

# RAF Pocklington and Local Area Losses

Aircraft Accidents & Losses at and near RAF Pocklington in WW2



*The Halifax HR792 shown here made an emergency landing on the Isle of Lewis in WW2 and has been restored by the Yorkshire Air Museum at Elvington where it is now on permanent display.*

*Although HR792 was not an RAF Pocklington aircraft, it is representative of the type flown from RAF Pocklington by No. 405 Squadron from April 1942 and later No. 102 Squadron to May 1945.*

*Evident is the radome for the H2S radar scanner mounted under the central fuselage; also the much-revised fin & rudder shape which transformed handling and thus flight safety (see Part 1).*

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## Introduction

The article on the WW2 airfield at [RAF Pocklington](#) on the Pocklington & District Local History Group website included details of several aircraft accidents and losses within the airfield boundary and the adjacent Pocklington parish.

Nevertheless, there were well over 100 aircraft losses during WW2 at Pocklington airfield and within the local area primarily covered by the History Group (including the neighbouring airfields at RAF Elvington, Full Sutton, Holme-on-Spalding Moor – colloquially abbreviated throughout to ‘HOSM’ – and Melbourne), primarily involving the Halifax bomber, and this companion article sets out to record them.

However, to provide full details of every accident and loss, the operational details, the aircrew names, photographs and so on, would result in an enormous and unwieldy article. But fortunately there are several online and printed resources which, taken together, already cover many of the same details. So to limit this document to a reasonable size, the intention is to sub-divide the article into 3 parts:

- ❑ **Part 1** will first set the scene, primarily to address the derived reasons for the surprising but nevertheless extremely disturbing realisation that the Halifax aircraft suffered excessive losses compared with its contemporaries such as the Lancaster and Stirling.

This led to considerable investigation and development testing by the Aircraft and Armaments Experimental Establishment (A&AEE, of which more anon) which resulted in a relatively straightforward modification being applied to the Halifax empennage, but which reduced the aircraft loss rate.

Part 1 will also address subsequent radar and other electronic improvements to reduce the loss rates (affecting all aircraft types), most notably by a combination of aircraft navigation aids allied with runway approach and landing aids.

- ❑ **Part 2** will then go on to list each ‘RAF Pocklington and Local Area’ accident or loss, by date, the aircraft type and registration number (with a hyperlink to external references where available), plus the pilot’s name – or instructor’s name if a training flight – followed by a resumé of the circumstances of each crash or incident.

Specifically, any accident resulting in the loss of an aircraft either at RAF Pocklington or in the local area (including the other airfields listed above), or where it was significantly damaged, or where aircrew, groundcrew or civilian personnel were either killed or injured, will be included; as will events not necessarily directly involving aircraft based at RAF Pocklington.

But where an aircraft suffered only minor, accidental or incidental damage (perhaps in a taxiing incident which was repairable on base), and where no personnel were injured, that will not be listed.

- ❑ Finally, **Part 3** will list all those other aircraft which took off on operational or, in some cases, non-operational sorties from RAF Pocklington (only) but which ‘Failed to Return’, invariably through enemy action, aircraft failure, accident or diversion.

Numerically, this is a significantly longer listing and, as the bulk of the losses are addressed in detail in the several printed and online references, the information listed here will be restricted to the date, aircraft type and registration number, plus the pilot’s name and followed by a relatively brief comment on the reason for the non-return. Where available, links will also be given to the main external references.

During WW2, the bulk of the listed occurrences at and near RAF Pocklington involved mainly the resident 2-engined Wellington and later the 4-engined Halifax aircraft of [No. 405 \(Vancouver\) Squadron](#) (covering the period 20 Jun 1941 – 6 Aug 1942) and the Halifaxes of [No. 102 \(Ceylon\) Squadron](#) (7 Aug 1942 – 8 Sep 1945), plus similar aircraft at the 4 neighbouring bases.

However, the listings include other aircraft based temporarily at RAF Pocklington (e.g. while their own bases were being repaired), aircraft diverted to Pocklington (due mainly to adverse weather conditions at their home base), plus other aircraft operating locally (including several different aircraft types) but which crashed in the designated local area.

It is a truism that the aircrews’ worst enemies during WW2 were not only through enemy action, but also so often the extreme weather conditions (including icing) which they faced during night operations, flying to and from their targets and especially on landing; also (despite the best efforts of the engineers and groundcrews) mechanical or other failure of the aircraft and engines.

For the same reasons, sadly, many losses included aircrew fatalities or serious injuries which occurred during training sorties; plus where groundcrew lost their lives in tragic accidents. All such cases are recorded in these listings. However, where, say, a badly damaged aircraft nevertheless fortuitously landed safely either at Pocklington or diverted to another airfield, without further damage to the aircraft or crew injury, these cases are not included.

## Acknowledgments

The links given throughout will lead to one or more of the existing online resources which will expand on the resumés listed here and, for example, will include the human story of the aircrew, where they came from (often the Dominions) and, if involved in a fatal accident, where they are buried (some in the Commonwealth War Cemetery at [Barmby Moor](#) or in the [Pocklington cemetery](#)).

To that end, we are very grateful to the several copyright holders who have given permission for limited data in their own works to be repeated here, including photographs of the crashed or damaged aircraft where available. These include the main online resource – the splendid [Aircraft Accidents in Yorkshire](#) website.

Further valuable sources have been the ‘RAF Form 540s’ – the Operations Record Books for the relevant units – made available by [The National Archives](#); also the [No. 102 Squadron Association](#) and ‘*The RAF Pocklington War Diary*’ by Mike Usherwood.

There are also excellent photos and a painting from the [Yorkshire Air Museum](#) and the [Imperial War Museum](#), plus quotations and several other photos from 3 books: ‘The Story of 102 (Ceylon) Squadron – *It’s Suicide but it’s Fun*’ by Chris Goss; ‘Halifax Navigator’ by Gregory Brown and Basil Spiller; and ‘Pocklington at War’ by Jim and Margaret Ainscough.

## Terminology

For avoidance of confusion, where some of the terms existing in the 1940s have since been changed, the modern equivalents will be used. This is particularly relevant where the word ‘overshot’ was used regularly in WW2, indicating that the aircraft had overshot the runway *either from an aborted take-off or on landing*, typically finishing up in a boundary hedge or ditch, very often with the ‘undercarriage’ (today called the landing gear) collapsed.

However, today’s term ‘overshot’ alternatively refers specifically to when, generally for practice, an aircraft undertakes a low approach to the runway – perhaps with 1 or even 2 engines intentionally set at reduced or idle RPM to simulate the potentially-dangerous asymmetric power condition – but then ‘overshoots’ without touching down by increasing engine power, ‘cleaning up’ (raising the landing gear and flaps) and climbing away, thus avoiding wear and tear on the landing gear and tyres.

So to cover these many instances, the 1940’s term ‘overshot’ is replaced throughout by ‘overran’ (the runway). Similarly, ‘swerved’ is replaced by ‘veered’ (off the runway); and ‘undercarriage’ is replaced by ‘landing gear’ (including in the case of the Halifax aircraft the retractable tailwheel).

During WW2, aircraft damage was categorised under several groups: for example ‘Cat U’ for undamaged; ‘Cat. A’ for damage repairable on site; ‘Cat. B’ for repairs on site not being possible, with the aircraft generally being dismantled and sent to a repair facility (including the manufacturer); through to ‘Cat. E’ where the damage was not considered economically repairable and the aircraft was ‘struck off charge’ (synonymous with today’s ‘Cat 5 – written off’).

The addition of a suffix gave further detail, e.g. ‘E/FA’ would represent not economically repairable following a flying accident, or ‘E/EA’ for loss due to enemy action.

As will be seen, even relatively minor events such as the numerous ‘veered off the runway and the landing gear collapsed’ accidents (without crew injury) very often resulted in the aircraft damage being categorised as ‘E/FA’. (Today’s terminology is very similar but simplified to damage categories 1-5.)

## Part 1 – Observations, Comments and Discussion

Before going on to consider the fine detail of all the aircraft losses and accidents involving the 5 RAF bases in our local area, as listed in Part 2 – followed by the far more extensive listing in Part 3 of the aircraft which ‘failed to return’, specifically to their base at RAF Pocklington –

this Part 1 will consider whether the listings were (statistically) par for the course in other UK areas. Were these local losses the odd ones out for some reason and – if so – were the reasons for the discrepancies ever determined and was any remedial action taken to lessen or even eliminate the problem(s)?

### ***Halifax aircraft directional control problems***

Dealing first with the sheer number of losses and accidents, plus the ‘failed to return’ statistics, both as listed in Parts 2 and 3, we need to consider the Halifax bomber in particular. (As far as we can tell, no parallel, in-depth investigations have been conducted for other bomber types such as the 2-engined Wellingtons, the 4-engined Lancasters and Stirlings, and so on.)

In very broad terms, the Halifax and its contemporary the Lancaster bomber led parallel lives in that their general design features were very similar. Initially they used the same power plant (4 of the ubiquitous Merlin engines) and their operating weights were roughly the same, as were their then bombloads, fuel contents, operating altitudes, airspeeds and so on. Later, the Lancaster had a significant edge in terms of bombload, range and overall weight, but not so large as to make a huge performance difference.

Both aircraft came into operational service at around the same time and were exposed to the same early changes to operational procedures, the most significant being the realisation that losses of other aircraft types in daylight bombing sorties early in WW2 were far too high to sustain; hence the decision to change over to night bombing.

This change to night operations led directly to several amendments to bomber aircraft design, most notably for the Halifax by the addition of the mid-upper gun turret (similar to that of the Hudson aircraft), plus the flame-damping exhaust system for the engines, both correctly considered essential for night operations. The downside for the Halifax was that the all-up-weight of the fully-laden aircraft increased to no less than 60,000 lbs (>27 tonnes!), and this – plus the additional aerodynamic drag of the mid-upper gun turret and the power-consuming flame-damping exhaust system – conspired together to reduce performance.

So to counteract this, the Halifax’s Rolls-Royce Merlin engines were eventually replaced with the more powerful Bristol Hercules engines. However – as quoted in the official report No. 760 published by the A&AEE based at RAF Boscombe Down in Wiltshire, these changes caused the Halifax to become “*distinctly difficult to fly to the extent that, when fully loaded, the aircraft was prone to fall into uncontrollable spins*”.

Such an extreme loss of control (bearing in mind the pilot had no powered-flying controls to assist him recover to controlled flight) invariably led to the aircraft crashing, with most crews being killed by being unable to bail out due to the excessive ‘g’ forces in the manoeuvre.

This in turn led to the Halifax accident rate to mount, not surprisingly “*causing official alarm and considerable unpopularity among the operational Halifax squadron crews*”. Indeed...

(Although the Lancaster was subject to exactly the same factors, it does not appear to have been so badly affected, although this has to be supposition.)

Furthermore, it may well be that the Halifax loss rate due to these out-of-control problems may have been worse than at first realised as, in so many cases, the aircraft which ‘failed to return’ were for unknown causes. Invariably the whole crew were either killed, POWs or missing, so there were few if any first-hand reports of the circumstances of the many losses. This most likely masked most of the loss-of-control data.

Additionally, it is arguably quite possible that, if a Halifax had been attacked by a nightfighter (increasingly likely as the night-bombing war progressed), the semi-standard ‘corkscrew’ escape manoeuvre employed by similar aircraft such as the Lancaster may very well have resulted in the Halifax aircraft suffering loss of control. Without powered flying controls, the likelihood of regaining control of a large, heavily-laden Halifax, even from an incipient spin – let alone a fully-developed spin – was very highly improbable.

In an endeavour to resolve and alleviate the problem, a standard production Halifax (R9534) was sent to A&AEE where the engineers and test pilots embarked on an intensive programme of weight and drag reduction, appreciating that wind tunnels, simulators and even computers did not then exist; all calculations were completed using slide rules! So reported problems had necessarily to be replicated and potential solutions had to be investigated by undertaking high-risk test flights.

As well as addressing the additional drag problem, an early version of the A&AEE report released in late-1940 added a provisional but crucially-important finding: that the aircraft directional control (i.e. in the yaw plane) was inadequate – and that ‘*rudder-overbalance*’ might be the underlying problem. We do not need to understand this complex symptom but, in essence, a large application of rudder (as invariably employed in a ‘corkscrew’ manoeuvre), would cause the 2 rudders to ‘lock’ *at full deflection* – and then be impossible for the pilot to return them to neutral to overcome the out-of-balance aerodynamic forces.

Even throttling back 2 engines on the opposite wing would fail to overcome or correct the aerodynamic asymmetry. Inevitably, the resulting considerable ‘yaw’ would cause aircraft directional control to be lost, most likely resulting in a spin (already suspected by A&AEE as being a contributory cause of the numerous ‘failure to return’ losses).

Using a brand-new production Halifax Mk II – by coincidence ‘borrowed’ from No. 102 Squadron – A&AEE were then contracted to undertake an in-depth investigation and, sure enough, they replicated both the manoeuvring conditions *and* the resulting likelihood of the aircraft then entering and becoming uncontrollable in a spin. Their later version of Report No. 760 amply demonstrates the extraordinary heroism of the A&AEE test pilots (sometimes accompanied by Flight Test Engineers) by – *intentionally* – undertaking such high-risk manoeuvres, with the likely outcome being their deaths. Indeed, one very highly-experienced Polish test pilot coaxed the test aircraft into a worst-case *flat* spin – invariably fatal – but incredibly he was able to limp away from the resulting slow-speed/near-vertical crash wreckage with only broken ribs.

(Others were not so fortunate as an accident which occurred on 7<sup>th</sup> June 1942 was to have a serious effect on the radar war. “*The most secret prototype H2S centimetric radar was being*

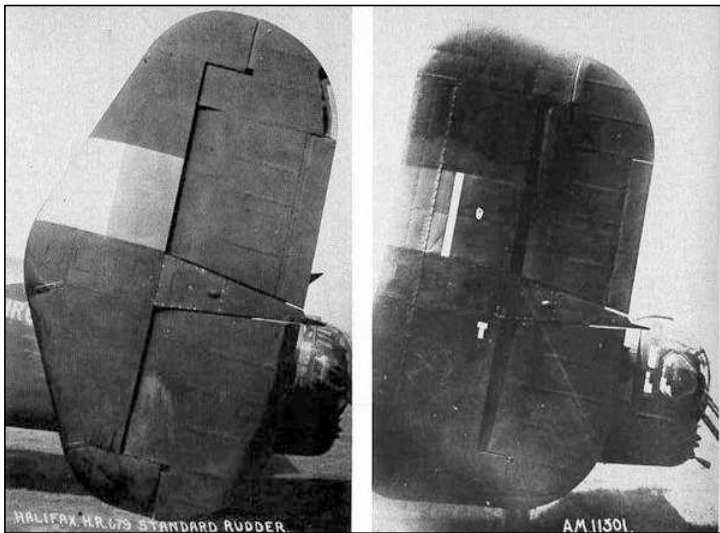
tested in Halifax V9977, which had taken off from another base with practically the entire H2S development team on board. V9977 did not return; it crashed from unknown causes into a field, killing all the occupants.”)

One has to wonder if the gallant aircrews based at RAF Pocklington and elsewhere had been aware of this then unpublished, serious directional control problem affecting their Halifax steeds, whether they would be so keen even to contemplate flying. The subtitle of Chris Goss’s excellent book – *It’s Suicide but it’s Fun* – takes on a whole new meaning...

Matters had come to a head by late-February 1944 when losses by No. 102 Squadron for example had risen to no less than 18 aircraft out of 87 aircraft despatched in only 2 months; a wholly unsustainable loss rate of over 20%. No. 102 Squadron and several others (all flying the Halifax Mk II) were withdrawn from operations against Germany and relegated to ‘Operation Gardening’ (minelaying) and other sorties outside Germany until they could be replaced with the more powerful Halifax Mk III. The other squadrons resumed operations against German targets before June 1944 but No. 102 Squadron did not resume operations (with the Halifax Mk III) against German targets until June 1944.

In the meantime, having determined and proved by high-risk air testing the root cause of the previously-suspected but ultimately serious Halifax ‘loss of control’ problem, the A&AEE derived and again air-tested a solution which was to effect a modification to the fins and rudders on the aircraft empennage, this becoming known as Modification No. 413 (‘Mod 413’) and retrospectively embodied on all relevant Halifaxes, as illustrated below.

(See also the re-shaped ‘post-Mod 413’ rudders installed on the restored Yorkshire Air Museum Halifax HR792 in the photo on the cover.)



Pre-Mod 413

Post-Mod 413

For avoidance of confusion, the introduction of the replacement Halifax Mk. III was often referred to as “the one with the modified rudders”, although Mod 413 was only one of a ‘package’ of modifications applied to that mark of aircraft.

Even more confusingly, the ‘pre-Mod 413’ rudders applied not only to the Mk. II variant, but also the seemingly later Mk V

Halifax in use at, say, RAF Elvington and HOSM. However, the Mark V variant had the same pre-mod 413 fins & rudders, so these aircraft were eventually upgraded and supplied to the squadrons as Mk III aircraft – including the Mod 413 fins and rudders.

Although it is not possible to determine statistically whether embodying the Mod 413 fins and rudders reduced the Halifax loss rate (there were far too many other variables), it has to be accepted that, through thorough flight testing, the A&AEE had not only deduced the most probable reason for the loss of control accidents and losses, but had derived an inexpensive and relatively easy-to-embody solution to deal with it in the form of Mod 413.

The RAF Pocklington ‘Failed to Return’ losses listed in Part 3 would also be expected to lessen accordingly. And as far as the other 4 ‘local’ airfields were concerned, in due course they all benefitted by receiving or converting to Mk III Halifaxes (with Mod 413 embodied); and this included RAF Elvington and HOSM where their Mk V Halifaxes were replaced with Mk III variants. The operational crews at squadron level would most likely applaud the improved handling of their modified steeds, possibly without even knowing of the heroic involvement of the A&AEE test pilots and their flight test engineers.

#### Runway overruns

Additionally, the more effective post-Mod 413 fins and rudders considerably improved directional control of the aircraft on the ground, especially at slow speeds, reducing the risk of the aircraft ‘veering off’ the runway in use, very often following engine failure and/or in crosswinds. Indeed, the number of off-runway excursions was either limited or even avoided.

However, it is self-evident from the listings in Part 2 that – compared with the 4 other nearby airfields considered in this article – RAF Pocklington suffered an inordinate number of aircraft accidents and losses through aircraft *overrunning* the active runway, either on landing or (in so many cases) on take-off by a heavily-laden bomber. In this case, the underlying reason for the accidents and often losses is again almost self-evident: namely the relatively short runways at Pocklington which, despite the replacement of one runway with the realigned and rather longer ‘4<sup>th</sup> runway’, still left the 3 operating runways restricted to only 1,600, 1,300 and 1,300 yards in length respectively, and which is discussed in some detail in the article on [RAF Pocklington](#).

Against that, the longest runways at RAF Elvington, Full Sutton, HOSM and Melbourne had been extended in the same timescale to become 1,800-2,000 yards long. Whilst the extra length may not sound very much, it would nevertheless in all probability make the crucial difference between an errant aircraft either: *a*) managing to stop on the paved runway; or *b*) overrunning it but at relatively slow speed; or *c*) over-running the prepared surface at significantly higher speeds and coming to rest in a hedge or a ditch, or – as in 2 cases at RAF Pocklington – finishing astride the main roads bounding the airfield, all very likely with the landing gear collapsing and the aircraft being damaged to the point where it might well have been written off.

Further details are discussed in the [RAF Pocklington](#) article but – other than diverting the main trunk road (now the A1079) and cutting down a swathe of Barmby Moor village – there was no ‘modification’ which could realistically be embodied at RAF Pocklington.

### **Local obstructions**

As a natural follow-on from the previous sub-section, RAF Pocklington also suffered from being relatively hemmed-in by several nearby obstructions such as the built-up areas at Pocklington and Barmby Moor, the 2 main roads and even discrete buildings such as Thirsk Mill – not forgetting the infamous ‘Red House’. So even if a heavily-laden aircraft managed to take-off on the relative short runway in use, any inability to climb away safely – e.g. in the event of an engine failure – endangered both the crew and (especially) those on the ground.

In comparison, the overrun areas at the other 4 airfields, invariably, were relatively clear of obstructions. So an unavoidable crash-landing into (say) an open field just outside the airfield boundary was potentially far less of a dangerous undertaking. There was no comparable ‘Red House’.

Even occupied buildings sited on the airfields resulted in different levels of danger to crews and support personnel alike. The [RAF Pocklington](#) article discussed the knock-on risk of aircraft veering off the re-aligned ‘4<sup>th</sup> runway’, either when taking off or on landing, and coming into physical conflict with the nearby Air Traffic Control and associated Fire Service buildings. This was evidenced by the pilot of an aircraft which veered off the runway on take-off retracting the landing gear *intentionally* to avoid colliding with the ATC building. Fortunately the building and aircraft were evacuated very shortly before the bombload blew up...

Following yet more similar incidents (at least 5 are recorded), eventually a trench was dug between the ‘long’ runway and the ATC building to remove the landing gear of errant aircraft but, subsequently, the ATC and Fire Service buildings were replaced with others on the north side of the airfield, becoming operational on 22 Mar 1944. At the same time this greatly improved the view of all the runway approaches.

(It is reported that the original Air Traffic Control and Fire Service buildings were subsequently demolished and, perhaps, the trench filled in so that no other aircraft veering off the runway would run into it and risk damaging the landing gear.)

### **Airfield area and runway landing aids**

With radar in its infancy at the start of World War 2, most airfields were devoid of any radar-based aids to area approach control and landing. During the winter months in particular, the likelihood of low cloud and poor visibility was an especial danger.

However, [radio direction finding](#) (RDF) systems became increasingly installed at airfields, a commonly-used feature being that, if an aircraft transmitted to request a [magnetic] ‘homing’ bearing from the aircraft to the airfield, the air traffic controller would note the bearing of the aircraft’s radio transmission on a display and transmit it to the aircraft. Alternatively, if requested by the aircraft, the controller could pass the reciprocal of the displayed bearing, i.e. from the airfield to the aircraft.

Also as WW2 progressed, radar blind landing aids became increasingly installed at many RAF airfields, including HOSM in the local area.

Even then, the aircraft were still at great risk if the horizontal visibility (typically ‘a good old Yorkshire fog’) was so poor as to make the final stages of the approach – even with the help of a blind landing aid – a very scary experience. In this context, of the 5 local airfields under review, RAF Melbourne was unique in having a ‘[FIDO](#)’ installation [Fog Intense Dispersal Operation].



But in essence, without an effective system of area radar control located at the airfields, it was a case of ‘make your own arrangements’, often with multiple aircraft returning from a raid, being told they were ‘number so-and-so’ to land, and having to get themselves in the right place in the queue even before they were able to use the landing aids. How could that possibly be done, generally at night, in conditions of low cloudbase and poor visibility, without effective radar assistance and control from the ground?

Hence so many crews, having spent several exhausting hours flying to and from the target, dealing with bad weather, flak barrages and nightfighters en-route and over the target, then finding their way back to base – but finally having to descend to low level in bad weather conditions, getting in the ‘queue’ and attempting to land in such conditions, came to grief in the local area without any effective airfield approach and runway landing aids, as evidenced by the sheer number of approach and landing accidents. (See especially the listings in Part 2 for 27 Nov 1943 – page 19 – where no less than 5 Lancasters, all having been diverted from Lincolnshire due to very poor weather conditions, crashed in the Pocklington local area.)

### **Aircraft navigation aids**

Also at the beginning of WW2, aircraft were without any on-board electronic aids to general air navigation and target detection; witness the extremely poor bombing accuracy results achieved by Bomber Command in the early years, at night or in conditions of cloud cover.

However, as WW2 progressed, several electronic aids to navigation became available, the first being ‘[Gee](#)’ in early 1943. Whilst Gee was an enormously useful aid to navigation outbound to the target, and on return, fixing the aircraft position with the early displays was anything but simple and, furthermore, accuracy degraded as distance from the UK Gee ‘chains’ (ground transmitters) increased.

Nevertheless, it was certainly far better than relying on visual pinpoints (impossible in cloud) ‘dead-reckoning’ (depending largely on the accuracy of forecast winds), and even astro-navigation (requiring a long time to produce even an approximate fix). A definite bonus was

that the aircraft did not need to transmit any electronic signal to use Gee, so did not give away their positions.

The original Gee Mk 2 system was eventually replaced by Gee Mk 3, the major bonuses for the navigator being fix accuracy and the more convenient-to-use controls and display. (The overall features and use of the subsequent 'Gee-H', Loran and Oboe systems were in general very similar so need not concern us.)

One common disadvantage however was that Gee could be degraded by electronic jamming, a not-altogether-satisfactory solution being to use an adjacent Gee 'chain', but portable Gee transmitters were soon installed on the continent as the allies moved eastwards after D-Day.

On return to base, so often in very adverse weather conditions and perhaps with limited fuel, the Gee equipment could be a huge help in pinpointing the aircraft position, allowing it to reduce altitude from the operating height to the lower levels and approach the airfield and even the runway in a relatively safe manner, especially in areas of high ground.

However, inspection of the numerous ● crash-location icons – especially on the local area map on page 30 with the accompanying descriptions in Part 2 – clearly shows that many aircraft 'got it wrong' and descended through what was probably thought – incorrectly and so often fatally – to be 'a gap in the clouds', but then only to meet the Yorkshire Wolds coming the other way.

Today this is known as 'Controlled Flight Into Terrain' (CFIT) and, even with modern navigation aids and area radar coverage, sadly still occurs; arguably the most notorious being the Chinook helicopter which was flown into the Mull of Kintyre on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1994 with the loss of 4 crew and 25 VIP passengers.



## Part 2 – Aircraft Accidents and Losses at and near RAF Pocklington

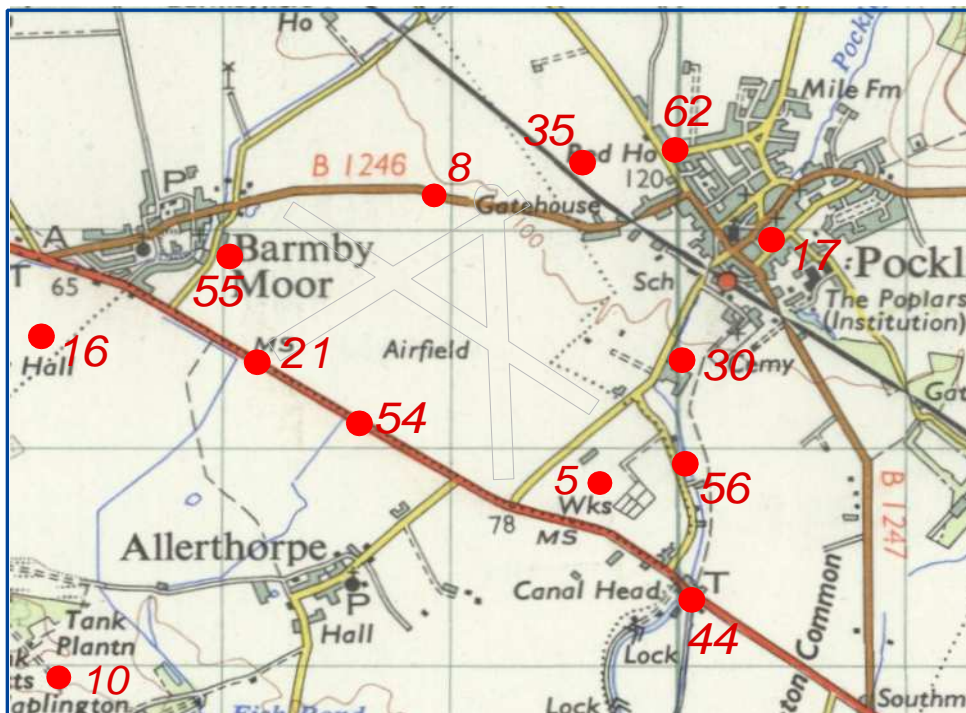
The aircraft listed in Part 2 (on pages 7-29) were primarily from the squadrons based at RAF Pocklington and the 4 neighbouring airfields at RAF stations Elvington, Full Sutton, HOSM and Melbourne during WW2.

Those aircraft involved in accidents and losses in the immediate area of RAF Pocklington are shown by the ● icons on the Pocklington inset map below (not including the many other runway 'overruns' at RAF Pocklington where the precise locations are not known). They show the best estimate of each aircraft crash location – some being approximate – cross-referenced to the listings and numbers on the subsequent pages.

Similarly, the far more numerous losses within the local area are depicted on the fold-out map on page 30. Unless stated otherwise in the text, all incidents involved RAF Pocklington-based aircraft. However, several other aircraft types which came to grief in the local area are also included and all accidents and losses are listed in date order.

Occasionally, it is not clear whether the date of an accident listed on (say) the '18/19th' of a month occurred before midnight on the 18th, or in the early hours of the following morning on the 19th. Where not recorded, the best estimate is given.

Clicking on each ['link'](#) in the listings will take the reader direct to one or more external references; primarily the 'Aircraft Accidents in Yorkshire' website.



27 Feb 1940 [Battle N2102](#) Pilot Officer Gordon Santo Crimp RAF

This dual control Battle aircraft of No. 234 Squadron, normally based at RAF Leconfield but temporarily operating from RAF Catfoss, was in the Wilberfoss area when the engine failed. The pilot attempted a forced landing with the landing gear up near Mill Farm [\[Ref. 1 on map on page 30\]](#) but struck a hedge shortly before touchdown, without serious injury.

The damaged aircraft was transported to No. 60 Maintenance Unit, then based at RAF Shipton\* (1½ miles north of Shipton-by-Beningbrough village), where it was written off.

\* At the time, RAF Shipton was also used as a [satellite dispersal airfield](#) for the Whitleys of No. 58 Squadron based at RAF Linton-on-Ouse.

25 Aug 1940 [Hurricane P3758](#) Sergeant Maurice Equity Leng RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 73 Squadron based at RAF Church Fenton was shot down by friendly anti-aircraft fire. The pilot bailed out without injury; the aircraft crashed near South Dalton [\[2\]](#) and was wrecked.

12 Jan 1941 [Tutor K3396](#) Unknown pilot

This aircraft was being flown from RAF West Raynham to No. 22 Maintenance Unit at RAF Silloth when it encountered a problem and the pilot elected to make a forced landing near Hayton, without further damage [\[3\]](#). A team effected repairs but, on take-off, the aircraft struck a hedge and overturned. After inspection, the damage was found to be such that the aircraft was written off.

25 Apr 1941 [Wellington R1218](#) Sergeant Arthur Wyn Idwal Jones RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 15 Squadron based at RAF Wyton returned from the target at Kiel but the crew became uncertain of their position in bad weather. The aircraft ran out of fuel and the crew abandoned the aircraft, with 1 crew member being injured. The aircraft crashed near Sand Hutton [\[4\]](#).

On 20 June 1941, No. 405 Squadron transferred from RAF Driffield to RAF Pocklington, equipped with Wellington aircraft. The station opened on 5 May 1941 under the command of Group Captain Sidney Osborne Bufton DFC.

7 Jul 1941 [Wellington W5490](#) Flying Officer Ronald John Fraas RAFVR

The aircraft was returning from Dortmund when, in the airfield circuit prior to landing, and with one engine seen to be out of action, the other engine burst into flames. The aircraft lost height, struck trees and crashed near the sewerage works [\[5\]](#).

One crew member was killed in the crash and all others seriously hurt, the pilot dying of his injuries the following day. The aircraft was badly damaged and written off.

13 Jul 1941 [Hampden AD910](#) Sergeant Guy Stuart Batchelor RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 49 Squadron based at RAF Scampton was returning from the target at Bremen but the crew became uncertain of their position. The aircraft became short of fuel and



crash-landed near High Barn Farm, Huggate [6]. The crew escaped injury but the extent of damage to the aircraft is not recorded.

13 Aug 1941 [Wellington W5516](#) Sergeant George Milburn Bigglestone RAFVR

The aircraft suffered engine problems outbound to the target at Berlin so, alternatively, Bremen was bombed. During the return, over Groningen, the aircraft was hit and damaged by a flak burst. The aircraft returned safely to Pocklington, albeit with 2 injured.

17 Aug 1941 [Wellington W5491](#) Sergeant Vernon Elton Sutherland RNZAF

The aircraft was returning from the target at Cologne when it was attacked by an ME110, the aircraft diving to 1,000 feet in an attempt to escape. Despite extensive damage, the aircraft landed safely at base although the rear gunner had been killed in the attack and was buried at Barmby Moor.

*On 26 Aug 1941, Pocklington airfield was attacked by enemy aircraft. 8 high explosive bombs were dropped, damaging a runway and an aircraft about to take off. Nil casualties.*

30 Aug 1941 [Halifax L9518](#) Squadron Leader Richard Bickford RAF

This aircraft of No. 76 Squadron based at RAF Middleton St. George was returning from the target at Frankfurt and, in the Finningley area, the engines began to suffer fuel starvation. One of the starboard engines failed at only 2,000 feet and, when one of the port engines also began to fail, the pilot ordered the crew to bail out.

One crew member's parachute failed to open in time, while the pilot failed to escape through the top escape hatch, probably being struck by a windmilling propeller and possibly with his parachute being caught in the aircraft tail. The aircraft crashed near Pocklington, burnt out and was written off. 2 fatalities.

1 Sep 1941 [Wellington W5535](#) Sergeant William Joseph Turner RAFVR

Shortly after take-off on a training sortie, and at 350 feet, the port engine caught fire which spread to the wing. The aircraft force-landed near Yapham [7] and the crew were able to escape, albeit with one being injured. The aircraft burnt out and was written off.

*No.458 Squadron RAAF formed at HOSM on 1 Sep 1941, initially flying Wellington Mk IV aircraft under the command of Wing Commander Mulholland DFC. The first 6 weeks were spent in training and taking delivery of their aircraft. The squadron was declared operational on 18 Oct 1941, with their first operational sortie being 2 days later.*

16 Sep 1941 [Hampden P4413](#) Pilot Officer Martin Patrick Loftus RAF

This aircraft of No. 106 Squadron based at RAF Coningsby in Lincolnshire was returning from the target at Hamburg and running low on fuel, so diverted to Pocklington. The aircraft lost height and a gear-up approach and landing was attempted, but it drifted off the flarepath, avoided the hangars, stalled (intentionally) and crashed, coming to rest astride the Barmby Moor to Pocklington road. The aircraft was seriously damaged and later written off [8].

18 Sep 1941 [Wellington W5492](#) Sergeant Ronald George Chandos RAFVR

The aircraft was above 5,000 feet on a photographic training flight and air test in the Pocklington area when the dinghy came away from its stowage and became entangled with the elevators. Parts of the empennage then broke off, the aircraft became uncontrollable and entered a steep dive, crashing near Northfield Farm, north of Pocklington [9].

All 8 crew died, including 1 supernumerary member, with 4 being buried at Barmby Moor.

*Although the [RAF Pocklington](#) article had discussed the shortfall in runway lengths at RAF Pocklington, as originally planned, it was not until 1 Oct 1941 that construction of the '4<sup>th</sup> runway' at RAF Pocklington commenced.*

13 Oct 1941 [Whitley Z9155](#) Sergeant Clive Gordon Lord RAAF

This aircraft of No. 58 Squadron based at RAF Linton-on-Ouse was returning from Nurnburg to land at Linton, but was diverted to Pocklington, ran out of fuel and crashed near Waplinton Hall near Allerthorpe [10]. All 5 crew were killed, 2 being buried at Barmby Moor, another at Pocklington cemetery.

17 Oct 1941 [Blenheim V5622](#) Sergeant Thomas Craig Bramley RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 54 Operational Training Unit (OTU) based at RAF Church Fenton was undertaking a night training flight. For unknown reasons, the pilot abandoned the aircraft but was killed on landing, the aircraft crashing 1 mile south of Everingham [11].

25 Oct 1941 [Wellington W5489](#) Pilot Officer L P Frizzle RCAF

The aircraft failed to attack the primary target at Frankfurt due to cloud cover but then bombed an alternative target at Shouwen Airfield, suffering flak damage to the wing fuel tanks, so returned and executed a landing at Pocklington.

However, the starboard engine then caught fire and the aircraft ran off the perimeter track, also causing a nearby pile of cans of phosphorus to catch fire. Despite the efforts of the fire crews, the aircraft burnt out, fortunately without injury to the aircrew.

24 Nov 1941 [Wellington Z1246](#) (Aircraft not manned)

The aircraft caught fire on the ground at HOSM and was destroyed, without injuries to personnel.

15 Dec 1941 [Wellington W5565](#) Squadron Leader John McCormack RCAF

The aircraft was being flown on a night training flight in the Pocklington area but, in poor visibility and rain, and with a strong crosswind, the aircraft veered off the runway on landing, coming to a halt in a barbed wire fence and with the landing gear collapsed. No casualties.

27 Dec 1941 [Wellington Z1272](#) Pilot Officer Kay Moore RAAF

This aircraft of No. 458 Squadron based at RAF HOSM was attacked by enemy aircraft en-route to the target at Dusseldorf with one fuel tank holed, a burst tyre, the hydraulics damaged and general damage at the rear of the aircraft. The bombload was jettisoned into the sea and the aircraft returned to base. 1 injured.

*No. 458 Squadron ceased operations at HOSM during January 1942 after it had been decided by Bomber Command that the squadron should be transferred to the Middle East, with the transfer finally taking place in March 1942.*

*The HOSM runways were extended in the winter and spring months of 1942 and not allocated a new squadron until the extensions were complete.*

6 Jan 1942 [Wellington Z8418](#) Pilot Officer Keith Frederick Thiele RNZAF

The aircraft failed to bomb the target at Cherbourg due to cloud cover and jettisoned the bombload. On return, the aircraft was in the airfield circuit at RAF HOSM but appears to have received both R/T communication to land at Pocklington and *also* a green Aldis lamp signal to land at HOSM. This was then countermanded by a red Aldis lamp signal but too late to be acted upon.

In the confusion, the aircraft landed at HOSM – but then collided with Wellington R1695, resulting in damage to both aircraft. A Court of Inquiry found that the crew of Z8418 were not to blame for the accident.

9 Jan 1942 [Wellington W5491](#) Sergeant William Kent Sloggatt RAAF

This aircraft from No. 104 Squadron based at RAF Driffield took off on a training sortie but the aircraft failed to gain height as the flaps had not been raised after take-off. The aircraft stalled near Tibthorpe Lodge Farm [12] and caught fire, with 2 crew being killed and another later dying of his injuries. 2 others were seriously injured; 1 other being slightly injured.

24 Jan 1942 [Wellington W5565](#) Unknown pilot

The aircraft was landing on a wet or frozen runway and the brakes proved ineffective. The aircraft overran the runway, resulting in Cat B/FA damage.

*On 26 Jan 1942, the Pocklington decoy airfield ('Q site') near Burnby was brought into operation (see map on page 30.)*

*During the period 29 Jan – 4 Mar 1942, while the airfield at RAF Driffield was undergoing repairs, No. 158 Squadron was temporarily detached to RAF Pocklington.*

11 Feb 1942 [Wellington Z8431](#) Sergeant Robert Neville Lonergan RAAF

The aircraft was being taxied towards the runway when the starboard main wheel became stuck in snow. With the engines at idle RPM, a groundcrew member in the aircraft got out and attempted to clear the snow but, in doing so, he backed into the rotating starboard

engine propeller and was struck on the head. Sadly, he later died of his injuries in Fulford Military Hospital, York.

26 Feb 1942 [Wellington Z8536](#) Flight Sergeant Reginald Francis Robb RCAF

This aircraft of No. 158 Squadron was on detachment from its parent base at Driffield. Shortly after takeoff at Pocklington, an engine caught fire. With the aircraft failing to gain height, the bombload was jettisoned at low level. Reportedly, in the ensuing explosion, the aircraft became uncontrollable and crashed near Yapham village [13], killing the crew, 4 of whom are buried at Barmby Moor.

28 Feb 1942 [Unidentified Halifax \(possibly Z8421\)](#) Unknown pilot

On landing, the aircraft ran into stones left on the runway by contractors. A tyre burst, the aircraft ground looped and the landing gear collapsed.

28 Feb 1942 [Oxford X6654](#) Pilot Officer Patrick William Percy RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 14 (Pilot) Advanced Flying Unit based at RAF Ossington in Nottinghamshire failed to gain height after take-off, stalled and crashed into a hedge near Towthorpe Lane Bridge, 1 mile west of Market Weighton [14]. The degree of damage was such that the aircraft was written off.

3 Mar 1942 [Wellington Z8441](#) Sergeant Denis Buckley Webb RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 158 Squadron was on detachment from its base at Driffield. Shortly after takeoff at Pocklington, the port propeller went into fine pitch which could not be corrected. After one attempted landing and successful overshoot in poor weather, the 4,000 bomb was jettisoned, the aircraft returned to the circuit but the port engine then failed, the aircraft rapidly lost height and crash landed a mile north of Pocklington [15], injuring 3 members of the crew. The aircraft damage was such that it was written off.

18 Mar 1942 [Wellington W5497](#) Flight Sergeant Frank Howard Mitchell RAAF

The aircraft returned to Pocklington to land after a combined night cross-country and photographic training exercise. The pilot miscalculated the approach and landed too fast, the aircraft overran the remaining runway and ran through a boundary hedge, one crew member being slightly injured. The aircraft damage was considerable and it was written off.

22 Mar 1942 [Wellington W5572](#) Unknown pilot

The aircraft landed heavily, a tyre burst and the landing gear collapsed. It is reported that the aircraft was repaired.

27 Mar 1942 [Unidentified Wellington](#) Unknown pilot

The aircraft landed heavily, a tyre burst, the aircraft veered off the runway and the landing gear collapsed.

4 April 1942 [Magister L8162](#) Squadron Leader John McCormack RCAF

The Magister was from RAF Pocklington Station Flight and was being flown on a general handling training flight by the B Flight Commander with the Station Navigation Officer. During aerobatics, the pilot lost control and the aircraft crashed about a mile west of the airfield [16], killing both crew.

The investigation concluded that, although a very experienced Wellington pilot, he was inexperienced on flying the Magister. Both crew were buried at Barmby Moor.

*No 405 Squadron converted from Wellington to Halifax Mk II aircraft in the period 18 Apr – 25 May 1942.*

9 Apr 1942 [Oxford AT651](#) Sergeant Ronald Arthur Elsom RAFVR

This aircraft of No. [1520 Beam Approach Training Flight](#) based at RAF HOSM landed with the landing gear having failed to lock down. The landing gear collapsed on landing but the degree of aircraft damage is not recorded.

23 Apr 1942 [Halifax R9427](#) Pilot Officer Harold Ernest Bedford RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 78 Squadron based at RAF Croft was being flown to RAF Pocklington to become a 405 Squadron aircraft. The aircraft crashed during an attempt to land in a strong crosswind, was badly damaged and was later written off. No casualties.

3 Jun 1942 [Oxford AT621](#) Sergeant Eric Armstrong Hooker RAFVR

This aircraft from No. 1520 Beam Approach Training flight based at RAF HOSM was undertaking a training flight when it veered off the runway on landing, ran into a deep ditch and overturned. Damage was such that the aircraft was written off.

24 Jul 1942 [Halifax W7769](#) Pilot Officer Robert Baker Albright RCAF

The aircraft returned from Duisburg and was in the circuit at Pocklington when the port outer engine suffered a coolant leak (which would not have been evident in the cockpit). The engine overheated and, with little prior warning, failed and caught fire.

It is suspected that the Flight Engineer – instead of cutting off the fuel supply to the burning port *outer* engine – had cut off the fuel cock supplying fuel to the port *inner* engine and which, being starved of fuel, then also failed.

Now under considerable asymmetric power, the aircraft yawed, the port wing dropped, the aircraft became uncontrollable and crashed into houses and the school in New Street, Pocklington [17]. All 8 crew members were killed (5 of whom were buried at Barmby Moor) but, fortuitously, there were no serious civilian casualties.

24 Jul 1942 [Halifax 'E' \(possibly W1112\)](#) Sergeant William Smith RAFVR

In preparing to land, the pilot was distracted by the fire from the Halifax W7769 crash recounted above. Although not confirmed, the aircraft may have had problems lowering

the landing gear as the Operations Record Books (ORBs) report it as having “crash landed on the edge of the runway with the landing gear retracted.” The degree of damage to the aircraft is not recorded. No casualties.

7 Aug 1942 [Halifax W7770](#) Flight Sergeant William Bradley Blizzard RCAF

The aircraft returned from the target at Duisburg but veered off the runway after landing, colliding with 2 parked Wellington aircraft, sustaining considerable damage and with 1 crew member injured.

7 Aug 1942 [Wellington DV451](#) and 1 other Nil crews

The 2 Wellington aircraft were parked on a dispersal which Halifax W7770 ran into (see previous report). Although Wellington DV451 sustained serious damage, it was reportedly repaired on site by a contractor's working party. There is no information on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wellington.

*On 7 Aug 1942, No. 405 (Vancouver) Squadron moved from RAF Pocklington to RAF Topcliffe.*

*Also on 7 Aug 1942, No. 102 (Ceylon) Squadron moved from RAF Topcliffe to RAF Pocklington, the first operational sorties being on 9 Aug 1942.*

16 Aug 1942 [Halifax BB197](#) Flight Sergeant John Fielding Wrench Towse RCAF

The 102 Squadron (Conversion Flight) aircraft was being flown solo for night flying practice. After landing, the aircraft veered to starboard, was over-corrected, the aircraft veered violently to port, performed a ground loop and the landing gear collapsed. The damage was probably substantial as the aircraft was written off. (E/FA).

*On 19 Aug 1942, No. 10 Squadron relocated from RAF Leeming to RAF Melbourne; however, as from 28 Aug 1942, they used RAF Pocklington as their operational base for the following 2 months. The first operational sorties from RAF Melbourne did not take place until 23 Oct 1942.*

2 Sep 1942 [Halifax W1248](#) Pilot Officer Harold Keith Stinson RCAF

The aircraft was returning from Saarbrücken with the starboard outer engine failed due to a coolant leak. Before a landing could be made at Pocklington, the remaining 3 engines failed due to fuel shortage. The aircraft crash-landed in a field near Low Catton, with the crew being uninjured [18]. The aircraft was written off, although the engines were recovered for re-use or as spares.

5 Sep 1942 [Wellington Z1671](#) Sergeant Percival John Povey Trotman RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 150 Squadron based at RAF Snaith was returning from the target at Bremen when an engine failed. The aircraft made a forced landing, reportedly near Hagg Bridge near Melbourne [19], with the rear of the aircraft breaking off. Damage was assessed as E2/FB and the aircraft was written off. 1 fatality, 2 injured.

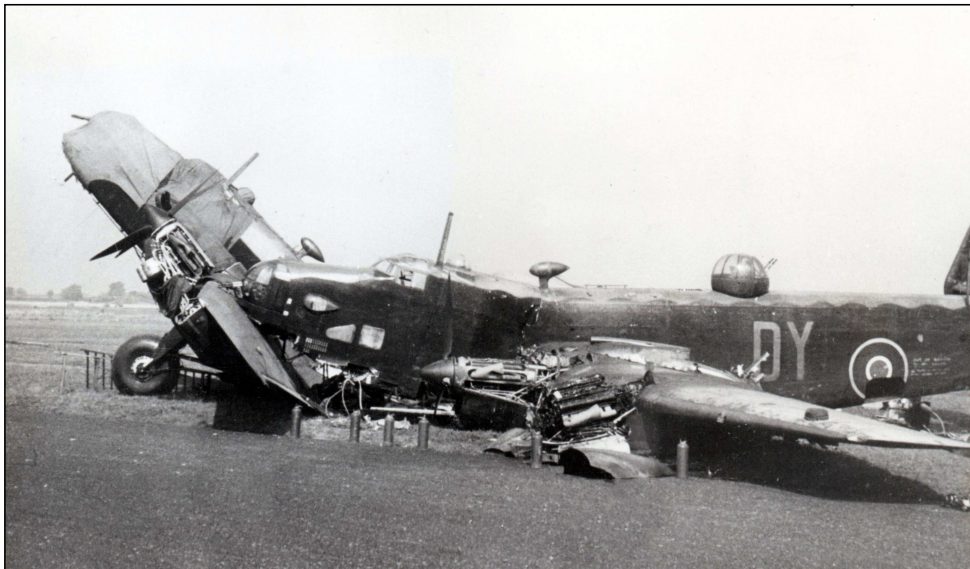
8 Sep 1942 [Halifax W1228](#) Flight Sergeant John Eric Nicholson RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 76 Squadron based at RAF Middleton St George had taken off for the target at Frankfurt but, some 20 minutes later, it exploded in the vicinity of Holtby, near York [20], with debris falling around the village. 7 fatalities, 3 of whom were buried at Barmby Moor. (The investigation showed that fuel from damaged fuel lines running across the fuselage floor had ignited, setting off a photo-flash in the bomb-bay and the bombload had exploded.)

9 Sep 1942 [Halifax R9449](#) Sergeant J B Robinson

The aircraft was returning from Frankfurt and, on landing, both port engines failed to respond to the throttles being closed. This caused the aircraft to veer off the runway, reportedly it 'bounced over Air Traffic Control' and came to a halt on top of a parked Halifax (W1239).

Both aircraft suffered broken backs and were written off. Remarkably and fortuitously, there were no injuries either to the crew of R9449 or the occupants of the Air Traffic Control building. (See also photo above right.)



17 Sep 1942 [Halifax W1276](#) Acting Wing Commander Wilfred Carter RAF

This No. 10 Squadron aircraft from RAF Melbourne was operating from Pocklington and returned early from the target at Essen with high fuel consumption and difficulty in climbing. The bombload was jettisoned into the sea but, on landing, the brakes were inoperative due to hydraulic system failure, the aircraft overran the runway, ran through the perimeter fence and came to rest on the main York-Hull road [21].

22 Sep 1942 [Tiger Moth T6434](#) Unknown pilot

This aircraft was badly damaged during an attempted landing near Providence Farm, Holtby [22], near York. Both occupants were injured. (The occupants may have been involved in the investigation into the crash of Halifax W1228 on 8 Sep 1942.)

24 Sep 1942 [Halifax DG219](#) Unknown pilot

This aircraft was being flown on a training flight by the No. 460 Squadron Conversion Flight when the aircraft veered on landing at RAF HOSM, ran into a ditch and the landing gear collapsed. The damage was assessed as being Cat. B/FA and was repaired on site.

*From 29 Sep 1942, No 101 Squadron relocated from RAF Stradishall to RAF HOSM and re-equipped with Lancasters, their first operation with Lancasters being on 20 Nov 1942.*

*No. 77 Squadron relocated from RAF Chivenor to RAF Elvington on 8 Oct 1942, with their first bombing operation being on 4 Feb 1943.*

13 Oct 1942 [Halifax W1167](#) Flight Sergeant James Leslie Hartshorn RAF

Outbound to the target at Kiel, the starboard outer engine failed, the rear turret became unserviceable and radio communications were lost. The pilot elected to return to base but the bombload could not be jettisoned and, during an attempt to overshoot, the overweight aircraft stalled and crashed, catching fire.

The crew managed to evacuate the aircraft uninjured before some of the incendiary bombs ignited. As a result of the crash and fire damage, the aircraft was written off.

13 Oct 1942 [Halifax DT546](#) Squadron Leader Archibald Ian Scott Debenham RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 10 Squadron based at RAF Melbourne bombed the target at Kiel but encountered heavy flak over the target, injuring the flight engineer. The aircraft returned safely to base but the flight engineer was hospitalised.

18 Oct 1942 [Halifax L9510](#) Sergeant Peter Anthony James Grant RAFVR

As the aircraft was about to land from a training flight, the pilot was distracted by his escape hatch blowing off, the aircraft veered off the runway and the landing gear collapsed. The extent of the damage was such that the aircraft was written off.

24 Oct 1942 [Halifax DT512](#) Wing Commander Sydney Bruce Bintley RAF

24 Oct 1942 [Halifax W1181](#) Flight Sergeant I L Berry

This tragic accident was due to human error on the part of a member of Air Traffic Control at the neighbouring airfield of HOSM. Halifax DT512 returned from Genoa with a burst tyre due to flak damage and with the starboard inner engine having failed.

It was unable to land at Pocklington and was diverted to HOSM, in poor visibility. Radio contact with HOSM air traffic control was lost but the pilot received a green signal flare and landed safely, although he was then unable to clear the runway because of the burst tyre.

Regrettably, Halifax W1181 was preparing to land shortly after and, with the pilot having also seen the green signal flare (but not Halifax DT512 until too late), presumed the flare was indicating permission for him to land. So he continued and, reportedly, “*landed on top of*” Halifax DT512, causing considerable damage to the latter’s nose area.



The degree of damage to Halifax DT512 was such that it was written off. The wireless operator was killed and the pilot (the Officer Commanding No. 102 Squadron, Wing Commander Bintley) later died of his injuries, both being buried at Barmby Moor. 2 other crew sustained injuries.

30 Oct 1942 [Halifax DT518](#) Sergeant Brian John Ketchell RAFVR

On take-off, the aircraft developed a swing which could not be corrected. The aircraft veered off the runway, the landing gear collapsed and damage was such that the aircraft was written off. Nil casualties.

2 Nov 1942 [Halifax L9565](#) Squadron Leader W I Lashbrook (Instructor)

During an aircraft conversion training flight, with several trainee pilots under instruction, the aircraft veered off the runway and the landing gear collapsed. (The pilot stated he was distracted by the closeness of the Air Traffic Control Tower – noting other accidents where aircraft narrowly avoided the ATC building: 9 Sep 1942 and 29 Aug 1943). The aircraft was written off.

3 Nov 1942 [Halifax L9584](#) Squadron Leader W I Lashbrook (Instructor)

On a training flight, with a trainee pilot Sergeant Grant probably at the controls, this No. 102 Squadron Conversion Flight aircraft veered off the runway on landing. The landing gear collapsed and the aircraft was written off. Nil casualties.

7 Nov 1942 [Halifax W7867](#) Flight Sergeant Leslie Jones Hampton RAFVR

This aircraft from No. 10 Squadron based at RAF Melbourne was en-route to the target at Genoa when the port outer engine failed. The bombload was jettisoned into the North Sea off Skegness and the aircraft returned to Melbourne. However, it made a heavy landing, crashed and burnt out, the crew being able to escape without serious injury.

7 Nov 1942 [Beaufighter X7698](#) Sergeant Michael Harold Griffith RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 25 Squadron based at RAF Church Fenton was in the local area when the port engine emitted sparks from a misaligned exhaust manifold, giving the impression that it was on fire. The fire extinguisher had no effect and the engine was shut down. The pilot attempted a single-engined landing at Pocklington but crashed beside Pocklington Canal near Bielby [23].

The navigator was thrown clear and hospitalised with burns and a broken pelvis, but the pilot was killed in the crash and was buried at Barmby Moor.

14 Nov 1942 [Halifax R9376](#) Sqn Ldr Edmund Keith Cresswell RAFVR (Instructor)

This aircraft from No. 10 Conversion Flight based at RAF Melbourne, with 3 trainee pilots, was taking off when the port outer engine propeller fell off, followed by the reduction gear, most of the engine and its cowling. The aircraft was force-landed in a field just beyond the airfield boundary with the landing gear down, but the landing gear collapsed and the aircraft was written off. No crew injuries.

21 Nov 1942 [Oxford ED138](#) Flight Sergeant Evans

This aircraft of No. 1484 (Bombing) Gunnery Flight based at RAF Leconfield landed at RAF Elvington but swung off the runway due to a crosswind and overturned, the 4 occupants being injured. Although the aircraft damage was assessed as being B/FA, it was repaired on site.

23 Nov 1942 [Halifax DG226](#) Pilot Officer Raymond Herbert Brooksbanks RNZAF

This aircraft of No. 10 Squadron based at RAF Melbourne attacked the target at Stuttgart but was then attacked by a JU88 nightfighter which damaged the wings, fuselage and tailplane. A subsequent attack by 3 FW190s was successfully evaded, with the aircraft descending to 3,000 feet and returning to base at extreme low level over France. The aircraft landed safely at base, albeit with branches embedded in the airframe. After landing, the main spar was found to have been damaged by a cannon shell. No crew injuries.

30 Nov 1942 [Halifax W7871](#) Flight Sergeant Edward John Wilmott RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 10 Squadron based at RAF Melbourne took off on a formation flying exercise, executed a steep turn shortly after take-off, stalled and crashed near Laytham Grange [24] and burnt out. 8 fatalities, 3 of whom were buried at Barmby Moor.

11 Dec 1942 [Halifax W7915](#) (no link available) Flying Officer N S Milnes

The target was at Turin but the aircraft had been damaged by enemy action and the bombload had been jettisoned. The aircraft was returning with 2 engines inoperative, landed at RAF Bradwell Bay and crashed into a Nissan hut. 1 crew injured.

12 Dec 1942 [Lancaster W4276](#) Squadron Leader David Anthony Reddick RAF

This aircraft of No. 101 Squadron based at RAF HOSM was returning from an operational sortie to Turin. The flaps did not fully lower prior to landing and the aircraft overran the runway into a ditch, causing the landing gear to collapse. The damage was assessed as Cat. B.

20 Dec 1942 [Halifax DT625](#) Flight Sergeant Allan Lord RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 77 Squadron based at RAF Elvington was conducting a circuit training exercise with 1 engine throttled back when the aircraft broke up in the air and crashed a mile south-east of Wheldrake village [25]. 6 fatalities.

20 Dec 1942 [Lancaster R5482](#) Flight Sergeant Roy Bowyer RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 101 Squadron based at HOSM was conducting an air test in poor visibility. The aircraft landed heavily which resulted in the landing gear collapsing. The crew escaped injury but the extent of the damage to the aircraft was such that it was written off (E/FA).

23 Dec 1942 [Lancaster W4312](#) Sergeant John Harvey Gillmore RCAF

This aircraft of No. 101 Squadron based at RAF HOSM returned to base in poor visibility following an air test. Several unsuccessful attempts were made to land and, eventually, the aircraft overran the runway, coming to rest in trees and barbed wire just outside the airfield boundary. There were no reported crew injuries but the aircraft was written off.

29 Dec 1942 [Halifax DT631](#) Flight Sergeant John Orr RAF

This aircraft from No. 77 Squadron based at RAF Elvington was completing a navigation, practice bombing and photographic flight. On return to Elvington, the aircraft stalled during

the final turn towards the runway (thought to be due to an engine failure) and crashed near Dunnington village [26]. 7 fatalities, 1 being buried at Barmby Moor.

4 Jan 1943 [Halifax DT555](#) Sergeant Gwilym Beynon Ellis RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 77 Squadron based at RAF Elvington was taking off on a training flight when, during the take-off run, the pilot lost control (no details available) and the aircraft crashed. The damage was such that the aircraft was written off.

4 Jan 1943 [Halifax L9569](#) Flt Lt Sidney James Brownlee Hamilton RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 1658 Heavy Conversion Unit based at RAF Riccall was undertaking a circuit-training sortie at RAF Melbourne when the starboard engine caught fire (due to a glycol leak), the fire spreading to the wing. The instructor took control and effected a safe landing but, after landing, the fire spread and the aircraft was badly damaged.

The aircraft blocked the runways and operational sorties planned for that night had to be cancelled. No injuries were recorded but the aircraft was written off.

10 Jan 1943 [Unidentified aircraft and registration number](#) Unknown pilot

Corporal Edward Dodds RAFVR, a member of the airfield staff or ground crew at Pocklington, was crossing one of the runways when he was struck on the head by a rotating propeller, being killed instantly.

15 Jan 1943 [Halifax DT506](#) Sergeant Bruce Thomas Brett RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 51 Squadron based at RAF Snaith was returning from the target at Lorient but was diverted to land at Pocklington due to poor weather. The flap controls had failed, the aircraft overran the runway and the landing gear collapsed. The aircrew escaped without serious injury but the aircraft was badly damaged and written off.

3 Feb 1943 [Halifax BB194](#) Sergeant John Noel Willoughby RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 1658 Heavy Conversion Unit based at RAF Riccall was conducting a night flying practice exercise at RAF Melbourne. The aircraft bounced on landing, then flew into the ground some 500 yards from Melbourne airfield. Damage was such that the aircraft was written off. The pilot suffered serious head injuries with the remainder of the crew escaping with less serious injuries.

11 Feb 1943 [Halifax W7879](#) Sergeant Harold Edward Richard Saunders RAFVR

Some 30 minutes after take-off, the port outer engine failed and was feathered. The aircraft returned towards base but, although the pilot instructed that the bombload should be jettisoned, this was not done. During the recovery to Pocklington, the aircraft was turned to port – i.e. towards the failed engine – which resulted in side-slip and loss of height.

The aircraft became uncontrollable and crashed near North Dalton [27]. Only one crew member escaped, albeit being injured and hospitalised; the remaining 7 crew members were killed, of which 6 were buried at Barmby Moor.

14 Feb 1943 [Halifax W7922](#) Pilot Officer Harold Keith Stinson RCAF

The aircraft was waiting to take off when an electrical short circuit caused the incendiary bombs to be jettisoned into the bomb bay (bomb doors closed). A fire developed and, although the aircrew escaped, the fire could not be extinguished and the aircraft was destroyed.

15 Feb 1943 [Wellington HE153](#) Flight Sergeant William Richard Martin RAAF

This aircraft of No. 466 Squadron based at RAF Leconfield was returning from the target at Cologne but difficulty in operating the fuel cocks resulted in the usable fuel contents running low, the engines cutting out, the aircraft losing height, striking trees in the grounds of Warter Priory and crashing [28]. The air gunner was killed with the other 4 crew being seriously injured. The aircraft suffered severe damage and was written off.

17 Feb 1943 [Lancaster ED374](#) Pilot Officer Howard George Harrower RCAF

This aircraft of No. 101 Squadron based at RAF HOSM was hit by flak over the target at Lorient. The controls were badly damaged and the rudders and elevators were jammed. The aircraft crashed short of the runway, caught fire and burnt out. The crew managed to exit the aircraft safely with the assistance of groundcrews, but the pilot and engineer were injured,

26 Feb 1943 [Halifax DT779](#) Warrant Officer James Livingston Lee RCAF

During the take-off run, an engine failed just before lift-off. The aircraft veered, the landing gear collapsed and the aircraft was badly damaged. The aircrew escaped but the aircraft was written off.

2 Mar 1943 [Halifax R9426](#) Sergeant Edward Wright Saywell RNZAF

This aircraft from the No. 1652 Heavy Conversion Unit based at RAF Marston Moor was undertaking a night solo flying practice, landed heavily at Pocklington, veered off the runway and the landing gear collapsed. The pilot escaped but the aircraft sustained serious damage and was written off.

5 Mar 1943 [Halifax R9392](#) Sergeant George Henry Sutton RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 1658 Heavy Conversion Unit based at RAF Riccall was conducting a training flight involving a practice landing at RAF Melbourne where the aircraft bounced on the port wheel, then the starboard wheel, and the landing gear collapsed. Whether the crew were injured is not recorded but the aircraft was written off.

10 Mar 1943 [Halifax W1039](#) Sergeant Geoffrey Francis Peck RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 10 Squadron based at RAF Melbourne was being ferried to another airfield when, shortly after take-off, the port outer engine failed and the propeller was feathered. The pilot turned towards the failed engine, the aircraft stalled and crashed 1 mile west of Seaton Ross [29], killing the crew. 2 buried at Barmby Moor.

12 Mar 1943 [Halifax DT789](#) Flight Sergeant George Alexander Vinish RCAF

This aircraft of No. 10 Squadron based at RAF Melbourne bombed the target at Essen but received flak damage to the tail fins, rear turret, bomb doors and starboard outer engine, with the rear gunner suffering serious injuries. The aircraft was safely recovered to base but the rear gunner was hospitalised.

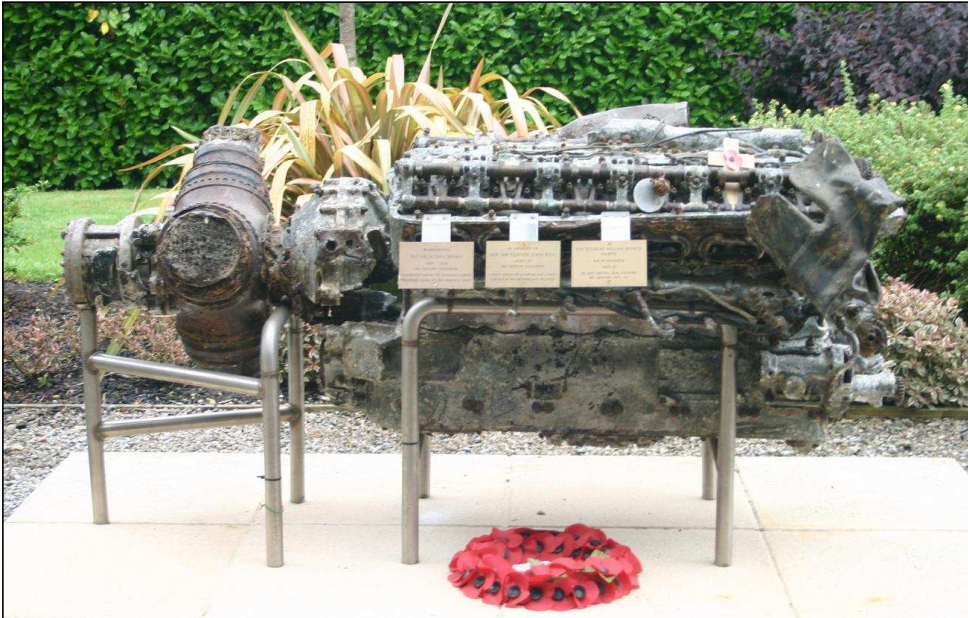
18 Mar 1943 [Halifax JB849](#) Flight Lieutenant Frederick Kitchener Bainbridge RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 77 Squadron based at RAF Elvington was on a training flight and veered on landing. The landing gear collapsed; damage being such that the aircraft was written off.

29 Mar 1943 [Halifax JB848](#) Warrant Officer William Phelps Comrie RCAF

After take off, the aircraft either passed through the slipstream of an aircraft from RAF Melbourne, or the pilot took collision-avoidance action. Whatever the root cause, the aircraft then stalled, turned on its back and crashed near Thirsk Mill on West Green in Pocklington [30]. All 7 crew were killed but, fortunately, there were no injuries to civilians. 3 of the crew were buried at Barmby Moor.





*Recovered engine and memorial to crew at crash location dated 29<sup>th</sup> March 1943*

3 Apr 1943 [Lancaster W4923](#) Squadron Leader William Cowan Ollason RAF

This aircraft of No. 101 Squadron based at RAF HOSM bombed the target at Essen but, during the return in the Amsterdam area, was damaged by flak which killed one of the gunners and seriously injured another. The aircraft was able to recover to base.

3 Apr 1943 [Halifax JB867](#) Squadron Leader John Everard Hadfield Marshall RAF

The aircraft attacked the target at Essen but was then held in a cone of searchlights. The pilot took evasive action, bringing the aircraft down to 5,000 feet and with the aircraft being hit several times by flak. The rear gunner was seriously injured and died before the aircraft returned and landed safely. (There is some doubt as to whether this was at Pocklington or a nearby base.)

13 Apr 1943 [Lancaster ED807](#) Sergeant Thomas Fee RAFVR

This aircraft from No. 101 Squadron based at RAF HOSM took off for an operational sortie to the target at Spezia but the port outer engine failed after take-off, the bombload being jettisoned off Flamborough Head.

During the approach to land, the aircraft stalled and crashed near Bursea [31], killing all the crew, 1 of whom was buried at the churchyard in Holme-on-Spalding Moor.

27 Apr 1943 [Lancaster W4833](#) Sergeant Thomas Craig Cunningham RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 101 Squadron based at RAF HOSM bombed the target at Duisburg but was then struck by incendiary bombs which damaged several areas of the aircraft, with fire breaking out near the flare chute and the pilot temporarily losing control of the aircraft. Control was regained and the fire extinguished but, in the confusion, the flight engineer and bomb aimer were presumed to have believed the aircraft was out of control and bailed out, becoming POWs.

The aircraft returned to base, with the airframe damage being categorised at Cat Ac (repairable on-site by another unit or contractor), and with damage to one engine being categorised as Cat B.

5 May 1943 [Halifax JB867](#) Flying Officer Alan Gibson RAFVR

During take-off for a training flight, the aircraft veered off the runway and the landing gear collapsed. The damage was such that the aircraft was written off.

5 May 1943 [Lancaster ED776](#) Flight Sergeant Francis James Kelly RAAF

This aircraft from No. 101 Squadron based at RAF HOSM undershot the runway on landing and crashed into the direction finding building. The crew were uninjured but the aircraft was badly damaged.

11 May 1943 [Halifax BB380](#) Sergeant Augustine Brannigan RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 77 Squadron based at RAF Elvington was taking off on a training flight when it veered off the runway, continued through a boundary hedge and the landing gear collapsed. The damage to the aircraft is unknown.

13 May 1943 [Halifax HR695](#) Pilot Officer Graham Thomas Beveridge RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 10 Squadron based at RAF Melbourne was en-route to the target at Bochum when, between Cologne and Dusseldorf, it was caught by searchlights and the pilot initiated evasive action. During a flak burst, the aircraft became out of control and descended to 7,000 feet before control was regained. It then appeared that the mid-upper gunner had bailed out. With the aircraft again having been caught by searchlights, the pilot took further evasive action and ordered the bombload to be jettisoned.

The aircraft was then attacked by 2 JU88 nightfighters which damaged the port tailplane, elevator, rudder and a fuel tank. The pilot took further evasive action and the aircraft eventually returned safely to base. Having bailed out, the mid-upper gunner did not survive.

13 May 1943 [Halifax JB865](#) Flying Officer Thomas Archibald RAAF

This aircraft of No. 77 Squadron based at RAF Elvington was returning from the target at Duisburg but, in conditions of poor visibility, it diverted to RAF Pocklington. However, the aircraft crashed near High Bellthorpe Farm, Bishop Wilton [32], killing 2 crew (the pilot being buried at Barmby Moor) and injuring the remainder.



2 Jun 1943 [Halifax DG300](#) Squadron Leader Michael William Renaut RAFVR

The aircraft was on a dual, daytime training flight and made a practice landing at Pocklington but stalled and crash-landed near Spring House Farm, a mile west of Pocklington, with 1 crew member sustaining injuries [33].

12 Jun 1943 [Halifax JB864](#) Flight Lieutenant George Francis Henry Ingram RAFVR

The aircraft was in the target area at Dusseldorf when it was damaged by flak on the fuselage and 3 fuel tanks. Despite the damage, the aircraft was able to return to the UK (possibly diverting to the south of England. One crew slightly injured.

*No. 101 Squadron moved from RAF HOSM to RAF Ludford Magna on 15 Jun 1943.*

*On 16 Jun 1943, No. 76 Squadron flying Halifaxes relocated from RAF Linton-on-Ouse to RAF HOSM, their first operational sortie from HOSM being on 19 Jun 1943.*

18 Jun 1943 [Halifax DG421](#) Flying Officer Kenneth Arthur Clack RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 1663 Heavy Conversion Unit based at RAF Rufforth was undertaking a night training sortie, including circuits and landings at Pocklington. At one point, the aircraft veered off the runway and the landing gear collapsed.

Apart from the instructor pilot, 2 trainee pilots were also onboard and, presumably, changed places as the flight progressed, but who was at the controls is not recorded.

25 Jun 1943 [Halifax JB850 \(possibly JB852\)](#) Flight Sergeant Ernest James Clinch RAF

This aircraft of No. 77 Squadron based at RAF Elvington was heading to the target at Wuppertal when the bomb bay was damaged by flak, causing a fire. The bombload was jettisoned and the pilot (who was injured by the flak burst) safely recovered the aircraft to base before being admitted to hospital.

29 Jun 1943 [Halifax DK151](#) Sergeant Walter Philling Ward RAFVR

This aircraft from No. 76 Squadron based at RAF HOSM was en-route to the target at Cologne when it was attacked by an enemy aircraft with the navigator being wounded. The aircraft was able to return safely to base.

10 Jul 1943 [Halifax DK176](#) Sergeant Kenneth Hewson RCAF

This aircraft of No. 76 Squadron based at RAF HOSM encountered engine problems on returning from the target at Gelsenkirchen. The aircraft crash-landed at base and was badly damaged, although the degree of damage is not recorded and no injuries were reported.

13 Jul 1943 [Halifax DK175](#) Flight Lieutenant Leif Woodrow Hulthin RCAF

This aircraft of No. 76 Squadron based at RAF HOSM was taxiing for take-off to the target at Aachen when the landing gear collapsed. The aircraft caught fire and was destroyed, although the crew managed to escape.

25 Jul 1943 [Halifax DK205](#) Flight Lieutenant Colin McTaggart Shannon RAAF

This aircraft of No. 76 Squadron based at RAF HOSM was en-route to the target at Hamburg but the port inner engine became unserviceable with low oil pressure and black smoke emitted from the exhaust. The sortie was abandoned, the aircraft returned to base but crashed on landing. It is presumed there were no injuries and the extent of damage to the aircraft is not recorded.

25 Jul 1943 [Halifax JD320](#) Sergeant Dennis Arthur Robert King RAAF

This aircraft of No. 77 Squadron based at RAF Elvington took off on an operational sortie but, some 10 mins after take-off, both starboard engines failed. The aircraft struck trees and crash-landed in a cornfield near Skipwith [34]. The crew escaped with the assistance of members of a nearby anti-aircraft unit, only 3 crew suffering minor injuries, but the aircraft caught fire, the bombload exploded and the aircraft burnt out.

26 Jul 1943 [Halifax DK148](#) Flight Lieutenant Colin McTaggart Shannon RAAF

This aircraft of No. 76 Squadron based at RAF HOSM was over the target at Essen when one of the propellers detached and hit the fuselage. An order to the crew to bail out resulted in one of the gunners exiting the aircraft and becoming a POW. However, the bail-out order was rescinded and the aircraft returned to base, where it crash-landed. The degree of damage to the aircraft and whether the remainder of the crew were injured is not recorded.

1 Aug 1943 [Halifax HR698](#) Warrant Officer Richard Jennings Kennedy RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 10 Squadron based at RAF Melbourne was conducting a night training exercise when it veered on landing and the landing gear collapsed. Damage was such that the aircraft was written off.

3 Aug 1943 [Halifax DT792](#) Flying Officer John George Jenkins RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 10 Squadron based at RAF Melbourne was en-route to the target at Hamburg when it was attacked and damaged by a JU88 nightfighter. The aircraft was recovered to base but the landing gear collapsed on landing and was further damaged. No injuries were reported and, although the aircraft was originally declared as Cat B/FB (operational loss), it was subsequently declared Cat E and written off.

6 Aug 1943 [Halifax JD412 \(no link available\)](#) Sergeant Keith George McAlpine

The aircraft was on a training flight, overran the runway on landing and hit an obstruction. The crew were uninjured but the degree of damage is not recorded.

7 Aug 1943 [Halifax W1141](#) Sergeant Ernest Armitage Brown RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 77 Squadron based at RAF Elvington was on a training flight and making a 3-engined landing (probably for practice) when it veered off the runway and crashed. The degree of aircraft damage is unknown.

10 Aug 1943 [Halifax JB794](#) Flight Sergeant Alan Everard Storey RAFVR

The aircraft developed a problem with the port outer engine en-route to the target at Nuremburg so returned to Pocklington. On the approach to land, a second engine failed, the aircraft lost height and struck 'Red House' at the junction of Yapham Road and Garths End in Pocklington and directly on the extended centreline of the runway. The aircraft lost a wheel and propeller and crashed after a further 60 yards (300 yards east of the airfield) [35].

2 crew were killed in the crash, a third later died of his injuries in Fulford Hospital and a fourth was subsequently permanently paralysed.

11 Aug 1943 [Halifax DK245](#) Sergeant Stephen John Troake

This aircraft from No. 76 Squadron based at RAF HOSM was en-route to the target at Nuremburg when it was hit by flak at Saarbrücken, damaging the port outer engine and fatally injuring the 2<sup>nd</sup> pilot. The aircraft either returned safely to base, or diverted to RAF Ford.

11 Aug 1943 [Halifax DK131](#) (no link available) Sergeant E E Rogerson

This aircraft of No. 76 Squadron based at RAF HOSM returned early from a raid on Nuremburg due to navigation problems. The aircraft crashed on landing and was written off. Whether or not the crew were injured was not recorded.

16 Aug 1943 [Oxford AT620](#) Pilot Officer Peter Burrough Percival RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 1520 Beam Approach Training Flight based at RAF HOSM was undertaking a training flight when the starboard engine failed. The aircraft was force-landed with the landing gear retracted, sustaining Cat. B damage which, however, was repaired on-site by a contractor's working party.

17 Aug 1943 [Halifax JD370](#) Warrant Officer V McKinley

Immediately after take-off, this aircraft of No. 78 Squadron based at RAF Brighton suffered a failure of the constant speed drive unit of the port inner engine. The aircraft force-landed in a field near Willow Garth, Bubwith [36] and was badly damaged. Apart from the pilot who was injured, the remaining crew escaped without injury.

19 Aug 1943 [Oxford DF409](#) Flight Sergeant Cedric John Charles Hickman RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 1520 Beam Approach Training flight based at RAF HOSM was on the approach to the airfield when the starboard engine failed. The aircraft was force-landed just outside the airfield boundary with the landing gear retracted. The aircraft was repaired on-site by a contractor's working party.

23 Aug 1943 [Halifax JD127](#) Wing Commander Stanley Jackson Marchbank RAF

During take-off, both port engines lost power and the pilot was unable to prevent the aircraft from veering off the runway. As it was heading for the Air Traffic Control building, the landing gear was raised intentionally to bring the aircraft to a halt.

However, fire broke out and the aircrew evacuated the aircraft via the escape hatches, one crew member sustaining injuries.

The bombload exploded shortly thereafter and nearby buildings (especially Air Traffic Control) were damaged, fortunately without injury to ground personnel. (Further details are given on page 6 of the '[RAF Pocklington](#)' article.)

24 Aug 1943 [Halifax DK241](#) Pilot Officer Wilfred Eric Elder RNZAF

This aircraft of No. 76 Squadron based at RAF HOSM was returning from the target at Berlin when it crashed, with 2 crew slightly injured and admitted to York Military Hospital. Details of the circumstances of the crash, the location and the extent of the damage are not recorded.

28 Aug 1943 [Halifax JB365](#) (no link available) Flight Sergeant K A Heaton

The aircraft was damaged by flak over the target at Nuremburg, with the navigator being killed. The aircraft made an emergency landing at RAF Tangmere.

29 Aug 1943 [Halifax DT702](#) Flying Officer Alan Gibson RAFVR

The aircraft returned to Pocklington following an air test and, on landing, was affected by very strong crosswinds. A particularly strong gust caused the aircraft to drift off the runway onto wet grass and it headed towards the Air Traffic Control building.

As a precaution (see the similar accident to Halifax JD127 on 23 Aug 1942), a trench had been dug in front of the building and the trench did its intended job, removing the landing gear and stopping the aircraft before it hit the building.

*(Note: This was the third similar incident, the 1<sup>st</sup> being on 2 Nov 1942 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> being on 23<sup>rd</sup> Aug 1943 listed above. All 3 incidents put the aircrews and occupants of Air Traffic Control and the adjacent Fire Station at risk, so a decision was made to replace both buildings with others on the northern boundary of the airfield c. 1944, as recounted on page 6 of the [RAF Pocklington](#) article.)*

31 Aug 1943 [Halifax JD 111](#) Pilot Officer James Bowman RAFVR

This occurrence is listed as a loss as, although the aircraft landed safely at Pocklington, it had been inadvertently damaged by being fired upon by the air gunners of another Halifax while en-route to or from the target at Munchen Gladbach and, after assessment, the damage was considered sufficiently serious that the aircraft was written off.

31 Aug 1943 [Halifax DK193](#) Flt Lt Reginald Arthur Montague Lemmon RAFVR

This aircraft from No. 76 Squadron based at RAF Holme-on-Spalding-Moor was taking off on an operational sortie to the target at Munchen Gladbach when a tyre burst, causing the aircraft to veer off the runway. Fire broke out but, fortunately, the crew were able to escape before the bombload exploded, destroying the aircraft.

4 Sep 1943 [Halifax V9989](#) Flight Sergeant Edgar Thomas Bridson Vicary RAAF

This aircraft of No. 1658 Heavy Conversion Unit based at RAF Riccall was conducting circuit training at RAF Melbourne when it veered off the runway. Damage was such that the aircraft was written off.

5 Sep 1943 [P47 Thunderbolt 41-6262](#) Willard D Hamilton USAAF

The pilot of this USAAF aircraft of the 83<sup>rd</sup> Fighter Squadron based at RAF Duxford lost control of the aircraft, bailed out and the aircraft crashed some 3 miles south of Melbourne [37].

17 Sep 1943 [Halifax HR919](#) Warrant Officer Edward Morgan Cartwright RAF

The aircraft was returning from the target at Modane but flew into high ground at Bishop Wilton Wold and was badly damaged [38]. The bomb aimer died of his injuries and the pilot suffered head injuries.

18 Sep 1943 [Halifax DG400](#) Sergeant Wareham John Pasco RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 1663 Heavy Conversion Unit based at RAF Rufforth was undertaking a training flight. The aircraft landed heavily at HOSM, bounced, stalled and fell back onto the runway. The damage was such that the aircraft was written off.

1 Oct 1943 [Halifax HX180](#) Sergeant W Hennys

The aircraft was undertaking a training flight from Pocklington but, with the starboard outer engine losing power, a precautionary landing was being undertaken at RAF Elvington where the aircraft bounced, stalled, veered off the runway and was badly damaged.

2 Oct 1943 [Mosquito DD738](#) Sergeant Herbert Anthony Hay RAFVR  
[Mosquito HJ713](#) Pilot Officer Thomas Patrick Quinn RCAF

These aircraft of No. 25 Squadron based at RAF Church Fenton were in the Pocklington local area, conducting an air-to-air firing training exercise (using the gun cameras) when they collided, one breaking up and crashing near Sandhill Farm, 500 yards south-west of Market Weighton, the other being uncontrollable and crashing on the adjacent Holme Road [39]. Both pilots and their navigators were killed.

3 Oct 1943 [Halifax JD276](#) Flight Sergeant William Anderson Miller RAAF

The aircraft undertook a night cross-country training flight and returned to land at Pocklington. However, the aircraft overshot and, in a low level circuit at only 100-150 feet, lost height (probably due to the flaps not having been retracted, causing additional drag) and crashed near Hayton [40]. 4 crew were killed (3 being buried in Pocklington Burial Ground), the remaining 3 crew shortly dying of their injuries at the Military Hospital in Fulford, York.

3 Oct 1943 [Halifax JD162](#) Sergeant Ernest Armitage Brown RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 77 Squadron based at RAF Elvington was returning from an attack on the target at Kassel which was due to a port outer engine failure. During the 3-engined landing, in a

crosswind, the aircraft veered off the runway and the landing gear collapsed. The degree of aircraft damage is not recorded.

4 Oct 1943 [Halifax JD467](#) Flight Sergeant Noel McPhail RAAF

This notable occurrence is listed as, although the aircraft landed safely, with no injuries to the crew, the port inner engine lost a propeller blade on the approach to land, the severe vibrations caused the engine to break away, fall from the aircraft and damage the propeller of the port outer engine which was then shut down.

The subsequent landing, with only 2 operating engines and in the potentially-dangerous, fully asymmetric condition, demanded a very high level of skill of the pilot who was awarded a DFM.

The extent of aircraft damage is not recorded but, from the photograph, may well have been repairable.



9 Oct 1943 [Halifax HX163](#) Pilot Officer Robert Cameron RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 10 Squadron based at RAF Melbourne bombed the target at Hannover but was damaged by flak and possibly bombs released from a higher aircraft. Although the aircraft was recovered safely to Melbourne, the extent of damage was such that the aircraft was written off.

20 Oct 1943 [Halifax BB370](#) Flight Sergeant Kenneth Herbert Whittington RCAF

The aircraft was on a night flying exercise but, on landing, overran the runway and ran through a ditch, with the landing gear collapsing. The damage was such that the aircraft was written off.

3 Nov 1943 [Halifax LK681](#) Flight Lieutenant James Steele RAFVR

This aircraft from No. 76 Squadron based at RAF HOSM was undertaking several tests, including an aircraft test and gun firing tests, when it crashed between Moneypot Hill Farm and Lair Grange Farm, some 2 miles north-east of Market Weighton [41]. 4 crew were killed but 3 survived the crash, albeit seriously injured and, sadly, all succumbed shortly afterward, 1 being a passenger, Miss Dorothy Robson BSc, a leading figure in bombsight development.

3 Nov 1943 [Halifax JD385](#) Squadron Leader Edgar Charles Badcoe RAFVR

This aircraft from No. 77 Squadron based at RAF Elvington was badly damaged by an ME110 nightfighter as it reached the target at Dusseldorf. Although with one engine unserviceable, the crew pressed home the attack and were able to recover safely to base. However, the extent of the aircraft damage was such that a repair was deemed unwarranted and the aircraft was written off.

3 Nov 1943 [Halifax LK949](#) Lieutenant Fridtjov Saeverud Giortz RNoAF

This aircraft of No. 76 Squadron based at RAF HOSM was attacked by fighters after bombing the target at Dusseldorf and sustained substantial damage. An order was given to prepare to abandon the aircraft, but 2 crew members mistakenly bailed out, while the rear gunner was badly wounded in the leg which had to be amputated. Although the aircraft returned to base and landed safely, the damage was such that it was written off.

3 Nov 1943 [Halifax HR921](#) Flight Lieutenant Jack Hewson Trobe RAAF

This aircraft of No. 10 Squadron based at RAF Melbourne was en-route to the target at Dusseldorf when it was attacked and badly damaged by a nightfighter. The bombload was jettisoned and the aircraft safely returned to base. However, 3 crew were injured during the attack and the aircraft damage was such that it was written off.

19 Nov 1943 [Halifax JD303](#) Flight Sergeant R G Wilding RAFVR

The aircraft was en-route to the target at Leverkusen but was damaged by flak. The aircraft returned safely to base but 1 crew member was injured, probably seriously.

19 Nov 1943 [Halifax \(possibly JD469\)](#) Flight Lieutenant B H Phillips

On the return from the target at Leverkusen, the aircraft overran the runway and ran into a ditch, with the landing gear collapsing.

20 Nov 1943 [Halifax DG234](#) Flight Sergeant Frank Lovatt RAFVR  
[Halifax DK205](#) (not manned)

Aircraft DG234 from No. 1663 Heavy Conversion Unit based at RAF Rufforth was on a night training flight, encountered bad weather with heavy rain, missed the runway at HOSM and landed on a dispersal area, colliding with an aircraft of No. 76 Squadron, DK205. Both aircraft were badly damaged.

20 Nov 1943 [Oxford AT619](#) Sergeant James Routledge Coulter RAAF

This aircraft of No. 1520 Beam Approach Training Flight based at RAF HOSM was on a training flight using the beam approach procedure but in thick fog. During the approach to land, the beam receiver failed to operate correctly and the aircraft bounced, left the runway and overturned. Both the pilot and pupil pilot were injured.

22 Nov 1943 [Halifax LW333](#) Pilot Officer Walter Hughes RAFVR  
[Halifax LW264](#) Flight Sergeant Cornelius Charles Lineham RAFVR

This tragic incident involving 2 aircraft resulted in the loss of both aircraft and crews. Halifax LW333 was in the landing circuit at Pocklington, awaiting clearance to land, when it collided with Halifax LW264 of No. 77 Squadron in the landing circuit of its base at neighbouring RAF Elvington.

Although the 2 aircraft should have been at different heights, clearly this was not the case and, sadly, 'blind spots' prevented the crews seeing each other in time to take effective collision-avoidance action. Both aircraft fell 500 yards from each other onto land near Newlands Farm, Barmby Moor [42]. (40 years later, 14 oak trees were planted near the farm in memory of the aircrews.)

26 Nov 1943 [Halifax HX188](#) (*no link available*) Pilot Officer H A Dick RAF

The aircraft was en-route to the target at Stuttgart but was attacked by a nightfighter several times over a period of 20 mins. Despite violent evasive manoeuvring, the aircraft was badly damaged and the mid-upper gunner was killed, but the pilot managed to retain control and brought the aircraft back to the UK, diverting to an airfield in southern England.

26 Nov 1943 [Halifax HR804](#) Sergeant John Westlake Symonds RAFVR

On return to the Pocklington circuit awaiting landing clearance, in poor visibility, the aircraft crashed in an area of high ground near Warter Priory [43]. 3 aircrew were killed (the pilot being buried at Pocklington graveyard); the remaining 4 crew survived the crash, although the degree of their injuries is not recorded.

27 Nov 1943 [Halifax LW267](#) Pilot Officer James Osmond Rivers Webster RAFVR

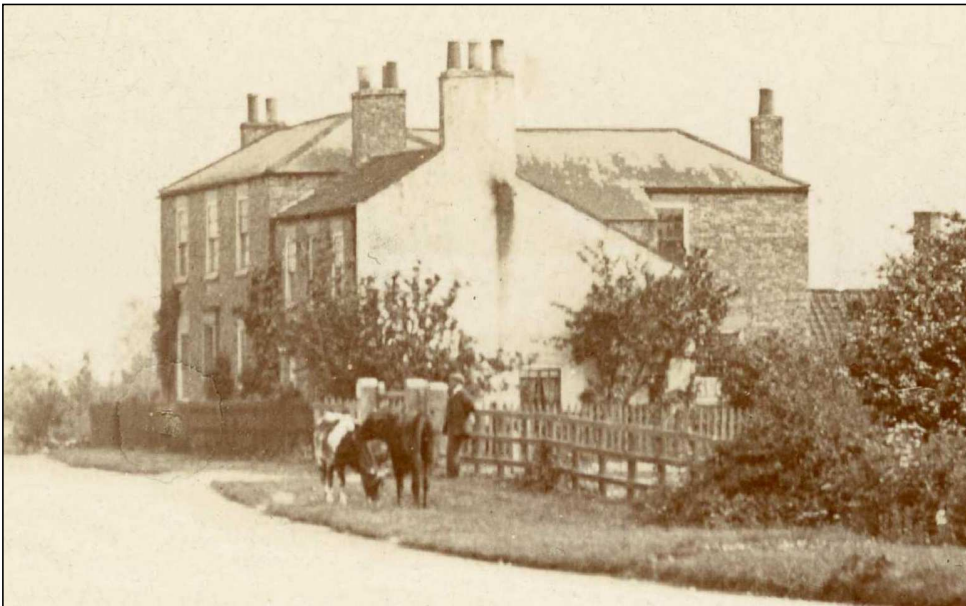
This aircraft from No. 77 Squadron based at RAF Elvington was attacked by an enemy aircraft in the Koblenz area. Despite being severely damaged, the aircraft returned and landed safely, but damage was such that the aircraft was written off.

27 Nov 1943 [Lancaster ED393](#) Pilot Officer Joseph Watson Thompson RAFVR

This Lancaster of No. 50 Squadron based at RAF Skellingthorpe in Lincolnshire was returning to its base from the target at Berlin but, due to thick fog, was diverted to RAF Melbourne which had the Fog Investigation and Dispersal ('[FIDO](#)') System installed, although the aircraft was then further diverted to Pocklington, also in poor visibility.

While flying in the Pocklington landing circuit, the aircraft lost height, clipped trees at the rear of the 'Wellington Oak Inn' at Canal Head (1 mile south of Pocklington town), then clipped

the adjacent 'Red House Farm', crossed the main road (now the A1079) and crashed into the innkeeper's residence at Canal Head Inn (not to be confused with the 'Wellington Oak'), badly damaging the house and a section of the Inn [44].



(Early photo above c. 1905 showing the Canal Head Inn and innkeeper's residence; cf. post-WW2 photo below showing 'modified' property, now a private residence.)



5 of the crew and 2 civilians at Canal Head were killed, with 2 crew and 1 civilian seriously injured. See also: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/53/a6040153.shtml>

27 Nov 1943 Lancaster DV336 Pilot Officer Kenneth James Mears RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 619 Squadron based at RAF Woodhall Spa in Lincolnshire was returning from the target at Berlin when it was diverted to RAF Pocklington due to very poor visibility at base and then re-diverted to RAF Elvington. The aircraft made several attempts to land at Elvington before crashing near Noah's Ark Farm, some 500 yards south of the airfield [45]. It is thought that 1 or more bombs remaining in the aircraft then exploded, killing all 7 crew.

27 Nov 1943 [Lancaster DV335](#) Flying Officer Philip Alexander Buttar RCAF

This aircraft, again from No. 619 Squadron based at RAF Woodhall Spa and returning from the target at Berlin, was also diverted north due to very poor visibility and attempted to land at RAF Elvington. In the event it hit a tree and crashed in a nearby field, severely damaging the aircraft, although the crew survived the crash.

27 Nov 1943 [Lancaster JA961](#) Pilot Officer Douglas Reginald Toovey RAAF  
[Lancaster DV377](#) Pilot Officer Edward Charles Weatherstone RAFVR

These aircraft of No 50 Squadron based at RAF Skellingthorpe in Lincolnshire returned from their target at Berlin but were diverted to RAF Melbourne due to poor visibility. JA961 landed first, missed the active runway and was bogged down in soft ground off the runway.

DV377 then landed, also missed the active runway due to the poor visibility, collided with an RAF van and then collided with JA961.

The damage to both aircraft was such that they were written off. Both crews survived, but, sadly, the van driver was killed.

27 Nov 1943 [Lancaster JB597](#) Flight Sergeant Sidney Albert Edwards RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 630 Squadron based at RAF East Kirby in Lincolnshire was returning from the target at Berlin and was diverted to RAF HOSM because of very poor visibility at its base. The aircraft crashed in the undershoot at HOSM with the runways not being visible. No crew injuries were reported and the extent of damage to the aircraft is not recorded.

27 Nov 1943 [Halifax DK167](#) Major John Magne Stene RNoAF

On return from the target at Stuttgart, this aircraft from No. 76 Squadron based at RAF HOSM attempted to land in fog, struck a direction finding building and crashed. The crew were not seriously injured and whether the aircraft was written off is not reported.

22 Dec 1943 [Halifax JN949](#) Flight Lieutenant Arthur Hilton RAFVR

The aircraft was taking off to conduct an engine air test following an engine unserviceability reported the previous night. However, the aircraft crashed (presumably on the runway). Details of why the engine failure had not been resolved, why the aircraft failed to take-off and the degree of resulting damage to the aircraft is not recorded.

7 Jan 1944 [Halifax DG417](#) Sergeant Hubert Hedley Wastell RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 1663 Heavy Conversion Unit based at RAF Rufforth landed at Pocklington on a training flight, but the aircraft veered off the runway and came to rest in a field near the airfield. The damage was found to be such that the aircraft was written off.

20 Jan 1944 [Halifax LL128 \(no link available\)](#) Flight Sergeant H Smith

This aircraft from No. 77 Squadron based at RAF Elvington was taking off on an operational sortie to the target at Berlin but veered off the runway and crashed. The crew were uninjured. The degree of aircraft damage is not recorded.

21 Jan 1944 [Halifax LK630](#) Flight Sergeant Eric Firth RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 76 Squadron based at RAF HOSM took off on an operational sortie to Magdeburg but, shortly after take-off, the aircraft began to vibrate severely. The pilot ordered the crew to abandon the aircraft (1 injured), but he remained at the controls, attempted to crash-land ½ mile north of Hotham [46] and was killed in the crash.

29 Jan 1944 [Halifax DK245](#) Flight Sergeant William Barlow Ward RAF

This aircraft of No. 76 Squadron based at RAF HOSM took off on an operational sortie to Berlin but lost power, failed to climb and struck trees near the airfield. 2 of the crew died in the crash and others sustained injuries. Whether the aircraft was written off is not recorded but, from the report, may not have been repairable.

7 Feb 1944 [Halifax DK192](#) Flight Lieutenant Alfred John Shirley Hodson RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 1663 Heavy Conversion Unit based at RAF Rufforth was undertaking a daytime training flight when, while flying in low cloud, struck the top of Garrowby Hill near Bishop Wilton [47]. The crew included an additional, trainee pilot.

6 crew died in the crash and, although the 7<sup>th</sup> managed to escape from the burning aircraft, he died of his injuries shortly after in hospital in York. A civilian driver of a milk lorry was also killed in the crash.

8 Feb 1944 *Unidentified Halifax (no link available)* *Unknown pilot*

This aircraft of No. 1663 HCU based at RAF Rufforth veered off the runway at RAF Pocklington during a 3-engined landing and the landing gear collapsed.

11 Feb 1944 *Unidentified Halifax (no link available)* Flt Sgt Dennis A Eaton RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 76 Squadron based at RAF HOSM crashed on take-off for a non-operational flight and caught fire. The crew escaped injury but the aircraft was considerably damaged in the fire.

20 Feb 1944 [Halifax JN919 \(no link available\)](#) Flight Sergeant A H E Welch  
The target was at Leipzig but the aircraft returned to base before reaching the target, having been damaged by flak and with the wireless operator having been wounded.

*As from February 1944, No. 76 Squadron based at HOSM converted from the Halifax Mk V to the Mk III variant, their first operational sorties with the Mk III being on 24 Feb 1944.*

1 Mar 1944 [Halifax LW636](#) Flight Sergeant James Leonard Richards RCAF

The aircraft took off for the target at Stuttgart and climbed away from RAF HOSM but, having reached around 600 feet above ground, stalled, lost height and crashed a mile north-west of the airfield [48], igniting the bombload of incendiaries and killing the crew.

The crash investigation found that a left-hand flat spin had developed following the stall and the aircraft struck the ground with negligible forward speed. 7 fatalities.

*As from March 1944, No. 10 Squadron based at RAF Melbourne converted from the Halifax Mk II to the Mk III variant. No. 10 Squadron's first operational sortie with the Mk III was to Frankfurt on 22/23 March 1944.*

26 Mar 1944 Halifax LL234 (*no link available*) Flight Sergeant K Jury

This aircraft from No. 77 Squadron based at RAF Elvington returned from the target at Courtrai but, during the landing, the landing gear collapsed. The crew were uninjured but the extent of the damage to the aircraft is not recorded.

17 Apr 1944 Halifax LW322 (*no link available*) Flight Lieutenant P B Jackson

The aircraft veered off the runway on take-off, the landing gear collapsed and the port outer engine caught fire. The crew were uninjured but the degree of damage is not recorded.

(This aircraft was the 3<sup>rd</sup> of 12 detailed for a 'Gardening' mine-laying operation. 2 aircraft in the stream took off but then LW322 blocked the runway, preventing the remainder from taking off.)

23 Apr 1944 [Halifax LV916](#) Flight Sergeant Charles Cliffe Owen Hood RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 78 Squadron based at RAF Brighton was undertaking an air test but, shortly after take-off, crashed to the south of Sutton-on-Derwent [49]. The circumstances leading to the crash are not recorded. 6 of the crew were killed, the rear gunner being seriously injured.

27 Apr 1944 Halifax LV863 (*no link available*) Plt Off. Geo. Martin Burcher RAAF

The target was the marshalling yards at Aulnoye but this aircraft of No. 10 Squadron based at RAF Melbourne veered off the runway on take-off and came to a stop with a broken back. The crew were uninjured but (although not recorded) presumably the aircraft was written off.

7 May 1944 Halifax LW138 (*no link available*) Flying Officer J H Rank

During a non-operational sortie, an overshoot on 3 engines was being demonstrated (with the starboard outer engine feathered), when the starboard inner engine failed. The aircraft crash-landed in a field. There were no casualties but the degree of aircraft damage is not recorded.

*As from May 1944, No. 102 Squadron at RAF Pocklington converted from the Halifax Mk II to the Mk III variant, their first operational sorties being on 15/16 May 1944 (see details in Part 1).*

*Also from 16 May 1944, the aircraft of No. 77 Squadron moved from RAF Elvington to RAF Full Sutton, using a mix of Mk V and Mk II variants, followed by their conversion to the Mk III variant. Their first operational sorties with the Mk III at Full Sutton was on 1/2 Jun 1944.*

*Also from May 1944, No. 346 Squadron (FFAF) formed at RAF Elvington, initially using the Halifax Mk V variant. They then converted to the Mk III variant, their first operational sorties being on 25 Jun 1944.*

5 Jun 1944 Halifax NA511 (*no link available*) Pilot Officer C S Baldwin

This aircraft of No. 77 Squadron based at RAF Full Sutton crashed on take-off on an operational sortie to the target at Maisy, with all crew members being injured. The degree of aircraft damage is not reported.

8 Jun 1944 [Halifax MZ701](#) Pilot Officer Gordon Leslie Hyde RAAF

This aircraft of No. 77 Squadron based at RAF Full Sutton was undertaking a night training exercise. Whilst climbing after take-off, an engine failed, as did the pilot's instruments.

Control was lost and the aircraft crashed near Elvington village, with several RAF and French Air Force personnel from RAF Elvington attempting to rescue the crew from the ensuing fire, sadly without success [50]. 5 of the crew died in the crash, with the pilot and 1 air gunner being rescued, both dying of their injuries in York Military Hospital.

14 Jun 1944 Halifax MZ289 (*no link available*) Pilot Officer A H Munroe RAAF

The aircraft was damaged by flak en-route to the target at Evrecy. With the intercom system unserviceable, the navigator misunderstood the pilot's instructions and bailed out. He was uninjured and, being over allied held territory, was able to make his way back to Pocklington a few days later.

*A second FFAF unit, No. 347 Squadron, became operational at RAF Elvington on 20 Jun 1944, initially using the Halifax Mk V variant. They then converted to the Mk III variant and commenced its first operational sorties using that variant on 18 Jul 1944.*

23 Jun 1944 [Halifax LW620](#) Squadron Leader Robert George West RCAF

This aircraft of No. 76 Squadron based at RAF HOSM was returning from the target at Laon and was about to join the landing circuit at base but crashed near Hotham [51], killing the crew.

24 Jun 1944 Halifax MZ648 (*no link available*) Flying Officer Peter Bailey

The aircraft was over the target at Noyelles when 3 engines were hit by flak and the pilot and flight engineer were slightly wounded. The aircraft diverted to RAF Ford. 2 injured, 5 uninjured.

25 Jun 1944 Halifax MZ752 (*no link available*) Sqn Ldr John Owen Cecil Kercher

The aircraft was returning from the target at Montorguell but, on landing in poor visibility, overran the runway. The degree of aircraft damage is not recorded and the crew were uninjured. (This was only the second daylight operation by No. 102 Squadron since August 1942, the first being on 24<sup>th</sup> June 1944.)

4 Jul 1944 Halifax MZ771 (*no link available*) Pilot Officer A J Crabb

After attacking the V1 site at Domlege, the aircraft was damaged by heavy flak on the fuselage, wings and starboard inner engine, with the mid-upper gunner slightly wounded. The aircraft was able to return to base. 1 injured.

13 Jul 1944 [Halifax NA551](#) Capitaine J Gaubert FFAF (navigator)  
Lieutenant R Pasquier FFAF (pilot)

*(According to French Air Force custom, the aircraft captain was the senior-ranking crew member, not necessarily the pilot).*

This aircraft of No. 346 Squadron based at RAF Elvington was returning from the target at Hautes-Buissons, France, and was in the circuit at Elvington awaiting its turn to land when it collided with Halifax NA546, also in the landing circuit. Control of NA551 was immediately lost and it crashed near Dunnington, York [\[52\]](#), killing the crew. (See next listing.)

13 Jul 1944 [Halifax NA546](#) Capitaine Jules Roy FFAF (bomb-aimer)  
Lieutenant J Gronier FFAF (pilot)

Halifax NA546 – also from No. 356 Squadron based at RAF Elvington and returning from the target at Hautes-Buissons, France – had probably hit NA551 (see previous listing) with a wing and damaged a propeller, causing severe vibrations. The aircraft captain ordered the crew to bail out and he and the rear gunner successfully did so. However, the pilot was able to reduce the vibrations by feathering the damaged engine, countermanded the order to bail out and was able to land safely. No injuries.

13 Jul 1944 [Halifax HR748](#) Sergeant Richard John Philip Barrell RAFVR

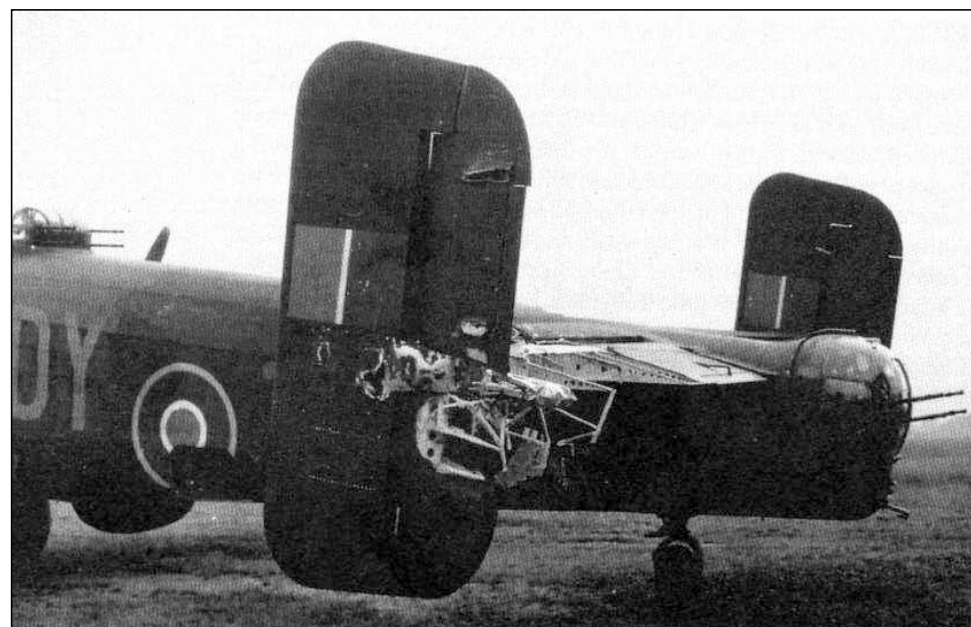
This aircraft of No. 1652 Heavy Conversion Flight based at RAF Marston Moor was undertaking a navigation training flight when the starboard outer engine began running rough and was shut down. The aircraft was flying over the Yorkshire Wolds, partly covered by low cloud and, with the crew believing they were over lower ground, the aircraft height was reduced and it crashed between North Dalton and Huggate [\[53\]](#). 2 crew were killed in the crash with a third dying of his injuries the following day.

25 Jul 1944 [Halifax MZ745](#) (*no link available*) Flight Lieutenant James Weaver RCAF

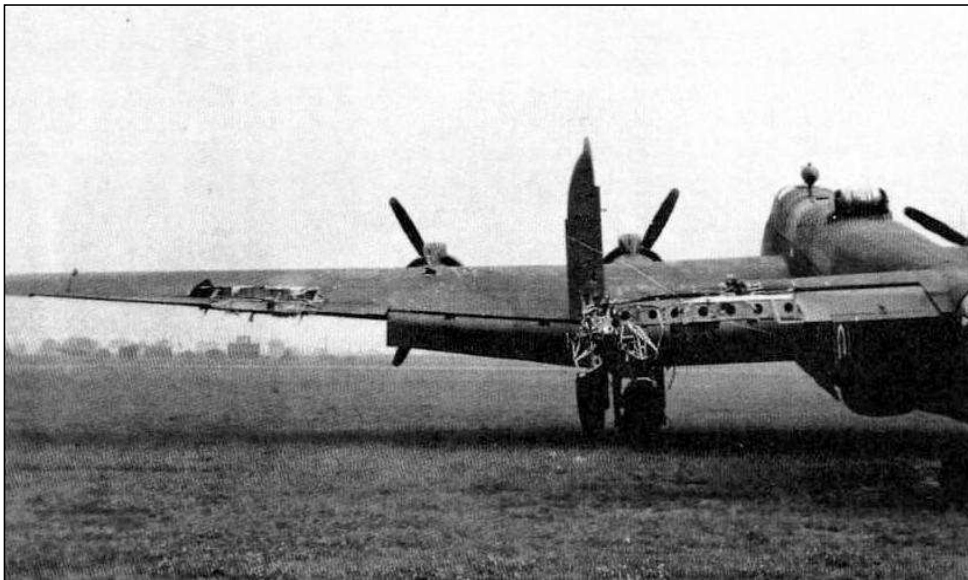
Shortly after returning from the target at Stuttgart, the aircraft was attacked by a Junkers 88 nightfighter which was shot down by the rear gunner, although the tail assembly and port wing had been damaged by cannon shells and with a port engine on fire. Although the fire was extinguished, the damaged engine, plus the damage to the port fin, rudder, elevators and aileron resulted in the aircraft being able to maintain height but not climb. The aircraft was then again attacked both from ahead and below. The aircraft was eventually recovered to base and landed, the aircraft performing a ground loop due to a shot out tyre. Despite these many tribulations, the crew were uninjured. (*See photos at right and on page 24.*)

28 Jul 1944 [Halifax LW169](#) (*no link available but the ORB suggests the registration number was LW142*) Flight Lieutenant William ('Bill') F Rabbit

The target was at Forêt de Nieppe and there are conflicting accounts as to whether the aircraft completed its bombing run, or whether the bombload hung up and was later jettisoned over the North Sea. Whichever account is correct, the aircraft was hit by flak over Ostend, damaging the fuselage, wings and nose, injuring 2 crew, 1 seriously.







*Further damage photos of entry for Halifax MZ745 dated 25 Jul 1944 (page 23)*

The aircraft diverted to the USAAF base at Great Ashfield where there was a surgical field hospital. The injured crew members recovered from their injuries.

3 Aug 1944 Halifax MZ830 (*no link available*) Flt Sgt Robert Richard Mitchell RAAF

The aircraft was returning from the target at Forêt de Nieppe but overran the runway on landing. The degree of aircraft damage is not recorded (although not written off) and the crew were uninjured.

8 Aug 1944 Halifax HX343 (*no link available*) Flt Sgt Ronald George Thorne RAAF

This aircraft of No. 10 Squadron based at RAF Melbourne suffered a control failure on take-off for an operational sortie against the V1 base at St. Philibert Ferme. The aircraft overran the runway and suffered severe damage so (although not recorded) presumably was written off. The crew were uninjured.

11 Aug 1944 *Unidentified Halifax (possibly MZ371) (no link available)* Flying Officer Albert Henry Munroe RAAF

The aircraft was taking off on an operational sortie to the marshalling yard at Somain when the port inner engine failed. The take-off was aborted and the aircraft overran the runway. The degree of aircraft damage is not recorded and the crew were uninjured.

10 Sep 1944 [Halifax NA585](#) Lieutenant Colonel Gaston Venot FFAF

This aircraft from No. 346 Free French Air Force Squadron based at RAF Elvington was returning from the target area at Octeville, France, with at least one 1,000lb bomb still on board. On landing at Elvington, the bomb was shaken loose and fell onto the runway where it detonated, destroying the aircraft. 6 fatalities, 1 seriously injured.

12 Sep 1944 Halifax LL555 (*no link available*) Flight Sergeant V G Fitt

The target was at Munster. The aircraft was damaged by flak and the bomb aimer was badly wounded. The aircraft diverted to RAF Woodbridge in Suffolk.

12 Sep 1944 Halifax MZ797 (*no link available*) Flt Lt William Forsyth Rabbitt RAAF

The aircraft was damaged by flak over the target at Münster and also by incendiaries dropped from an aircraft flying 1,000 feet above the formation (reportedly not a rare occurrence). The incendiaries damaged the tailplane and fuselage, with one finishing inside the fuselage. Fortunately, it did not explode and was pushed out of the aircraft by a crew member. Despite the damaged tailplane, the pilot managed to return to Pocklington, albeit with great difficulty, and execute a safe landing. However, the damage was such that the aircraft was written off. Crew uninjured.

15 Sep 1944 Halifax MZ526 (*no link available*) Sgt Herbert Dilley Throssell RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 76 Squadron based at RAF HOSM took off on an operational sortie to Kiel but the aircraft lost height soon after take-off, crashing in a field near the airfield. The crew managed to escape from the aircraft but 3 suffered severe burns. The aircraft was destroyed.

9 Oct 1944 Halifax MZ770 (*no link available*) Flight Sergeant A Crompton

The aircraft was hit by flak and attacked by a nightfighter in the target area at Bockum, being badly damaged and with the wireless operator being injured. The aircraft was recovered to the UK and diverted to RAF Manston in Kent.

15 Oct 1944 Halifax LV908 (*no link available*) Plt Off Ron. Stanley Bishop RNZAF

This aircraft of No. 10 Squadron based at RAF Melbourne was heavily damaged by flak while attacking the target at Wilhelmshaven. On return to Melbourne, with the mainplane and starboard landing gear damaged, the starboard wheel fell off when the landing gear was lowered for landing, so the aircraft belly-landed. The damage was such that the aircraft was written off.

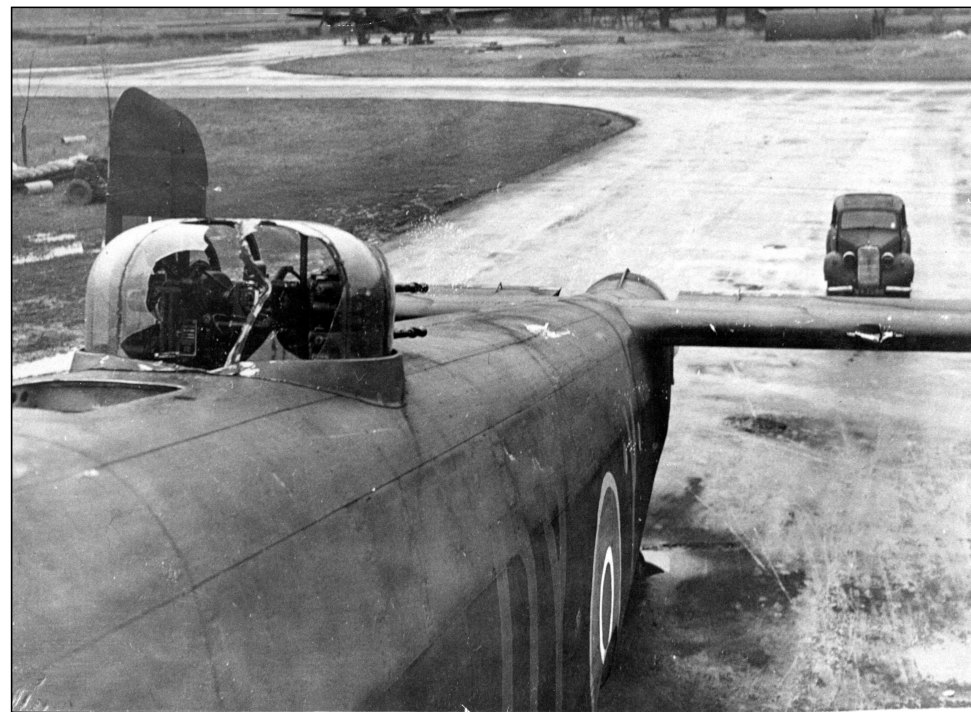
31 Oct 1944 Halifax NA599 (*no link available*) Sqn Ldr Arthur Henry Jarand RAF

The aircraft was struck and damaged by incendiaries dropped from an aircraft flying above (see similar report dated 12 Sep 1944 but evidently not a rare occurrence). 2 crew members were injured but the aircraft landed back safely at Pocklington. (*See also photo above-right.*)



21 Nov 1944 Halifax NR187 (*no link available*) Warrant Officer E W Fogg

The aircraft returned early from the target at Sterkrade after a port engine failed soon after take-off. The bombload was successfully jettisoned but, on landing, the aircraft overran the runway, the landing gear collapsed and the aircraft came to rest straddling the main Pocklington-York main road, blocking the road for several hours [54].



9 Dec 1944 Halifax MZ800 (*no link available*) Squadron Leader L J Ward

On landing on a dual instruction flight, the aircraft struck a boundary hedge, the landing gear collapsed and the tail wheel was torn off. Whether the damage was repairable is not recorded.

22 Dec 1944 Halifax NA267 (*no link available*) Flying Officer Bernard Yates RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 10 Squadron based at RAF Melbourne suffered a hydraulics failure after take-off on an operational sortie to the target at Bingen so the bombload was jettisoned and the aircraft returned to Melbourne. On landing, the aircraft overran the runway and crashed, the degree of damage being such that the aircraft was written off, although the crew escaped uninjured.

24 Dec 1944 [Halifax 'K'](#)

As part of a raid where 45 V1 rockets were air-launched against Manchester by Heinkel HE111 bombers, one landed well short but, fortuitously, landed in a gravel pit alongside Back Lane, Barmby Moor, where it exploded. Several civilian properties were badly damaged however, and there were some slight injuries. The Halifax parked on an adjacent hardstanding was badly damaged and written off [55]. (*See also 'RAF Pocklington' article and map on p26.*)



28 Dec 1944 [Halifax NA174](#)

This aircraft of No. 347 Free French Squadron based at RAF Elvington was being loaded with bombs when one of the bombs being winched into position was dropped and exploded, resulting in 4 more bombs exploding in the course of the next 5 minutes. Tragically, there were 13 fatalities, 5 injured (all FFAF groundcrew).



29 Dec 1944 [Halifax MZ426](#) (*no link available*) Flight Lieutenant W H Russell

The aircraft was hit by heavy flak en-route to the target at Koblenz, injuring the navigator. The aircraft was recovered to the UK and diverted to RAF Manston in Kent.

1 Jan 1945 [Halifax LW158](#) Pilot Officer Maxwell Owen Langham RAAF

On return from an operational sortie to Dortmund, the aircraft was the last of 11 to land at Pocklington but the tailwheel failed to lock down. On the fourth attempt to land, the aircraft struck a tree, then a house at Riverhead ('Canal Head') some 700 yards from the runway, became embedded in a hedge and burst into flames. The pilot was seriously injured but the bomb aimer was killed in the crash [56]. 1 fatality, 6 injured.



1 Jan 1945 [Halifax LV785](#) Flying officer J Charles Winter RAF

This aircraft from No. 10 Squadron took off from its base at RAF Melbourne to attack a coking plant at Dortmund but, shortly thereafter, the starboard outer engine failed and caught fire. The fire was extinguished by the fire extinguisher system, the crew aborted the operational task, jettisoned the bombload into the North Sea and returned to Melbourne. However, the initial approach to land was too high and, during the subsequent overshoot and climb, the starboard inner engine also failed.

With both starboard engines now failed, the pilot was forced to restrict the power on the 2 port engines to maintain directional control but was unable to maintain height and elected to attempt a forced landing near Laytham Grange close to the airfield [57], with the aircraft catching fire.

Both air gunners were killed in the crash, one being buried in Pocklington cemetery. The remaining 5 crew were injured but, aided by several civilians, were rescued.

2 Jan 1945 [Halifax NR186](#) Flight Lieutenant James Robert Marvin RCAF

The aircraft returned to Pocklington from the target at Ludwigshaven, possibly in poor visibility, and landed some distance down the runway. The aircraft overran the runway and, although the pilot attempted to turn the aircraft to avoid a ditch at the Canal Lane end of the runway, the aircraft crashed through it, the landing gear collapsed and the aircraft was badly damaged. Although not reported, the aircraft was probably written off.

2 Jan 1945 [Halifax MZ335](#) Flight Sergeant Derrick William Muggeridge RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 77 Squadron was either taking off or had just taken off from its base at RAF Full Sutton to the target at Ludwigshaven when warning lights for the port outer and starboard inner engines illuminated. An attempt was made either to abort the take-off or to crash-land from very low level. After the aircraft came to a halt, beyond the runway, fire broke out. The crew escaped unharmed but the extent of the damage to the aircraft is not recorded.

13 Jan 1945 [Halifax MZ321](#) Wing Commander John Douglas Richard Forbes RAF

This aircraft from No. 77 Squadron based at RAF Full Sutton took off on an operational sortie to Saarbrücken but, as the aircraft lifted off, the starboard outer engine caught fire. It proved impossible to feather the propeller and shut down the engine, while the fire extinguisher had no effect.

The bombload was jettisoned over farmland but, when the fire began to spread to the airframe, the aircraft was force-landed in a field a mile north-east of Stamford Bridge, coming to rest in the River Derwent [58]. Remarkably, the crew were uninjured.

22 Jan 1945 [Halifax LW438](#) Capitaine Roger Martin FFAF

This aircraft of No. 346 Squadron based at RAF Elvington was taking off on an operational sortie to Gelsenkirchen when it veered off the runway and ran through a hedge. The landing gear collapsed but the extent of the damage to the aircraft is not recorded.

3 Feb 1945 [Spitfire BL848](#) Warrant Officer John Noel Willoughby RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 1689 Bomber Defence Flight based at RAF HOSM (normally used for fighter affiliation sorties with the bombers) landed too far down the runway at RAF Elvington, overran the runway, overturned and stopped in soft ground. The pilot was slightly injured.

21 Feb 1945 [Halifax NP950](#) Flight Lieutenant W R McEvoy

The starboard inner engine failed on the return flight to Pocklington from the Rhenania Ossag oil refinery at Reisholz, Dusseldorf. The aircraft landed in poor visibility, overran the runway and ran into a ditch. The aircraft was badly damaged and not repaired, so is presumed to have been written off. Nil casualties.

4 Mar 1945 [Halifax NR179](#) Flying Officer Alan Percy William Shelton RAAF

This aircraft of No. 466 Squadron based at RAF Driffield (having moved from RAF Leconfield to RAF Driffield on 3 Jun 1944) was returning from the target at Kamen and in the circuit waiting to land when it was attacked and shot down by enemy intruders ('[Operation Gisela](#)'), reportedly near Gill's Farm, Fridaythorpe. 3 of the crew bailed out but the remainder were killed.

4 Mar 1945 [Halifax NR235](#) Lieutenant Jean Marie Bernard Louis Terrien FFAF

This aircraft from No. 347 Squadron was returning and close to its base at RAF Elvington when it was attacked by a Luftwaffe Ju88 intruder ('[Operation Gisela](#)'), setting the Halifax on fire.

The crew was ordered to abandon the aircraft which they did without injury but, sadly, when the pilot attempted to abandon the aircraft, the aircraft became uncontrollable, he was unable to escape and was killed in the crash near Glebe Farm in Sutton-on-Derwent [59].

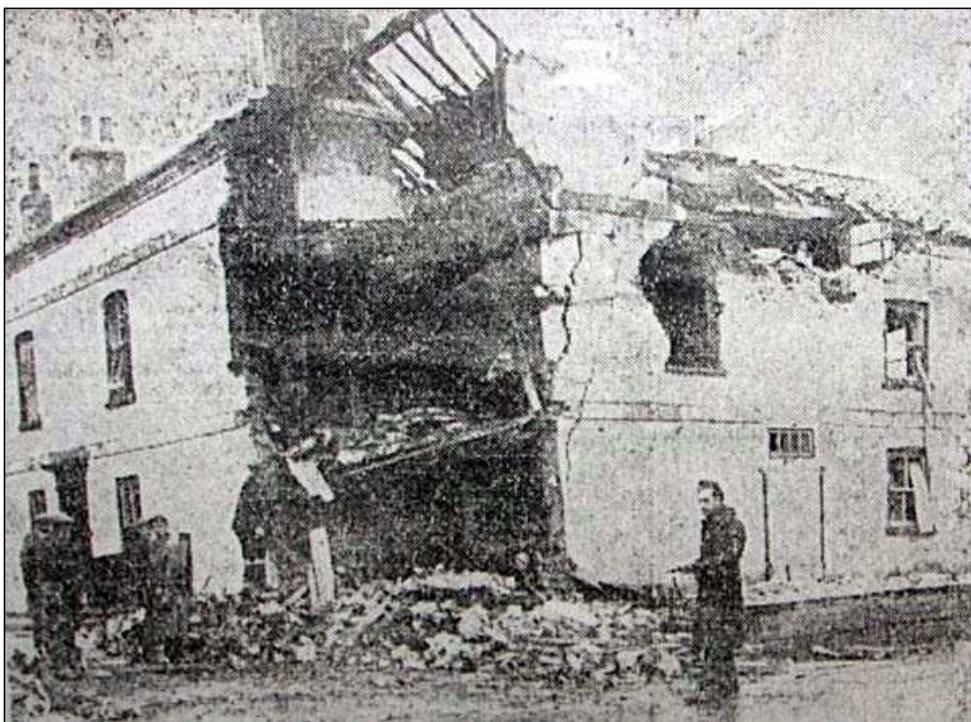
See also [The Yorkshire Museum](#) account.

4 Mar 1945 [Junkers Ju88 D5+AX](#) Hauptman Johann Dreher

This JU88 nightfighter was taking part in '[Operation Gisela](#)', intercepting British aircraft on their return from the target at Kamen in Germany. The JU88 had already attacked at least 1 Halifax in the RAF Elvington circuit (possibly NR235 listed above) and, reportedly, was attacking a taxi on the Elvington village to York road near the RAF Elvington runway.

However, the JU-88 clipped a tree, then the corner of Dunnington Lodge, crashing onto the road and disintegrating, killing the crew and seriously injuring 3 occupants of the Lodge [60], all of whom subsequently died. 7 fatalities (4 German Air Force; 3 UK civilians).

(See photos of Dunnington Lodge and memorial plaque on page 28.)



19 Mar 1945 [Halifax RG501](#) Flying Officer B E Marsh RAF

This aircraft from No. 77 Squadron based at RAF Full Sutton was taking-off for the target at Witten when the left wheel left the runway and the landing gear collapsed, the damage being such that the aircraft was written off.

21 Mar 1945 [Halifax RG541](#) Flying Officer Ronald Henry Louis Kerslake RAF

This aircraft from No. 77 Squadron was based at RAF Full Sutton. There are 2 different accounts of the accident, arguably the more likely being that the starboard outer engine failed during the landing approach from a test flight in poor visibility and, although the aircraft touched down on the runway, it may then have overrun into a ditch and with the landing gear collapsing. The damage was such that the aircraft was written off.

24 Mar 1945 [Halifax RG438](#) Warrant Officer D C Rogers RCAF

There is some doubt on the detailed circumstances/date/time of this accident but it appears that this aircraft of No. 10 Squadron based at RAF Melbourne veered off the runway either on take-off or landing (possibly on a non-operational sortie), ran over the 'FIDO' installation (or struck a concrete block) and the landing gear may have collapsed. In any event, the damage to the aircraft was such that it was written off.

7 Apr 1945 [Halifax RG592](#) Sous-Lieutenant Paul Gridelet FFAF

This aircraft of No. 346 Squadron based at RAF Elvington was on a non-operational sortie. The aircraft veered during a heavy landing and the landing gear collapsed, damaging the main spar.

9 Apr 1945 [Halifax MZ361](#) Flight Lieutenant I B Jackson RCAF

This aircraft of No. 78 Squadron based at RAF Brighton was returning from the target at Hamburg and crossed the coast at Robin Hoods Bay, Yorkshire, in poor weather conditions including low cloud and thick fog. After overflying RAF Lissett, the aircraft descended through what the crew believed was a break in the clouds but crashed into the ground and broke up near Farberry Garth Farm, Warter [61]. 3 fatalities; 4 injured.

9 Apr 1945 [Halifax RG424](#) Flight Sergeant W J Hicks

This aircraft of No. 10 Squadron was based at RAF Melbourne. The aircraft returned from the target at Hamburg, landed heavily and the port landing gear collapsed. The degree of damage to the aircraft is not recorded but the crew were uninjured.

10 Apr 1945 [Spitfire EN796](#) Flying Officer Fenwick Rollins Charlesworth RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 1689 Flight based at RAF HOSM, undertaking a fighter affiliation exercise, landed at Pocklington. The landing gear partially collapsed causing some aircraft damage.

18 Apr 1945 [Halifax LL556](#) Lieutenant Robert FFAF

Although there is some doubt on the details, this aircraft of No. 347 Squadron FFAF based at RAF Elvington may have flown on an operational sortie earlier in the day, landing at 15:45; but then *may* have flown on a training sortie later the same day, with a different pilot, Lt. Robert. The aircraft crashed on take-off on this second sortie but the degree of damage to the aircraft is not recorded.

18 Apr 1945 [Halifax RG622](#) Warrant Officer R Holmes RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 76 Squadron based at RAF Full Sutton was taking off on an operational flight to the target at Heligoland when it veered off the runway, performed a ground loop and the landing gear collapsed. The crew escaped injury but the aircraft caught fire and the bombload exploded, blocking the runway.

*25 Apr 1945 – all the squadrons from the 5 'local' bases flew their last operational sorties; also said to be the last major allied air raid in WW2.*

3 May 1945 [Halifax RG654](#) Lieutenant M Bohrac FFAF

This aircraft of No. 346 Squadron FFAF based at RAF Elvington was on a navigation training sortie when it bounced on landing. The port wing struck the runway, causing the aircraft to veer and the landing gear to collapse. The degree of aircraft damage is not recorded.

*As from VE Day on 8<sup>th</sup> May, the 4 RAF Halifax squadrons based at RAF Melbourne, HOSM, Full Sutton and Pocklington transferred from Bomber Command to Transport Command and, in the following months, disposed of surplus ordnance over the North Sea and undertook transport flights and training for their new rôles.*

*In the period 8-31<sup>st</sup> Aug 1945, Nos. 10, 76 and 77 Squadrons relocated from their 'local' bases to RAF Broadwell, converted to Dakotas and, initially, undertook training before transferring to India.*

*No. 102 Squadron relocated from RAF Pocklington to RAF Bassingbourne on 8<sup>th</sup> Sep 1945, converted to Liberators and, initially, returned troops and POWs from India.*

*Also as from VE Day, the 2 FFAF squadrons based at RAF Elvington initially undertook transport duties and training, relocating to Bordeaux on 6<sup>th</sup> Oct 1945 and coming under French control in Nov 1945.*

30 Jul 1945 Halifax RG482 (no link available) Flight Lieutenant S B Dalmais

The aircraft was on a non-operational sortie but an engine failed on take-off, the flaps were raised instead of the landing gear, the aircraft failed to climb and crashed into Red House at the junction of Yapham Road and Garths End [62]. Reportedly, all 5 crew were killed, although a contemporary newspaper report stated that the rear gunner was extricated alive.

Extract from Hull Daily Mail, 31 July 1945: “Mrs Etherington, the occupant of Red House, had a remarkable escape from death. Members of the crew were killed, although there were no civilian casualties. Mrs Etherington was in the kitchen when the crash occurred. The room in which she was working was transformed into an inferno of flames and falling masonry.



*She received injuries to the hand and arm, but was able to escape through the front door.*

*Some men went to render assistance and it was through their efforts that the rear gunner was extricated alive.*

*Mrs Etherington's father, Mr T Stavely, had left the garden of the house only five minutes before the crash.*

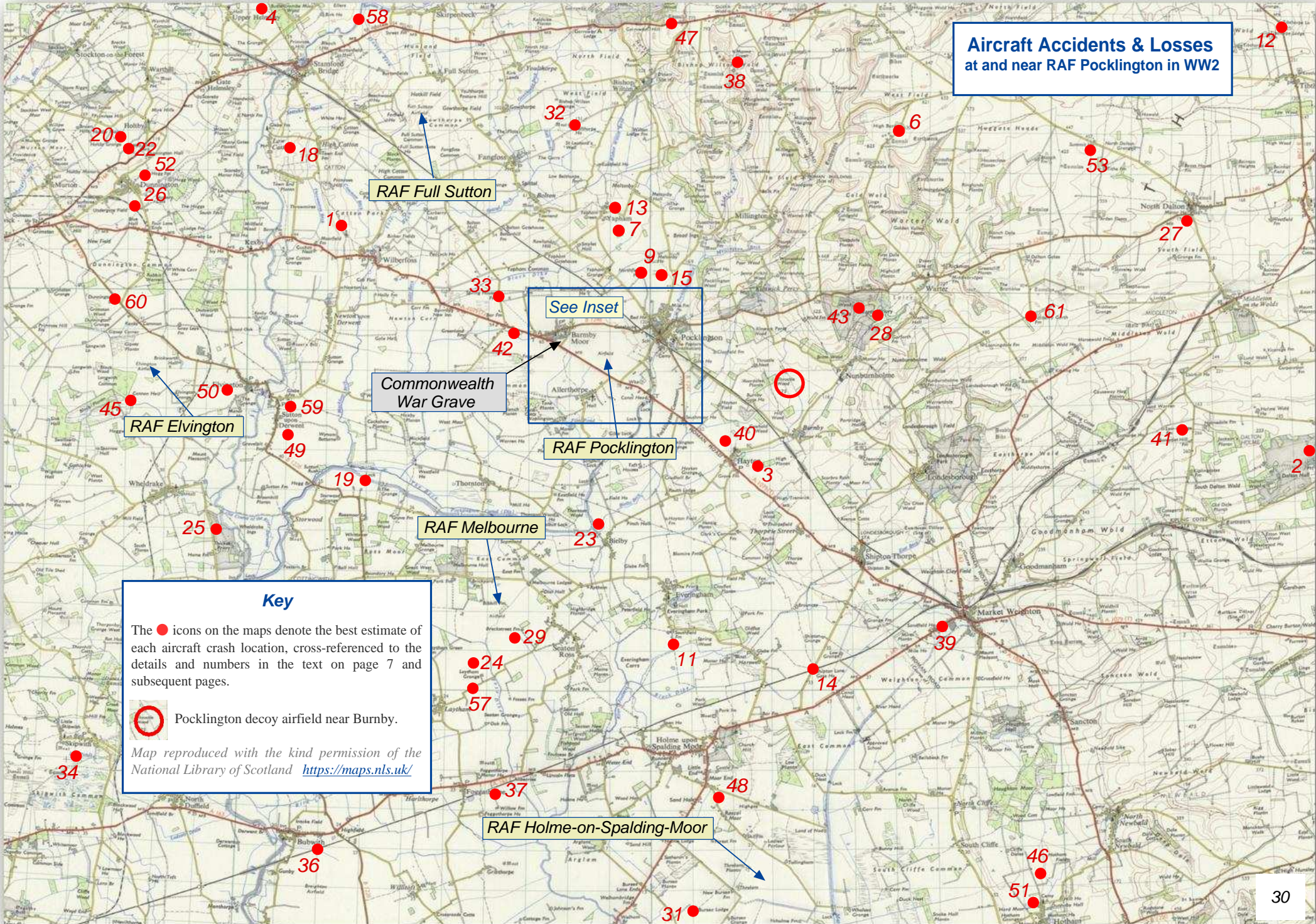
*Men working in a field nearby, describing the crash, said the machine appeared to catch fire in mid-air. “It was like a ball of fire”, they said.*

*The Red House was the scene of a similar crash about two years ago. It is partially demolished and, through the efforts of the National Fire Service, supported by a number of off-duty and part-time men who turned out to assist, they were able to prevent the fire from spreading to the front portion of the house and much of the furniture was saved.*

*At the adjoining house of Mr R Tinson, a nine foot wall was completely demolished and the front entrance gate of his garden was smashed.”*

Owing to the serious damage to the fabric of Red House, it was decided to rebuild it as a bungalow.

# Aircraft Accidents & Losses at and near RAF Pocklington in WW2



**Key**

The ● icons on the maps denote the best estimate of each aircraft crash location, cross-referenced to the details and numbers in the text on page 7 and subsequent pages.

○ Pocklington decoy airfield near Burnby.

Map reproduced with the kind permission of the National Library of Scotland <https://maps.nls.uk/>

Part 3 – Aircraft from RAF Pocklington which Failed to Return to Base

*'Failed to Return' – Halifax HR911 over Germany 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1943*  
(© Charles John Thompson from the collection of the Yorkshire Air Museum)





Unless stated otherwise, the aircraft listed in Part 3 were from No 405 Squadron based at RAF Pocklington from 20<sup>th</sup> Jun 1941 until 7<sup>th</sup> August 1942; followed by No. 102 Squadron from 7<sup>th</sup> August 1942 to 8<sup>th</sup> Sep 1945.

These Pocklington-based aircraft – including some which took off on their operational sorties from other airfields – failed to return to RAF Pocklington for the reasons given (where known). Typically this would be through enemy action such as being severely damaged by a flak barrage or nightfighters en-route to, from, or over the target.

The aircraft may have crashed over Germany or enemy-occupied territory including Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France and the Netherlands; or ditched in the North Sea, perhaps with the crew taking to the aircraft dinghy.

In some cases the crew were rescued from the North Sea by Royal Navy ships, RAF high speed launches (photo below), or by dedicated air-sea rescue aircraft, usually Walrus aircraft of No. 277 Air-Sea Rescue Squadron based at RAF Stapleford Tawney near Chipping Ongar (photo below-right).

Some aircraft, either badly damaged or perhaps carrying seriously-injured crew requiring urgent treatment, managed to recover to the UK but diverted to RAF bases outside the local area and then either crash-landed or landed safely, sometimes without further crew injury .

The listings in Part 3 are taken primarily from 'The Story of 102 (Ceylon) Squadron – 'It's Suicide but it's Fun' by Chris Goss; supplemented by further data from the [No. 102 \(Ceylon\) Squadron](#) website, the [RAF Commands](#) website, the '[Aircraft Accidents in Yorkshire](#)' website and 'The RAF Pocklington War Diary' by Mike Usherwood. Other sources used are listed in the Bibliography on page 47.

Perhaps inevitably, data from the several sources do not always match perfectly so, in general, a 'most likely' amalgam is recorded in the following listings.



15 Jul 1941      [Wellington W5534](#)      Sergeant Derek Bert Thrower RAFVR

The aircraft was returning from the target at Hannover when it was shot down by a nightfighter and crashed at Avereest, Overijssel, Netherlands. The 6-man crew bailed out and survived but became POWs. Subsequently the pilot was repeatedly able to escape before eventually contacting advancing British Forces.

24 Jul 1941      Wellington W5530      Sergeant William Lawrence Scott RCAF

The crew achieved a direct hit on the battleship Gneisenau docked at Brest but was attacked by 2 enemy aircraft, the second damaging the bomber and severely injuring the rear gunner. On crossing the Devon coast on return, the aircraft was force-landed at RAF Roborough. The gunner was trapped in the aircraft and extricated, but died of his injuries in hospital.

24 Jul 1941      Wellington W5551      Wing Commander Peter Alexander Gilchrist RAF

The aircraft attacked the battleship Gneisenau docked at Brest but was then attacked by an enemy aircraft and the crew bailed out. 1 fatality, 3 POWs.

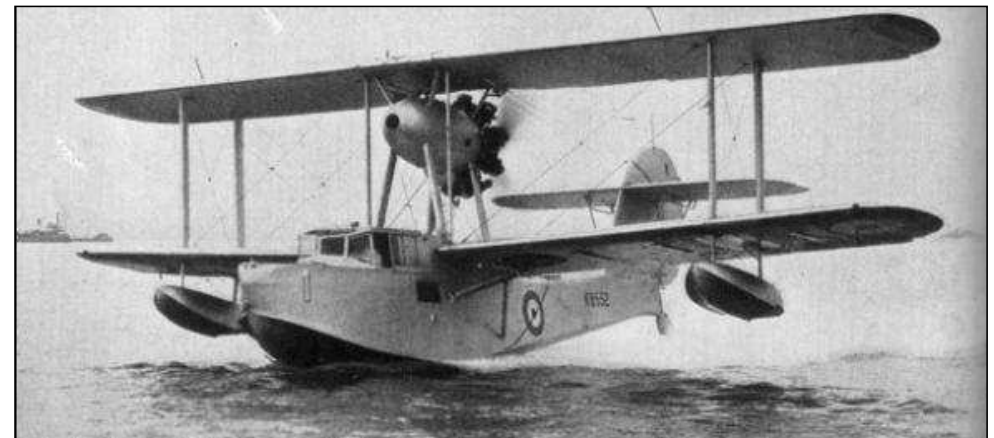
Of the POWs, 1 later escaped, was held in Vichy France and returned to the UK via Spain & Gibraltar. 2 other crew evaded capture, 1 returning to the UK via Spain & Gibraltar, with Wg Cdr Gilchrist returning to the UK via Switzerland, Spain & Gibraltar.

24 Jul 1941      Wellington W5537      Pilot Officer Ronald Victor Trueman RAFVR

The aircraft was attacking the battleship Gneisenau docked at Brest. It was last seen diving steeply, followed by an ME109 fighter.

24 Jul 1941      Wellington W5581      Probably Sgt James Wilson Craig RAFVR

During an attack on the battleship Gneisenau, docked at Brest, the aircraft was attacked in successive air battles by 4 enemy aircraft, including 3 ME109 fighters. The aircraft fabric was extensively damaged and caught fire but the flames were extinguished before they took hold.



The aircraft headed for base but ditched near Plymouth, only 300 yards from land. The crew boarded the aircraft dinghy and were picked up by a motor boat which took them ashore.

3 Aug 1941 Wellington W5483 Flight Lieutenant Theodor Ross Kipp RCAF

The target was at Berlin. The crew were reported as POWs, their aircraft having crashed at sea off the coast of Holland.

3 Aug 1941 Wellington W5527 Pilot Officer Reginald Cox RAFVR

The target was at Hamburg but nothing was reported of the fate of the aircraft other than that it crashed in the North Sea with the crew being killed, and 1 of whom was washed ashore on the Danish coast.

15 Aug 1941 Wellington W5496 Pilot Officer George Howard Fleming RCAF

The target was at Magdeburg. Nothing firm was reported of the fate of the aircraft although there is an unconfirmed report of it having crashed in the North Sea off Flamborough Head; the crew were reportedly killed.

28 Aug 1941 Wellington W5488 Pilot Officer Ernest Miller Watts RAF

The target was at Duisburg. The aircraft failed to return, with 4 fatalities and 2 crew becoming POWs.

8 Sep 1941 Wellington W5521 Sergeant John Stewart Saunders RCAF

The target was Berlin. The aircraft was intercepted and shot down by an ME110 nightfighter operating from Twente in the Netherlands. The aircraft crashed at Norddorf, Germany, with all the crew being reported as POWs.

20 Sep 1941 Wellington Z8344 Sergeant T F Dougall RAF

A post-attack transmission from the aircraft confirmed that the target at Stettin had been attacked. Subsequently, nothing is known of the fate of the aircraft other than that the pilot and several of the crew were reported as POWs.

22 Oct 1941 Wellington Z8419 Sergeant Cyril Roland Hall RCAF

A post attack transmission from the aircraft confirmed that the target at Le Havre had been attacked but there is no information on the fate of the aircraft or crew other than that 1 member had been killed. However, subsequently, all the crew were reported as having been killed.

8 Nov 1941 [Wellington "B"\(possibly Z8358\)](#) Flt Lt John Emilius Fauquier RCAF

The crew were unable to find the primary target at Berlin and, instead, bombed the harbour at Kiel. The aircraft was caught by a searchlight and heavily damaged by flak. The aircraft diverted to RAF Hutton Cranswick but, on landing, the port wing and tailplane were damaged by steel obstruction poles.

8 Nov 1941 Wellington W5555 Sgt Alexander Lawrence Dennis Hassan RCAF

The target was at Berlin. The aircraft was last heard of at 2:30am on 8<sup>th</sup> November but reportedly it was brought down over Niederblockland, Germany, and the Red Cross reported that the crew were killed.

30 Nov 1941 Wellington W5476 Squadron Leader Robert Clare Bissett RAF

The target was Hamburg but there is no information on the fate of the aircraft. Reportedly an exhaustive sea search was mounted (aircraft ditched?) but with no trace having been found. All the crew are reported to have been killed.

22 Dec 1941 Wellington W5560 Sergeant L S Mather RCAF

En-route to the target at Wilhelmshaven, the starboard engine failed and the pilot returned to base but was instructed to divert to RAF Lindholme. However, during an overshoot from an aborted landing (at Lindholme), the port engine also failed over the airfield and the aircraft crash-landed. The aircraft was destroyed and 3 crew were injured.

29 Dec 1941 Wellington W5561 Sergeant Edwin John Williams RNZAF

The aircraft target was Emden but reportedly the aircraft was shot down and crashed at Aurich, Germany. The Red Cross reported that the crew had been killed.

5 Jan 1942 [Wellington W5589](#) Sergeant Osborne Bayfield Lefurgey RCAF

The aircraft was on a routine air test in very poor weather conditions when the port engine caught fire which necessitated a forced landing. The aircraft crashed near Strensall, York, and was destroyed. All the crew (1 RAAF and 4 RCAF) were killed and were buried at Barmby Moor.

17 Jan 1942 Wellington Z8329 Squadron Leader Walter Bernard Keddy RCAF

The aircraft was en-route to the target at Bremen but returned to base with engine trouble. The starboard engine then caught fire and the aircraft crashed into the North Sea. The Royal Observer Corps reported an aircraft, believed to be a Wellington, on fire and in the sea close to Skipsea. An air sea rescue launch left Bridlington but eventually returned with nothing to report. However, 2 crew were rescued by a British destroyer, albeit injured and having spent 14 hours in a dinghy. The remaining 4 crew were killed.

26 Feb 1942 Wellington W5516 Flight Lieutenant James Alexander Robson RAFVR

The target was Kiel Docks. There is an unsubstantiated claim of the aircraft having been shot down into the sea, west of Westerland, Germany. The crew were reportedly killed.

10 Mar 1942 Wellington Z8428 Pilot Officer Robert Keep Durbridge RAAF

The target was at Essen. An SOS was received at 23:24 but the Air Sea Rescue services found no trace of the crew.

1 Apr 1942 Wellington Z8527 Flt Sgt Moheddeen Abdul Ghias Howsan RAAF

The target was at Poissy. Reportedly the aircraft was shot down by flak as it left the target and crashed in a fireball near Marly-le-Roi, France. 5 fatalities, 1 POW. An eye-witness reported that the pilot had made every effort to avoid a village before crashing and, on Remembrance Day 1994, the villagers unveiled a memorial to the crew.

9 Apr 1942 Wellington Z8358 Pilot Officer Richard Philip Locke RCAF

The target was at Hamburg. An SOS was received at 4am that the aircraft had engine problems and the crew intended to land on a beach. The body of 1 crew member was later washed ashore, the remaining crew being reported missing and presumed killed.

12 Apr 1942 Wellington W5531 Flight Sergeant David Kilgour Lloyd RAAF

The target was at Essen but the aircraft returned early when the port engine failed and caught fire near RAF Wattisham. 4 members of the crew bailed out but, reportedly, 1 other was unable to find his parachute. The pilot displayed conspicuous gallantry in attempting to force-land the aircraft at Creeting St. Mary in Suffolk but both were killed in the crash.

15 Apr 1942 Wellington W5427 Sergeant Donald Malcolm MacFarlane RCAF

The target was at Dortmund. The aircraft was hit by heavy flak and crashed, with all the crew being killed.

15 Apr 1942 Wellington Z8530 Flt Sgt Henry Adolphus Echin (alias Chinn) RAAF

The aircraft was returning from the target at Dortmund when it became short of fuel and the crew bailed out near Petersfield. No injuries.

15 Apr 1942 Wellington W5390 Pilot Officer P C Toft RCAF

The target was at Dortmund. An SOS was received from the aircraft which was out of range of the UK rescue services so the SOS was re-broadcast on the HF International Broadcast channel. The crew were rescued and became POWs.

*No 405 Squadron converted from Wellington to Halifax Mk II aircraft in the period 18 Apr – 25 May 1942.*

31 May 1942 Halifax W7707 Sergeant Leonard Alfred Wadman RCAF

The target was at Cologne. The aircraft was shot down by an ME110 nightfighter operating from St. Trond in Belgium and reportedly the aircraft exploded over Niederaußem, Germany, crashing near the village, with the crew being killed.

2 Jun 1942 Halifax W7713 Pilot Officer Ross Lloyd Baltzer RCAF

The target was at Essen. The aircraft was hit by heavy flak and crashed in the vicinity of Krefeld, with the crew being killed.

8/9 Jun 1942 Halifax W1111 Pilot Officer David Gordon Morris RCAF

The target was at Essen but there is no information on the fate of the aircraft or crew.

9 Jun 1942 Halifax W7708 Flight Lieutenant John Angus MacLean RCAF

The target was at Essen. The aircraft was damaged by heavy flak and shot down over the Netherlands by an ME110 nightfighter. The crew bailed out, with the pilot evading capture and returned to the UK. The remaining crew became POWs.

9 Jun 1942 Halifax DG224 Pilot Officer Lloyd George Higginson RCAF

The target was at Essen. There is no information on the fate of the aircraft but the Red Cross reported that 1 crew member became a POW, the remaining 7 being killed.

28 Jun 1942 Halifax W1110 Warrant Officer William Lawrence Scott RCAF

The target was at Bremen. On the return, the aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter operating from Leeuwarden. The aircraft crashed into the North Sea, 13 miles SSW of Den Helder, with all 7 crew being killed.

28 Jun 1942 Halifax W1175 Flight Sergeant William Ewart Nixon Field RCAF

The target was at Bremen. On the return leg, the aircraft was hit by heavy flak and shot down, crashing 25 miles west of Den Helder. All the crew were killed, with the body of 1 crew member being washed ashore.

30 Jun 1942 Halifax W1113 Flt Sgt Henry Adolphus Echin (alias Chinn) RAAF

The target was at Bremen. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter operating from Leeuwarden and crashed near the Friesian village of Noordwolde, all 8 crew being killed.

30 Jun 1942 Halifax W7715 Flight Lieutenant Harold Liversidge RAFVR

The target was at Bremen. The aircraft was shot down by an ME110 nightfighter operating from Vechta, with the aircraft crashing at Bimolten, 5 miles NNW of Nordhorn. All the crew were killed except one wounded survivor who became a POW.

30 Jun 1942 Halifax W7714 Flight Sergeant Lawrence Sydney RCAF

The target was at Bremen. The aircraft was shot down during the return leg by a nightfighter operating from Leeuwarden. The aircraft crashed at Scharnegoutum, with all the crew being killed.

27 Jul 1942 Halifax W1230 Sergeant William Smith RAFVR

The target was at Hamburg but there is no definitive information on the fate of the aircraft. All but 1 of the crew were killed, the survivor becoming a POW.

27 Jul 1942 Halifax W1186 Flight Sergeant Henry Maximillian Slezak RCAF

The target was at Hamburg. Reportedly, the aircraft exploded over marshy ground on the south bank of the river Elbe near Stade.

1 Aug 1942      [Halifax W7718](#)      Sergeant Donald Edward West RCAF

The target was at Dusseldorf. The aircraft was shot down on the Belgian/German border near Maaseik by an ME110 nightfighter operating from Venlo. The crew bailed out, with 1 crew member not surviving the parachute jump. Another was severely injured and later died, but another of the crew evaded capture and eventually returned to the UK via Spain and Gibraltar. The remaining 4 crew became POWs.

1 Aug 1942      Halifax W1109      Sergeant James Hunter RAF

The target was at Dusseldorf. The aircraft was hit by heavy flak and crashed at Anrath, Willich, with the crew being killed.

*102 Squadron moved from RAF Topcliffe to RAF Pocklington to replace No. 405 Squadron on 7th August 1942.*

10 Aug 1942      Halifax BB211      Pilot Officer Douglas Burton McLeod RAAF

The target was at Osnabruck. The aircraft was hit by flak and crashed near Elbergen, Lingen. 2 crew were killed with 5 survivors becoming POWs.

*On 19 Aug 1942, No. 10 Squadron relocated from RAF Leeming to RAF Melbourne; however, as from 28 Aug 1942, they used RAF Pocklington as their operational base for the following 2 months. The first operational sorties from RAF Melbourne did not take place until 23 Oct 1942.*

29 Aug 1942      Halifax W7712      Warrant Officer Frederick Arthur Schaw RNZAF

The aircraft was returning from the target at Saarbrucken and was forced to descend to 12,000 feet because of icing. It encountered heavy flak near Ostend, with the port aileron being shot away, No. 5 fuel tank being holed and the rear turret being hit. 1 crew member was seriously wounded in the legs and later died. The aircraft crash-landed at RAF Honington.

7 Sep 1942      Halifax W7767      Pilot Officer Denys William Evan Morgan RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 10 Squadron temporarily flying from RAF Pocklington joined another 8 aircraft from Nos. 102 and 10 Squadrons to attack the target at Duisburg. The fate of the aircraft is not known but, reportedly, all 8 crew were killed.

9 Sep 1942      [Halifax W7677](#)      Sergeant Francis Harold John Farrell RAFVR

While flying outbound to the target at Frankfurt, the aircraft was hit by flak, damaging the port outer engine. With the latter badly misfiring, a decision was made to abandon the aircraft which then crashed at Rambrouch, Luxembourg. 2 crew evaded capture and returned to the UK via Spain and Gibraltar. 3 crew died, with the other 2 becoming POWs (1 of whom died of natural causes in captivity).

10 Sep 1942      Halifax W7752      Pilot Officer Bernard George Harry Smith RAF

The target was at Dusseldorf. Reportedly the aircraft was shot down by a JU88 nightfighter and crashed in the North Sea off the island of Walcheren in the Netherlands. Reportedly all 8 crew were killed.

14 Sep 1942      Halifax W1271      Sergeant T P Thirsk

On return from the target at Bremen, the aircraft crash-landed at RAF Coltishall with 3 of the crew being injured, 1 of whom subsequently died. (The aircraft may have been repaired as it was reportedly written off on 22 Jun 1943).

14 Sep 1942      Halifax R9531      Sergeant James Leslie Hartshorn RAF

On return from the target at Bremen, the aircraft crashed-landed at RAF West Raynham; the crew were uninjured. (The aircraft may have been repaired as it crashed at Scunthorpe on 5 Dec 1942.)

20 Sep 1942      [Halifax R9383](#)      Sergeant Edward John Wilmott RAFVR

This aircraft of No. 10 Squadron based at RAF Melbourne took off from Pocklington. On returning from the target at Saarbrucken, the aircraft struck a tree on high ground at Thruscross and crashed in West End village near Harrogate. The crew bailed out but 1 died due to parachute failure.

24 Sep 1942      Halifax DT517      Flying Officer Leo George Mee RNZAF

The aircraft crashed into the sea, probably near the target at Flensburg, with all 8 crew being killed.

24 Sep 1942      Halifax W1055      Sergeant Richard Charles Edgar Bassom RAFVR

The aircraft crashed into the sea, probably near the target at Flensburg, with 5 fatalities and 2 missing.

1 Oct 1942      Halifax W7858      Sergeant Richard Mathews RAFVR

The aircraft crashed into the sea, probably near the target at Flensburg, 1 fatality. 6 missing.

1 Oct 1942      Halifax W1066      Sergeant Percy Charles Cato RAFVR

The aircraft reportedly crashed near Kiel with all 7 crew being killed.

1 Oct 1942      Halifax W7852      Flight Sergeant John Hope Moller RNZAF

This aircraft from No. 10 Squadron temporarily flying from RAF Pocklington took off for the target at the ship building yards at Flensburg. The aircraft was hit by flak and crashed, reportedly with 5 fatalities and 2 POWs.

1 Oct 1942      Halifax DT520      Sergeant David Campbell RAFVR

This aircraft from No. 10 Squadron temporarily flying from RAF Pocklington took off for the target at the ship building yards at Flensburg. The aircraft was hit by flak and crashed into the Baltic at Nordenbro, Vesteregn, with all the crew being killed (7 bodies being recovered).

1 Oct 1942      Halifax BB207      Pilot Officer John Leslie Jones RAFVR

This aircraft from No. 10 Squadron temporarily flying from RAF Pocklington took off for the target at the ship building yards at Flensburg. The fate of the aircraft is not recorded but all 7 crew were killed.

1 Oct 1942      Halifax W7667      Sergeant K Hayes

This aircraft from No. 10 Squadron temporarily flying from RAF Pocklington took off for the target at the ship building yards at Flensburg. The aircraft was coned by a searchlight, hit by light flak and was shot down, crashing at Oeversee. Reportedly, 2 of the crew were killed, with 5 POWs.

2 Oct 1942      Halifax W1116      Pilot Officer Keith Abraham Baxter

This aircraft from No. 10 Squadron temporarily flying from RAF Pocklington took off for the target at Krefeld. The fate of the aircraft is not recorded but, reportedly, all the crew became POWs.

5 Oct 1942      Halifax W7746      Pilot Officer Ronald Ernest Williams

The target was at Aachen. The aircraft reportedly crashed near Brussels with all 7 crew being killed.

5 Oct 1942      Halifax W7824      Warrant Officer Frederick Arthur Schaw RNZAF

The target was at Aachen. The aircraft was coned by searchlights and hit by flak over Cologne, crashing in flames at Ingendorf, Pulheim, near Cologne. Of the crew of 8, reportedly 1 was killed. with 7 POWs of whom 2 escaped and returned to the UK.

13 Oct 1942      Halifax W7870      Pilot Officer John David Lindsay RCAF

This aircraft from No. 10 Squadron temporarily flying from RAF Pocklington took off for the target at Kiel. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter operating from Leeuwarden, reportedly with the crew being killed.

15 Oct 1942      Halifax W1058      Wing Commander Richard Kemp Wildley RAF

This aircraft from No. 10 Squadron temporarily flying from RAF Pocklington took off for the target at Cologne. Reportedly the aircraft was hit and the pilot (the Officer Commanding No. 10 Squadron) bravely remained at the controls to allow 5 of the crew to escape the burning aircraft and become POWs. 3 fatalities.

9 Nov 1942      Halifax DT539      Flight Sergeant Donald Thomas Marler RCAF

The target was at Hamburg. The aircraft was hit by flak and crashed on the sea dike at Oosterend, Netherlands with all 8 crew being killed.

9 Nov 1942      Halifax W7864      Sergeant Gerald Anthony Neville RCAF

The aircraft may have been shot down over the North Sea by a nightfighter and crashed 30 miles west of Wijk Aan Zee in the Netherlands. 8 crew missing.

22 Nov 1942      Halifax W7194      Plt Off Geoffrey Bernard Herbert King RAFVR

The target was at Stuttgart. The aircraft crashed at Hangest Sur Somme, France, with all 7 crew being killed.

3 Dec 1942      Halifax W7884      Sergeant H A E Charman

The aircraft was en-route to the target at Frankfurt when it was repeatedly attacked by a nightfighter, with bullets narrowly missing the bomb-aimer and smashing the perspex in the front turret. With the intercom out of action, the pilot ordered the crew to bail out and it is known that Pilot Officer Don McKim managed to exit the aircraft, landed safely and was captured by the crew of a flak battery. 2 crew killed; 5 POW. The aircraft crashed at Laumersheim.



*Wreckage of Halifax W7884 shot down by nightfighter at Laumersheim on 2/3 Dec 1942*

3 Dec 1942      Halifax W7916      Sqn Ldr John Greet Gordon Walkington RAF

The target was at Frankfurt. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter and crashed near Couvron et Aumencourt, Aisne, France. 3 crew were killed and another 3 became POWs.

A supernumerary crew member, Wing Commander John Robert Andre Ebling, at the time the commanding officer of No. 77 Squadron based at RAF Elvington but flying with No. 102 Squadron to gain operational experience, evaded capture along with one other. They returned to the UK via Spain and Gibraltar in March 1943 with the aid of the French Resistance.

3 Dec 1942 Halifax W7913 Flight Sergeant Harry Morrissey RCAF

The target was at Frankfurt. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter and crashed between Resteigne and Grupont near Rochefort, Belgium. with all 8 crew being killed.

6 Dec 1942 Halifax W7911 Sergeant Peter Anthony James Grant RAFVR

The target was at Mannheim. The aircraft crashed near Abbeville, France, with all 7 crew being killed.

6 Dec 1942 Halifax W7924 Sergeant Frederick David Buchwalter RAFVR

The target was at Mannheim. The aircraft probably crashed into the North Sea as the body of 1 crew member was washed ashore near Gammel Skagen, Denmark. 7 fatalities.

8 Dec 1942 Halifax W7925 Sergeant Brian John Ketchell RAFVR

The aircraft was 'Gardening' (mine laying) near the Friesian islands and crashed in the North Sea off the island of Juist. 2 bodies were washed ashore, with the remaining crew trapped in the aircraft and not recovered.

12 Dec 1942 Halifax W7933 Sergeant Gerald John Morgan RAFVR

On returning from the target at Turin, in worsening visibility, the aircraft was diverted to RAF Middleton St. George. But when descending through cloud, it crashed into high ground at Hawaby, near Helmsley. All 7 crew were killed, 3 being buried at Barmby Moor.

4 Jan 1943 [Halifax W7910](#) Warrant Officer John Fielding Wrench Towse RCAF

The aircraft of No. 102 Squadron based at Pocklington was on a night training exercise and approaching East Moor airfield with the intention of landing there. At 500 feet, reportedly the port inner engine failed and, not being sure which engine was at fault, the pilot feathered the propeller so that the engine could be restarted if the port outer engine failed.

However, height was lost and a decision was made to make a forced landing in the Huby area, with the landing gear up. The crew escaped without injury, but the aircraft suffered severe damage and was later written off.

27 Jan 1943 Halifax W7918 Flight Lieutenant Bruce Keith Lindsay RAFVR

The aircraft was hit by flak over the target at Dusseldorf and crashed in the Waddensee, east of Den Helder, Netherlands. Reportedly, of the 4 crew who parachuted from the aircraft, 1 parachute failed to deploy and 3 crew became POWs, one of whom later died. The remaining 2 crew died in the crash.

2 Feb 1943 Halifax W7882 Flt Sgt Hugh Alexander Ross-Thompson RAFVR

The aircraft was hit by flak, collided with Lancaster W4819 of No. 44 Squadron and crashed near Luykgestel, Netherlands, with all 7 crew killed.

3 Feb 1943 Halifax W7921 Flt Sgt Maurice William Lofthouse RAFVR

Outbound to the target at Hamburg, the aircraft is believed to have been shot down near Quakenbruck by a nightfighter. 4 crew killed, 3 POWs, 1 of whom was injured in the crash.

14 Feb 1943 Halifax W7880 Flight Sergeant James Leslie Hartshorn RAF

The target was at Cologne. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter operating from Venlo and then crashed at Veulen, Netherlands, with all 7 crew being killed.

25 Feb 1943 Halifax DT800 Sergeant Charles Henry Bray RAF

On the outbound flight to the target at Nuremburg, the aircraft crashed at Badliss Hall Farm, Ardley, near Colchester. All the crew were killed.

26 Feb 1943 Halifax HR669 Sergeant Michael Gerrard Gibbons RAFVR

The target was at Cologne. Reportedly the aircraft crashed in the target area. Of the 8 crew, 7 were killed with 1 missing.

26 Feb 1943 Halifax W7919 Sergeant Edwin John Frith RAFVR

The target was Cologne. The aircraft was hit by flak and crashed in the target area. 6 killed. 1 missing.

8 Mar 1943 Halifax JB840 Flight Sergeant R C F Hibben RAFVR

The target was at Nuremburg. During the outbound flight, the aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter, crashing near Brizeaux, France. Of the crew, 5 became POWs, with 2 evading capture. With the help of the Burgundy network of the French Resistance, both evaders eventually returning to the UK via the Pyrenees, Spain and Gibraltar.

12 Mar 1943 Halifax JB836 Fg Off Anthony Drew Ashby Barnes RAFVR

The target was at Essen and the aircraft was shot down by an ME110 operating from Bergen. The aircraft crashed in the North Sea 13 miles south-west of Den Helder, with all 7 crew being killed.

12 Mar 1943 [Halifax DT799](#) Sergeant Harold Cedric Alan Newland RAFVR

The target was at Essen and the aircraft was shot down by flak over the target, with the port outer engine failed, a propeller blade from the port inner engine entering the fuselage, the intercom failed and the tailplane controls severed. Of the crew, 6 were killed, with 1 having bailed out and becoming a POW.

12 Mar 1943 Halifax DT739 Sergeant Edward William Leon Charlebois

The target was at Essen. The aircraft is believed to have been hit by flak and then shot down by a nightfighter operating from Twente, with the port wing and 2 engines on fire. The aircraft crashed near Wessum, Ahaus, Germany, with 2 fatalities and 5 becoming POWs, 2 of whom sustained injuries.

17 Apr 1943      Halifax HR663      Squadron Leader Wally Lashbrook

The target was the Skoda works at Pilsen. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter and crashed near Eppe-Sauvage (Nord) on the Belgian border with France. 1 fatality, 2 crew were captured and became POWs. 4 crew evaded capture and, with the help of the Comete resistance network, returning to the UK via the Pyrenees, Spain and Gibraltar in May/June 1943.

(See links to evasion reports for the [Pilot](#), [Navigator](#), [W/Op](#) and [Bomb Aimer](#))

21 Apr 1943      [Halifax DT747](#)      Sergeant Wilfred Ambrose Griffiths RAFVR

The target was at Stettin. The aircraft was shot down by flak and crashed at Sædding near Esbjerg, Denmark, with all 8 crew including the 2<sup>nd</sup> pilot killed.



*Wreckage of Halifax DT747 at Saedding, Denmark*

21 Apr 1943      [Halifax HR712](#)      Sergeant Peter Russell Olliver

The target was at Stettin. The aircraft was shot down by flak and crashed in Slipshaven Harbour near Nyborg, Denmark. 5 killed, 2 POWs. (See photo above-right.)

27 Apr 1943      Halifax JB918      Sergeant James George Grainger RCAF

The target was at Duisburg. The aircraft was shot down by an ME110 nightfighter operating from Leeuwarden and crashed in the North Sea off Texel. 7 fatalities.



*Wreckage of Halifax HR712 in Slipshaven Harbour*

5 May 1943      Halifax JB869      Sgt William Bernard Johnson Happold RAFVR

The target was at Dortmund. The aircraft crashed near Münchengladbach, Germany. 4 fatalities, 3 POWs.

5 May 1943      Halifax HR667      Squadron Leader John Bernard Flowerdew RAF

The target was at Dortmund. The aircraft was damaged by flak and shot down by an ME110 nightfighter operating from Leeuwarden, the aircraft crashing near the village of Westergeest near Dookum, Netherlands. 7 fatalities.

5 May 1943      Halifax W7820      Flight Sergeant James Bowman RAFVR

On return from the target at Dortmund, the aircraft was hit by flak and the starboard outer engine failed. Subsequently the port outer engine failed and the aircraft was ditched in the North Sea, 75 miles from Flamborough Head, with the crew being picked up by a rescue launch.

13 May 1943      Halifax JB799      Flight Sergeant Murray Quinn Moffat RCAF

The target was Duisburg. The aircraft was shot down by an ME110 nightfighter operating from Gilze-Rijen and crashed in the North Sea 40 miles west of Walcheren. 7 fatalities.

14 May 1943      Halifax W7935      Flight Sergeant A McA Sargent

During the outbound leg to the target at Bochum, the aircraft was coned by searchlights, hit by heavy flak and had to jettison the bombload short of the target. A port engine and petrol tanks were hit and pieces of fuselage blew around the aircraft. The aircraft ditched c. 23 miles east of Yarmouth, with the crew being rescued by a motor gun boat.

14 May 1943      Halifax JB964              Sergeant Vincent Herbert Hatchard RAFVR

The target was at Bochum. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter during the return to the UK and crashed between Cologne and Münchengladbach. 5 of the crew were killed with 2 becoming POWs.

28 May 1943      Halifax JD149              Pilot Officer John Denzil Jeffrey RAF

The target was at Essen. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter operating from Leeuwarden and crashed in the Waddenzee, west of Oosterland, Netherlands. 7 fatalities.

30 May 1943      Halifax W7934              Sergeant Ronald Aslin Ward RAFVR

The target was at Wuppertal. The aircraft crashed at Guesten, near Jülich, Germany, with all 7 crew being killed.

13 Jun 1943      Halifax JB868              Sergeant Ronald Reginald Hale RAFVR

The target was at Bochum. The aircraft was shot down by an ME110 nightfighter operating from Bergen. The aircraft crashed into the North Sea 30 miles west of Callantssoog, Netherlands, with all 8 crew being killed.

21 June 1943      [Halifax JD206](#)              Sergeant George S Honey

The aircraft was en-route to the target at Krefeld but was hit by flak near Overflakkee, Netherlands, the damage being such that only the starboard outer engine was left running. The bombload was jettisoned and the aircraft ditched successfully. The crew boarded the dinghy and, after 2½ hrs managed to attract the attention of 2 Walrus aircraft of No. 277 Air-Sea Rescue Squadron based at RAF Stapleford Tawney near Chipping Ongar.

4 crew members boarded one Walrus which took them to RAF Martlesham Heath near Woodbridge, Suffolk, while the other 4 crew boarded the second Walrus which (unable to take off due to the heavy sea swell) taxied to a motor gun boat and which then took them to Felixstowe.

25 Jun 1943      Halifax JB834              Sergeant James Arthur Marsden RAFVR

The target was at Wuppertal but the aircraft was both hit by flak and shot down by a nightfighter operating from Venlo. The aircraft crashed north of Welldorf near Jülich, Germany, with all 7 crew being killed.

25 Jun 1943      Halifax JD144              Sgt Kenneth Robert William Sheppard RAFVR

The target was at Wuppertal. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter and crashed on the hamlet of Failon between Barvaux-Condroz and Maffe in Belgium. 5 crew fatalities and 2 POWs.

26 Jun 1943      Halifax JB843              Sergeant Kenneth Gore RAFVR

The target was the oil refineries at Gelsenkirchen. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter and crashed on the Anna Paulowna Road near Breezand/Koedijk, Netherlands. 7 fatalities.

4 Jul 1943      Halifax BB428              Flight Sergeant Rufus George Jenkins RAFVR

The target was at Cologne. The aircraft was hit by several heavy flak units and was shot down by an ME110 nightfighter operating from Bonn-Hangelar. The aircraft crashed at Winterscheid, 20 miles south-east of the target. 5 crew killed, 2 POWs.

10 Jul 1943      Halifax BB249              Flight Sergeant Arthur Thomas Fraser RAAF

The target was at Gelsenkirchen. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter and crashed at Eprave (Namur), near Rochefort, Belgium. 4 crew killed, 3 POWs.

14 Jul 1943      Halifax JD297              Wing Commander Henry Reginald Coventry RAF

The target was at Aachen. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter and crashed near Maubeuge, France. 7 fatalities (Wg Cdr Coventry being the Officer Commanding No. 102 Squadron).

14 Jul 1943      Halifax JB894              Sergeant Robert Glass Amos RAFVR

The target was at Aachen. The aircraft was hit by heavy flak and exploded, crashing near Brunssum, Netherlands. 6 fatalities, 1 POW.

25 Jul 1943      Halifax JD316              Flight Lieutenant Tom Bakewell RAFVR

The target was at Hamburg. The aircraft is believed to have been hit by bombs from another aircraft, then shot down by an ME110 nightfighter, crashing at Lengenbostel, Germany. 7 fatalities, 1 POW.

26 Jul 1943      Halifax JD169              Sergeant James Newell Whitehouse RAFVR

The target was at Essen. The aircraft was shot down by an ME110 nightfighter and ditched in the North Sea. 2 fatalities, 5 crew reported missing.

28 Jul 1943      [Halifax JD150](#)              Sergeant Gordon Harry Brown RAFVR

The target was at Hamburg. The aircraft was shot down by an ME110 nightfighter and crashed near Hübek, Haßmoor in Schleswig Holstein, Germany. 7 fatalities. *(See photo below.)*





28 Jul 1943      Halifax JB864      Flying Officer George McFerran Clarke RAFVR  
The target was at Hamburg. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter and crashed near Hamburg. 4 fatalities, 3 POWs (1 of whom died jumping from a train after escaping).

30 Jul 1943      Halifax HR711      Sergeant John Sydney Gaston RAFVR  
The target was at Hamburg. The aircraft was shot down by a Dornier 217 nightfighter and crashed in the North Sea, north-east of Heligoland, with 7 fatalities.

30 Jul 1943      Halifax W7883      Flt Sgt Thomas Albert MacQuarie RAFVR  
The target was at Hamburg. The aircraft was shot down by a Dornier 217 nightfighter and crashed at Todesfelde near Bad Segeberg, Germany, with 7 fatalities.

10 Aug 1943      Halifax JD408      Squadron Leader L J Petridge  
The target was at Mannheim. The aircraft was attacked by a nightfighter near Trier, the crew bailing out and landing near Idar-Oberstein, Germany. 3 fatalities, 4 POWs.

10 Aug 1943      Halifax JB782      Sergeant V H Thomas RAFVR  
The target was at Mannheim. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter at Spesbach, Landstuhl, Germany. The crew suffered 5 fatalities with 2 POWs.

11 Aug 1943      Halifax JD369      Warrant Officer Guydon Whitfield Ward RAAF  
The target was at Nuremberg. The aircraft crashed near Ramsen, 12 miles north-east of Kaiserslauten, Germany, with 6 fatalities and 2 POWs.

18 Aug 1943      Halifax JD296      Flight Sergeant W B Lambert  
The target was at Peenemunde. The bomb doors had to be opened manually for the bombing run and then failed to close. On return, the aircraft diverted and crash-landed at RAF Ashbourne, Derbyshire with the crew reportedly uninjured.

23 Aug 1943      Halifax JD378      Sqn Ldr Donald John Geoffrey Jackson RCAF  
The target was at Leverkusen and the aircraft crashed near Kreuzau, Dueren, Germany. 1 fatality, 6 POWs.

24 Aug 1943      Halifax JD407      Flight Sergeant George Stephen Roadley RAFVR  
The target was at Berlin. On the return leg, the aircraft crashed into the North Sea, with 7 fatalities. The pilot's body was recovered 100 miles south-east of Norfolk.

28 Aug 1943      [Halifax JB835](#)      Flight Sergeant Gordon Sproat RAFVR  
The target was at Nuremberg. On the return leg, the aircraft was intercepted and shot down over Belgium by an ME110 nightfighter, crashing near Jemeppe-Sur-Sambre, Belgium. 6 fatalities, 1 POW.

31 Aug 1943      Halifax JD128      Flight Sergeant John Arnold Chappell RAAF  
The target was at Münchengladbach. The aircraft crashed in Germany with 7 fatalities, but the circumstances of the crash are not recorded.

31 Aug 1943      [Halifax JN909](#)      Sgt Edward Thomas Samuel Rowbottom RAFVR  
The target was at Berlin. The aircraft is believed to have been badly damaged by flak and crashed between Sinnigen and Saerbeck, Munster, Germany. 5 fatalities, 1 POWs, with 1 evading capture and reaching Switzerland.



*Wreckage of Halifax JN909 (photograph by Mike Harrison)*

7 Sep 1943      Halifax JB921      Flying Officer Robert Atkinson RAF  
The target was at Munich. The aircraft was shot down by an ME110 nightfighter and crashed at Antdorf near Penzberg, Germany. 3 fatalities, 4 POWs of whom 1 was wounded.

22 Sep 1943      [Halifax HX154](#)      Flight Sergeant Jack Hanby RAFVR  
The target was at Hannover. The aircraft was coned by searchlights and attacked by an Me110 nightfighter near Voremberg, Emmerthal, Germany.  
Despite the pilot taking vigorous evasive action, the starboard inner engine was damaged, with the propeller detaching and slicing through the aircraft nose, at which point the aircraft electrics were lost (main fusebox damaged). One of the engines was also on fire. 1 fatality. 6 POWs.

9 Oct 1943      Halifax HR927 or HX173      Flight Sergeant Ronald Ellis RAFVR

There is some unresolved doubt on the aircraft's registration number. The target was at Hannover. The aircraft crashed at Lichtenhorst, Steimbke, Germany, with 3 fatalities and 4 crew becoming POWs.

22 Oct 1943      Halifax JN908      Flight Lieutenant Eric Snowden Kelly RNZAF

The target was at Kassel. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter and crashed at Niesen, NW of Borgentreich, Germany. 1 fatality, 7 POWs.

22 Oct 1943      Halifax HR911      Pilot Officer Dennis William Brookes RAFVR

The target was at Kassel. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter and crashed at Silixen, Germany. 4 fatalities, 3 POWs. *(See also the painting of this aircraft on page 31.)*

11 Nov 1943      Halifax HX158      Flight Sergeant Robert Hugh Campbell RAAF

The aircraft was minelaying ('Operation Gardening') off the Friesian Islands, was shot down by a flak ship in the target area and ditched off the Dutch coast. An SOS was acknowledged by the German Air Force. 7 crew missing.

26 Nov 1943      Halifax HR811      Flight Lieutenant H R Phillips

The aircraft was shot down over the target at Frankfurt and crashed near the towns of Burgstädt and Miltenburg, Germany. 2 fatalities, 6 POWs.

26 Nov 1943      Halifax JD366      Sergeant Douglas Milward Pearson RAFVR

The target was at Frankfurt. The aircraft crashed near Oestrich-Winkel, Germany with all 7 crew killed.

4 Dec 1943      Halifax JD303      Flying Officer Evelin Leon Joseph Key RAFVR

The target was at Leipzig. The aircraft crashed at Luderitz, Germany, but the circumstances are not recorded. 5 fatalities, 2 POWs.

20 Dec 1943      Halifax JD467      Flight Sergeant Robert Fiddes RAFVR

The target was Frankfurt. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter and crashed at Arloff near Euskirchen. 5 fatalities. 2 POWs.

29 Dec 1943      [Halifax HR867](#)      Pilot Officer Augustus Charles Fraser RAAF

The target was at Berlin. The aircraft was repeatedly hit by flak en-route to the target, putting both the port and starboard outer engines out of action, then blowing off the aircraft nose. Later, the aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter and crashed near Rhinow, Germany, killing 1 crew member. The remaining 7 crew bailed out, at low level, and became POWs.

29 Dec 1943      Halifax JD412      Sergeant Edgar Arthur Stokes RAFVR

The target was at Berlin but the fate of the aircraft is not known. 1 fatality, 6 POWs.

*The 2 nights of 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Jan 1944 were disastrous for No. 102 Squadron. Of the total of 31 of the Squadron's aircraft which took off for targets at Berlin and Magdeburg, 11 failed to return, a quite unsustainable loss rate of 35%.*

20 Jan 1944      [Halifax LW337](#)      Flying Officer George Albert Griffiths RAFVR

The target was at Berlin. The aircraft was damaged by an ME 110 nightfighter using its upward-firing cannon (Schräge Musik) and possibly by flak, with the starboard wing and bomb bay on fire. Four of the crew were able to parachute safely from the aircraft but the remaining 4 died when it crashed at Koepenick woods, Berlin. 4 fatalities, 4 POWs.

20 Jan 1944      Halifax HX187      Flying Officer Arthur William Dean RAFVR

The target was Berlin. The aircraft was hit by flak and shot down by a nightfighter, crashing near Ahrensfelde, Germany. 3 fatalities, 5 POWs.

20 Jan 1944      Halifax JN951      Flight Sergeant E Render RAFVR

The target was at Berlin. The remains of the aircraft were discovered post-WW2 near Wensickendorf on the approach to the target. 6 fatalities, 1 POW.

20 Jan 1944      Halifax JD302      Flight Sergeant R W Proctor

On return from the target at Berlin, the aircraft crashed near Norwich. 1 fatality, 1 injured, the remaining 5 crew being slightly injured.

20 Jan 1944      Halifax LW227      Warrant Officer Reginald George Wilding RAFVR

The target was at Berlin. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter and crashed at Neuruppin, Germany. 7 POWs.

20 Jan 1944      Halifax JD461      Flight Sergeant R Compston

The target was at Berlin. The aircraft crashed near Neu-Zittau, Germany. 2 fatalities, 5 POWs.

20 Jan 1944      Halifax HR716      Flying Officer Alexander Henry Hall

The No. 3 petrol tank was holed by flak during an operation to Berlin. The aircraft returned with only 10 mins flying time remaining. 6 crew bailed out with the pilot crash-landing the aircraft 5 miles north of Drifffield. 7 crew uninjured.

21 Jan 1944      Halifax HX149      Flight Sergeant J W Gregory

The target was at Magdeburg. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter as it was leaving the target at Magdeburg, severely damaging the aircraft controls and setting the starboard wing alight. 3 fatalities, 4 POWs.

21 Jan 1944      Halifax JN952      Pilot Officer Michael Francis Headly RCAF

The target was at Magdeburg. The aircraft was shot down near Eindhoven, Netherlands, the pilot retaining control to allow 2 of the crew to bail out. 5 fatalities, 2 POWs.

21 Jan 1944 Halifax HX150 Flight Sergeant Harold Thomas Ellis RAFVR  
The target was at Magdeburg. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter en-route to the target, 40 miles from Flensburg, and is thought to have crashed near Bergen-Becklingen, Germany. 1 fatality, 3 POWs, 3 missing.

22 Jan 1944 Halifax LW274 Sergeant Joseph Morrison Smith RAFVR  
The target was at Magdeburg. On the return flight, the aircraft crashed into the North Sea off Flamborough Head, with the bodies of 2 crew being recovered. 7 fatalities.

29 Jan 1944 Halifax JN950 Flight Lieutenant Albert Edward Kilsby RAFVR  
The target was at Berlin. The aircraft was damaged by a nightfighter, putting 1 engine out of action and injuring 1 crew member. The pilot was awarded a DFC for safely returning the damaged aircraft to base on 3 engines.

29 Jan 1944 Halifax LW277 Pilot Officer Edward William Linsell RAFVR  
The target was at Berlin. The aircraft was hit by flak and set on fire over the target and crashed 20 miles west of Berlin. 1 fatality, 7 POWs.

29 Jan 1944 Halifax JD165 Flight Sergeant David Meurig Evans Pugh  
The aircraft was returning from the target at Berlin but ditched into the North Sea off Montrose. Having spent 2 days and nights in a dinghy with nothing to drink, 4 crew were rescued, suffering from exposure, and returned to RAF Montrose, although 1 crew member died en-route. 3 crew missing.

15 Feb 1944 Halifax HX155 Pilot Officer Ananda Kularatne RAFVR  
The aircraft was shot down over Berlin although the details are not recorded. 8 fatalities.

15 Feb 1944 Halifax LW339 Flight Lieutenant Arthur Hilton RAFVR  
The target was Berlin. The aircraft was hit by flak and shot down by an ME110 nightfighter, crashing at Bartelshagen, Germany. 6 fatalities, 1 POW.

20 Feb 1944 Halifax HX185 Flying Officer W B Dean RCAF  
The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter over the target at Leipzig and crashed in the Stendal area, Germany. 7 crew POWs.

20 Feb 1944 Halifax JN972 Flight Sergeant Kenneth George Cummings RCAF  
The target was at Leipzig. The aircraft crashed near Sulingen. 5 fatalities, 2 POWs.

*In view of the unsustainable loss rate in early 1944, it was decided to withdraw the Halifax Mk II and Mk V aircraft (i.e. with pre-mod 413 rudders) from operations against targets in Germany.*

26 Feb 1944 Halifax LW331 Flight Sergeant Sidney John Rodgers RCAF  
The aircraft was returning from a mine laying operation ('Operation Gardening') when it ditched into the North Sea off Bridlington. Although seen by other aircraft, an extensive search carried out by the Air Sea Rescue Service and by RAF Pocklington aircraft revealed no trace of the aircraft. 7 crew missing.

24 Mar 1944 Halifax HR978 Flight Sergeant James Garside RAFVR  
The target was the railway marshalling yard at Laon but nothing is known of the fate of the aircraft. 7 fatalities.

23 Apr 1944 Halifax HX151 Flying Officer Alexander Henry Hall RAFVR  
The aircraft was minelaying ('Operation Gardening') in the Cadet Channel between Germany and Denmark in the Baltic Sea. The aircraft was shot down by an ME110 nightfighter and crashed into the sea east off Ømo, Denmark. 7 fatalities, with the bodies of some of the crew being washed ashore.

28 Apr 1944 Halifax JN948 Flight Lieutenant Alexis Louis Silverman RAFVR  
The target was the railway marshalling yards at Aulnoye-Aymeries. The aircraft crashed close to the target, 800 yards south of Dourlers, France. 7 fatalities.

*As from May 1944, No. 102 Squadron at RAF Pocklington converted from the Halifax Mk II to the Mk III variant. Operations were resumed against German targets on 16/17<sup>th</sup> June 1944, with 102 Squadron taking part in a raid on Sterkrade, resulting in 5 of the 11 aircraft involved being lost.*

28 May 1944 Halifax MZ649 Fg Off Austin Harold Stanbury Huycke RCAF  
The target was at Bourg Leopold military camp in Belgium. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter over Goeree-Overflakkee. 2 fatalities, 5 POWs.

#### *6 June 1944 – D-Day*

9 Jun 1944 Halifax MZ659 Pilot Officer Stanley William Sambell RAAF  
The aircraft was returning from the target at Alençon, France, became short of fuel and was unable to land at base due to bad weather. The crew successfully bailed out and landed (uninjured) near Carnaby with the aircraft set to crash into the North Sea east of RAF Carnaby.

9 Jun 1944 Halifax LW140 Warrant Officer George Donaldson Jekyll RAAF  
The aircraft was returning from laying mines off the port of Brest ('Operation Gardening') when it crashed at Wassand Hall near Catfoss with all 7 crew being killed, 1 being buried at Pocklington Cemetery.

12 Jun 1944 Halifax MZ651 Flight Sergeant Russel Percival Singleton RAAF  
The target was at Massy Palaisaeu. The aircraft crashed near Autheuil-Authuillet, 9 miles north-east of Evreux, France, with all 7 crew were killed.

17 Jun 1944 Halifax MZ292 Flt Sgt James Guthrie Wallace Kelso RAFVR

The target was the synthetic oil plant at Sterkrade. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter over the North Sea off the Dutch coast. 7 fatalities with the bodies of 3 of the crew being washed ashore.

17 Jun 1944 Halifax MZ652 Flying Officer Austin Vaughan Maxwell RCAF

The target was the synthetic oil plant at Sterkrade. The aircraft crashed at near Südlohn and Oeding in Germany, with all 7 crew being killed.

17 Jun 1944 Halifax LW192 Flt Sgt Eric Frederick Marshall Braddock RAFVR

The target was the synthetic oil plant at Sterkrade. The aircraft was attacked by a nightfighter and exploded, killing all 7 crew. The wreckage fell between Buurmalsen and nearby Buren, 13 miles north of S'Hertogenbosch, Netherlands.

17 Jun 1944 Halifax MZ301 Squadron Leader David Roy Fisher RAFVR

The target was the synthetic oil plant at Sterkrade. The aircraft crashed into the North Sea with all 7 crew missing.

17 Jun 1944 Halifax MZ642 Sergeant Adam John McDowell Barr RAFVR

The target was the synthetic oil plant at Sterkrade. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter and crashed at De Luur, Steenderen, Netherlands. 5 fatalities, 2 POWs.

25 Jun 1944 [Halifax MZ753](#) Squadron Leader Guy Benjamin Treasure RAFVR

The target was the V1 site at Montorgueil Farm near Fontaine L'Etalon. Reportedly, bombs falling from a Halifax of No. 10 Squadron hit Halifax LL549 of No. 77 Squadron based at RAF Full Sutton. The latter lost a wing and then collided with Halifax MZ753, both aircraft crashing near Fontaine L'Etalon in the Pas de Calais. All 7 crew in Halifax MZ753 were killed.

29 Jun 1944 [Halifax LW143](#) Flight Sergeant Nigel Douglas Campbell RAAF

The target was the railway marshalling yard at Blainville sur l'Eau. The aircraft crashed near Lyons-de-Foret to the east of Rouen, Normandy. 3 fatalities, 4 POWs (*see photo at top-right*).

29 Jun 1944 Halifax LW159 Pilot Officer Henry Rogers RAFVR

The target was the railway marshalling yard at Blainville sur l'Eau. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter and crashed near Coeuvres et Valsery, 7 miles north of Villers-Cotterets, France. 6 fatalities, 1 POW.

29 Jun 1944 Halifax NA502 Plt Off George John Frederick Mulvaney RAAF

The target was the railway marshalling yard at Blainville sur l'Eau. The aircraft crashed 1 mile north-east of Ons-en-Bray, France. 2 fatalities, 1 POW, 4 evaded capture.



*Wreckage of Halifax LW143 (29 Jun 1944)*

29 Jun 1944 [Halifax MZ644](#) Sergeant Basil Robinson Jardine RAFVR

The target was the railway marshalling yard at Blainville sur l'Eau. Reportedly the aircraft was hit in the starboard engines and wing, the nose and the rear turret by 'friendly' fire from a Halifax flying shortly ahead of MZ644 and crashed at Foret de Wassy, 6 miles south of St. Dizier, France. 3 fatalities, 4 evaded capture.

29 Jun 1944 Halifax MZ646 Sergeant Keith Robinson RAFVR

The target was the railway marshalling yard at Blainville sur l'Eau. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter and crashed at Fresnoy-la-Rivière. 5 fatalities, 2 POW.

24 Jul 1944 [Halifax MZ298](#) Plt Off Harley William Edwards Donald RAAF

The target was the V1 site at Les Hauts Buissons. On the return leg, the aircraft was shot down over the North Sea by a fighter and was seen to spiral dive over the North Sea with both port engines on fire. 6 fatalities, 1 crew member rescued by a naval vessel (which also picked up 2 bodies).

25 Jul 1944 Halifax LL552 Flt Sgt Aubrey James ('Jimmy') Page RAFVR

The target was at Stuttgart. On the return flight, the aircraft was attacked by a nightfighter with the starboard wing bursting into flames and breaking away. The aircraft entered a spin and crashed near Lisieux, France. 6 fatalities, 1 POW.

30 Jul 1944      Halifax NA503      Flt Sgt James Evan McKenzie Hulme RNZAF

The sortie was abandoned before reaching the target in the Normandy battle area and, on return, the aircraft crashed into trees while attempting to land in bad weather at Blockley, near Moreton in the Marsh. 7 fatalities.

13 Aug 1944      Halifax LW195      Flying Officer Stanley William Sambell RAAF

The target was at Brunswick. The aircraft crashed near Rinteln, Germany. 2 fatalities. 5 POWs.

13 Aug 1944      Halifax MZ647      Flight Lieutenant Philip Edward Young RAAF

The target was at Russelsheim but nothing is known of the fate of the aircraft. 7 fatalities.

16 Aug 1944      Halifax NA504      Flt Sgt Lawrence William Coughlan RAFVR

The target was at Kiel but nothing is known of the fate of the aircraft. 8 fatalities.

12 Sep 1944      Halifax MZ699      Pilot Officer Phillip Henry Groves RAFVR

The aircraft crashed near Kinderhaus Railway station near the target at Münster. 2 fatalities, 5 POW.

17 Sep 1944      [Halifax MZ289](#)      Captain Ronald Carby Thompson SAAF

The aircraft was carrying out an operational flight over the North Sea (possibly engaged in bomb disposal) but failed to return. Extensive sea searches with flares that night by Warwick maritime reconnaissance aircraft from RAF Chatham, followed by a 102 Squadron Halifax the following day, were unsuccessful. 1 fatality, 6 missing.

2 Nov 1944      Halifax MZ798      Lieutenant James Errol Begbie SAAF

The target was at Dusseldorf. The aircraft was damaged by friendly fire from another bomber, then shot down by a JU88 fighter, crashing south of Leuven, Belgium (by then in liberated territory). 3 fatalities. The remaining crew bailed out and survived.

2 Nov 1944      Halifax LW141      Flying Officer John Redmond RAFVR

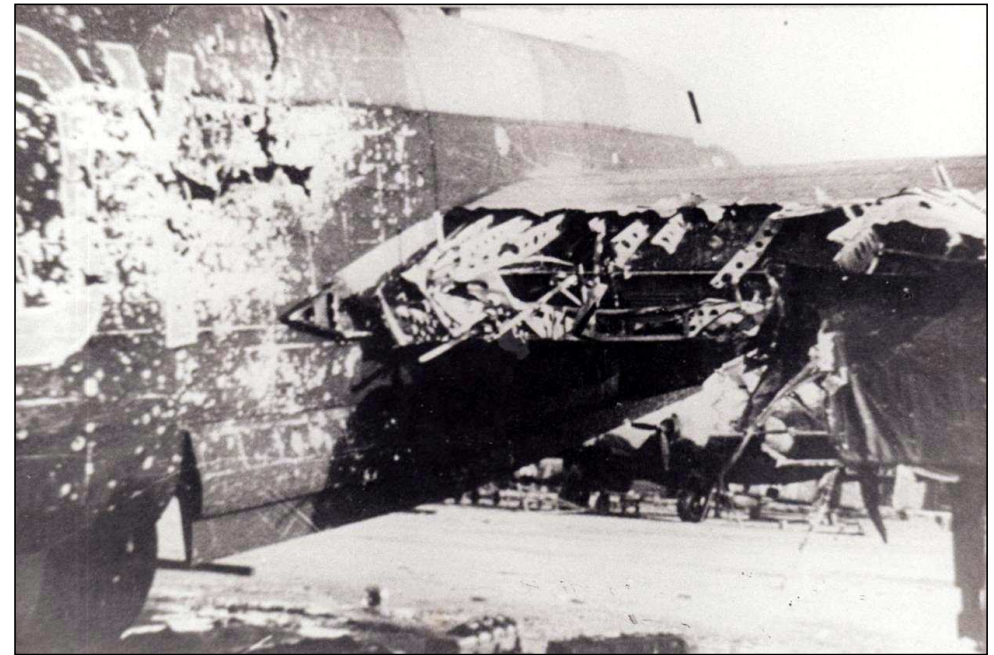
The target was at Dusseldorf. Details of the loss are not available but the aircraft crashed 15 miles south-east of Aachen, Germany. 6 fatalities, 1 POW.

4 Nov 1944      Halifax MZ772      Flying Officer Anthony Carlyle Cameron RAFVR

The target was at Bochum. The aircraft crashed on the Belgian border between Aachen and Laurensberg, Germany. 7 fatalities.

16 Nov 1944      Halifax NA165      Flying Officer Eric Jesse Francis RAFVR

The target was at Jülich in support of Operation Queen and the allied offensive against the Siegfried Line. The aircraft was hit by flak over the target area with a wing badly damaged and a crew member injured. On return, the aircraft diverted to RAF Woodbridge. (*See photo above right.*)



*Halifax NA165 post-diversion to RAF Woodbridge (16 Nov 1944)*

24 Dec 1944      Halifax MZ871      Flying Officer Evan Roberts RAFVR

The target was at Mulheim (one of several airfields thought to be a forward supply point for the Ardennes offensive). The aircraft crashed near Neuss, Germany. 2 fatalities, 5 POWs, 1 missing.

24 Dec 1944      Halifax LW168      Pilot Officer Edward Hislop RAFVR

The target was at Mulheim (one of several airfields thought to be a forward supply point for the Ardennes offensive). The aircraft was hit by flak and crashed near Krefeld, Germany. 2 fatalities, 5 POWs.

5 Jan 1945      Halifax MZ796      Flying Officer John F Bergman RCAF

The target was at Hannover. The aircraft was hit by flak and crashed between Mariensee and Neustadt am Rübenge, Germany. 5 fatalities, 2 POWs.

5 Jan 1945      Halifax LL597      Flight Lieutenant J T Jones RAFVR

The target was at Hannover. The aircraft was shot down near Littel, 3 miles SSW of Wardenburg. 5 fatalities. 3 POWs.

5 Jan 1945      Halifax NA602      Captain Ronald W Frederick Heiden SAAF

The target was at Hannover. The aircraft came under fire from a nightfighter and exploded, crashing on the Freilingen (Garbsen) – Otterhägen road, 15 miles north-west of Hannover. 7 fatalities, 1 POW.

16 Jan 1945      Halifax LW179      Squadron Leader Arthur Henry Jarand RAF

The target was at Magdeburg. The aircraft crashed near Wolfshagen im Harz, Germany. 7 fatalities.

7 Feb 1945      Halifax LW142      Flg Off Ronald William Smallwoods RAFVR

The target was at Goch to hinder German troop movements. The aircraft was shot down by a nightfighter and the aircraft crashed at Hamme Mille, Belgium. 7 fatalities.

7 Feb 1945      Halifax NA175      Pilot Officer William Reveler Smith RAFVR

The target was at Goch. The aircraft was attacked by an unidentified aircraft after leaving the target area and crashed near Lommel, Belgium. The crew had been ordered to bail out, with 1 fatality, 2 injured, 4 uninjured. (Belgium had been liberated by this date.)

5 Mar 1945      Halifax RG502      Flying Officer John Albert Hurley RAFVR

The target was at Chemnitz. The aircraft crashed near Volyne, SSW of Strakonice, Czechoslovakia. 4 fatalities, 3 POWs.

15 Mar 1945      Halifax RG498      Flt Lt William Herbert Ames Dick RAFVR

The target was the Benzol distillation plant at Matthias Stinnes. The aircraft was damaged by flak, losing a fin and starboard rudder, with the elevators being jammed. The aircraft diverted to RAF Manston, veered off the runway, caught fire and was burnt out. The crew were able to escape uninjured.

19 Mar 1945      Halifax PP179      Flying Officer Royston Donald Jeff RAFVR

The target was the rail facilities and industries at Witten. The aircraft crashed near Dortmund/Brechten, Germany (no other details recorded). 7 fatalities.

*25 Apr 1945 – the last major offensive air operation conducted from RAF Pocklington in WW2.*

**8 May 1945 – VE day**

10 May 1945      Halifax RG503      Possibly Flight Lieutenant Leonard Fenny RAFVR

The aircraft was on a bomb disposal sortie but experienced control problems and ditched in the North Sea near the coast, with all crew being rescued.

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## Glossary

### *Aircraft accident damage repair categories* (during WW2):

- U Undamaged
  - A Damage repairable on site (using own unit resources or with specialist assistance from a visiting team e.g. a maintenance unit or the manufacturer).
  - B Damage not repairable on site (normally requiring the aircraft to be transported to a maintenance unit or returned to the manufacturer).
  - E Damage not considered economically repairable (the aircraft would normally be written off and/or used for replacement parts).
- /FA Flying accident (used as a suffix to any of categories A-E, e.g. B/FA).
- /EA Enemy action (used as a suffix to any of the categories A-E, e.g. E/EA).

### *RAF non-commissioned and commissioned ranks* (Acting and Substantive):

Sgt	Sergeant
Flt Sgt	Flight Sergeant
W O	Warrant Officer
Plt Off	Pilot Officer
Fg Off	Flying Officer
Flt Lt	Flight Lieutenant
Sqn Ldr	Squadron Leader
Wg Cdr	Wing Commander
Gp Capt	Group Captain

*A&AEE* – The Aeroplane & Armaments Experimental Establishment, established in 1917 but re-located to RAF Boscombe Down, Wiltshire, at the commencement of WW2. Primarily responsible for developing new airborne systems and armaments as they become available, performance assessment and acceptance trials.

*Aldis lamp* – A lamp, usually hand-held, used for signalling between ground units (e.g. air traffic control units) and aircraft, normally with red, green and white filters. The Morse code is generally used to transmit longer messages which, for brevity, may use codewords.

*Beam approach beacon system* – A ground-based unit located at airfields, providing an electronic beam transmitted to an indicator in the aircraft showing the left-right alignment of the aircraft approach relative to the runway in use.

*Bomber defence flight* – A subsidiary training flight of aircraft and crews normally co-located at a bomber base and providing training and practice for operational bomber crews at several nearby bomber bases.

*CFIT – Controlled Flight into Terrain.*

*Conversion Flight* – A non-operational sortie often conducted and supervised by a designated instructor pilot, with the aim of providing air instruction and practice either for one or more trainee pilots, or perhaps for a partial or complete crew, during their training phase before becoming fully operational. Normally the training sortie would be with one or more trainee pilots, exchanging seats as the sorties progressed.

*Empennage* – The stabilizing features of an aircraft located at the rear of the fuselage, normally consisting of the tailplane, the elevators, rudders, fins, and trimmers, all controllable by the pilot.

*FFAF* – Free French Air Force.

*FIDO* – Fog Investigation and Dispersal Operation. ‘FIDO’ was a system developed during WW2 where fuel (normally aviation fuel) fed to pipes alongside a fog-bound runway could be ignited, resulting in a ‘pea-souper’ being burnt off to a height sufficient for an aircraft to visually identify and conduct a landing onto a runway which would not otherwise be feasible.

*‘Fish pond’* A feature of the H2S radar (*qv*), allowing the operator to locate and monitor the behaviour of friendly or potentially hostile aircraft within a range equal to the altitude of the bomber, e.g. up to 4nm range at an altitude of 24,000 feet.

*Fine pitch* – (3 Mar 1942) Along with coarse pitch, a setting of the propeller blade angle relative to the airflow to enhance efficient transfer of power from the engine. In very broad terms, equivalent to the gearbox of a car engine.

*Flap controls* – Flaps are subsidiary wing surfaces. usually located at the rear of the main wing, which can be angled down to optimise the lift characteristics of the wing at slow speeds (e.g. on take-off and, especially, during the landing approach).

*Flare path* – The static lighting arrangement located alongside the active runway, enabling the pilot to identify the runway at night or in adverse weather, and to gauge the angle of approach to the runway.

*Gee* – An early electronic navigation system consisting of ground transmitters and aircraft receivers enabling an aircraft position to be determined. Accuracy was dependent upon the distance between the aircraft and the Gee ground transmitter ‘chain’.

*Ground loop* – A situation (usually after landing) where the aircraft was unable to maintain directional control and veered off the runway, with the veer continuing perhaps towards or through a full 360° turn (horizontal loop).

*H2S centimetre radar* – A self-contained aircraft radar system with scanner (independent of ground transmitters) used primarily for ground mapping and target identification at night or in non-visual conditions.

*Heavy Conversion Unit* – An independent unit normally co-located on a bomber aircraft station and, with qualified instructors (especially instructor-pilots) responsible for the conversion training of bomber crews onto the 4-engined ‘heavy’ bombers before they gained operational status.

*Landing circuit* – An airfield traffic pattern used to co-ordinate aircraft take-offs and landings in the vicinity of the airfield.

*Operation Gisela* – the Luftwaffe operation to optimise the use of its dwindling fuel reserves by utilising experienced nightfighter crews to act as intruders in the UK, following bombers back to their bases and attacking them at their most vulnerable time while recovering for landing. (See for example Part 2 on 4 Mar 1945.)

*ORB* – Operation Record Book produced by a squadron or higher formation as a written record of the unit history, aircraft accidents and so on.

*OTU* – Operational Training Unit preparing pilots and crews for operating particular aircraft types or for particular roles.

*Pilot Advance Flying Unit* – One of several specialist units involved in training pilots on advanced flying skills.

*Q decoy site* – One of several decoy and deception methods to mislead enemy bombers by representing dummy targets, real targets (but in the wrong place), diversionary fires and simulated urban lighting.

*R/T communication* – Voice communication between aircraft and ground units using radio sets operating on the HF (high frequency) and VHF (very high frequency) wavebands.

*RAAF* – Royal Australian Air Force.

*RAF Form 540* – standardised RAF form used for recording squadron and unit Operation Record Books (ORB – *qv.*)

*RAFVR* – Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

*RCAF* – Royal Canadian Air Force.

*RDF* – Radio Direction Finding. Ground-based electronic apparatus measuring the magnetic bearing of a radio signal, e.g. an R/T transmission from an aircraft.

*Reduction gear* – Gears enabling propeller RPM to be reduced to optimise power transmission from the engine to the airflow (in effect similar to a car gearbox).

*RNoAF* – Royal Norwegian Air Force.

*RNZAF* – Royal New Zealand Air Force.

*RSAAF* – Royal South African Air Force.

*Satellite dispersal airfield* – Subsidiary landing ground, usually linked to a nearby operational airfield to allow aircraft to be further dispersed to minimise effects of air attack.

*Station flight* – Subsidiary unit on an operational airfield, often using different aircraft types, mainly used for training flights and communications.

*USAAF* – United States Army Air Force (the forerunner of the United States Air Force).

*VI* – An unmanned, rocket-powered German flying bomb ('buzz-bomb' or 'doodlebug'), either ground-launched from a 'ski ramp', or air-launched to increase the effective range.

*Yaw* – The angle between the fore-and-aft axis of an aircraft and its direction of travel through the air. Akin to 'side-slip'.

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