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Hits 'rattled' and banged rather than exploded. In some desperation, whole bundles of window were heaved through the open forward hatch. It is a fact that the firing fell astern - out of range or the effect of the window, will never be known. Within minutes we were over the sea. At no time from Berlin to the coast had enemy aircraft attempted to interfere with the homeward flight.

For many hours, the W/O had attempted to operate his damaged radio. Nearer home, he attempted to establish contact using the emergency dinghy radio transmitter. Although the crew were unaware of it, a message had in fact been picked up, but so much time had subsequently elapsed that no action was initiated.

The heavy physical effort required to maintain rudder control persisted to the end. The F/E gave much assistance and relief to the pilot by applying hand pressure to the right rudder control pedal, assisted from time to time by the Navigator.

The rate of descent was slowly increasing as England was approached and there was mouth to ear discussion as to the preferred course of action:-

- a) ditch
- b) jump
- c) persevere to Woodbridge

This was accentuated by the knowledge that fuel was getting very low. The concensus was to continue to Woodbridge.

Searchlights were observed on land ahead on the starboard bow, and course was changed toward them, This was an error because shortly afterwards, they traversed their beams along the coast to the south. The course was adjusted accordingly but at the expense of some unnecessary loss of fuel, compromising an already critical fuel situation. The new course meant that Woodbridge was approached from a North Easterly direction, quite unsuited for a direct fly-in landing.

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