

Date :17-06-1944

Time :01.51 h

Aircraft :Lancaster I ME-840

Codes :BQ-V

Squadron :550 Squadron RAF

Base :North Killingholme, Lincolnshire A/C took off at 23.05 h

Crashed :A/C exploded in air, main part of a/c came down behind the farm "Oude Liefink" of G.J. Heusinkveld, E-78 at Heelweg. Tail section came down near farm "Nieuwe Vennesschuur" (Hoftijzer). Municipality of Wisch

Due to :Nightfighter. Oblt Josef Nabricht, 3./NJG 1. FF Kurfürst 6.000 m, 01.49 hrs. Also claimed by Oblt Georg Fengler, Stab IV./NJG 1, FF Kurfürst 4.000 m, 01.51 hrs. Both claims confirmed as full victories 07-10-44.

Target :Sterkrade/Holten synthetic oil plant.

Remarks :321 aircraft – 162 Halifaxes, 147 Lancasters and 12 Mosquitoes of 1, 4, 6 and 8 Groups to attack the synthetic oil plant despite poor weather forecast. Target was covered by thick cloud but the glow of the PFF markings could be clearly seen. Most of the bombing was scattered. 31 aircraft lost. A/C bombed target. 19 a/c of 550 Squadron took part in this raid. 1 early return, 3 failed to return.

**Crew killed in crash:**

S/Ldr Gavin Strang <b>SMITH</b> From Perth. "B" Flight Commander	108543(DFC) Age 22	Pilot Plot A Grave 22
F/O John Joseph <b>BERG</b> From Grimsby, Lincolnshire. Husband of Frances Berg.	129551(DFC) Age 23	Navigator Plot A Coll.Grave 12-14
F/Sgt Ralph <b>TOWNSEND</b> From Emley, Yorkshire.	1078579(DFM) Age 23	W.Op/Air Gunner Plot A Coll. Grave 12-14
F/Lt St John <b>TIZARD</b> From England.	112026	Mid Upper Gnr
F/O James <b>HEATH</b> From Toronto, Ontario, Canada.	J-20002(RCAF) Age 35	Rear Gunner Plot A Grave 11
F/O James <b>PULFREY</b> From Sheffield. Bailed out but found dead on the ground. (Gandvoortweg, Aalten)	148869 Age 29	Air Bomber Plot A Grave 15

Casualties were buried in Varsseveld General Cemetery, June 19, 1944 at 18.00 hrs.

**Evaded:**

F/O Roy <b>KAY</b> From Whitwick, Leicestershire. Blown out of the aircraft and parachuted to safety.	53358	Flight Engineer
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Details Collected by: Karl Lusink, Strengscheveld 29, 6996 DK, Drempt.

AIR WAR RESEARCHER

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