

## NORMAN PIERCY - RESEARCH NOTES

### 149 Sqn

The squadron also formed No. 149 Squadron Conversion flight on 21 January 1942 to train new Stirling crews and on 7 October 1942 this was formed into 1657 Heavy Conversion Unit (HCU) together with 7, 101 and 218 Squadron Conversion Flights. In August 1944, the Stirlings gave way to [Avro Lancasters](#), which served the squadron until 1949.

### **Aircraft**

November 1941-June 1943: Short Stirling I (probably Normans time)

February 1943-September 1944: Short Stirling III

### **Location**

6 April 1942-15 May 1944: Lakenheath (Normans photos are labelled Topcliffe)

### Letter to 405 (Canadian) Sqn

*I am son in law to a now deceased WW2 member of 405 Sqn. He was a Flight Engineer and his name was Norman Piercy. His son and I have been working through his vast collection of photographs of his and his family's life and have discovered some of his wartime RAF days. He served with 405 Sqn and then moved to the Pathfinders with 156 Sqn. In the collection we have found some photos from his time with 405. They include photos of his crew and include one of Flt Sgt GA Davis DFM stamped "Copyright Air Ministry" on the rear.*

*Norman narrowly escaped death while on 405 Sqn when he was declared unfit to fly and was replaced on a sortie on 03 Dec 1943. His crew never returned and are now buried together in Berlin along with the Engineer who replaced him. Had Norman been fit he would have flown and would not have survived. Sadly, the DFM holder Flt Sgt Davis was among the crew who perished.*

*We are not sure how many sorties Norman did with 405 as sadly his log book is missing. Our research is that Norman went on to complete 28 Ops with 156 before he was involved in a ground incident at Upwood when, on landing after being hit by flak, the bombs they returned with exploded killing 7 groundcrew and injuring Norman. He had to have his right leg amputated but strived on to become a General Practitioner doctor and was also one of the first one legged downhill skiers in the UK.*

*If you are interested in receiving more info or copies of the photographs then please supply me with an e mail address.*

*Regards*

*Trevor Riley*



From IBCC database

# DAVIS, GEORGE

## Personal Information

Rank F/S

Forename(s) George Albert

Surname DAVIS

Gender M

Age 22

Decorations DFM

Date of death 04-Dec-1943

Next of kin Son of George and May Florence Davis, of Speke, Liverpool.

## Aircraft Information

Aircraft Lancaster

Serial Number JB222

Markings LQ-M

**Memorial information**

Burial/Memorial Country      Germany

Burial/Memorial Place      Berlin 1939-1945 War Cemetery

Grave Reference      4. L. 4.

**BCC Memorial Information**

Phase      2

Panel Number      153

**Enlistment information**

Service Number      1027022

Service      Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve

Group      8

Squadron      405 (Vancouver)

Trade      Air Gunner

Country of origin if different

## Fellow Servicemen

[ACORN GW \(WO2\)](#)

[ANDERSON J 131 \(P/O\)](#)

[BELCHER G \(F/L\)](#)

[BOWRING NH \(F/O\)](#)

[HOLDER CM \(F/S\)](#)

[HOLLAND GC \(P/O\)](#)

### Last Operation information

Start Date 03-Dec-1943

End Date 04-Dec-1943

Takeoff Station Gransden Lodge

Day/Night raid Night

Operation Leipzig. 527 aircraft. By way of a diversion, the main force took a direct route toward Berlin and then turned off for Leipzig, by which time German fighters were already amongst them and scoring successes. Fortunately many were called back to Berlin once the Mosquito diversionary raid began. as a result only three bombers were thought to have been Lost in the target area. Some aircraft flew off course and ended up in the heavily defended Frankfurt area and most of the losses sustained this night were amongst them. PFF marking was accurate and the resultant bombing was effective. The former World Fair exhibition buildings were hit, some of which had been converted into a Junkers aircraft factory.

Reason for Loss Crashed near Delitsch, Germany

## 156 Sqn

February 1942, 156 Squadron reformed at Raf Alconbury in Huntingdonshire as a medium bomber squadron equipped with Wellingtons and operated under 3 Group. A few months later when the Pathfinder Force formed in August 1942, No 156 was one of the four squadrons selected to form the nucleus of the new force, with the object of securing more concentrated and effective bombing by marking targets with incendiary bombs and flares dropped from aircraft flown by experienced crew and using the latest navigational equipment. It remained with the Pathfinder Force for the rest of the European war and, still flying Wellingtons at first and then Lancasters, played a major part in Bomber Command's Offensive. In over a span of 38 months of operations it dropped 16,017 tons of bombs and lost 45 Wellingtons and 117 Lancasters.

The Stations 156 Squadron were based at

ALCONBURY 14/2/42 TO 15/8/42

WARBOYS 15/8/42 TO 5/3/44

UPWOOD 5/3/44 TO 27/6/45 (Normans time)

WYTON 27/6/45 TO 25/9/45

From 156 Sqn web page [www.156squadron.com](http://www.156squadron.com)

156 Squadron Crew List									
Rank	Christian	Surname	Decoration	Nationality	Service No.	First Mention	Last Mention	Missions	Deceased
Sergeant	NT	<a href="#">PIERCY</a>		RAF		9/04/1944	9/09/1944	28	
New Search		Home							

## Normans flying record 156 Sqn

156 Squadron Missions Flown Together			
Rego	Date	Target	Disposition
<a href="#">JB669</a>	9/04/1944	Lille	
<a href="#">JB669</a>	10/04/1944	Laon	
<a href="#">JB669</a>	11/04/1944	Aachen	
<a href="#">JB669</a>	20/04/1944	Koln	
<a href="#">JB669</a>	22/04/1944	Laon	
<a href="#">JB186</a>	3/05/1944	MontDidier	
<a href="#">JB186</a>	11/05/1944	Hasselt	
<a href="#">ND978</a>	22/05/1944	Orleans	
<a href="#">ND978</a>	27/05/1944	Aachen	
<a href="#">ND978</a>	31/05/1944	Tergnier	
<a href="#">ND978</a>	5/06/1944	Houlgate	
<a href="#">ND978</a>	8/06/1944	Fougeres	
<a href="#">ND978</a>	9/06/1944	Le Mans	
<a href="#">ND978</a>	23/06/1944	Coubronnes	
<a href="#">ND978</a>	2/07/1944	Oisemont	
<a href="#">ND978</a>	7/07/1944	Vaires	
<a href="#">ND978</a>	10/07/1944	NuCourt	
<a href="#">ND978</a>	11/07/1944	Gapenne	
<a href="#">ND534</a>	12/07/1944	Tours	
<a href="#">ND978</a>	15/07/1944	NuCourt	
<a href="#">PB186</a>	19/07/1944	Rollez	
<a href="#">ND978</a>	7/08/1944	Normandy	
<a href="#">ND978</a>	26/08/1944	Kiel	
<a href="#">ND534</a>	27/08/1944	Marquise Mimoyecques	
<a href="#">ND591</a>	31/08/1944	Lumbres	
<a href="#">ND978</a>	5/09/1944	Le Havre	
<a href="#">ND978</a>	9/09/1944	Le Havre	
<a href="#">ND978</a>	9/09/1944	Upwood	Injured

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## Normans total sortie crew details 156 Sqn

Killed In Action		Prisoner of War		156 Squadron Crew List										Wounded		Evaded		
Date	Target	Aircraft	Typ	Pilot	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
9/04/1944	Lille	JB669	L	SCOTT	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	JACKSON	A	SHEPHERD	A	
10/04/1944	Laon	JB669	L	SCOTT	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	JACKSON	A	SHEPHERD	A	
11/04/1944	Aachen	JB669	L	SCOTT	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	JACKSON	A	SHEPHERD	A	
20/04/1944	Koeln	JB669	L	SCOTT	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	JACKSON	A	SHEPHERD	A	
22/04/1944	Laon	JB669	L	SCOTT	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	JACKSON	A	SHEPHERD	A	
3/05/1944	MontDidier	JB186	L	SCOTT	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	JACKSON	A	SHEPHERD	A	
11/05/1944	Hasselt	JB186	L	SCOTT	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	JACKSON	A	SHEPHERD	A	
22/05/1944	Orleans	ND978	L	SCOTT	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	JACKSON	A	SHEPHERD	A	
27/05/1944	Aachen	ND978	L	SCOTT	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	JACKSON	A	SHEPHERD	A	
31/05/1944	Tergnier	ND978	L	SCOTT	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	JACKSON	A	SHEPHERD	A	
5/06/1944	Houlgate	ND978	L	SCOTT	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	JACKSON	A	SHEPHERD	A	
8/06/1944	Fougeres	ND978	L	SCOTT	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	JACKSON	A	SHEPHERD	A	
9/06/1944	Le Mans	ND978	L	SCOTT	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	JACKSON	A	SHEPHERD	A	
23/06/1944	Coubronnes	ND978	L	SCOTT	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	SHEPHERD	A	JACKSON	A	
2/07/1944	Oisemont	ND978	L	SCOTT	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	SHEPHERD	A	JACKSON	A	
7/07/1944	Vaires	ND978	L	SCOTT	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	SHEPHERD	A	JACKSON	A	
10/07/1944	NuCourt	ND978	L	SCOTT	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	JACKSON	A	SHEPHERD	A	STEVENS V
11/07/1944	Gapenne	ND978	L	SCOTT	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	JACKSON	A	SHEPHERD	A	
12/07/1944	Tours	ND534	L	GRIFFIN	P	HUDSON	N	NEGUS	W	PIERCY	F	DYSON	S	MUIR	A	MACGREGOR	A	
15/07/1944	NuCourt	ND978	L	SCOTT	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	SHEPHERD	A	JACKSON	A	
19/07/1944	Rollez	PB186	L	SCOTT	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	SHEPHERD	A	JACKSON	A	
7/08/1944	Normandy	ND978	L	BINGHAM-HALL	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	SHEPHERD	A	ALLEN	A	GILBERT V
26/08/1944	Kiel	ND978	L	BINGHAM-HALL	P	FARRIS	N	WATSON	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	SHEPHERD	A	BIRCH	A	GILBERT V
27/08/1944	Marquise Mimovecques	ND534	L	CLAYTON	P	CHANDLER	N	GREENE	W	BRUCE	F	KETTLE	S	LINDSAY	A	BONE	A	PIERCY F
31/08/1944	Lumbres	ND591	L	NEAL	P	LEWIS	N	CARRAD	W	BRIGGS	F	HODGES	S	KIRK	A	MCVITTIE	A	PIERCY F
5/09/1944	Le Havre	ND978	L	BINGHAM-HALL	P	FARRIS	N	EVEREST	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	SHEPHERD	A	HEATRICK	A	GILBERT V
9/09/1944	Le Havre	ND978	L	BINGHAM-HALL	P	FARRIS	N	EVEREST	W	PIERCY	F	EWENS	S	SHEPHERD	A	HEATRICK	A	GILBERT V
9/09/1944	Upwood	ND978	L	GILL	G	MOLE	G	GRAHAM	G	JONES	G	THOMPSON	G	ELLIS	G	PIERCY	F	

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Norman was an ever present till the accident: slipping in as extra crew on 2 trips.



Details Le Havre 5<sup>th</sup> Sep – aborted mission

DETAIL OF WORK CARRIED OUT							
By No. 156 Squadron							
For the Month of SEPTEMBER 1944							
DATE	AIRCRAFT TYPE & NUMBER	CREW	DUTY	TIME		DETAILS OF SORTIE OR FLIGHT	REFERENCES
				UP	DOWN		
3.9.44	LANCASTER 111, PB 177	S/L A.W. Raw. P/O G.W. Rowers. P/L A. Millar. P/O J.A. Brookes. S/L G.A.R. Underhill. P/S Warwick, N. W/O Leonard, J. H.	Bombing Raid.	1605	1859	Task. ENNEBOVE A/P. Target attacked at 1732 hrs from 14,000 ft. No TI's seen on arrival at 1726.30 hrs. 01300 prevented bombing on our first and second run, so we orbited a second time and bombed. Red TI's fell when we were about half way round on our first orbit. These fell in the canal. This was about 1727 hrs. When we came round to bomb smoke covered the target, and we followed the H/B directions to bomb the centre of the smoke concentration. One photo attempted. Bomb load 8 X 1,000 ANM 65 TD 025.3 X 1,000 ANM 44 TD 025.4 X 500 ANM 65 TD 025.	176 app 317
5.9.44	LANCASTER 111, ND 978	W/O T.L. Bingham-Hall. P/L E.W. Farris. W/O Everest, A. P/S Flacey, N. T. P/L A.R. Beans. P/L L.H. Gilbert. P/S Shepherd, W. Sgt Heatrick, R. J.	Bombing Raid.	1715	1953	Task. LE HAVRE. Target attacked at 1837.54 hrs from 13,900 ft. Green TI's down on arrival at 1835 hrs, rather NW of A/P. Some Red TI's, not a complete salvo, were seen to undershoot about 300 yds at about 1842 hrs, but did not attract bombing. A/P was surrounded by Red TI's at about 1838 hrs. Bombing was well patterned over the oblong area in which the A/P was situated. Very few odd sticks seen to over shoot. The following instructions were given - 1836 hrs 'Reassess flight plan'. 1839.30 hrs 'Bomb visually or centre of Red TI's'. 1840.30 hrs 'Accurate bombing, please, bomb ground concentration of smoke'. 1841 hrs 'You are still undershooting. Bomb ground concentration of smoke. You are still undershooting'. 1842.30 hrs 'Bomb the ground concentration of smoke. Ignore Red TI's which have undershot'. 1844.30 hrs 'Bomb slightly to S/B of the ground concentration of smoke'. 1845.30 hrs 'Bomb centre of ground concentration of smoke'. Slight H/B, predicted accurate. One photo attempted. Bomb load 4 TI Red B: 2x 857 3000'. 4 TI Red 'A'. 4 X 1,000 ANM 44 TD 025.2 X 1,000 ANM 65 TD 025.	app 318
	LANCASTER 111, ND 875	S/L T.E. Ison. P/L H.F. Morrish. P/S Walton, L. T. P/O W.J. Roberts. P/L P.E. Keighley. P/O A.J. Eley. P/S Conolly, W. J. P/O J.N. Hough.	Bombing Raid.	1719	1946	Task. LE HAVRE. Target attacked at 1837.12 hrs from 13,000 ft. Greens had cascaded by the time we arrived and were a slight undershoot to the NW. Our own Reds fell very close to the A/P. Target was practically smoke covered for the bombing run. Bombing generally seemed round the A/P with some undershooting. One photo attempted. Bomb load as above.	

## Clouser view

5.9.44.	LANCASTER III. TD 978	W/O T.L. Bingham-Hall. P/L L.V. Farris. W/O Everest, P/S Piercy, A.P. P/L A.R. Brown. P/L L.R. Gilbert. P/S Shepherd, W. Sgt Heatrick, R.J.	Bombing Raid.	1715	1943	Task LE HAVRE. Target attacked at 1837.54 hrs from 13,900 ft. Green TI's down on arrival at 1835 hrs, rather NW of A/P. Some Red TI's, not a complete salvo, were seen to undershoot about 300 yds at about 1842 hrs, but did not attract bombing. A/P was surrounded by Red TI's at about 1838 hrs. Bombing was well patterned over the oblong area in which the A/P was situated. Very few odd sticks seen to ever shoot. The following instructions were given-1836 hrs 'Basement flight plan'. 1839.30 hrs 'Bomb visually on centre of Red TI's' 1840.30 hrs 'Accurate bombing, please, bomb ground concentration of smoke'. 1841 hrs 'You are still undershooting. Bomb ground concentration of smoke. You are still undershooting'. 1842.30 hrs 'Bomb the ground concentration of smoke. Ignore Red TI's which have undershot'. 1844.30 hrs 'Bomb slightly to S of the ground concentration of smoke'. 1845.30 hrs 'Bomb centre of ground concentration of smoke'. Slight H/P, predicted accurate. One photo attempted. Bomb load 4 TI Red B.2; 867 3000'. 1 TI Red 'A'. 4 X 1,000 ANK 44 TD 025. 2 X 1,000 ANK 65 TD 025.
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## The accident

7/09/1944	Thursday	The Commanding Officer (W/C T.L. BINGHAM-HALL DFC) assumed command of the Station during the absence on leave of G/C J.L. AIREY DFC, W/C D.B. FALCONER DFC AFC assumed temporary command of the Squadron. W/C R.J. BURROUGH "A" Flight Commander attached to RAF Station Wyton pending posting.	
8/09/1944	Friday	5 A/C detailed for operations. The target was again LE HAVRE. The German garrison is still holding out there. S/L T.E. ISON DFC was Master Bomber and S/L A.W.G. COCHRANE DFC Deputy Master Bomber. Cloud was 10/10ths over the target area, and the attack had to be abandoned. 13 non operational flights	<a href="#">Le Havre</a>
9/09/1944	Saturday	5 A/C detailed for operations against LE HAVRE. The mission was abortive owing to thunderstorms and 10/10ths cloud. A serious accident occurred today. Bombs were being removed from one of the aircraft on the disposal point. For some reason, not yet known, the bombs which were on the trailer exploded. Seven airmen were killed, and trace of 4 of these airmen could not be found. They were classified "Missing, believed killed". 3 airmen were dangerously injured and many others were injured. F/O C.W. MOSELEY and crew posted from 166 Squadron.	<a href="#">Le Havre</a> <a href="#">Warboys</a>
10/09/1944	Sunday	6 A/C detailed for operations against LE HAVRE. 17 non operational flights.	<a href="#">Le Havre</a>
11/09/1944	Monday	13 A/C detailed for operations - a daylight raid on GELSENKIRCHEN. All proceeded. 1 A/C missing, S/L A.W. RAW and crew. The target was strongly defended and 10 aircraft were hit and damaged by flak. 3 non operational flights	<a href="#">Gelsenkirchen</a>
12/09/1944	Tuesday	5 A/C detailed for daylight operations against SCHOLVEN. 16 further aircraft detailed for the nights operations on FRANKFURT. 15 proceeded. Today LE HAVRE at last surrendered. A memorial service was held today on "B" Flight dispersal for the airmen who	<a href="#">Scholven</a> <a href="#">Frankfurt</a>

## Sortie timings

Target: Le Havre  
Mission Date: 9/09/1944  
Mission Comments:

Rego	Type	Captain	Departed	Over Target	Height	Returned	FL
<a href="#">ND978</a>	Lancaster III	W/C BINGHAM-HALL	06:57			09:43	
<a href="#">PB403</a>	Lancaster III	W/C FALCONER	06:57			09:43	
<a href="#">ND422</a>	Lancaster	F/O LEWIS	06:57			09:43	
<a href="#">ND618</a>	Lancaster III	F/Lt CLAYTON	06:57			09:43	
<a href="#">ND875</a>	Lancaster	S/L ISON	07:00			09:35	

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## DEDICATION TO THE GROUND CREWS



**Cpl. James Albert Mole** pictured right on the front row

On the 9th of September 1944, an accident happened when the ground crew of 156 squadron were removing the bomb load from Lancaster III ND978 GT. At 11.20 the bombs load exploded killing 6 people. Lancaster ND978 GT brought back the bomb load from le Havre due to most hazardous circumstances, flown by Squadron CO W/C/ T L Bingham-hall DFC.

**The men Killed while serving our country were:**

156 Squadron Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.

Cpl. William Edward Gill... AGE 25, Cpl. James Albert Mole... AGE 29

LAC Herbert Bromley Jones... AGE 33, LAC James Frederick Thompson... AGE 42

ACI James Ellis... AGE 23, 9156 Servicing Ech. LAC Thomas Edward Henry Graham... AGE 25

Sgt. N. Piercy was injured during the explosion

**9 Sept 1944 Lancaster III ND978 GT-**

Wrecked 1120 when a nearby Lancaster exploded.

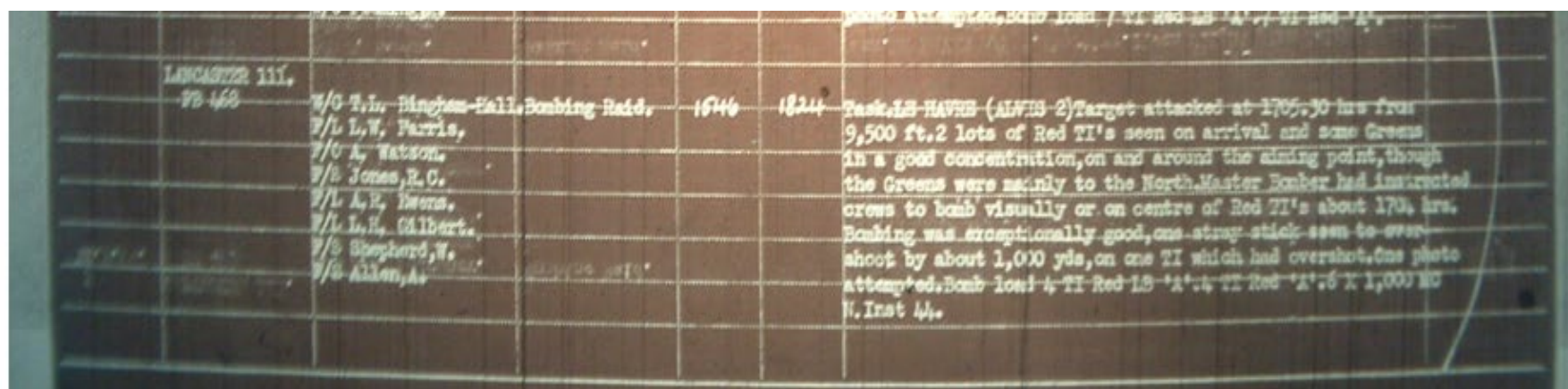
Exploded 1120 during the removal of the bomb load brought back a few hours previous under most hazardous circumstances from Le Havre by the Squadron CO W/C T L Bingham-Hall DFC. Of the identified casualties, Cpl Gill is buried at Garforth; Cpl Mole lies in High Wycombe cemetery and four, including 42 year old LAC Thompson, are commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial.

**BILL SHEPHERD 156 record (Normans normal Mid upper gunner)**

156 Squadron Crew List									
Rank	Christian	Surname	Decoration	Nationality	Service No.	First Mention	Last Mention	Missions	
Sergeant	FREDERICK VALENTINE HERBERT	<a href="#">SHEPHERD</a>		RAF	629714	2/04/1942	27/08/1942	28	2
Flight Sergeant	JOHN GOODWILLIE	<a href="#">SHEPHERD</a>		RAF	1071280	6/09/1942	27/03/1943	15	2
Sergeant	W	<a href="#">SHEPHERD</a>		RAF	1822124	9/04/1944	23/10/1944	40	

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**10 Sep (the next day)**











## BINGHAM HALL COMMENDATION

Note the similarities in the 9 Sep 1944 sortie.

Sqn	Date	Task	Desig	Type	Comments
156	7/10/1944	Kleve	PB507	Lancaster	Whilst circling the target the C.O's aircraft was hit by heavy flak, the port inner engine caught fire and was feathered. On completion of Master Bombing duties the aircraft made its solitary homeward journey on three engines and was successfully landed at base. In spite of intense flak this raid was a very successful one.  [ED] - See DSO commendation for Bingham-Hall regarding this mission.

Rank	Init	Surname	Decoration	Unit	Age	Disposition	Service No.	Cemetery	CWGref	Deceased
W/C	T L	BINGHAM-HALL	<a href="#">DSO DFC MID</a>			✓	39848			
F/Lt	L W	FARRIS	<a href="#">DFC</a>			✓	J29517			
F/O	A	WATSON	<a href="#">DFC</a>			✓	159013			
W/O	J M	COULSON	<a href="#">DFC</a>			✓	542345			
F/Lt	A R	EWENS	<a href="#">DFC</a>			✓	Aus. 417823			
Sgt.	W	SHEPHERD				✓	1822124			
F/Sgt	E C	BANGS			22	✓	1399979	RHEINBERG WAR CEMETERY	<a href="#">2042327</a>	21/02/1945
F/Lt	P A	MURPHY	<a href="#">DFC</a>			✓	160834			

## Normans obituary in the Scotsman

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/obituaries/obituary-dr-norman-piercy-general-practitioner-and-disabled-athlete-1-1522099>