

# Sergeant George. L. “Johnny” Johnson

Air Gunner / Bomb Aimer

This work has been produced on behalf of  
97 (Straits Settlements) Squadron Association by the  
webmaster 97 (Straits Settlements) Squadron Association

References: 97 Squadron Operational Record Books 1942-1943

*Achieve Your Aim by Kevin Bending*

Mark Howard

2018

Approved  
George R.I.



J.D. Helm-Armstrong  
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

27/28 Aug 42 Gydnia Port (S/L Coton) (returned early),  
1.28/29 Aug 42 Nuremburg (W/C Collier),(MG)  
2.2/3 Sept 42 Karlsruhe (S/L Coton), (MG)  
3.4/5 Sept 42 Bremen (S/L Coton),(MG)  
4.23/24 Sept 42 Wismar (Sgt Smith), (MG)  
5.6/7 Oct 42 Osnabruck (P/O Rowlands),  
6.24 Oct 42 Milan (F/Sgt Smith),  
7.9/10 Nov 42 Hamburg (F/Sgt Smith),  
8.13/14 Nov 42 Genoa (F/Sgt Smith),  
9.7/8 Dec 42 Gardening (F/Sgt Smith),  
10.21/22 Dec 42 Munich (F/O McCarthy),  
11.8/9 Jan 43 Duisburg (F/O McCarthy),  
12.16/17 Jan 43 Berlin (F/O McCarthy),  
13.17/18 Jan 43 Berlin (F/O McCarthy),  
30/31 Jan 43 Hamburg (F/O McCarthy) ret early,  
14.2/3 Feb 43 Cologne (F/O McCarthy),  
15.4/5 Feb 43 Turin (F/O McCarthy),  
16.11/12 Feb 43 Wilhelmshaven (F/O McCarthy),  
17.21/22 Feb 43 Bremen (F/O McCarthy),  
18.25/26 Feb 43 Nuremburg (F/O McCarthy),  
19.26/27 Feb 43 Cologne (F/O McCarthy),  
20.28 Feb/1 Mar St Nazaire 43 (F/O McCarthy),  
21.1/2 Mar 43 Berlin (F/O McCarthy),  
22.3/4 Mar 43 Hamburg (F/O McCarthy),  
23.8/9 Mar 43 Nuremburg (F/O McCarthy),  
24.9/10 Mar 43 Munich (F/O McCarthy),  
25.11/12 Mar 43 Stuttgart (F/O McCarthy),  
26.12/13 Mar 43 Essen (F/O McCarthy),

## Details from Operational Record Book

27/28 August 1942 Gydnia

27.8.42 14 aircraft for ops – 8 aircraft to attack Kassel – 2 did not take off owing to engine trouble. 5 aircraft reached and bombed target or area and one aircraft, F/Sgt McKenna and crew are missing, no news received after take off. Remaining 6 aircraft detailed to attack the Graf Zeppelin in Gydnia Port, the battleship Gneisenau being the alternative in the same port. 3 aircraft claimed to have bombed the port or alternative target – 1 aircraft bombed Puck ten miles north east of Gydnia Port and 2 aircraft abandoned owing to technical failures. On this target 5,600lb bombs were used.

R5548 OF-A S/L E.Coton, Sgt A.R.Airy, F/L R.A.Boddington, Sgts M.H.Middleton, A.O.Stafford, G.L.Johnson, G.F.McMahon. Up 1940 Down 2221. Mission abandoned. Returned owing to petrol leakage.



28.12.42 NFTs. 9 aircraft for ops which were cancelled. Two aircraft carried out Bullseye exercises. The aircraft "A" for "Queenie" (autographed by Queen Elizabeth) was ver badly damaged. The aircraft was loaded with incendiaries and petrol ready for ops when the photoflash exploded killing A/C Taylor (Armourer) who was in the aircraft. The fuselage from the wings to the tail was completely destroyed. Although other airmen were near the aircraft and one on the starboard wing, no one else was injured beyond the armourer. This was due to the explosion blasting out to port. The cause remains unknown but an investigation has been convened.

Extract from Bomber Command Losses – 28.12.42

Lancaster I R5548 OF- Ground. Burnt out at Woodhall Spa following ignition of a photo flash flare

28/29 August 1942 Nuremburg

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.

R5609 OF-S W/C J.D.D.Collier, Sgt A.R.Airy (2nd Pilot), F/L R.A.Boddington, Sgts M.H.Middleton, A.O.Stafford, G.L.Johnson, J.Hollshon (?). Up 2113 Down 0326. Primary visually pin-pointed on river, bombed from 13,000'. Enormous column of smoke and debris flew into the air as bomb burst. Many searchlights over target area.

#### Combat Report (AIR50/200)

Lancaster 'S' R5609 28/29 August 1942

Crew – Capt W/C Collier DFC 2nd Pilot Sgt Airy Nav F/L Boddington DFC Air Bomber Sgt Middleton W/Op Sgt Stafford Mid Gunner Sgt Johnson Rear Gunner Sgt McMahan DFM.

On crossing the French coast at Charleroi flying at 12,000', time 2253 hours, the rear gunner sighted an Me109 flying in the opposite direction on the starboard beam at a distance of approximately 400 yards. The recognition was apparently mutual as the Me turned to starboard in the dead astern position; level and at a distance of between 700 and 800 yards where he continued to maintain that range for the duration of the combat. A few seconds after the sighting of the Me109, the nose gunner spotted a second aircraft which was single-engined but unidentified at a range of 600 yards crossing from port to starboard bow, following round to attack on the starboard beam. On reaching this position the enemy aircraft developed the attack, lessening range continuously on the starboard beam. The pilot at this critical stage turned to starboard with a slight dive at a speed of 320mph and was enveloped in a nearby cloud which completely lost the two enemy aircraft (the moon ahead of the Lancaster).

Result of combat : - No rounds fired from the Lancaster. The enemy aircraft attacking on the beam was presumed to have fired his guns as the Perspex on the astro hatch was damaged with a hole approximately 3" in diameter through it. Actually no rounds were observed to have been fired from either aircraft.



2/3 September 1942 Karlsruhe

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.

R5609S S/L E.Coton, Sgt A.R.Airy (2nd pilot), F/L R.A.Boddington, Sgts G.L.Johnson, A.O.Stafford, F/L J.Truman, Sgt G.F.McMahon. Up 2338 Down 0515. Bomb load 1 x 8000lb. Clear, no cloud – visibility good except for smoke. Bomb dropped Karlsruhe town from 13,000' and bursts seen, although details of town were invisible owing to smoke. Opposition ineffective.

Aircraft flown

R5548A – OF-A for Queenie

R5609S

R5609S

R5607X

R5497Z

L7577T

R5607X

R5552I

W4355T

++++ McCarthy++++

R5796M

ED430C

R5612R

ED430C

ED430C

ED430C

R5614G

ED425E

ED430C

ED430C

ED430C

ED430C

R5490B

ED430C

ED430C

W4926Z

ED430C

ED430C

ED430C

4/5 September 1942 Bremen

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.

R5607X S/L E.Coton, Sgt A.R.Airy (2nd Pilot), F/L R.A.Boddington, Sgts M.H.Middleton, A.O Stafford, G.L.Johnson, G.F.McMahon. Up 0024 Down 0504. 1 x 8000lb. Bremen town bombed from 16,000'. Bombing run handicapped owing to flares having gone out. Target area in bomb

23/24 September 1942 Wismar

23.9.42 12 aircraft detailed to attack Wismar, three detailed specially to attack the Dornier Assembly Factory. All were to attack between 1,000 and 2,000 feet. Two aircraft successfully bombed factory, one being unable to locate target, bombed Wismar town. Of the remaining aircraft, 2 abandoned – technical troubles – remaining 7 bombed town of Wismar.

R5497Z Sgts C.Smith, M.P.Stewart, J.Trowsdale, G.L.Johnson, C.Mayland, F/Sgt C.Robinson, Sgt D.F.Suckling. Up 2311 Down 0619. 14 SBC. Wismar bombed on DR. Target not identified visually. Extremely bad weather conditions on return, thunder and very active static conditions. Route as detailed.

6/7 October 1942 Osnabruck – Bomb Load 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC

6.10.42 10 various aircraft dispersed on aerodrome from previous nights's ops. 6 aircraft to attack Osnabruck. 5 aircraft successfully reached and bombed target area, 1 aircraft abandoned mission owing to electrical trouble.

L7577T P/O D.H.Rowlands, Sgt F.Sandiford, F/Sgt H.W.Bennett, Sgt M.Griffiths, F/Sgt P.F.Edge, Sgt G.L.Johnson, P/O W.B.Kirkwood – Hackett. Up 1921 Down 2326. Bombed town of Osnabruck from 7,500' though break in cloud. Slightly hazy. Pin-pointed and set course from Durgger See. Good fires burning in town. Flares well placed over lake.

24 October 1942 Daylight - Milan

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.

R5607X F/S C.Smith, Sgts M.P.Stewart (2<sup>nd</sup> Pilot), J.Trowsdale, Johnson, C.Mayland, F/Sgt C.Robinson, P/O W.B.Kirkwood-Hackett. Up 1222 Down 2223. 1 x 4000lb. Primary objective bombed from 8,000'. Marshalling yard identified to north of aiming point. One fighter seen after leaving target, but no attack made. Several fires observed in target area.

9/10 November 1942 Hamburg

9.11.42 6 aircraft took off to raid an aiming point at Hamburg. F/O Keir abandoned mission owing to the artificial horizon being u/s and jettisoned bombs in the sea. The remaining five aircraft successfully completed the mission but due to 10/10ths cloud bombing was on ETA and results unobserved.

R5607X F/Sgt C.Smith, Sgts F.Sandiford, S.Trowsdale, Johnson, C.Mayland, C.Robinson, D.F.Suckling. Bomb load 1 x 8000lb. Up 1839 Down 2330. Bombed estimated position of target. Cloud at 10,000'. White glare seen through cloud.

7/8 December 1942 Gardening in "Furze" area – 3 mines

7.12.41 Two aircraft to lay mines in "Furze" area. Both aircraft successfully completed task after a flight of nearly ten hours. Lancaster W4356, Captain Sgt Johnson reported to have crashed at Kirkbridge near Carlisle. None of the crew were injured. Crash was apparently caused by two starboard engines cutting and when attempting to land port engine cut. Engineers report not yet to hand.

W4355T F/Sgt C.Smith, Sgts F.Sandiford, J.Trowsdale, Johnson, R.P.Irons, F/Sgt J.Benbow, F/Sgt D.F.Suckling. Up 1705 Down 0237. Veg successfully planted in Furze area. Parachutes seen to open. A very nice and uneventful trip.

13/14 November 1942 Genoa

13.11.41 Two day cross countries carried out. 5 aircraft detailed for ops – Genoa. Three aircraft in night flying Bullseye exercise. One of these on the exercise, Lancaster R5569, Sgt Mercer (Can) and crew crashed near Scampton aerodrome. The aircraft was diverted to Scampton owing to bad visibility at base. It has been reported that the aircraft was landing and apparently overshooting, the captain tried to go round again but was seen to crash and burst into flames about a mile from the aerodrome. All were killed except Sgt Collings, who died from injuries the following day at Bracebridge Hospital. Of the ops, four aircraft successfully attacked Genoa in good weather. One aircraft, S/L Coton DFC, obtained a good photo of the aiming point. The fifth aircraft, P/O McCarthy, was attacked by a Ju88 – took violent evasive action – lost enemy aircraft but port outer engine overheated and caught fire, causing abandonment of mission and jettisoned bombs in sea. All aircraft diverted to various aerodromes.

R5552I F/Sgt C.Smith, Sgts F.Sandiford, S.Trowsdale, Johnson, C.Mayland, F/Sgt C.Robinson, D.F.Suckling. Bomb load 2 x 1000lb 7 SBC. Up 1832 Down 0500. Visibility good with target in sights. Bombs seen to fall in target area. Slight trouble with undercarriage on landing.



21/22 December 1942 Munich

21.12.42 Fighter affiliation. 9 aircraft for ops against Munich. 8 aircraft claim to have attacked target in weather conditions of 10/10ths cloud at 4-5,000' but with good visibility. Most of the aircraft were forced to bomb through gaps in the cloud which greatly hampered the success of the raid. Several fires were seen reflected through the cloud. One aircraft abandoned task on account of intercom failure. F/Sgt West was attacked by fighters and received much damage to his aircraft, also three of his crew received severe injuries during the attacks. With great difficulty, together with his navigator, F/Sgt West managed to fly his aircraft to Bodney where he managed a crash landing without further injuries to any of the crew.

R5796M F/O J.V.McCarthy, Sgts W.Radcliffe, A.Westwell, Johnson, Thompson, R.Batson, R.Muskett. 13 SBC. Up 1725 Down 0050. Primary target bombed. Built up area located by flares and bombed, own incendiaries seen to ignite. Starboard outer engine u/s. Port inner also gave trouble. Forced to land at Bottesford. Terrible weather.

F/O McCarthy – At 2110 hours when flying at a height of 15,000' in weather conditions of good visibility and bright moonlight and just about to make a bombing run over Munich, Lancaster sighted an enemy aircraft at a range of 1000 yards, the aircraft was identified as a Ju88.

The enemy aircraft was first seen flying parallel with our aircraft and it immediately turned in to the Lancaster's starboard, our aircraft then turned in on top of the enemy who went underneath our aircraft's stern, the Lancaster once again turned into it. The enemy aircraft then turned into the port side of our Lancaster which turned on top of the enemy who again made a starboard approach and tracer from its guns was seen to pass beneath the nose of the Lancaster. The enemy aircraft then disappeared from view and was not seen again.

The enemy aircraft carried no lights, no action was taken with IFF. There was no flak reported at the time but two or three searchlights were probing the sky but the Lancaster was not held. There were no casualties and no rounds fired by the Lancaster.

+++++First op with McCarthy ++++++



8/9 January 1943 Duisburg – Bomb load 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC

8.1.43 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.

ED430C F/O J.V.McCarthy, Sgts W.Radcliffe, A.Westwell, G.Johnson, Eaton, R.Muskett, R.Batson. Up 1726 Down 2120. Bombs released on primary target but no results seen. PFF flares enabled us to locate target. Much cloud.

16/17 January 1943 Berlin

16.1.43 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.

R5612R F/O J.V.McCarthy, Sgts W.Radcliffe, A.Westwell, G.Johnson, L.Eaton, R.Muskett, R.Batson. 1 x 8000lb. Up 1655 Down 0110. Alternative. Aircraft would not climb so bombed at 14,000', believed Berlin. Several lakes and flares seen, own bombs seen to explode, other bursts seen. Fires observed.

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

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.

ED430C F/O J.V.McCarthy, Sgts W.Radcliffe, A.Westwell, G.Johnson, L.Eaton, F/O D.Rodger, Sgt R.Batson. Up 1714 Down 0135. Primary target bombed. Flares in target area. Own bombs seen to straddle marshalling yards. Fires observed over large area. No help from PFF who apparently failed to locate target. Completed return journey with 3 engines.

30/31 January 1943 Hamburg

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.

ED430C F/O J.V.McCarthy, Sgts W.Radcliffe, A.Westwell, G.Johnson, G.Eaton, R.Batson, F/O D.Rodgers. 1 x 4000lb 10 SBC. Up 0002 Down 0307. Mission abandoned owing to oxygen failure. Bombs jettisoned safe.

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

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.

ED430C F/O J.V.McCarthy, Sgts W.Radcliffe, A.Westwell, G.Johnson, L.Eaton, R.Batson, F/O D.Rodger. Up 1813 Down 2310. Cologne successfully bombed. Patchy cloud, thick ground haze. Bombed on red marker flares, no results for own bombs seen. Fires seen after leaving target. PFF on time.

4/5 February 1943 Turin – Bomb load 14 SBC

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.

R5614G F/O J.V.McCarthy, Sgts W.Radcliffe, A.Westwell, G.Johnson, L.Eaton, R.Batson, P/O D.Rodger. 1 x 8000lb. Up 1821 Down 0224. Target successfully bombed. Clear – slight ground haze. Built up area observed visually. Bombed red marker flares. Bomb seen to burst on cluster of buildings. One large fire and lots of smaller fires seen in centre of town.

11/12 February 1943 Wilhelmshaven – Bomb load 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC

11.2.43 Day cross country and air tests. 5 Lancasters detailed to attack Wilhelmshaven. 4 aircraft successfully completed task and one aircraft returned early owing to a technical failure.

ED425E F/O J.V.McCarthy, Sgts W.Radcliffe, A.Westwell, G.Johnson, L.Eaton, R.Batson, P/O D.Rodger. Up 1741 Down 2218. Wilhelmshaven successfully attacked. Cloud over target. Bombed on TI flares. Glow seen through cloud which may have been fires burning. Much larger glow observed when aircraft was 80 miles away.

21/22 February 1943 Bremen – Bomb load 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC

21.2.43 7 Lancasters detailed for ops and some for training during the day. All aircraft successfully attacked Bremen. Weather 10/10ths cloud over target area. Aircraft diverted on return, 1 to Eastmore, one to Topcliffe, 4 to Aclington and 1 to Middleton St George.

ED430C F/O J.V.McCarthy, P/O R.P.Clayton, Sgts A.Westwell, G.Johnson, F/Sgt Mort, Sgt R.Batson, P/O D.Rodger. Up 1855 Down 0002. Bremen attacked from 18,000'. Cloud over target. Sky marker flares seen but bombed on TI markers. Markers in sights. Bomb flash seen. Glow of good fire seen through cloud. Uneventful trip.

25/26 February 1943 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.

ED430C F/O J.V.McCarthy, Sgts W.Radcliffe, A.Westwell, G.Johnson, F/O P.B.Ballantyne, Sgt R.Batson, P/O D.Rodger. 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC. Up 1942 Down 0337. Nuremburg attacked from 10,000'. No cloud but hazy. Bombed green TI markers, no results seen. Built up area identified visually. Large fires, presumably factory, burning fiercely. PFF timing very late.

26/27 February 1943 Cologne

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

ED430C F/O J.V.McCarthy, Sgts W.Radcliffe, A.Westwell, G.Johnson, F/O P.B.Ballantyne, Sgt R.Batson, P/O D.Rodger. 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC. Up 1834 Down 0017. Primary objective successfully attacked. 20,000'. Some haze. Bombed centre of green TI markers. 4000 pounder seen to burst in built up area. Good trip if PFF were accurate.

28 February/1 March 1943 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.

ED430C F/O J.V.McCarthy, Sgts W.Radcliffe, A.Westwell, G.Johnson, F/O P.B.Ballantyne, Sgt R.Batson, P/O D.Rodger. 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC. Up 1818 Down 2352. Primary objective St Nazaire attacked from 14,000'. Clear with ground haze. Bombed red TI markers. Several large explosions observed. Many good fires burning in town. Successful raid.

1/2 March 1943 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.

R5490B F/O J.V.McCarthy, Sgts J.Radcliffe, A.Westwell, G.Johnson, F/O P.B.Ballantyne, Sgt R.Batson, F/O D.Rodger. 1 x 4000lb 10 SBC. Up 1906 Down 0139. Berlin successfully attacked. Slight haze over target. Identified built up area and river visually. Bombed cluster of red and green TI markers. Many bursts and fires observed. Glow of fires seen 150 miles from target.

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

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.

ED430C F/O J.V.McCarthy, Sgts J.Radcliffe, A.Westwell, G.Johnson, F/O P.B.Ballantyne, Sgt R.Batson, F/O D.Rodger. Up 1908 Down 2336. Last resort – believed Friedrichskogg attacked from 19,000'. No cloud – rather hazy. Estuary of Elbe visually identified and estimated position of Friedrichskogg bombed. 4000 pounder seen to burst and start fire.

8/9 March 1943 Nurnburg – Bomb load 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC unless stated

8.3.43 12 Lancasters detailed to attack Nuremberg. 10 aircraft reported success. PFF markers were scattered, there being three distinct concentrations, most of the crews bombed the largest cluster. Numerous scattered fires were reported, some being particularly good. Two aircraft returned early owing to technical failures.

ED430C F/O J.V.McCarthy, Sgts J.Radcliffe, A.Westwell, G.Johnson, F/O P.B.Ballantyne, Sgt R.Batson, F/O D.Rodger. Up 1933 Down 0308. Nurnburg attacked from 12,500'. Clear. Bombed cluster of green TI markers in sights. Built up area observed by light of illuminations. Numerous good fires, one very big blaze to south east of town.

9/10 March 1943 Munich

9.3.42 9 Lancasters detailed to attack Munich. 9 aircraft successfully attacked target. Many fires reported, one particularly large in the south east of Munich. Most crews report having seen a very large explosion followed by fire and smoke. One aircraft returned early due to technical failure after jettisoning bombs. 10.3.43 Three Lancasters detailed to lay mines in Privet Area and one in Spinach Area. All report successful laying of mines. Weather was fine with good visibility.

W4926Z F/O J.V.McCarthy, Sgts J.Radcliffe, A.Westwell, G.Johnson, F/O P.B.Ballantyne, Sgt R.Batson, F/O D.Rodger. 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC. Up 2049 Down 0415. Primary target Munich bombed. 13,000'. Layer of thin cloud. No TI markers were burning while we over target so bombs were released on centre of fire area. Haze obscured ground detail. Several scattered fires. One large explosion.

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

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.

ED430C F/O J.V.McCarthy, Sgts J.Radcliffe, A.Westwell, G.Johnson, F/O P.B.Ballantyne, Sgt R.Batson, F/O D.Rodger. Up 2004 Down 0212. Stuttgart bombed from 13,000'. Clear with ground haze. All TI markers were out, bombed centre of fires which were in sights. Nothing remarkable in the way of fires but target turned redder as we were leaving.

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

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.

ED430C F/O J.V.McCarthy, Sgts J.Radcliffe, A.Westwell, Ball (Nav 2), G.Johnson, L.Eaton, R.Batson, F/O D.Rodger. Up 1909 Down 2351. Primary target Essen bombed. 20,000'. Clear but hazy. Red TI markers in sights when we bombed. Very large explosion seen immediately after bombing. Target area well covered with fires. Other terrific explosions seen.

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

ED430C F/O J.V.McCarthy, Sgts J.Radcliffe, D.A.McLean, G.Johnson, L.Eaton, R.Batson, F/O D.Rodger. Up 1910 down 2356. St Nazaire bombed. 11,500', scattered cloud with some ground haze. Aiming Point not seen, position identified by river mouth. Fires and red glow seen in area of Aiming Point "C" which we bombed. Uneventful trip.

END OF SERVICE WITH 97 (Straits Settlements) SQUADRON

1199696

Sgt G.F.Johnson

AB

To 617 Sqn

25.3.43









