

Firestorms.

Germany's second largest city, Hamburg had 4 RIF and 2 U.S. raids from 24th to 29th July '43. All the Bomber Command raids were of over 700 planes. The 3rd raid, on 26th caused a huge firestorm with heavy casualties & damage. Despite hundreds of raids on cities this was the first firestorm. Some of the reasons may have been: a more dense raid (in area & time) from the NW; use of WINDOW nullifying their radar; a compact city with few open spaces; prior air raid damage. However, it was a 'fluke'.. no one could predict such a fire. Despite all the raids on cities, before & after that, the next big one was at Darmstadt on Sept 11th, '44, and no more until 1945... Magdeburg 16 Jan; Dresden 13th Feb; Pforzheim 23rd Feb. & Wurzburg 16th Mar. There was a great 'hoo-ha' after the war about Dresden, but it was, along with Berlin, Leipzig & Chemnitz, all threatened by Russians... and raids on them ^{were} asked for at the Yalta Conference

Our crew took part in 3 raids, just by 5 Group, with about 200 Lancs, causing firestorms on the cities Stuttgart (12.9.44), Bremerhaven (18.9.44) & Bremen (~~18~~ 16.10.44)... perhaps because of 5 Group's good marking, with bombing much condensed in time & space compared to "earlier times." I have seen no record of these 3 fires in the several books I've read about Bomber Command.

"Lutzow." On 17.12.44 our crew was one of just a few picked to attack the Lutzow & another pocket battleship at Gdynia (Poland) Crew the years I've tried to find out what happened to the Lutzow... & recently found, on p.183 of a book

"Lancaster, The Biography" by 617 Sqn Pilot Weson, when they attacked it with Tallboys & 1000 pounders... "tore a hole in the bottom of Lutzow & she settled to the bottom in shallow water."