

# Squadron Leader E.A.Deverill



Pilot



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References: 97 Squadron Operational Record Books 1939-1943

*Achieve Your Aim by Kevin Bending*

Mark Howard

2020

Approved  
*George R.I.*



*J.D. Astor-Amstrong*

College of Arms,  
January, 1939.

Chester Herald  
and Inspector of Royal  
Air Force Badges

**Commanding Officers:**

Wg Cdr D.F.Balsdon

Wg Cdr J.H.Kynoch

Wg Cdr J.H.H.Collier DSO DFC

Wg Cdr G.D.Jones DSO DFC

Gp Capt N.H.Fresson DFC

Wg Cdr E.J.Carter DFC\*

Wg Cdr A.W.Heward DFC\* AFC

Gp Capt P.W.Johnson DSO DFC AFC

(\* denotes Bar)

Early in 1941, a large donation was made to the British Government by the Malay Straits Settlements for the purchase of some Avro Manchester bomber aircraft. In appreciation of this, 97 Squadron was authorized to assume the title of "97 (Straits Settlements) Squadron", and it was reformed in February 1941, at Waddington.

25th February 1941 97 Squadron was scheduled to operate from RAF Coningsby as part of 5 Group. The Squadron began to convert to using Lancasters in January 1942 and, in March of that year, 97 Squadron re-located to Woodhall Spa.

re-formed 25.2.41 as No.97 (B) Sqdn from nucleus provided by No.207 (B) Sqdn at: Waddington Feb 1941-Mar 1941

Coningsby : Mar 1941-Mar 1942

Woodhall Spa : Mar 1942-Apr 1943

Bourn : Apr 1943-Apr 1944

"A", "B" & "C" Flts detached to Gransden Lodge, Graveley & Oakington, respectively during Aug/Sep 1943.

Coningsby : Apr 1944 onwards

#### Aircraft flown by 97 Squadron

Avro Manchester : Feb 1941-Feb 1942

Avro Lancaster B.I and B.III : Jan 1942 onwards



## List of Operations

### Deverill, E.A. (Pilot)

**P/O** 8 Nov 41 Dunkirk,  
**F/O** 7/8 Dec 41 Aachen *ret early*,  
18 Dec 41 Brest *ret early*,  
9/10 Jan 42 Brest *ret early*,  
17 Jan 42 Bremen,  
25/26 Mar 42 Essen *returned early*,  
10/11 Apr 42 Hamburg,  
17 Apr 42 Augsburg,  
7/8 May 42 Gardening,  
8/9 May 42 Warnemunde,  
16/17 May 42 Gardening,  
19/20 May 42 Mannheim (*returned early*),  
22/23 May 42 Gardening,  
30/31 May 42, Cologne  
1/2 Jun 42 Essen,  
3/4 Jun 42 Bremen,  
**F/L** 8/9 Jun 42 Essen,  
11/12 Jun 42 Gardening,  
19/20 Jun 42 Essen,  
21/22 Jun 42 Gardening,  
25/26 Jun 42 Bremen (*returned early*),  
27/28 Jun 42 Bremen,  
29/30 Jun 42 Bremen,  
1/2 Jul 42 Gardening,  
23/24 Jul 42 Duisburg,  
26/27 Jul 42 Hamburg,  
6/7 Aug 42 Duisburg,  
23.8/9 Aug 42 Gardening,  
24.16/17 Aug 42 Gardening,  
25.17/18 Aug 42 Osnabruck,  
26.24/25 Aug 42 Frankfurt,  
27.28/29 Aug 42 Nuremburg,  
28.1/2 Sept 42 Saarbrucken,  
29.2/3 Sept 42 Karlsruhe,  
30.4/5 Sept 42 Bremen,  
31.14/15 Sept 42 Wilhelmshaven,  
19/20 Sept 42 Munich (*ret early*),  
32.2/3 Oct 42 Krefeld,  
33.13/14 Oct 42 Kiel,  
34.17 Oct 42 Le Creusot,  
35.22/23 Oct 42 Genoa,  
36.24 Oct 42 Milan,

**Second Tour S/L 1.** 16/17 Dec 43 Berlin *kia*.

## Details from Operational Record Book

45546

*P/O E.A.Deverill*

*posted from 25 OTU*

*26.9.41*

### **November 1941**

8.11.41 Three aircraft detailed by A Flight for ops against docks at Dunkirk. Two dropped bombs successfully and one brought them back, failing to locate the target. P/O Hodge (Rhodesia), 2nd pilot in P/O Deverill's crew was hit by flak and died at 2300 hours at the Station SQ. Much flak and searchlights at Dunkirk. F/L Price DFC and crew and F/O Blakeman and crew took off from base at 1320 for sea rescue work over North Sea in the hope of crews of numerous aircraft from other units which may have made forced landings in the sea. No trace. F/L Price and crew are missing from this operation. F/L Trueman, gunnery leader, of the other aircraft, last saw the aircraft L7466 N at 1600. The missing crew are the Captain and P/O Pickering, Sgt Weston (Aus), F/Sgt Stanley DFM, Sgts Dexter, Manners and Bronson(Can).

#### **8 November 1941 – Dunkirk**

L7476 K P/O Deverill, P/O Hodge, P/O Hepburn, Sgts Irons, Hildersley, Canning, Benbow. Up 1745 Down 2038. Target attacked but bombs released due to flak during run up. P/O Hodge badly wounded. Jettisoned 4 x 500lb in North Sea. 2nd Pilot admitted to SSQ on return – where he died of his wounds at 2300 hours.

Extract from “Avro Manchester – The legend behind the Lancaster”

Pilot Officer Deverill's crew had a harrowing experience. Their aircraft was heavily engaged by flak batteries whilst running up to bomb at 17,000 feet. The aircraft was very severely damaged by a near miss and plunged to 4,000 feet with the mortally wounded second pilot, Pilot Officer Hodge, obstructing the controls. Deverill was able to level out and jettison part of the bomb load, the remaining four 500lb bombs were dumped in the North Sea. With the second pilot being cared for on the rest couch, Deverill took stock. All exterior lights on the aircraft were illuminated and could not be extinguished due to a short in the electrical system. The bomb doors were jammed open owing to the failure of the hydraulic system. Deverill was able to return to Coningsby where the emergency system had to be used to lower the undercarriage. Don Hodge, a Rhodesian straight from the Operational Training Unit, was taken to the station sick bay at 2038 hours but died of his wounds at 2300 the same night. So much for the shallow penetration operational experience raids!”

### **December 1941**

7.12.41 Six aircraft required by A Flight for ops – to destroy the Nazi Party HQ in a German town. Five aircraft to carry 1 x 4000 and 4 x 500 and one aircraft to carry 6 x 1000. Op was not very satisfactory owing to cloud cover over enemy territory and some alternative targets were bombed, but few bursts observed.

#### **7/8 December 1941 – Aachen (Nazi Party HQ)**

L7473 H F/O Deverill, P/O Miller, F/O Hepburn, Sgts Irons, McKay, Benbow, Canning. Up 0250 Down 0454. When testing guns over the North Sea, found failure of front and rear turrets and returned to base.

18.12.41 Daylight ops attacking the battleships at Brest. Very successful op. Believed some direct hits. Took off in formation at 0930 escorted by fighters near Lands End. Stirlings and Halifaxes also on the target. P/O Stokes and crew reported missing. The aircraft was attacked by an enemy fighter and five of the crew were shortly afterwards seen to bale out about 4 miles off the French coast. Weather was good but on return foggy conditions set in. F/O Rodley landed at Mildenhall. W/O Rowlands landed at Waterbeach. F/O Blakeman DFM had been hit by flak causing holes in oil tanks and starboard engine to seize, however, he managed a good landing at Colerne with no casualties. A tragic end came to W/C Balsdon (Formation Leader) and F/Sgt Pendrill (Captain) and crew. On reaching home base, the visibility being bad, overshot the aerodrome and on opening up the engines to apparently circle round again, the aircraft stalled and crashed, killing all the crew. The aircraft was completely burnt. The aircraft had been seen to be hit by flak over the target, smashing the tailplane and elevator, the rear turret also being put out of action. The rear gunner was a casualty. W/C Balsdon having signalled for the ambulance to be ready on landing. W/C Balsdon led the formation to the target and back to the English coast and then gave over command to S/L Sherwood DFC owing to damage caused by flak.

18 December 1941 – Brest Harbour (attack against battleships – Gneisenau, Scharnhorst & Eugene)

L7488 F F/O Deverill, Sgts Worswick, Irons, McKay, Benbow, Canning, F/O Hepburn. Returned after leaving base – aircraft u/s.

Extract from “Avro Manchester – The Legend behind the Lancaster”

The 97 Squadron force consisted of 11 Manchesters led by the CO, Wing Commander Balsdon, one of which was intended as a spare in case any aircraft should drop out through unserviceability on the flight across England. Wing Commander Balsdon decided to take the crew of Flight Sergeant George Pendrill, still accompanied by Sergeant Les Jones, who had out-fought Heinrich Griese back in early November, as rear gunner. This brought the crew complement to eight. Other crew carried were Sergeant Gibson, the Squadron Navigation Leader and Flight Lieutenant Wright the squadron bombing leader. Take-off was close to 0930 hours.

As all the Manchesters remained serviceable, Flight Sergeant Bob Fletcher, the spare, was able to peel away and return to base. Later Flying Officer Deverill had to return owing to a malfunction in the aircraft, reducing the force to nine.

## January 1942

9.1.42 Five aircraft detailed for ops, only four taking off – target being Brest. One aircraft returned owing to instrument failure, two brought bombs back owing to being unable to locate the target, and the fourth carried out a low level attack from 500 feet, landing at Pershore on the homeward run.

### 9/10 January 1942 – Brest (Attack on Scharnhorst and Gneisenau)

L7457 Y F/O Deverill, F/Sgt Worswick, F/O Hepburn, Sgts Irons, Mackay, Keane, Canning. Trouble with DR compass put this aircraft on reciprocal course! On discovery of error it was too late to continue to target and the aircraft returned to base.

17.1.42 Delivery of two Lancasters – five aircraft detailed to bomb Bremen.

### 17 January 1942 – Bremen (Bombs 14 SBC's)

L7489 T F/O Deverill, F/Sgt Worswick, P/O Hepburn, Sgts Irons, Canning, Keane. 10/10th cloud over target – bombs brought back. Plenty of heavy and light flak, not accurate.

45546            *F/O E.A.Deverill DFM*    *GD*        *Boscombe Down*                            7.2.42

## March 1942

25.3.41 6 aircraft detailed for ops. Weather good – some cloud later. One aircraft unable to operate owing to turret trouble. Another aircraft was u/s just before take-off. The target was Essen. Three successfully bombed the target or area, the weather was hazy and target obscured. One aircraft abandoned mission owing to engine trouble.

### 25 March 1942 – Essen (Bomb load 14 SBC each)

R5487 V F/O Deverill, P/O Friend, P/O Butler, Sgts Irons, Mackay, Devine, Keane. Up 1947 Down 2300. Task abandoned owing to port outer engine u/s. Jettisoned 14 x SBC in sea. Landed base safely. Unsuccessful.

## April 1942

### 8/9 April 1942 – Hamburg

R5496 U F/O Deverill, Sgt Cooper, P/O Butler, Sgts Irons, Mackay, Devine, F/Sgt Keane. Up 2132 Down 0303. Low cloud made visual identification impossible. Run on TR 1335 made and bombs dropped, after dropping flak opened up from that area. Visibility good above cloud. Bombed from 20000 feet on primary. Bomb load 14 x SBC. Incendiary bursts seen.

### Operation Margin -Raid on M.A.N. Works Augsburg

17.4.41 Six aircraft detailed for daylight ops in formation with two reserve aircraft and crews. Seven took-off in five minutes commencing 1455 hours. W/O Harrison in aircraft "H" went u/s. W/O Rowlands flew as far as Selsey Bill as reserve, not being required, returned to base. The raid being in daylight, flew in formation of 6 aircraft, the captains being S/L Sherwood DFC, F/L Hallows, F/O Rodley, F/L Penman DFC, F/O Deverill DFM, W/O Mycock DFC. The attack was of very great importance on the MAN Diesel works – Augsburg, South Germany, being a total of 1500 miles. All six aircraft flew over France and low over Germany and successfully reached the target, all dropped their bombs. S/L Sherwood and W/O Mycock were seen to be hit by flak over the target, caught fire and crashed near the target area. F/L Hallows aircraft was badly damaged and all the other aircraft received a certain amount of damage, but they all managed to reach base safely without any casualties. The op was highly successful, the press giving excellent reports, also the BBC broadcast an account mentioning that this raid was the finest of its type during the war. The names of the formation leaders – S/L Sherwood and F/L Penman were also broadcast. Definite from the reports of the captains of the aircraft that large amount of damage was caused to the essential parts of the factory. The following signals of congratulation have been received from 5 Group.

The following has been received from AOC-in-C Bomber Command – the following message has been received by the AOC from the Prime Minister – “We must plainly regard the attack of the Lancasters on the U-boat engine factory at Augsburg as an outstanding achievement of the Royal Air Force. Undeterred by heavy losses at the outset, 44 and 97 Squadrons pierced and struck a vital point with deadly precision in broad daylight. Pray convey the thanks of His Majesty’s Government to the officers and men who accomplished this memorial feat of arms in which no life was lost in vain”.

Message from Chief of the Air Staff – “I would like 44 and 97 Squadrons to know the great importance I attach to this gallant and successful attack on the diesel engine factory at Augsburg. Please give my warmest congratulations and thanks”.

From Air Marshall A.T.Harris “Convey to the crews of 44 and 97 Squadrons who took part in the Augsburg raid, the following; - the resounding blow which has been struck at the enemy’s submarine and tank building programme will echo round the world. The full effects of his submarine campaigns cannot be immediately apparent, but nevertheless they will be enormous. The gallant adventure penetrating deep into the heart of Germany in daylight and pressed home with outstanding determination in the face of bitter and unforeseen opposition takes its place amongst the most courageous operations of the war. It is moreover yet another fine example of effective cooperation with the other services by striking at the very sources of the enemy effort. The officers and men who took part, those who returned and those who fell, have indeed served their country well”.

17 April 1942 - Augsburg

L7575 Y F/O Deverill DFM, Sgt Cooper, P/O Butler, Sgts Irons, Mackay, Devine, F/Sgt Keane. Up 1459 Down 2315. Target attacked in formation. No cloud, from 400 feet bombs were dropped on target area. No 3 "P" was seen to catch fire in the air and crash. Very heavy flak and light predicted flak and S.A tracer. Aircraft caught fire on starboard side of fuselage and bomb bay but was extinguished by the efforts of the Wireless Operator and Mid gunner. Both mid and rear turrets u/s from target. Port outer engine was u/s and feathered on leaving but was restarted before reaching coast. Formated again on No 1 "U" for protection and landed base.

The Augsburg operation – 17April 1942

L7573 OF-K S/L Sherwood DFC & bar, P/O Webb, F/O Hepburn, Sgt Page, Sgt Cox, F/Sgt Harrington, F/Sgt Wilding.

R5537 OF-B F/L Hallows, P/O Friend, P/O Cutting, F/Sgt Louch, Sgt Jones, Sgt Broomfield, Sgt Goacher.

R5488 OF-F F/O Rodley, P/O Colquhoun, Sgts Henley, Merralls, Cummings, Ratcliffe, Crisp.

R5496 OF-U F/L Penman DFC, P/O Hooey (USA), P/O Ifould RAAF, F/Sgt Elwood, Sgts Tales, Overton, Hebdon.

L7575 OF-Y F/O Deverill DFM, Sgt Cooper, P/O Butler, Sgts Irons, Mackay, Devine, F/Sgt Keane.

R5513 OF-P W/O Mycock DFC, Sgt Hayes, W/O Harrison, Sgts Eades, Macdonald, Shelly, Donoghue.

Extract from S/L Sherwood's recommendation for the Victoria Cross – total hours flown on ops – 253 hours, 55mins; number of sorties carried out – 43. "Squadron Leader Sherwood DFC led his squadron on the daylight attack on the important Diesel Engine Factory at Augsburg, Southern Germany. With great skill and ability Squadron Leader Sherwood led the formation at very low level across 900 miles of enemy occupied territory – eventually leading all his aircraft directly on to the target. On the approach to the target itself, heavy and accurate anti-aircraft fire was experience but, with extreme daring and cool-headedness, he pressed home the attack with his Section, scoring direct hits on the Factory with his bombs from a very low level. While bombing the target his aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft guns and caught fire. Squadron Leader Sherwood continued to lead his section away from the target with one wing well alight and until such time as the aircraft became uncontrollable. By extreme devotion to duty, Squadron Leader Sherwood ensured the success of the operation with which he was charged, and continued his daring leadership to the end. His conspicuous bravery on this occasion crowned a long and distinguished career in the service of his country" (sic – W/C Collier CO 97 Sqn)

"This gallant leadership deserves the highest recognition. His example will always be remembered in this Group and in the Royal Air Force". (sic – G/C Harries 5 Group). "Strongly recommended" - AM Harris. Air Ministry endorsement – "To be recd for DSO if later found to be alive"

Awards – F/L Penham – DSO (“He showed great skill in the handling of his section and the greatest determination in attacking the target from a very low level in spite of intense and accurate anti-aircraft fire”); F/L Hallows – DFC (“His leader was shot down in flames...he then took over command of the remainder of the section....throughout the whole operation, he showed the greatest possible determination and pluck”); F/O Deverill – DFC (“His aircraft was hit in numerous places causing a fire...which burned a large portion of the fuselage”); P/O Hooey – DFC – (“He greatly assisted the leader to find and bomb the target by accurate map-reading”); P/O Ifould – DFC – (“By accurate bomb aiming under intense fire he scored direct hits on the main works”); Sgt Overton – DFM, Sgt Ratcliffe – DFM, Sgt Louch – DFM, Sgt Goacher – DFM, Sgt Irons –DFM, Sgt Mackay – DFM (Re Irons and Mackay “They dealt with the situation with great calmness and resource...putting out the fire after it had gained a considerable hold”.)

Extract from “The Lancaster Story” by Peter Jacobs

“By the time the 97 Squadron aircraft were making their attack, every anti-aircraft gun was in full action and the crews were met with an almost unavoidable barrage of fire. Sherwood led the attack and made a straight and very low approach and the two other aircraft in his section, flown by Flying Officers ‘Darky’ Hallows and ‘Rod’ Rodley, followed him in to attack. Having released their bombs, both pilots then witnessed their leader’s aircraft explode on impact with the ground.

The rear section was led by Flight Lieutenant ‘Jock’ Penman DFC. By now the German gunners had established the exact line and height of the run-in to the target and all three aircraft of the section were hit. The number two of the rear section, flown by Flying Officer Ernest Deverill DFM, received hits in the hydraulic pipes, which put the gun turrets out of action, and hydraulic oil caught fire under the mid-upper turret. At the same time the starboard inner engine was hit and set on fire.

The third aircraft of the section, flown by Warrant Officer Tommy Mycock DFC, also caught fire during the run-in. He managed to hold the aircraft steady just long enough to release his bombs on target before the aircraft was seen to blow up. The two remaining Lancasters in the section turned for home. Deverill’s aircraft, now on just three engines, faced a long and hazardous flight.

The four surviving 97 Squadron aircraft had landed back at Woodhall Spa by midnight, with Deverill’s aircraft immediately being declared a total write-off. The eight Lancasters that reached the target had caused sufficient damage to hold up production for several weeks.”

“Sergeant Ron Irons was a wireless operator....took part in the Augsburg raid. He recalls ‘We were flying as number two of the rear section and by the time that we arrived over the target area the element of surprise had completely gone. The German defences were very alert and were firing everything imaginable at us, including heavy gunfire. We were hit during the run-in to the target. Flak had hit the hydraulic pipes, which had put the gun turrets out of action, and hydraulic oil had caught fire under the mid-upper turret. I left my position to help the gunner extinguish the fire. At the same time our starboard inner engine had been hit and was on fire. Having eventually extinguished the engine fire, we faced a long and hazardous journey back to base on just three engines.’

Being the wireless operator, Ron Irons was the first to react and, together with the mid-upper gunner, was able to extinguish the fire and save the aircraft – an act which brought both men the award of a DFM.”



D177 Augsburg Raid survivors group photo. Back Row (from left) Sergeants Goacher, Merralls, Crisp, Ratcliffe, Overton, Flight Sergeant Ellwood, Sergeants Irons, Hebdon. Centre Row (from left) Sergeants Henley, Cummings, Jones, Broomfield, Devine, Cooper, Flight Sergeant Keane, Flight Sergeant Louch, Sergeant Tales. Front Row (from left) Pilot Officers Colquhoun, Cutting, Friend, Flight Lieutenant Hallows, Flying Officer Rodley, Flight Lieutenant Penman, Flying Officer Deverill, Pilot Officers Butler, Hooey, Ifould.

## May 1942

4 aircraft successfully mined the "Forget me Not" area and three aircraft successfully planted their vegetables in "Asparagus" area. Visibility good, practically daylight. F/L Miller was unable to take off.

### 7/8 May 1942 – Gardening "Forget me Not" area – load 6 mines

R5497Z F/O Deverill, Sgt Cooper, P/O Butler, Sgts Irons, Mackay, F/S Keane, Sgt Devine. Up 0050 Down 0629. Moonlight, no cloud. Planted mines from 700 feet in the correct position. Mines seen to drop in water evenly spaced. Encountered flak and machine gun tracer from two small vessels. Damage one hole in mainplane.

8.5.41 AVM Coryton and Lord Trenchard visited the Squadron this morning to interview the Augsburg Raid aircrews. AM Harris conferred the honour on the Squadron by the presentation of the personal message address to him from the Prime Minister in a silver crested frame. The presentation will be a lasting and much prized record of the exploit of Augsburg. 10 aircraft detailed for ops.

8/9.5.42 F/L Hallows DFC returned early due to defective immersion pump. The other nine aircraft reached and bombed the target area. The actual identification of the target being made very difficult owing to great searchlight activity. Defences were also very heavy. F/L Coton received some damage to his aircraft. All crews returned safely to base. This morning the CO with F/L Hallows tested the faulty aircraft and had exactly the same trouble with the immersion pumps.

### 8/9 May 1942 – Heinkel Works at Warnemunde – Bomb load 6 x 1000lb GP

R5552P F/O Deverill, Sgt Cooper, P/O Butler, Sgts Irons, Mackay, F/S Keane, Sgt Devine. Up 2200 Down 0408. Bombed primary from 6,700 feet. Visibility good but nullified by searchlights. Impossible to identify buildings owing to dazzle. Bombs dropped on estimated position. Results not observed. Aircraft held in searchlights and subjected to intense, accurate heavy flak also some light flak. Aircraft and crew returned safely.

16.5.42 7 aircraft for ops. A letter has been passed to the Squadron from the Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Dudley Pound, conveying congratulations on the Augsburg Raid, as follows :- "I have now seen the photograph and assessment report K1316 produced by the RAF station at Medmenham about the raid on the M.A.N. works at Augsburg on 17th April. I am particularly impressed with the results which have been achieved and I am sure that this attack will have helped greatly in achieving our object of reducing the output of U-boats in the future. I should be grateful if you would express my congratulations to ACM Harris and to all who took part in the raid. I much deplore the comparatively heavy casualties but I feel sure that their loss was not in vain. You will, I am sure, forgive me for not having expressed my appreciation earlier, but I have waited to read of the full effects of the raid". Ops were successfully carried out by 7 aircraft, 4 mining the "Daffodil" area, 1 the "Forget me Not", 1 in "Sweet Pea" and 1 in "Raddish" area. Only F/O Rodley planted his mines in alternative area "Endive" due to weather conditions.

16/17 May 1942 – Gardening "Sweet Pea" area – Load 5 mines

R5559W F/O Deverill, Sgt Cooper, P/O Butler, Sgts Irons, Mackay, F/S Keane, Sgt Benbow. Up 2214 Down 0429. Vegetables planted in primary area. No cloud, visibility good. Pinpoint on Godsor Head and five vegetables seen to enter water. Crossed Denmark at 800 feet. Trip uneventful.

19.5.42 7 aircraft detailed to bomb Mannheim "A". One aircraft F/O Deverill returned owing to intercom failure. F/O Keir bombed Ostend owing to lack of oxygen. Two aircraft detailed to take part in searchlight exercise over London.

19/20 May 1942 – Mannheim "A" – Bomb load 1 x 4000lb HC, 6 x SBC's

R5497Z F/O Deverill, Sgt Cooper, P/O Butler, Sgts Irons, Mackay, F/S Keane, Sgt Benbow. Up 2231 Down 0029. Intercom system failed on becoming airborne, failing completely at 13,000 feet over the Belgian coast. Returned to base.

22.5.42 Ops Gardening. F/L Hallows set out for primary "Willows" area but due to electrical trouble, placed vegetables in "Hawthorne" area. Convoy of six ships seen. F/L Miller planted vegetables in primary. F/S Berridge successfully planted vegetables in primary, saw convoy of 20 ships. Machine gunned a ferry boat. P/O Keir planted veg in "Willows" (primary area). Successful and uneventful. F/O Maltby successful at primary. Encountered searchlights and light flak. One searchlight doused by gunners.

22/23 May 1942 Gardening "Willows" area – Load 5 mines

R5559W F/O Deverill, Sgt Cooper, P/O Butler, Sgts Irons, Mackay, F/S Keane, Sgt Benbow. Up 2214 Down 0505. Planted veg in primary from 600 feet. Good visibility 8-10 miles and no cloud. Parachutes seen to open. On return trip at 600 feet encountered slight searchlight activity and light flak (white tracer) from Sprogø Island and Nyborh. All gunners replied and one searchlight doused.

30.5.42 Ops at Cologne – 16 aircraft detailed. One, P/O McMurchy failed to take off due to a broken tail wheel. F/S Baines jettisoned his bombs safe in the sea and returned due to low oil pressure and high oil temperature. All remaining aircraft attacked target successfully.

30/31 May 1942 – Cologne – Bomb load 1 x 4000lb HC, 8 x SBC 4 lb

R5559W F/O Deverill, Sgt Cooper, P/O Butler, Sgts Irons, Devine, Benbow, F/S Keane. Up 0011 Down 0335. Bursts observed on primary from 13,800 feet. No cloud and visibility good. Many fires burning. East of river obscured by smoke. Very quiet trip, practically no opposition, only slight searchlight activity.

**June 1942**

1.6.42 15 aircraft detailed for ops tonight. 13 aircraft successfully reached and bombed the target at Essen or the target area. Of the other two aircraft, one returned early owing to a technical failure and the other, F/S Davies and crew, failed to return. No news of them having since been received. The weather over the target was bad but considerable damage was done. This raid consisted of over 1,000 bombers, being the second highest raid of the war, the first being on Cologne.

1/2 June 1942 – Essen – Bomb load 1 x 4000lb 8 x SBC 4lb

R5559W F/O E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.S.Cooper, P/O E.R.Butler, Sgts J.Irons, J.Devine, J.Benbow, F/S H.Keane. Up 2321 Down 0240. Bombed primary from 17,200 feet. Good visibility but 7/10ths light broken cloud at 7/8000 feet. Average searchlight and flak activity over large area. Uneventful outward and return journey.

3.6.42 R5612 collected from Prestwick. Three aircraft detailed to attack Bremen. All successfully bombed the primary, one aircraft having engine failure, and returned safely to base.

3/4 June 1942 – Bremen – Bomb Load 1 x 4000lb 8 x SBC 4lb

R5559W F/O E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.S.Cooper, P/O E.R.Butler, Sgts J.Irons, J.Devine, J.Benbow, J.R.Dawson. Up 2340 Down 0318. Bombed primary from 17,000 feet. No cloud – poor light, slight haze. Bomb Aimer aimed to overshoot river ½ mile but was blinded by searchlights after bomb had gone. Rear gunner saw burst and estimated ¾ mile north-east of marshalling yard. Searchlight activity considerable but not very accurate. Considerable light flak and moderate heavy flak.

8.6.42 6 aircraft detailed for ops – Aiming Point “B” at Essen – the town as alternative. Five aircraft attacked the town of Essen and one aircraft, P/O Hughes and crew, failed to return. No further news of aircraft has been received. Five aircraft returned safely to base.

8/9 June 1942 – Essen – Bomb Load 1 x 4000lb 8 x SBC 4lb

R5559W F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.S.Cooper, P/O E.R.Butler, Sgts J.Irons, J.A.Devine, J.Benbow, N.W.Keane. Up 2344 Down 0422. Bombed Essen town from 17,000 feet. 5-6/10ths cloud, visibility good, light very poor. Few fires observed in Ruhr area. Cloud and poor light made target invisible, so bombs dropped on TR. Considerable searchlight and heavy flak in Ruhr. Aerial mines were seen in target area.

11.6.42 7 aircraft for ops – 5 aircraft successfully carried out task in mining the “Geranium” area. The sixth, F/O Maltby, failed to take off owing to a faulty oil gauge. The 7th aircraft, P/O Colquhoun (Freshman) successfully mined the “Nectarine” area. All aircraft returned safely to base.

11/12 June 1942 – Gardening “Geranium” area – Load 4 mines

R5497Z F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.S.Cooper, P/O E.R.Butler, Sgts J.Irons, J.A.Devine, F/S N.W.Keane, Sgt J.Benbow. Up 2225 Down 0455. Mines laid in correct position in primary area. Patchy low cloud 7/10ths at 2,000 feet. Good visibility and light. Made timed run from pin-point on coast. Rear gunner saw the four mines enter the water. Uneventful trip. No flak or searchlights directed at us

19.6.42 5 aircraft for ops – Aiming Point “A” at Emden with Osnabruck as alternative. Three aircraft successfully bombed alternative target. P/O McMurchy returned owing to rear turret being u/s and jettisoned some incendiaries in the sea. The 5th did not take off owing to the Captain, F/S Adams, being taken ill at the last moment.

19/20 June 1942 – Essen (Osnabruck alternative) – Bomb load 1 x 4000lb 8 x SBC 4lb

R5559W F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.S.Cooper, P/O E.R.Butler, Sgts R.G.Gross, J.A.Devine, J.Benbow, F/S H.W.Keane. Up 2359 Down 0400. Bombed alternative, primary obscured by 10/10ths cloud. Visibility good. Bombs appeared to fall approximately 300 yards west of aiming point. No flak over target. Two combats seen, one fighter believed shot down. Very satisfactory trip.

21/22.6.42 The four aircraft successfully planted their five mines in the correct position in the “Deodar” area. Of the Freshman, F/S Croppi had to return early owing to W/T failure and jettisoned his mines safe. The other aircraft planted his mines in the correct position in “Nectarine”.

21/22 June 1942 Gardening “Deodars” area – Load 6 mines

R7544N F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.S.Cooper, P/O E.R.Butler, Sgts J.A.Devine, J.R.Dawson, J.Benbow, F/S H.W.Keane. times??? Outward journey as ordered and uneventful. Approached garden east to west, where vegetables were planted OK. Considerable medium and light flak experienced during run up and getaway.

25.6.42 16 aircraft detailed for ops for tonight to attack the Focke Wulf aircraft factory at Bremen. Three aircraft abandoned mission owing to technical failures. The remainder were unable to identify the target owing to 10/10ths cloud and bombed the area around Bremen. Results were not seen. All returned safely to base. This raid consisted of over 1,000 bombers. The AOC 5 Group conveyed his congratulations to all members of air and ground crews for the magnificent performance put up by the Squadron.

25/26 June 1942 Bremen – Load 1 x 4000lb 8 x SBC 4lb

R5559W F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.S.Cooper, P/O E.R.Butler, Sgts J.A.Devine, K.Mackay, F/S H.W.Keane, Sgt J.Benbow. Up 2339 Down 0025. Port main petrol cock jammed first on inner tanks, after considerable leverage by members of the crew, the cock was moved to centres. Efforts to move it back were unavailing, so in view of the doubtful efficiency of the cocks, it was decided to return.

27.6.42 Ten aircraft detailed to attack Bremen. None of the aircraft were able to identify target and all bombed on TR, results believed to be good, although 10/10ths cloud. F/O Friend (Rhodesian) and crew failed to return – no news received after take off.

27/28 June 1942 Bremen – Bomb load 1 x 4000lb 8 x SBC 4lb

R5559W F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.S.Cooper, P/O E.R.Butler, Sgts J.A.Devine, K.Mackay, F/S H.W.Keane, Sgt J.Benbow. Up 2346 Down 0359. Primary bombed on TR. Bombs fell in area in which white and red glow could be seen reflecting on cloud. Very little flak on way out but considerable over target and at points on the way home. A line of flak positions seems to have been established between Wilhelmshaven and Emden.

29.6.42 12 aircraft detailed for ops tonight – 9 aircraft reached and bombed the target, Bremen. One aircraft did not take off, becoming bogged. The other two returned early owing to technical failures. Most bombed on TR and bursts seen. All aircraft returned safely to base.

29/30 June 1942 Bremen – Bomb load 1 x 4000lb 8 x SBC 4lb

R5559W F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.S.Cooper, P/O E.R.Butler, Sgts R.P.Irons, K.Mackay, F/S H.W.Keane, Sgt J.Benbow. Up 2327 Down 0336. Normal trip. Bombed primary from 13,000 feet. 10/10ths cloud. No appreciable opposition on route. Three fighters seen near target. On breaking away to north, river seen through break in cloud and number of fires seen. Some flak and searchlights.

July 1942

1.7.42 Three Lancaster detailed to mine Broccoli and Asparagus areas. Mining successfully carried out and trips uneventful

1/2 July 1942 Gardening “Broccoli” Area

R5559W F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.S.Cooper, P/O E.R.Butler, Sgts R.P.Irons, K.Mackay, F/Sgt H.W.Keane, Sgt J.Benbow. Up 2302 Down 0412. Veg laid in position as detailed. No low cloud, very good visibility and light. Five parachutes seen in water by Rear Gunner. Entirely uneventful trip. Route there and back as detailed.

23.7.42 Nine aircraft detailed for ops against a target at Duisburg. All aircraft reached the target area and bombed on TR, owing to cloud. Results not observed.

23/24 July 1942 Duisburg – Bomb Load 14 SBC 4lb

R5559W F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.Lennox, P/O E.R.Butler, P/O P.Anderson, Sgts R.A.Irons, J.Benbow, F/Sgt H.W.Keane. Up 0104 Down 0418. Primary target bombed from 13,400'. Bombs were released on TR and fell in extremely large fire. After bombing, Navigator looked through blister and identified road across the Rhine with large fire in target area. Bomb Aimer agrees this is almost certainly the fire on which our bombs fell. Flak over target nothing extraordinary.

16 aircraft for ops against a target at Hamburg. 14 completed the task, one, F/O Keir, returned early owing to engine trouble and one, F/O McMurphy and crew failed to return. No news received since leaving base. All other aircraft returned safely to base.

#### 26/27 July 1942 Hamburg

L7574N F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.Lennox, P/O E.R.Butler, P/O P.Anderson, Sgt R.A.Irons, F/Sgt H.W.Keane, Sgt J.Benbow. Up 2254 Down 0352. Very good visibility. Flak on way in, Kiel Canal etc, and on the way out. Merely a few searchlights and practically no flak over target. Impossible to miss target. A very satisfactory trip.

### **August 1943**

6.8.42 Nine aircraft detailed for ops – 1 did not take off due to turret trouble. remaining 8 reached and bombed Duisburg or the target area.

#### 6/7 August 1942 Duisburg

R5559W F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.Lennox, P/O E.R.Butler, F/Sgt J.Robertson, Sgts R.P.Irons, J.Benbow, F/Sgt H.W.Keane. Up 0053 Down 0421. Visibility very bad, thick ground haze so bombs dropped by TR on Duisburg Town. Numerous incendiaries seen over an area 1 mile by 10 – 15 miles. Practically no flares seen over target area but a number seen over the Maas area.

#### 8/9 August 1942 Gardening in "Silverthorn 2" Area – Load 5 mines

R5559W F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.Lennox, P/O E.R.Butler, F/Sgt J.Robertson, Sgts R.P.Irons, J.Benbow, F/Sgt H.W.Keane. Up 2221 Down 0331. Veg planted in Silverthorn area from 1,000'. Rear Gunner saw four parachutes open. Uneventful trip, mission successfully completed.

16.8.42 6 aircraft for mining ops – 3 in "Spinach" and 3 in "Geranium". Of the "Spinach" aircraft only one successfully completed task. One failed to take off and the other returned early owing to suction pump u/s. Two aircraft successfully completed task in "Geranium", third aircraft returned early owing to seizure of starboard engine.

#### 16/17 August 1942 Gardening – "Spinach" Area

R5559W F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.Lennox, P/O E.R.Butler, Sgts E.Mackay, R.P.Irons, J.Benbow, F/Sgt H.W.Keane. Up 2040 Down 2129. Returned early to base as suction pump was found to be u/s immediately after take-off.

17.8.42 5 aircraft to Osnabruck – all successful.

#### 17/18 August 1942 Osnabruck

R5559W F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.Lennox (2nd Pilot), P/O E.R.Butler, Sgts E.Mackay, R.P.Irons, J.Benbow, F/Sgt H.W.Keane. Up 2145 Down 0130. Bombed primary from 13,300'. Visibility good but very thick ground haze. Rear Gunner saw bombs explode and incendiaries catch fire in middle of some light flak. Nothing of interest to report. Opposition moderate.

24.8.42 14 aircraft detailed for ops – 5 cancelled before take off. 9 aircraft attacked Frankfurt, 8 of which reached and bombed target. F/O Hooey DFC and crew are missing. The aircraft was seen to be shot down in flames over the target.

#### 24/25 August 1942 Frankfurt

R5559W F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.Lennox, P/O E.R.Butler, Sgts E.Mackay, R.P.Irons, F/Sgt H.W.Keane, Sgt J.Benbow. Up 2101 Down 0314. Visibility good apart from cloud which was 10/10ths in patches. Bombed primary on DR from clearly identified Rhine. Uneventful trip out and back except for inexplicable bumps with no visible connection with flak, but bearing all the characteristics of near misses by heavy flak.

28.8.42 13 aircraft detailed to Nurnberg – 9 successfully completed mission, one aircraft returned early due to a failure, 2 aircraft failed to take off for the same reason and one aircraft, Sgt Dinning and crew are missing, no news having been heard since. F/Sgt Morgan had trouble over the target with one engine on fire and on circling base another engine cut but he managed to make a good landing. W/C Collier DFC carried an 8,000lb bomb on this trip.

#### 28/29 August 1942 Nuremburg

L7574N F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.Lennox (2nd Pilot), P/O E.R.Butler, Sgts K.Mackay, R.P.Irons, J.Benbow, F/Sgt H.W.Keane. Up 2050 Down 0345. Primary target identified by intersection of rivers and visual identification of town and bombed from 13,000'. Starboard blister hit by flak and smashed. Opposition average over target area. A successful trip.

### **September 1942**

1.9.41 10 aircraft for ops – Saarbrucken. 9 aircraft bombed target or target area and 1 aircraft, F/Sgt Morgan and crew is missing. The weather over the target was very clear and target easily identified. The operation appears to have been very successful.

#### 1/2 September 1942 - Saarbrucken

R5559W F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.Lennox (2nd Pilot), P/O E.R.Butler, Sgts K.Mackay, R.P.Irons, J.Benbow, F/Sgt H.W.Keane (no rear gunner shown in ORB). Up 2357 Down 0455. Bomb load 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC. Primary bombed from 12,000'. Target in sights when bombs released. Very little flak and no searchlights over target. 16 bundles of G43 dropped.

2.9.41 9 aircraft for ops – Karlsruhe. All aircraft successfully reached and bombed target or target area. Visibility was good and all aircraft visually identified the target.

#### 2/3 September 1942 Karlsruhe

R5559W F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.Lennox (2nd Pilot), P/O E.R.Butler, Sgts K.Mackay, R.P.Irons, J.Benbow, F/Sgt H.W.Keane. Up 2318 Down 0450. Bomb load 1 x 4000lb 10 SBC. Town of Karlsruhe bombed from 11,000'. Electrical system of bomb release fault caused the bomb to hang up and it eventually fell ½ mile short of the Aiming Point. Moderate flak over target. Uneventful trip out and home.

4.9.42 Bombing training and NFT's. Three aircraft attacked the Focke Wulf works at Bremen. All three successfully bombed target. The remaining eight aircraft attacked another target in Bremen, two of these returned early due to engine trouble and one aircraft, Sgt Cooper and crew are missing.

#### 4/5 September 1942 Bremen

R5559W F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.Lennox (2nd Pilot), P/O E.R.Butler, Sgts K.Mackay, R.P.Irons, J.Benbow, F/Sgt H.W.Keane. Up 0001 Down 0426. 5 x 1900lb. Primary target believed bombed from 10,500'. Visibility clear with hazy patches. Light and heavy flak but not directed at us on run up. Buildings adjacent to aerodrome in bomb sights as bombs released. Bursts not observed.

14.9.42 14 aircraft to attack Bauhaven – Wilhelmshaven. 9 took off, 1 aircraft returned early owing to technical trouble. The remaining 8 aircraft reached and bombed the target or target area.

#### 14/15 September 1942 Wilhelmshaven

L7577T F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt R.Kay, P/O R.B.G.Murphy, Sgts H.H.Jenkins, C.H.Shepherd, K.C.Saw, E.Wharton. Up 2043 Down 0031. 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC. West dock area bombed from 16,000'. Visibility clear, slight haze and about 8/10ths cloud at target. No results seen but glow observed to south of target. Uneventful trip.

19.9.42 9 aircraft detailed to attack Munich. One aircraft abandoned due to technical trouble. The remaining aircraft reached and bombed the target or target area. Visibility good.

#### 19/20 September 1942 Munich

R5559W F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt J.Lennox (2nd Pilot), P/O E.R.Butler, Sgts K.Mackay, R.P.Irons, J.Benbow, F/Sgt H.W.Keane. Up 2026 Down 2247. Mission abandoned owing to loss of oil and petrol.

### **October 1942**

2.10.42 Diverted aircraft returning all day. 6 aircraft to attack Krefeld. Owing to weather conditions over target, all aircraft believed to have bombed town. 4 aircraft diverted owing to weather at base.

#### 2/3 October 1942 Krefeld

W4170K F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt Anderson (2nd Pilot), P/O E.R.Butler, Sgts K.Mackay, R.P.Irons, J.Benbow, F/Sgt H.W.Keane. Up 1932 Down 2300. 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC. Primary believed bombed. Thick haze and very dark. Number of incendiaries seen burning in open fields. 16 bundles of G54 dropped in target area.

13.10.42 9 aircraft to Kiel, 6 aircraft reached target or target area, 2 abandoned mission owing to technical trouble and 1 aircraft failed to take off owing to difficulty in loading bombs.

13/14 October 1942 Kiel

R5559W F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt Webster, P/O E.R.Butler, F/Sgt C.A.Jones, F/Sgt P.F.Edge, Sgt J.Benbow, F/Sgt H.W.Keane. (no times shown). 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC. Kiel town bombed from 15,000'. Bombs believed to have hit factory building. Effective smoke screen over target. Considerable increase in defences over Central Denmark.

17.10.41 87 Lancasters of this Group took off to bomb Le Creusot in daylight, flying in formation, low level. 9 aircraft of this Squadron took off for op, 6 of these were to attack the Schneider Works and 3 the transformer and switching station. 2 aircraft had to abandon mission owing to technical failures. 7 remaining aircraft all reached their targets and successfully bombed them. Weather was good with slight haze. All crews spoke highly of the attack which was "wizard".

17 October 1942 Daylight raid on Le Creusot

W4278T F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt Webster, P/O E.R.Butler, F/Sgt C.A.Jones, Sgts R.P.Irons, J.Benbow, F/Sgt H.W.Keane. Up 1159 Down 2222. 8 x 500lb. Primary target bombed from 500'. Target identified visually. Bombs seen to overshoot main control room but to straddle isolating switch house and 120KW transformers. Whole area inside wire fence machine gunned.

22.10.42 11 aircraft for ops. At 1400 hours trials were carried out by a Manchester aircraft on Arrestor Gear – the performance appeared satisfactory. The AOC 5 Group and many Station Commanders and Squadron Commanders were present. Ops against Genoa, Italy – 1 aircraft failed to take off and two abandoned mission owing to failures and engine trouble. The remaining 8 aircraft reached and successfully bombed the target. The raid was very successful. Bright moonlight over target and visibility good. Little opposition. All aircraft were diverted – weather bad over base. W4278 overshot the aerodrome at North Luffenham due to bad visibility and little petrol to spare. All crew uninjured, aircraft badly damaged.

22/23 October 1942 Genoa – Bomb Load 2 x 1000lb 1 x 4000lb 6 SBC

R5559W F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt Cuelenaere (2nd Pilot), P/O E.R.Butler, F/Sgt C.A.Jones, Sgts R.P.Irons, J.Benbow, F/Sgt H.W.Keane. Up 1716 Down 0220. Primary target bombed visually from 10,000'. 9/10ths cloud over target. Attack appeared to be well concentrated. Good fires burning and were visible 100 miles away.

24.10.42 7 aircraft to attack Milan in daylight. S/L Coton was late in taking off owing to aircraft not being ready and failed to catch up with formation. Aircraft returned to base early after reaching French coast. Remaining aircraft except for F/O Keir successfully reached and bombed target. Weather was good on route but cloudy over target.

24 October 1942 Daylight - Milan

R5559W F/L E.A.Deverill, Sgt Webster, P/O E.R.Butler, F/Sgt C.A.Jones, Sgts R.P.Irons, J.Benbow, F/Sgt H.W.Keane. Up 1220 Down 2126. 4 x 1000lb RD 2 SBC. Primary objective believed bombed. Bombed on ETA, large built up area seen through gap in cloud and aimed at buildings, believed factory. 9/10ths cloud at 3 –4 ,000'.

**December 1943**

**+BLACK THURSDAY +**

16.12.43 21 aircraft detailed to attack Berlin. Good concentration of bombing in early stages falling off later. No results seen only reddish glow. 10/10ths cloud tops 3/5000', vis good. Defences H/F moderate to 22,000' and moderate L/F 14,000' – S/Ls ineffective. Many fighter flares and scarecrow flares. F/L Pelletier in Lanc JA960 was attacked by an enemy fighter JU88 and claims it damaged. One aircraft, F/L Brill and crew failed to return – no news heard since. On returning to base aircraft encountered bad visibility over England and the Squadron had a disastrous night in aircraft losses and 28 aircrew being killed. The following is a brief summary of the return. 8 aircraft landed safely at Bourn and 3 at Graveley. One aircraft landed at Wyton. F/Sgt Coates after being hit by another aircraft's incendiaries and having two engines put out of action on the same side by flak, put out a ditching signal when not far from the Danish coast. With great skill he flew the aircraft back on the two engines and landed safely without further damage at Downham Market. Two crews, P/O Smith and F/O Mooney the captains, baled out safely over Ely and Wyton. All the crews were uninjured but one aircraft is missing and untraced. S/L Mackenzie DFC crashed at Bourn on the edge of the airfield. Three were killed – S/L Mackenzie, F/O Colson, P/O Pratt, the remainder are either in hospital or sick quarters. F/O Thckway and crew crashed near Bourn airfield, killing all except Sgt Mack who is in hospital and Sgt Laver who escaped uninjured. S/L Deverill DFC DFM and crew crashed at Graveley, all being killed except for W/O Benbow who is in Ely hospital. F/Sgt Scott and crew crashed at Graveley, all being killed. P/O Kirkwood and crew crashed near Gransden, all being killed. Total loss of aircraft – 8. Aircrew killed – 28, injured 7.

16/17 December 1943 - Berlin

JB243P S/L E.A.Deverill, F/Sgt A.Russell, P/O J.T.Brown, F/Sgt J.Farr, F/Sgt R.Crossgrove, W/O J.Benbow, W/O D.J.Penfold. Up 1645 Down 0015. 5 x 2000lb. Crashed at Grevelay on returning from attack on Berlin owing to very bad visibility and low cloud. All members of the crew were killed except the mid upper gunner who was injured.

The following officers were killed as the result of aircraft accidents on 17.12.43:-

J24632	F/O L.K.A.Grant	GDB	82671	A/S/L D.Mackenzie DFC	GD
53269	P/O J.T.Pratt DFM		GDE	141402 F/O W.A.Colson DFM	GDB
45546	A/S/L E.A.Deverill DFC DFM	GD	156611	P/O J.T.Brown	GDB
146119	F/O J.Kirkwood	GD	132874	F/O G.A.Wigley	GDB
138109	P/O E.Thackway		GD		

Extract from Bomber Command Losses – 16/17.12.43

Lancaster III JB243 OF – P. Op Berlin. T/O 1645 Bourn. Crashed 0120 near Graveley airfield, Hunts. W/O Benbow who had gained his DFM while serving with the squadron was admitted to RAF Hospital Ely. F/S Crossgrave RNZAF, whose DFM was won with 57 Squadron and gazetted on 11 June 1943, lies in Cambridge City Cemetery. W/O Penfold's award was published the same day, but for

service with 50 Squadron. That for S/L Deverill had appeared on 9 July 1940. The dead, apart from F/S Crossgrave already mentioned, were conveyed to their home towns.

S/L E.A.Deverill DFC, AFC, DFM(+), F/S A.Russell(+), P/O J.T.Brown(+), F/S F.R.Farr(+), F/S R.Crossgrave DFM, RNZAF(+), W/O J.Benbow DFM(inj), W/O D.J.Penfold DFM(+).

**"THE DEVIL"  
GETS A BAR**



**THEY** call him "The Devil" at his bomber station. His name is Flight Lieut. Ernest Deverill, D.F.C., D.F.M.—you see him above. Now Deverill has added a Bar to his D.F.C. for his flights over Le Creusot, Milan and Genoa.

They call him "The Devil" because of his utter contempt for enemy fighters and ack-ack opposition.

Another R.A.F. ace gets the D.S.O. He is Wing Commander Guy Gibson, D.F.C. and Bar, aged 24. Wing Commander Gibson pilots one of the "super heavies"—a Lancaster.

He smashed the power station at Le Creusot, blasted Genoa, and two days later led his squadron to Milan in daylight.

Picture of Wing Commander Gibson is on the left.



# END OF SERVICE WITH 97 (Straits Settlements) SQUADRON

45546 A/S/L E.A.Deverill DFC DFM GD Killed in Action 16/17 December 1943

