

Flight Lieutenant J.L.Munro

Pilot

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97 (Straits Settlements) Squadron Association by the
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References: 97 Squadron Operational Record Books 1939-1943

Achieve Your Aim by Kevin Bending

Mark Howard

2018

Approved
George R.I.



J.D. ~~Keble~~ ~~Amstrong~~
Chester Herald
and Inspector of Royal
Air Force Badges

College of Arms,
January, 1939.

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

Munro, J.L. (Pilot)

F/O 1.8/9 Jan 43 Gardening,
2.11/12 Jan 43 Essen,
3.13/14 Jan 43 Essen,
4.16/17 Jan 43 Berlin,
5.17/18 Jan 43 Berlin,
6.27/28 Jan 43 Dusseldorf,
30/31 Jan 43 Hamburg ret early,
7.2/3 Feb 43 Cologne,
8.4/5 Feb 43 Turin,
F/L 9.14/15 Feb 43 Milan,
10.16/17 Feb 43 Lorient,
11.19/20 Feb 43 Wilhelmshaven,
12.25/26 Feb 43 Nuremburg,
13.26/27 Feb 43 Cologne,
14. 28 Feb/1 Mar 43 St Nazaire,
15.1/2 Mar 43 Berlin,
16.3/4 Mar 43 Hamburg,
17.11/12 Mar 43 Stuttgart,
18.12/13 Mar 43 Essen,
19.22/23 Mar 43 St Nazaire,

NZ413492 F/L J.L.Munro GD To 617 Sqn 25.3.43

Details from Operational Record Book

1.8/9 Jan 43 Gardening

Five Lancasters detailed to attack the town of Duisburg and three aircraft detailed for mining in "Pumpkin" area. All five claimed to have attacked Duisburg. The weather over the target was 10/10ths cloud. All aircraft bombed on observing the marker flares but owing to the weather no results were observed. Of the three mining aircraft, all dropped their mines successfully. Sgt Rowson landed at Newmarket aerodrome and the undercarriage collapsed, wrecking the aircraft. None of the crew was injured. Night training also detailed.

8/9 January 1943 Gardening – "Pumpkin" area – 4 mines

W4175U F/O J.L.Munro, Sgt F.E.Appleby, P/O F.G.Rumbles, Sgts K.W.Knight, E.Pigeon, W.Howarth, E.Speight. Up 1753 Down 2335. Dark visibility over primary Pumpkin area. Pin-pointed Rosnaes Port through gap in cloud. Veg planted correctly, one possibly exploded on contact with sea.

2.11/12 Jan 43 Essen

11.1.43 6 aircraft detailed for ops and one on night cross country and bombing. F/O Keir has been awarded the DFC and F/Sgt Crouch (Aus) the DFM. 5 aircraft took off for ops against Essen. Two of the aircraft were abortive owing to engine trouble, the remaining three aircraft successfully reached and bombed on the marker flares. No results seen owing to 10/10ths cloud. All returned safely to base.

11/12 January 1943 Essen – Bomb load 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC

ED3230 F/O J.L.Munro, Sgt F.E.Appleby, P/O F.G.Rumbles, Sgts W.K.Knight, E.Pigeon, W.Howarth, E.Speight. Up 1725 Down 2210. Primary objective Essen reached. Some cloud. Marker flares seen but not release point flares. Own bursts not seen but other bursts observed through clouds. One can of incendiaries hung up.

3.13/14 Jan 43 Essen

13.1.43 2 aircraft detailed for ops and 3 aircraft on night training. Only one of the latter carried out the duty owing to the weather conditions. Both the aircraft detailed to attack Essen successfully completed their sorties. Weather 8 – 10/10ths cloud. No results observed. Both flights carried out fighter affiliation during the day.

13/14 January 1943 Essen – Bomb load 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC

W4355T F/O J.L.Munro, Sgt F.E.Appleby, P/O F.G.Rumbles, Sgts K.W.Knight, E.Pigeon, W.Howarth, E.Speight. Up 1703 Down 2126. Primary target reached. Bombed by release point flares. Some of own bombs seen to burst. Glimpse of river seen through break in cloud, many fires observed. Glow seen from 50 miles. Defences not accurate.

4.16/17 Jan 43 Berlin

16.1.42 12 Lancasters took off to attack an aiming point in Berlin. 11 claim to have bombed the target or target area, several large fires being seen many miles after leaving the city. There was little cloud over the target and visibility was moderate. One aircraft abandoned the mission at Mano, the rear turret being u/s.

16/17 January 1943 Berlin

ED3230 F/O J.L.Munro, Sgt F.E.Appleby, P/O F.G.Rumbles, Sgts K.W.Knight, E.Pigeon, W.Howarth, E.Speight. 14 SBC. Up 1644 Down 0103. Believed primary target bombed. Bombed on marker flares from 24,000'. Many fires seen but these gave appearance of being dummies. Some opposition encountered.

5.17/18 Jan 43 Berlin

17.1.42 14 Lancasters detailed to attack Berlin – 11 aircraft took off and successfully bombed the target. Weather – moonlight and good visibility, slight haze. Two aircraft returned early due to technical troubles and one aircraft, Sgt Rowson, is missing. No news received after leaving base. Aircraft diverted owing to weather on return. Defence was heavier and many fighters seen.

17/18 January 1943 Berlin – 1 x 4000lb 8 SBC

ED3230 F/O J.L.Munro, Sgt F.E.Appleby, P/O F.G.Rumbles, Sgts K.W.Knight, E.Pigeon, W.Howarth, E.Speight. Up 1708 Down 0110. Primary Berlin bombed. No assistance from PFF. Own bombs released on built up area but results not observed. Many sticks of incendiaries seen falling and some fires scattered over target area.

6.27/28 Jan 43 Dusseldorf

27.1.43 9 aircraft took off to attack dusseldorf. 8 aircraft claim to have bombed the target and one aircraft, Sgt Robinson and crew are missing. Weather mainly 10/10ths low cloud, but several fires seen through the cloud. 5 more aircraft successfully mined the Nectarine area.

27/28 January 1943 Dusseldorf – Bomb load 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC

R5607X F/O J.L.Munro, Sgt F.E.Appleby, P/O F.G.Rumbles, Sgts Parker, E.Pigeon, W.Howarth, E.Speight. Up 1731 Down 2218. Primary target bombed. Released bomb where red and green markers were seen to disappear into cloud. Own burst observed. Uneventful but successful trip.

30/31 Jan 43 Hamburg ret early

30.1.43 13 Lancasters raided Hamburg. 6 of them completed their sorties by bombing the red and green release flares and two aircraft bombed the red markers. 4 aircraft abandoned the mission owing to technical failures. One aircraft, F/O Moyle (Aus) and crew are missing. Weather cloudy and ground haze.

30/31 January 1943 Hamburg

R5612R F/O J.L.Munro, Sgt F.E.Appleby, P/O F.G.Rumbles, Sgts R.M.Nelson, E.Pigeon, W.Howarth, E.Speight. 1 x 8000lb. Up 0011 Down 0318. Mission abandoned owing to rear turret u/s. 8000lb jettisoned safe.

7.2/3 Feb 43 Cologne

2.2.43 9 Lancasters took off on op and one aircraft on night training. The op was to attack Cologne. All aircraft successfully reached and bombed the target. One aircraft landed on return at Docking owing to loss of fuel due to damaged jettison pipe. Bomb bursts and fires seen in target area.

2/3 February 1943 Cologne – Bomb load 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC

R5559W F/O J.L.Munro, Sgt F.E.Appleby, P/O F.G.Rumbles, Sgts T.S.Cummings, E.Pigeon, W.Howarth, E.Speight. Up 1813 Down 2310. Primary objective Cologne bombed. Thin cloud over target but green marker flares were just visible, these were bombed. Own bursts not seen. Red fires visible among sticks of incendiaries burning on ground.

8.4/5 Feb 43 Turin

4.2.43 Low flying attack on army exercise. 5 Lancasters detailed to attack Turin. All aircraft successfully reached and bombed target. Weather clear with slight ground haze.

4/5 February 1943 Turin – Bomb load 14 SBC

ED3230 F/O J.L.Munro, Sgt F.E.Appleby, P/O F.G.Rumbles, Sgts T.S.Cummings, E.Pigeon, W.Howarth, E.Speight. Up 1816 Down 0256. Primary target Turin successfully bombed. Smoke haze over target, otherwise clear. Bombed on red marker flares, built up area identified visually. Several fires were seen starting.

F/L 9.14/15 Feb 43 Milan

14.2.43 14 Lancasters detailed for night ops. 13 aircraft successfully raided Milan in good weather. 13 photos were also taken and two plotted within 2000 yards of the target. 1 aircraft returned early owing to technical failure. Operation was highly successful.

14/15 February 1943 Milan

W4887N F/L J.L.Munro, Sgt F.E.Appleby, P/O F.G.Rumbles, S/Lt Lett, Sgts E.Pigeon, W.Howarth, F/Sgt E.Speight. 1 x 4000lb 4 SBC. Up 1853 Down 0316. Milan successfully bombed. Identified town visually. Bombed on TI markers, many bursts seen. Fires in built up area.

10.16/17 Feb 43 Lorient

16.2.43 8 Lancasters for ops tonight. All successfully attacked Lorient in good weather. Many fires seen. On return to base W4197A was badly damaged when the aircraft swung off the runway, trying to avoid overshooting. The undercarriage collapsed. No one was injured.

16/17 February 1943 Lorient – Bomb load 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC

W4887N F/O J.L.Munro, Sgt F.E.Appleby, P/O F.G.Rumbles, F/L J.Grieves, Sgts E.Pigeon, W.Howarth, F/Sgt E.Speight. Up 1844 Down 0118. Primary Lorient target successfully attacked. Visibility good. Bombed on TI markers and confirmed visually that these were in correct position. 3 or 4 fires were starting as we left target.

11.19/20 Feb 43 Wilhelmshaven

19.2.43 6 Lancasters detailed to attack Wilhelmshaven. All aircraft attacked the target and fires were seen. Weather, haze and low cloud 5-10/10ths. One aircraft also on night cross country and one on night bombing.

19/20 February 1943 Wilhelmshaven

R5607X F/O J.L.Munro, Sgt F.E.Appleby, P/O F.G.Rumbles, Sgts Knight, E.Pigeon, W.Howarth, F/Sgt E.Speight. 1 x 8000lb. Up 1833 Down 2234. Primary objective successfully attacked. 18,000'. Ground haze. Ran down coast, identified visually, until it became obscured. Bombed estimated centre of markers. One large and other fires seen in target area.

12.25/26 Feb 43 Nuremburg

25.2.41 9 aircraft detailed to attack Nuremburg. All aircraft reported successful bombing of the target. Thick haze was encountered over the target area. Two aircraft also on night bombing.

25/26 February 1943 Nuremburg

R5612R F/O J.L.Munro, Sgt F.E.Appleby, P/O F.G.Rumbles, S/Lt W.H.Lett, Sgts E.Pigeon, W.Howarth, E.Speight. 1 x 8000lb. Up 2005 Down 0331. Primary target attacked. Much ground haze. Bombed on cluster of green TI markers. No ground detail picked out. Long factory type of building seen to burst into flames followed by large explosion. Some aircraft failed to wait for PFF.

13.26/27 Feb 43 Cologne

26.2.43 11 Lancasters detailed to Cologne. All successfully reached and bombed the target in reasonably clear weather.

26/27 February 1943 Cologne

R5612R F/L J.L.Munro, Sgt F.E.Appleby, P/O F.G.Rumbles, Sgts Cummings, E.Pigeon, W.Howarth, E.Speight. 1 x 8000lb. Up 1844 Down 2350. Cologne attacked. Reasonably clear, some smoke and ground haze. Bearing taken on red markers. Released bomb on concentration of green TI markers. Target identified visually. Large scattered fires seen burning.

14. 28 Feb/1 Mar 43 St Nazaire

28.2.42 10 aircraft detailed to attack St Nazaire. All aircraft successfully bombed the target and many fires were seen. One very large explosion was observed. Weather fine with considerable ground haze.

28 February/1 March 1943 St Nazaire

W4887N F/L J.L.Munro, Sgt F.E.Appleby, P/O F.G.Rumbles, S/Lt W.H.Lett, Sgts E.Pigeon, W.Howarth, F/Sgt E.Speight. 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC. Up 1843 Down 2338. St Nazaire successfully attacked. 14,000', smoke haze. Bombed on red TI markers. Saw 4000 pounder but just west of it. Good concentration of fires seen and developing. Many explosions observed.

15.1/2 Mar 43 Berlin

1.3.42 11 Lancasters detailed to bomb Berlin. 9 aircraft reported successfully bombing the target or target area and many good fires were seen, the glow from which was visible 150 to 200 miles away. Weather was fine with no cloud and only slight haze. One aircraft abandoned the mission due to technical failure and one aircraft, with Sgt Innes and crew are missing.

1/2 March 1943 Berlin

R5612R F/L J.L.Munro, Sgt F.E.Appleby, P/O F.G.Rumbles, Sgts F.J.Jones, E.Pigeon, W.Howarth, E.Speight. 1 x 8000lb. Up 1903 Down 0152. Berlin attacked from 20,000'. Visibility good – some smoke haze. Bombed on cluster of red and green

16.3/4 Mar 43 Hamburg

3.3.42 11 aircraft detailed to bomb Hamburg. 8 aircraft attacked the town and all but one crew saw the marker bombs. Many good fires were observed and the glow was visible some distance from the target. One aircraft bombed a last resort, Friedrichskoog owing to technical failure. Two aircraft jettisoned bombs and returned due to technical failures. No cloud but considerable ground haze over the target.

3/4 March 1943 Hamburg – Bomb load 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC

W4200W F/L J.L.Munro, Sgt F.E.Appleby, P/O F.G.Rumbles, Sgts Jones, E.Pigeon, W.Howarth, E.Speight. Up 1927 Down 0021. Primary target attacked at 17000' but slight haze. No TI markers seen. Bombed southern edge of fires started by previous aircraft. Believed part of dock area identified visually on run in. Fires rather scattered.

17.11/12 Mar 43 Stuttgart

11.3.43 12 Lancasters detailed to bomb Stuttgart. 9 aircraft report bombing the target. Bombing did not appear to be too concentrated, though some good fires were seen. Weather over target was good, there being no cloud but some haze. One aircraft bombed a last resort target owing to engine trouble. This target was an airfield and bursts were believed to have been on runways.

Two aircraft returned early due to technical failure.

11/12 March 1943 Stuttgart – Bomb load 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC unless stated

R5607X F/L J.L.Munro, Sgt F.E.Appleby, P/O F.G.Rumbles, S/Lt Lett, Sgts E.Pigeon, W.Howarth, F/Sgt E.Speight. 1 x 8000lb. Up 2031 Down 0245. Stuttgart attacked. 13,000'. Considerable ground haze and smoke haze. No TI markers when in position to bomb. Bombed where markers were last seen. No ground detail seen. About 12 good fires counted.

18.12/13 Mar 43 Essen

12.3.43 11 Lancasters detailed to bomb Essen. 7 aircraft report successful bombing of the target and large fires and one outstanding explosion were seen. Weather was good with ground haze.

One aircraft (Sgt Plaunt) is missing. Three aircraft returned early due to technical failures.

12/13 March 1943 Essen – Bomb load 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC unless stated

W4200W F/L J.L.Munro, P/O Weight (2nd Pilot), P/O F.G.Rumbles, F/Sgt D.B.King, Sgts E.Pigeon, W.Howarth, F/Sgt E.Speight. Up 1905 Down 2347. Essen successfully bombed. 18,000'. Visibility good except for smoke haze. Red TI markers in sights when we bombed. Large concentration of fires round red TI markers. All appearance of very satisfactory raid.

19.22/23 Mar 43 St Nazaire

22.3.43 12 aircraft detailed for ops (St Nazaire). One (F/O Weight) returned early on account of engine trouble. All other aircraft claimed to have reached and bombed the target area. Bright moonlight with good visibility. All aircraft but one landed away from base.

22/23 March 1943 St Nazaire – bomb load 11 x 1000lb unless stated

R5609A F/L J.L.Munro, Sgt F.E.Appleby, F/O F.G.Rumbles, F/Sgt D.B.King, Sgts E.Pigeon, W.Howarth, F/Sgt Broomfield. Up 1917 Down 0005. Primary target bombed. Visibility fair with some ground haze. Dock area seen visually and recognised. Markers not seen but bombs released on main dock. Other bursts seen.

END OF SERVICE WITH 97 (Straits Settlements) SQUADRON

NZ413492 F/L J.L.Munro GD To 617 Sqn 25.3.43

