

ALEC'S OPERATIONAL FLIGHT RECORDS

These operational details were obtained from the Kew Records Office.

Alec was recorded as being on his 29th operation when his Lancaster LM595 was shot down, probably by a German Night Fighter. I have only been able to find records of 26 of the operations, the first 2 of which are when Alec was Co Pilot. Some of the information is of a technical nature and abbreviated but I have tried to write it as seen. The details I have are as follows:-

1st March 1944 Plane Lancaster R5486 Take off 23.20 hrs rtrn 07.05hrs Target Stuttgart

Pilot P/O Godfrey

Co Pilot F/Sgt J. E. A. Pyle

Crew Stewart

Sewell (NZ)

Chirighin

Gardner (NZ)

Rose

Willis

Bombed centre of skymarkers at 03.05 hrs from 23,000 ft. Heading 070deg. Markers well concentrated. Big explosion at 03.01hrs and large one at 03.06hrs.

15th March 1944 Plane Lancaster LM466 Take off 19.10hrs rtrn 02.45. hrs. Target Stuttgart

Pilot P/O Derisley

Co Pilot F/ Sgt J.E.A. Pyle

Same crew

Bombed centre of red T.Is at 23.24hrs from 21,000ft heading 010deg. Raid scattered but some good fires observed

ALEC NOW PROMOTED TO PILOT

26th March Plane Lancaster LL859 Take off 20.05hrs. Rtrn 00.55hrs Target Essen

Pilot F/S J.E.A. Pyle

Same Crew

Centre of green T Is bombed at 22.05hrs from 22,000 ft. Heading 141deg Reflection of large fires seen on cloud.

30th March 1944 Plane Lancaster ND781 Take off 22.25hrs. rtrn 00.55hrs. Target Nuremburg

Pilot F/Sgt J.E.A. Pyle

Crew same

Operation abandoned due to u/s guns in rear turret. Farthest point reached 5105N 0340E At 00.46hrs. Load Jettisoned.

10th April 1944 Plane Lancaster LL859 Take off 01.20hrs rtrn. 06.20hrs. Target Laon Marshelling Yards

Pilot F/Sgt J.E.A. Pyle.

Same crew

Bombed red T Is at 03.49hrs. from 9000ft heading 079deg. Very concentrated bombing in and around markers.

18th April 1944 Plane Lancaster LL859 Take off 22.35hrs rtn. 02.40 hrs. Target Rouen

Pilot Flight Sergeant J.E.A. Pyle

Same crew

Bombed markers as directed at 00.51 hrs. From 12000ft. Heading 024deg. Marking very good and bombing was accurate.

20th April 1944 Plane Lancaster ND765 Take off 01.20hrs. rtn. 04.45hrs. Target Kolin.

Pilot Flight Sergeant J. E. A. Pyle.

Same crew.

Bombed green flares at 02.13hrs. from 20000ft. Heading 017deg. 10/10 Cloud over target but raid seemed concentrated.

24 April 1944. Plane Lancaster LL802 Take off 21.55hrs. rtn. 03.40hrs. Target Karlsruhe.

Pilot Flight Sergeant J.E.A. Pyle. Note that there is now a new crew, who stayed together for the remainder of the operational flights.

Crew Flt/Sgt P.A. MacGibbon

Flt/Sgt E. Crowther

Sgt. A.H. Hall

Flt/Sgt. L. Tomlinson

Pilot Officer W.H. Pool (Royal Canadian Airforce)

Sgt. J.L. Spaven

Bombed centre of flares at 00.45hrs at 19,000ft.

26 April 1944. Plane Lancaster LL802 Take off 22.50hrs rtn. 03.05hrs. Target Essen

Pilot Flight Sergeant J.E.A. Pyle.

Same crew.

Bombed centre of red T1's at 01.31hrs. from 20,000ft. Good concentration of bombing and fires burning well.

1st May 1944. Plane Lancaster LL802 Take off 22.30hrs rtn. 02.45hrs. Target Chambly.

Pilot Flight Sergeant J.E.A. Pyle.

Same crew.

Bombed yellow T1's at 00.27hrs from 8,000ft. Bombing well concentrated and attack appeared successful.

19 May 1944 Plane Lancaster LM 466 Take off 22.05hrs. rtn. 02.50hrs. Target Le Mans Marshaling Yard.

Pilot Flight Sergeant J.E.A. Pyle.

Same crew.

Bombing very concentrated and target visually identified.

21st May 1944 Plane Lancaster LM466 Take off 22.55hrs. rtn. 03.00hrs. Target Duisburg.

Pilot Flight Sergeant J.E.A. Pyle.

Same crew

Bombed Red T1's at 01.15hrs from 21,000ft. No results observed.

31st May 1944 Plane Lancaster LL802 Take off 23.45hrs. rtn. 04.45 hrs. Target Trappes.
Pilot Flight Sergeant J.E.A. Pyle.
Same Crew
Bombed White Tl's with undershoot at 02.00hrs from 9,000ft Saw own bombs go down on White Tl's

2nd June 1944. Plane Lancaster LM466. Take off 00.25hrs. rtn. 03.20hrs. Target Wissant.
Pilot Flight Sergeant J.E.A. Pyle.
Same crew.
Bombed Red Tl,s from 5,800ft.

6th JUNE 1944 ALEC PROMOTED TO PILOT OFFICER J.E.A.PYLE 175907 G.D. PILOT
APPOINTED TO COMMISSION.

12th June 1944 Plane Lancaster LL885. Take off 23.00hrs. rtn. 03.00hrs. Target Wissant.
Now Pilot Officer J.E.A. Pyle.
Crew same. Navigator Flt.Sgt P.A.MacGibbon.
Wireless Operator Flt.Sgt. E. Crowther.
Flight Engineer.Sgt. A.H.Hall
Bomb Aimer Flt. Sgt. L. Tomlinson
Air Gunner Pilot Officer W.H. Pool. Royal Canadian Air force.
Air Gunner Sgt. J.L. Spaven.
Bombed southerly Tl,s from 21,000ft. Several sticks of bombs observed bursting on Tl,s. Many fires with large amount of smoke.

14th June 1944. Plane Lancaster LM595. Take off 23.45hrs. Rtn. 03.00hrs. Target Gelsenkirchen.
Pilot Officer J.E.A. Pyle.
Same crew.
Bombed between Green and Red Tl,s. From 14,000ft. Identified Docks and Town bombing accurate.

15th June 1944, Plane Lancaster LM595 Take off 23.20hrs. rtn. 01.55hrs. Target Valenciennes.
Pilot Officer J.E.A.Pyle.
Same Crew.
Bombed Red and Green Tl's at 00.36hrs. from 7,000hrs.Saw Marshaling Yards. Red and Greens on target. Bombing concentrated.

17th June 1944, Plane Lancaster LM 595 Take off 01.00hrs. rtn.05.05hrs. Target Montdidier.
Pilot Officer J.E.A. Pyle.
Same Crew.
Ordered not to bomb by M/B. Bombs returned.

23rd June 1944, Plane Lancaster LM595. Take off 23.10hrs. rtn. 01.45hrs. Target L,Hey.
Pilot Officer J.E.A. Pyle. Same Crew.
Bombed centre of red glow at 00.18hrs from 8,000ft. Low clouds.

24th June 1944. Plane Lancaster LM595 Take off 23.20hrs. rtrn. 02.05hrs Target Timeux.
Pilot Officer J.E.A. Pyle.
Same Crew.
Bombed Red T's at 00.34hrs. from 8,000ft. All T's very concentrated. Bombing accurate.

26th JUNE 1944. ALEC GRANTED THE RANK OF FLYING OFFICER.

27th June 1944. Plane Lancaster LM595. Take off 23.40hrs. rtrn. 03.05hrs. Target Biennais.
Pilot. Flying Officer J.E.A. Pyle.
Same Crew.
Bombed glow of Red T's. At 01.14hrs. from 13,500hrs. No observations.

2nd July 1944. Plane ID IM595. Take off 12.25hrs. rtrn. 16.15hrs. Target Beauvoir. (Daylight Raid)
Pilot. Flying Officer J.E.A. Pyle.
Same Crew.
Bombed Yellow T's from 12,000ft.

17th July 1944. Plane Lancaster LM595. Take off 10.55hrs. rtrn. 14.10hrs. Target Not specified.
(Daylight Raid)
Pilot. Flying Officer J.E.A. Pyle.
Same Crew.
Aircraft recalled to base.

18th July 1944. Plane Lancaster LM595. Take off 03.35hrs. rtrn. 07.40hrs. Target Caen. (Daylight Raid)
Pilot. Flying Officer J.E.A. Pyle.
Same Crew.
Bombed Red T's at 06.06hrs from 9,500ft. Bombing concentrated. Much smoke.

18th July 1944. Plane Lancaster LM595. Take off 22.45hrs. Rtrn. 02.50hrs. Target Aulnoye.
Pilot Flying Officer J.E.A. Pyle.
Same crew.
Bombed Green T's from 9,000ft. Concentrated raid.

20th July 1944. Plane Lancaster LM595. Take off 23.10hrs. NOTHING HEARD AFTER TAKE OFF.
Target. Homburg Oil Plant installation in Germany.
Pilot.....Flying Officer J.E.A. Pyle. R.A.F. Age 22
Navigator.....Flight Sergeant P.A. Mac Gibbon. R.A.F.
Wireless Operator..Flight Sergeant E. Crowther. R.A.F. Age 36
Flight Engineer.....Sergeant A.H. Hall. R.A.F. Age 23
Bomb Aimer.....Flight Sergeant L. Tomlinson. R.A.F. Age 24
Air Gunner.....Pilot Officer W.H. Pool. (Royal Canadian Air Force). Age 20
Air Gunner.....Sergeant J. L. Spaven R.A.F. Age 35

Other records reveal that the plane, Lancaster LM595, was shot down, probably by a night fighter, at approximately 01.45 hrs. In or near to Oude Tonge on the island of Overflaake, Netherlands.

In view of the time lapse between taking off at 23.10hrs and the crash time given as 01.45hrs., and allowing a deduction of 1 hour for time difference, this would give a flying time of 1 hr. 35 min. It would appear that the plane crashed on the outward leg of its flight to bomb the Oil Plant Installation at Homburg, Germany. See records from Ray Allard 1/6/1995, which gives details of bomb load being carried.

The crew were buried initially in graves near to the crash site. Although one report indicates that Flight Sgt Crother was buried in a separate area. It was presumed that he had bailed out but was too low to survive. After the war the bodies were then reburied where they are now at the Bergen-Op-Zoom War Cemetery, Netherlands. See photographs.