

Notes of interview with William Parry D.F.S.M. Ground Crew.  
11.8.94 - Andrew Hobley

Born 1912. Left school 1928. Lived in Borthwick.

Moved to Church Station to work for G.W.R. Reserved occupation. Left job and joined R.A.F.R., intending to become air crew (1940). At Cardington failed as air crew as night vision insufficient. Offered chance to return to job (as not conscripted) but asked for job to do with aircraft and flying. Sent to Hatton on engineering course. On 2 week leave pass went through Coventry on day after raid with fellow "Harrow Boys" who came from Coventry.

Joined 4 Sqn. R.A.F. 1940 as L.A.C. After 4/5 months sent back to do Conversion Course at Cosford. Applied to go on Flying Boat Squadron (as Sunderlands always had a ground crew member). Posted back to 4 Sqn.

4 Sqn had Wellingtons till June '42  
Mincasters June '42 - Aug '42  
Lancasters after.

Main fault of Lancaster tendency to swing to port on take off, due to airflow from propeller. Saw one pilot (new) swing to port, overcompensate to starboard, aircraft etc. collapsed, port wing ripped, fire started. Never saw crew leave plane so fast! After fire + bomb load went off no need for crane to pick up pieces!

Sent on two short courses with A.V.R. at Woolfold, one Lancaster assembly stage had failed. Came off line (three hrs, one or perhaps) didn't fail, taken straight up by pilot and untested.

As Segt. Supised maintenance of 3 ac. Towards end of  
war was flying F/187 in B flight, supisingly 9-10 ac.  
Not yet involved with repair work himself but signed air worthy form.  
Normally 3 men per aircraft, two engine filters, one airframe filter.

For EB 656 - Engine filters. Bob Taylor  
Alan Willgress (from Kins Lynn)  
Airframe filter. "Pop" Brookett (from Boscombe, Hants)  
Bucknell Royal Navy.

Stayed with 9 Sqn. the disbanded 1446 Service ac.

With "Tallyho," - beautifly engraved bomb. shone to waste with  
steel in a bomb. Held in bays by stay - would sometimes drop  
back on take-off or landing - but would break through bulkhead  
at rear of bay, thus causing drop. Bom Bay 14-1.44. Close trouble

After leaving R.A.F. - (would have pretend to stay in bays with  
pilot because of G.W.R. did not want to find him -  
found job with local electrical board in Shropshire.

Enjoyed the wartime years, despite of the dangers.

Little interference from higher authority.

) Not allowed to take off if both magnetos in each engine  
not working. Avl. landed off base - went to check up  
crew said may not working. One eng. dead. Sqn. Leader  
with him decided to take off & land (Normal to take off w/  
flying)

- y) A/C dropped in at half braked airfield, only half a runway - landed O.K., but take off problem. Took off all armament + armor, minimum fuel load, picked up boost to engine and got a/c off.
- 3) Was A/C. landed little Sparng. All gone but two. First one motor and airframe O.K. rest duff. Pilot W/loq + Battery took off. No wireless, no IFF. Muster day. Went up to 2000', above cloud, and flew over work. Pilot suddenly noticed little black pits ahead - flat! Dived through cloud to be seen - was Navy.
- 4) End of war - flew to little airfield (not liberated) to set up POW shuttle. Aim to get German party established. Took two Lances loaded with equipment. Spare wheels loaded into bomb bay. Got to take off - pilot found b bay doors would not close before of last - took off with door open - very drafty - landed with feet frozen.
- 5) Close share with John Evans. Had problem with us. Party asked for a shot. Evans asked for Bill to come up too or F/Eng. Went to Waco field, dropped S-8 practice bombs. Had permission to return at low level - went down low we see of Skymaster, then over land 200'. Came over front on S phibian. Was dropped on right down low - on full wt at end of run took off after tree. Temp in sled were shot up. Party with feathers or smoke coming wt. rest of engine to full power took up to 2000'. Engine still smoking. Evans suggested may have to jettison. Party not annoyed or not worried however (unfortunately) and chose back by extreme board.

Smoke fired off - was at first steam. Got back to base  
but after 1/2, main gear damaged. Was forced Court Martial  
- but lost in action before that.

b) Superstition. Flyer Tom Lava (NZ) senior R-Catnadr.  
Always had St Christopher medallion on instrument panel.  
(flown later WS-V) Flying had to make sure medallion  
wore of flew other w/c.  
Completed tour & went to training Command at Gwadabey.  
Killed in accident caused by ground crew. Up second  
flight he never got blinded with fog. Av. engine Captains  
fire. Oil leaked. 7 men. Causes = 2 ground crew killed.  
Oil line had been plugged with fog and engine over heated.  
Died at New Zealand war cemetery. (Also in command no chkd).  
Buried in London.

c) W. Kelly moved to Bodney. Paddy joined soon after

at it was foggy - cold turn Lancaster made up. Close  
friends. Much flying deals in Sqd Mess, Garage Held London  
+ pts by railway station.

Came from Waterford. Took national and passed diff.  
Joined up to fly. Only captain of aircraft seen Non-Can.  
Wong ~~knows~~<sup>captain</sup> called him in + said should apply for  
commission - delighted to meet an Englishman who was still  
patriotic." Paddy told him what to do with commission.  
Never less commissioned later

Feathers less probably killed him. If 5-year was 250 too  
low, go lower. Would let down or cloudy etc and  
see very above clouds. Possibly flying on. Not holding  
back. Originally had 2 crew survival, then only one (or greater)  
I guess of war - no wisdom though as many as last. Didn't think like us English.

Paddy's opinion of war - no opinion. Bomb us many as can!

Photo (E8656+view) taken after anti-air raid when Crockett killed