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I am Wireless Operator on aircraft  
in 8 flight of H60 squadron RAAF  
On the night of the 22/23rd  
of March 1944 while proceeding  
on operations in aircraft '8' (No 392)  
to Frankfurt, we were attacked  
by an enemy fighter, and hit  
by both cannon and machine  
gun fire, which cut away the  
rudder controls, and trim controls,  
also 3 cannon shells going into  
the rear turret, inferring the  
rear gunner. The captain instructed  
me to go to the rear of  
the aircraft and investigate  
the welfare of the gunners.  
Having already called them

up on the intercommunication  
and getting no reply.

When I got to the rear I  
found the mid-upper gunner  
half out of his turret in a  
semi-conscious condition and hanging  
by his oxygen tube, I released  
him from his hanging position  
and at the same time dropped  
my torch, having then to go  
forward and get another torch.  
When I got back to the  
mid-upper gunner again, he  
was holding himself up, with  
his parachute on. He had  
removed his helmet and after  
some trouble managed to  
replace it. I ~~said~~ ~~he~~ is  
then realized that he was  
nearly passing out through

lack of oxygen, so I immediately gave him my emergency oxygen bottle, after which I had to go forward again for oxygen for myself. As soon as I obtained another oxygen bottle I went aft, again to attend to the gunner again, only to find that the main entrance door was open and the mid-upper gunner missing. I then carried on to the rear gunner, but on the way discovered a fire smouldering on the port side of the fuselage, which I managed to put out with my hands. I then carried on to the rear gunner, who I found leaning back against the

half of the turret doors  
~~the top~~ had not been blasted  
~~away~~ when the cannon  
shells exploded. On a closer  
inspection at the rear gunner  
I thought I could see the  
place where a cannon shell  
had hit the base of his  
spine, and therefore presumed  
him dead. Then as I could  
feel myself slipping away  
through lack of oxygen I  
made my way back up  
front as fast I could. When  
I had partly recovered I  
reported the whole thing  
to the captain. The whole  
incident had occurred over the  
target area. A little while

latter the bomb aimer went back to the mid-upper turret to see if it was still serviceable about an hour and a half latter I went back to see if he was still okay and found him sitting on the west bed, I took him up to my position and gave him my oxygen, and for the rest of the trip he remained in my seat. We then made the trip back to base as best we could, and after landing we discovered much to our relief that the rear gunner was still alive and able to speak. We learnt afterwards that if we had

moned the near gunner he  
would ~~have~~ probably have  
died from loss of blood  
as it was the blood froze  
over the wound.

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so it, the trip where we had the greatest losses of the war, losing 96 aircraft. This trip for us though was quite a quiet one, although right across the continent, our whole course was lit up, by the lights on the ground, and every now and again we saw an aircraft going down, nothing came anywhere near us. I am perfectly certain that from the way our whole course had been lit up, that information had leaked through to the enemy, <sup>as to</sup> where we were going that night and the route we were taking.

The day after returning from

that of, we went on leave  
a leave that I think we  
fully earned, and deserved.

during that leave I had a  
really good time, for I still  
had it fresh in my memory  
that ops were a very risky  
business, and as I always have  
done believed in having a  
good ~~spare~~<sup>time</sup> while I had the  
chance. When the time came  
to ~~go~~ go back to camp, I  
felt very reluctant to do so,  
I was that "Browned Off" that  
at lunch time before I went  
back I refused to drink more  
than a pint of beer. When  
on the train to go back to  
camp, as it started to  
move out of the station I  
had a good look out of

the window at home, for I was quite positive at the time that I should never see it again.

The next op we did was to Cologne, a trip that very little of importance happened, many defence at Koln itself, but other than that nothing to worry about.

The night after that we had a Sgdn party, where everyone was invited, and best of all FREE BEER, well from 8 o'clock when I arrived with my own glass, picked from the Sergeants Mess, as you had to bring your own glass, myself and the crowd of chaps I was usually with, were queing up, filling our glasses, and walking round to the

end of the queue shrinking the  
peel on the way down and  
filling up again. That went on  
for about 2 to 2½ hours, after which  
the beer ran out, but I think I  
had had enough to drink ~~to~~ to  
last me the rest of the night.  
The next morning I woke up with  
a terrible hang over, only to find  
that ops were on again that night.  
At briefing time we found that  
it was again to the ~~as~~ ruck, a  
place where we had learnt ~~to~~ to  
pray for cloud, for they had  
too many searchlights for ours or  
anybody else's liking. Well that night  
we went to Dusseldorf. It was one  
of the nights where there was  
no cloud. On the way across  
enemy territory we saw no  
signs of fighters ~~or~~ flak or  
searchlights, but as we approach  
our target, we saw the ~~whole~~

the searchlights begin to spring up, one or two to begin with, then in their 10's and before long the whole sky seemed to be one blaze of light. We carried on to the target and drop one bombs successfully, we then turned our nose for home and got out of the searchlight ~~area~~ area as quick as possible. It was not long then before we saw home sweet home again.

We arrived back at our drome at about 3-30 in the morning and as usual we were one of the first, but never the less there was still quite a few in at interrogation before us, so we had to wait about

half an hour before our turn came, but as soon as we were seated, the interrogation officer started asking his usual questions, and we gave a ~~our~~ usual answer, that we had neither seen nor heard anything ~~for~~ all we were thinking about at that time in the morning, was to get to bed, and we knew that the less we had to report, the quicker we should have our thoughts fulfilled.

We eventually got to bed about 4-30 and slept until about 5ish to afternoon. Then seeing as there were no ops on that night, we dressed up in ~~a~~ our best togs, and went out to Grinby to have one

few drinks that we figured we were entitled to.

The following night, we were on op again, this time to Haarsbrue.

We took off at about 9-30 pm, and as we had been told at briefing we met dirty weather, although at briefing they told us that we might miss it with a bit of luck. It turned out a lot worse though than we had expected. We were somewhere just over the French coast when it hit us. Clouds, rain snow, sleet and ice. At the time we were somewhere up at about 18 thousand feet, at first we tried to climb over it, but found that it was impossible, as

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it was going up to somewhere between 30 & 35 thousand feet. So we started to descend below it, but we had not got down far before one port outer engine stopped because of the ice gathering round it, it was not much longer before three of them had stopped, when we were down at about 1 thousand one only remaining engine began to splutter, we were just about ready to bail out when we got below freezing level, and one of our other engines picked up again, before not long after that everything was going merrily again, and we were climbing like the clappers, to gain height.

again before reaching the target, forcing at last fast though the bad weather and out in the open again. After that everything was plain sailing up to the target which we made quite a nice mess off. On the return journey we again ran into bad weather, but it was nothing like what we had experienced on the outward journey, and we passed through it without anything more than a few sparks running up and down our aerials, happening to us, & and so on back safely to base again.

Just as a matter of interest, the bomb aimer told me later, that while we were passing through the storm going out, he

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was quite enjoying himself.  
watching sparks flashing from  
the end of his finger to the  
perfora in the nose, by ~~him~~ being  
able to do that, it will give you  
some idea of the intensity of  
~~the~~ the electricity in the storm.