savant Lake, one travelled eight miles across the lake and then four miles by taxi. During Spring break-up this is impossible and the only way to the railway is a sixteen mile hike through the bush. On May 5 as soon as school was over I set out on the sixteen mile walk to Savant Lake. While daylight lasted the going was not too bad but after dark, since the trail was ill defined, it was difficult to follow the the trail and at one point I was wading in waist deep water to cross a small creek. However, I reached Savant Lake in time to catch the midnight train.

The next morning I reported to the recruiting centre. After filling in many forms and undergoing a physical examination I was told to return on Monday. I stated that I was already travelling over six hundred miles for this appointment and now I was being asked to travel another six hundred miles and in any case I could not come on Monday since I would be back at work. I was assured that the medical examination could not be completed that day and that if I wanted to enlist I would have to return another day. On being assured that everything in the medical was OK so far I agreed to return on May 27. The return train arrived in Savant Lake at 3:20 on Monday morning and I had the sixteen mile walk before opening the school at 9:00 AM. Fortunately the walk was nearly all in daylight.

On May 26 the Spring break-up was over and I was able to travel by boat and taxi. I reported to the recruiting centre on the morning of May 27 as agreed and waited to be called in for completion of the medical. When nothing had happened by the middle of the afternoon I went to the desk and asked what had gone wrong. The lad at the desk said that they could not find my file but that he would search again. He reappeared with the file with a rather strange look on his face. He showed me the file in which I had been assigned the medical category "E".

I insisted that I had been assured that everything was OK before I left on May 6. He then led me to one of the doctors who had me sit in a chair, looked up my nose, stroked out the "E" on the file and wrote in "A". I then saw another doctor who completed the medical and said everything was OK. They then told me at the desk that I should go home and that I would be called up soon.

I advised the school board that I would not be teaching the next year and awaited the call-up. By the end of June I had heard nothing further so I got a job working underground in the mine. When I had heard nothing by the middle of August I wrote to the recruiting centre and was advised that I would be called up in the near future. In November I had still heard nothing further. I quit the job at the mine, went to Fort William now Thunder Bay, and got a job at the aircraft factory where they were building Hurricane fighters.

In January a mobile recruiting team came to Fort William. I went to see them to find out why I had not been called up. On checking with the office in Winnipeg they informed me that my file had been misplaced, was found and that I would have to have another medical since the previous one was now expired. I then arranged to go to Winnipeg for another medical on Feb 27.

ON 27 Feb I returned to Winnipeg and underwent another medical examination. Although I was just recovering from a bad case of measles they let me pass and asked when I would like to report for enlistment. Since I had not been home for about a year I decided that I would make a quick trip home before enlisting and so it was agreed that I would return to Winnipeg on March 10 to enlist.

On March 10 I reported to the recruiting centre and was told

to return 20 April to be sworn in. I told them that this was impossible since I had already borrowed money to get to Winnipeg, had no job and no place to stay. After some consultation among the staff I was told that I could return the next day and be sworn in.

I do not recall where I spent the night but I did return to the recruiting centre on March 11, was sworn in and found myself on a train to Brandon. After a delay of about ten months and 4000 kilometers travel I was finally in the Royal Canadian Air Force.

I spent a month at No 2 Manning Depot in Brandon. This was where one was introduced to the RCAF and air force life. Everything that is required, all clothing, razor, boot polishing equipment etc. is issued. The time is spent learning air force law, procedures, discipline and drill. Much time was spent on drill and route marches.

On April 1 I was posted to No 1 Air Navigation School, Rivers Man for guard duty. On guard duty we were issued a rifle and two or three bullets and required to man one of the several posts about the air base. For aircrew this was just a useful means of keeping us occupied until there was an opening for further training. This was of course a very dull period but I was able to get some flying as a passenger in the Anson aircraft on the navigators' training flights. In fact I could help pay my way by cranking the undercarriage up and down as required.

On the 9th Of June I was transferred to No 2 Initial Training School (ITS) Regina. Here the training for either pilot or navigator was begun and life became much more serious as no one wanted to fail. Training was given in weather, navigation, morse code, armaments and of course more drill. On graduation

# WINGS



VOL. 1—No. 5 FIVE CENTS

NO. 11 S.F.T.S., YORKTON, SASKATCHEWAN

Christmas Number, December, 1941

## Seventh Wings Parade O.C. Presents Wings To Seventh Class From No. 11

On the evening of December 5th, the pageantry of parade or the pat-  
ter of phrases. You of class thirty-  
eight have won your wings under  
No. 11 Service Flying Training School, received their wings. Some-  
times we consider seven as a lucky  
number, but as far as weather con-  
ditions went, the seventh class was  
far from lucky.

The Wings Parade was held in  
the drill hall, which was decorated  
with Brits' and American flags. A  
large number of people from York-  
ton, as well as friends and rela-  
tives of the graduates and other  
personnel, were present to witness  
the wings presentation.

R. A. Warren of Brockville, On-  
tario, was the winner of the "Wings  
of Merit" trophy for being the out-  
standing student of the class.  
Group Captain G. R. Howsam,  
commanding officer of No. 11 Ser-  
vice Flying Training School pre-  
sented the wings to the graduates.  
In addressing the class, Group Cap-  
tain Howsam said: "Tonight the  
hour is late, and work remains to  
be done. There is little time for

best of luck wherever you go. We  
"So to the graduating class, our  
seventh course, we all wish the very  
best of luck wherever you go. We  
best of luck wherever you go. We

best of luck wherever you go. We  
best of luck wherever you go. We  
best of luck wherever you go. We

best of luck wherever you go. We  
best of luck wherever you go. We  
best of luck wherever you go. We

best of luck wherever you go. We  
best of luck wherever you go. We  
best of luck wherever you go. We

- sead our fondest hopes and our  
sincere prayers with you, and in  
doing so, we are envious of your  
magnificent opportunity of going  
overseas. However, much as we  
would like to go with you, we are  
most confident you will bring great  
credit to yourselves and to our Air  
Force, and that you will persevere  
constantly until our great cause is  
won, and Hitlerism and all it stands  
for is destroyed."
- Among those to graduate were:  
LAC Adams, Gavin P...  
LAC Allen, Roy Don.  
LAC Armstrong, George Ray La-  
verne.  
LAC Armstrong, Ly'e Emerson.  
LAC Askey, Michael Willem  
Hamilton.  
LAC Baker, William Charles.  
LAC Batters, Harold Mark.  
LAC Bee, Clinton Henry.  
LAC Bennett, Gordon Wellington.  
LAC Birch, James Ralph.  
LAC Birt, Louis.  
LAC Bullard, William Russell.  
LAC Buttle, Thomas William.  
LAC Caplan, Ben.  
LAC Cave, Harry Herbert Mal-  
colm.  
LAC Chapman, Stuart Charles.  
LAC Compton, Dorwin Kenneth.  
LAC Cross, Arthur Lawrence.  
LAC Curry, Willard Smith.  
LAC Dove, Lloyd Alvine.  
LAC Dusan, Alexander Rassel.  
LAC Fisher, Marquis V.  
LAC Gagne, Joseph Wilfred Herve  
LAC Gersbater, Ezra.  
LAC Gilberstad, Robert Arthur.
- LAC Gregory, Laurence Edward.  
LAC Guest, Charles Hugh.  
LAC Henrikson, Donald Carl.  
LAC Horn, Walter Wilfred.  
LAC Kraushar, Ernest Lewis.  
LAC Lalley, Joseph William.  
LAC Leaf, Dale.  
LAC McDougall, Cameron Corne-  
lius.  
LAC McKay, David Gordon.  
LAC McKay, Gordon Ormonde.  
LAC McMillan, John Alexander.  
LAC Mackie, Alexander Morton.  
LAC Milner, Joseph Emmet.  
LAC Mitchell, Billy Morris.  
LAC Montgomery, William John  
Irwin.  
LAC Morgan, Cullen.  
LAC Murray, Lewis Beverly.  
LAC Potter, Harold Willis Ford.  
LAC Pratt, John Henry.  
LAC Rice, John D.  
LAC Sanderson, Thomas Ross.  
LAC Screnson, Collin Frank.  
LAC Speetjens, Frans Willem  
Louis Sophie.  
LAC Swatridge, Lionel Edward.  
LAC Tatier, Harold John Mason.  
LAC Thomas, Albert.  
LAC Turgeon, J. A. M. M. Rene.  
LAC Vaughan, Paul G.  
LAC Waddell, Thomas James.  
LAC Wallace, Lloyd George.  
LAC Walsh, Edward Vernon.  
LAC Warren, Russell Arden.  
LAC Watt, Norman Alexander.  
LAC Wiegand, William Norman.  
LAC White, Ralph Scott.  
LAC Winslow, Terence Bawlf.  
LAC Wood, James Gordon.  
LAC Yonkers, Zenon.

Some of Class "38" in the Wings Ceremony



from ITS one was promoted from Aircraftsman 2nd Class (AC2) to Leading Aircraftsman (LAC) and could wear the white flash in the cap which indicated that one was an aircrew trainee. On July 15 I graduated and was transferred to No 14 Elementary Flying Training School (EFTS) Portage La Prairie Msn.

At Portage flying training was on the Tiger Moth. Everything seemed to go very well, I was able to do my first solo in average time and had no great difficulty in passing the course. On September 13 I was transferred to No 11 Service Flying Training School (SFTS) Yorkton Sask. having a total of 66 hours flying.

Training at Yorkton was on Harvard aircraft which was much bigger, heavier and faster than the Tiger Moth. Here again everything progressed normally and on the 4th Dec I received my pilot's wings and was promoted to Sergeant. I now had a total of 160:10 hours flying, was granted leave and ordered to report to No 1 "Y" Depot Halifax 22 Dec for transfer overseas.

On leave I went directly home to Algonquin. Within a day or so I received a telegram informing me that I was promoted to Pilot Officer and instructing me to outfit myself with the appropriate officers uniform. This was accomplished in Toronto and in due course I proceeded to Halifax to await space on a ship overseas.

On Jan 6 1942 I and 98 other aircrew officers were marched to a harbour wharf. There we were instructed to board a small ship tied to the wharf. We assumed that this was the boat that would take us out to the boat that would take us across the ocean. We were soon disallusioned. One of the crew met us off the gangplank and said "Take any cabin you like". This was the boat that was to take us across the ocean.

The SS Bayano, 6800 tons, was a "banana boat". That is a ship designed to carry passengers and a cargo of bananas. It had passenger accommodation for 99 passengers and there were exactly 99 aircrew officers assigned to the ship for the crossing. We were told that the cargo in the hold was aluminum and pork. Also two Hurricane fighters in crates were lashed to the deck.

The day we boarded the ship the temperature in Halifax was ten degrees below zero F and the walls of the cabins were covered with about a half inch of hoar frost. Being a banana boat there was no provision for heating the cabins were very cold. However, there was a bar on the ship operated just as it was in peacetime at peacetime prices. The bartender made excellent hot rums.

The dining room was supplied and operated just as it was in peacetime with a printed menu for each meal. The food for the whole crossing was as good as I ever had anywhere before or since.

Sometime during the night the ship left the wharf and began the crossing. When we went on deck the next morning we could see that we were one of some forty ships in a convoy with corvette escorts.

We were instructed to never close our cabin doors. There was a hook and eye arrangement so that the door could be fastened about three inches open. We were discouraged from going on deck at night but in any case absolutely no light was to be visible. During the day we could go anywhere except the engine room, which was warm, and the crew quarters.

The second night out we could hear depth charges going off which indicated that the escorts had detected a submarine but apparently no damage was done to the convoy.

About four days out we encountered a very severe storm. Apparently, most of the ships in the convoy could not continue and "hove to". That is they turned and headed into the wind which was westerly. However, we continued on course with not another ship in sight. Some of the crew said it was the worst storm that they had ever seen and I could believe them. The oncoming waves seemed to be fifty to sixty feet high and you would expect them to completely bury the ship. The waves would crash down on the bow but somehow the ship would rise, shake off the water and carry on. And at the same time the ship was rolling to what seemed to be forty-five degrees or more.

When the storm was over and we were alone, with a top speed of twelve knots, which was less than the speed of the enemy submarines, we had to do shifts on submarine watch. A cannon on the foredeck was uncovered and made ready for action. Old World War I vickers machine guns were produced and we were instructed in how to use them if we were attacked by aircraft.

Early in the morning of Jan 22 we docked in the Liverpool harbour and disembarked. Later the same day we arrived by train in Bournemouth to No 3 Personnel Reception Centre. This was a holding unit from which aircrew were sent to the various units for further training and action. Of course all the pilots wanted to go to fighter squadrons. After about ten days in Bournemouth I was one of a small group moved to Hastings which was another holding unit.

On the 13 Feb. I was one of a small group posted to No 4 Flying Instructors School at Cambridge. This was a great disappointment as we all expected to get into operational flying. As soon as we could on arrival in Cambridge we asked to see the CO and told him we did not want to be flying instructors



and asked him to have our posting cancelled. We were told in no uncertain terms that we were going to be flying instructors and we had better make the best of it.

On April 12 I finished the course and was posted to No 22 EFTS which was located on the same airfield. I was one of only two Canadian flying instructors on that staff.

The aircraft in use at that school was the British Tiger Moth. It was essentially the same as the Canadian Tiger Moth except it had an open cockpit and a tail skid instead of a tail wheel. It could be very cold flying with an open cockpit in winter.

Shortly after I began instructing the RAF introduced what they called the grading plan. The British Commonwealth Air Training Plan was in operation and nearly all RAF pilot trainees were sent to Canada for training. Despite every effort to select the candidates most likely to succeed the failure or "washout rate" was very high. Being washed out is very demoralizing to the individual and besides there is cost and time wasted in sending the trainee to Canada and bringing him back. The grading plan was devised to alleviate this problem.

Under the "Grading Plan" all volunteers who qualified for pilot training were given about twelve hours flying instruction at an EFTS. Each candidate was tested and assigned a grading mark. As vacancies arose for pilot training in Canada those trainees with the higher marks were selected and those not selected were offered training in other aircrew positions, air gunners, navigators, bomb aimers etc. or other employment in the RAF. We were told that subsequently the washout rate in Canada was very much reduced. ,

# SOLDIER JAILED

## Flying Officer Killed



Flying Officer Michael E. Hallam, R.A.F.V.R., aged 24, husband of Mrs. Joan Hallam, of 29, The Homing, Meadowlands, Cambridge, who has been killed in action.

The EFTS at Cambridge was civilian operated with the exception of the flying training staff and no living quarters were provided. It was therefore necessary to find room and board off the base. Thus it happened that I found accommodation at 60 Maids Causeway which was to have consequences affecting all the rest of my life.

The boarding house at 60 Maids Causeway was managed by Mrs. Hurry, recently widowed, accompanied by her daughter Stella. Shortly after I began residence there Stella was called to the army ATS and was away for several months. However, in a short time Stella managed a transfer back to Cambridge and was once again living at home.

Living in the same house as Stella I came to know her very well and found her to be a very attractive personality. The feeling must have been mutual since we became engaged in November and were married on Feb 3 1943.

I continued to remind the CO that I wanted to get operational flying as soon as possible. In June he advised me that he had arranged a five day attachment to a bomber squadron where I could get some flying on bomber operations.

On July 7 1943 I reported to No 77 RAF Squadron Elvington, a Halifax heavy bomber squadron. The squadron OC, a Wing Commander air gunner, was very pleasant and accommodating and did all he could to ensure that I saw how a bomber squadron operated. I managed three flights of fighter affiliation totalling 2:45 hours and on the 9th of July I went on a bombing raid to Gelsenkirchen in the Ruhr. Since this was at the time when bomber losses were at the worst it was quite an exciting trip. In total I flew 8:45 hours in Halifax bombers.

The monotony of the job was relieved somewhat when several army officers from the desert campaign came for flying instruction. They were to train to be army artillery observation pilots. They were a welcome change from the usual

newly enlisted trainee.

My flying instructing term came to an end the 8th February 1944 when I was posted to No 20 Advanced Flying Unit AFU at Weston On The Green where I would be training on Oxfords.

After about 78 hours flying on Oxford aircraft I was transferred to No 22 Operational Training Unit (OTU) Wellesbourne. Here the training was done on Wellington aircraft.

The first activity at the OTU was the forming of bomber crews. A bomber crew consisted of a pilot, a navigator, a bomb aimer, a wireless operator and two air gunners. A flight engineer would be added later. I don't remember how many crews were on the course but if there were, say, twenty-five crews there would be twenty-five of each category present (fifty air gunners). I ALL strangers to each other and gathered in one room.

It seemed to me that I had two distinct advantages over all other pilots who had to pick crews. I was a Flight Lieutenant whereas all the others were either Pilot Officers or Sergeants and I had the experience of a bombing trip. I resolved to seek out the oldest navigator and bomb aimer and ask them to join me. Bill Atkinson, navigator, and Dave Lynch, bomb aimer agreed to join me. Bill was 32 and Dave was 28 and both were Flying Officers. We then asked Ron Hale, wireless operator, and Sergeant air gunners Jasper Farrish and Ted Hall to join us and we had our crew.

The most important aspect of the crew training was the navigational training flights. This was an exercise requiring a flight of 4 to 6 hours following a designated route finishing with some practise bombing on a bombing range. On the first three such flights Bill, the navigator, was unable to cope and early in the flight announced that he was lost. Immediately on landing on the third X-country, as these flights were called, Bill came to me and said he wasn't coping and that he was going to pack it in. At my request

he agreed not to do anything until I had consulted the rest of the crew. It was very important that the navigator and the bomb aimer work together as a team and I wanted to get Dave's views before anything was decided. Dave said that Bill was getting better each time and in his view Bill would make it if given another chance. He wanted to see him continue. I was most impressed by the fact that in every instance Bill had been very honest and forthcoming when he was in trouble. I certainly did not want a navigator who would mislead you when things were not going right and I was confident that that would not happen with Bill. I then persuaded Bill to try at least once more.

Later that day I was approached by the leader of the navigation section who informed me that they were going to scrub Bill and that I would have to find another navigator. However, I was able to persuade him to give Bill one more chance. On the next flight everything went well and we continued as a crew.

About this time Ron Hale our wireless operator had an accident on a bicycle and broke his collar bone. If we had waited for him to recover we would have lost several weeks. It so happened that a pilot on course had managed to raise the undercarriage while the aircraft was on the ground and was taken off the course. His crew was broken up and his wireless operator was available to us. Thus Sergeant Andy Andrews joined our crew.

OTU training proceeded normally without further incident and on June 28 we were posted to No 1664 Heavy Conversion Unit (HCU) Dishforth where we were introduced to the Halifax bomber. At this time we were joined by RAF Sergeant Art Weatherill who was to be our flight engineer.

Finally training was completed and we were posted to 429 Squadron Leeming on the 12th August 1944.

Before a crew went on a bombing operation the pilot was required to at least one flight as a second pilot with an experienced crew. On August 14 I was detailed to fly with S/L Arbuckle on a daylight army co-operation attack. It was a clear day and the wind was forecast to be 8 mph over the target. There was no cloud over the target but there was no wind. As soon as the bombs landed a large cloud of smoke and dust formed over the target area and obscured the ground rendering the target markers invisible. However, the bombing continued through the smoke. I well remember the master bomber literally screaming, "Don't bomb the quarry".

I can't say what the crew I was with did exactly but as it turned out our own Canadian troops were bombed and there were several casualties. Needless to say, the army was outraged and demanded that disciplinary action be taken against the perpetrators. It would have been impossible to determine who had bombed irresponsibly but several pilots were selected to be penalized. S/L Arbuckle was demoted to Flight Lieutenant and posted from the squadron immediately. I was glad to have been a spectator on that occasion.

On August 16 I did a night operation as second pilot to Kiel with F/L Hawn. It was an uneventful trip, very quiet, and I believe quite successful.

On August 18 we did our first operational trip as a crew. It was a night attack on a railway marshalling yard at Connantre. It was a good trip, the timing was right on, thanks to Bill and Dave. During the bombing run a fighter approached from the rear but as soon as the rear gunner opened fire the fighter broke off and disappeared. We were unable to return to Leeming because of weather and had to land at Waddington. Altogether I was very pleased. On our first trip the crew performed in a first class

manner and I was confident that I had an excellent crew.

This is probably a good point in the narrative to to give a general description of the usual preparation and events of a bombing trip. Since most of my trips were night raids the description will be of a typical night raid.

Sometime in the morning a message would be received from Group HQ announcing the target, the time on target, the route to be followed to and from the target and the number of aircraft that the squadron was expected to provide. The groundcrew would be informed of the bomb load and the fuel load.

The Flight Commanders would then decide which crews to assign and the lists would be prepared and posted in the messes during the noon hour.

In the afternoon all the assigned crews would assemble for briefing. The crews would then be informed of the target, the route to and from the target, the time on target and the altitude to be flown. Crews were expected to be on target within one minute of the assigned time. The "Met Man" would describe the weather to be expected and the Intelligence Officer would describe the target, factory area, oil refinery, marshalling yard, shipyard etc. The time for take-off was also announced.

The navigators and bomb aimers would then prepare their charts. The route was never a straight line to the target but rather a number of "dog legs". Given the forecast winds the navigator would calculate the time to fly each leg and working backwards determine the time to set course from base. To ensure getting to the target on time extra time was added to each turning point. It is very difficult to make up time but very

easy to lose time. Turn 60° fly for one minute, turn back 120°, fly for one minute, resume your original heading and you are back on track having lost one minute. The navigator also prepared a small chart showing the route to and from the target.

I usually was the first or near the first one to take off. I did this this for at least two reasons. First, if anything was to go wrong with the aircraft there might be time to get it fixed. Second, often we had to climb and circle through several thousand feet of cloud and by being ahead and above all or most others chance of collision was reduced.

Often the take-off was before dark and if there was no cloud one could see a great number of aircraft climbing and setting course. When darkness arrived, you could see no other aircraft, although occasionally you would pass through a slipstream. If you were directly behind another aircraft and very close you could see the engine exhausts.

The pilot could have no artificial light whatever and relied entirely on the luminescence of the flight instruments. The navigator, bomb aimer and the wireless operator worked in a closed, blacked out area, and could see nothing of what was going on outside. The bomb aimer emerged if he wanted to check our position by a ground reference and, of course, to aim the bombs when the time came. The air gunners were in darkness as well.

On a bright moonlit night some other aircraft close by could be seen and as we approached the target, if the raid was already under way, there would often be enough light from the fires and exploding bombs to see many aircraft. If possible, one avoided flying directly under another aircraft to ensure not being hit by falling bombs. This did happen occasionally but not to me.



Along the route each aircraft dropped loose bundles of metal coated strips of paper of varying lengths, known by the code name "window", to confound the radar of the anti-aircraft guns and searchlights. The "window" seemed to be effective. I don't recall ever experiencing predicted flak when flying in the bomber stream. Usually there was plenty of "barrage" flak. That is anti-aircraft shells fired to explode in the bomber stream. Of course, occasionally a shell would explode close enough to damage a bomber and even bring it down. The searchlights were continually probing and occasionally would find an aircraft. When that happened all the nearby searchlights would turn to the hapless bomber, the anti-aircraft guns would concentrate on it and it would be a target for any night fighters in the vicinity. When this happened the bomber very seldom escaped.

To improve the accuracy and concentration of the bombing, Pathfinder crews arrived at the target first and dropped marker flares. These were coloured flares usually red or green which burned for three minutes. The "master bomber" would then assess his markers and direct the main stream bombers accordingly. The markers would be replaced as required throughout the raid. On several occasions I was detailed to be pathfinder support. As pathfinder support you were required to pass over the target at the same time as the pathfinder who was placing the markers. The purpose of the pathfinder support was to provide additional aircraft for the defences to deal with if they should be effective. The support aircraft after passing over the target with the pathfinder then circled back, flew over the target again and dropped his bomb load with the mainstream.

Each aircraft carried a camera mounted to take a picture of the ground directly under the airplane. Therefore if you continued on the course of the bombing run, allowed time for the bombs to reach the ground and took a picture, the middle of the

the middle of the photograph would indicate where your bombs actually landed. An intelligence worker could then assess the accuracy of your bombing and in some cases tell you just what it was that you bombed.

Our second trip as a crew was on the 25 Aug to Brest /St Mathieu. Everything went well and we had a quiet successful trip. However we had to land at Husbands Bosworth as our base was fogged in.

On Aug 27 we again bombed a flying-bomb site at Mimoyeques. It was a quiet successful trip.

On 28 Aug another flying-bomb site was attacked . It was a quiet successful trip.

Le Havre, the French port, was still occupied by the Germans and they were making a nuisance of themselves so it was decided to bomb them and then clear them out. On 10 Sept we were on the bombing attack and were awarded a "Target Token" which is a copy of our target photograph indicating that we hit the target. Our contribution of 11,000 lbs of bombs along with all the others apparently so stunned the Germans that they were overrun by the army and Le Havre was rid of Germans.

On 12 Sept our target was a synthetic oil plant in Dortmund in the Ruhr. We were assigned to be PFF support and so we were able to see the raid develop and then go in and drop our bombs. The Flak was very heavy but we were not hit. On the way home over Holland we encountered predicted Flak from a German battery. It takes at least 15 seconds for shells to reach our altitude. If you alter course in about 15 seconds the shells go to where you would have been. Thus we had a short game with the gunners until we passed out of their range.

On 14 Sept we were briefed to attack Wilhelmshaven but since the fighter escort were fogged in the raid was cancelled and we were called back.