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The pilot had no option but to take a wide swing to get into position for landing and everyone concerned knew that there could be no second chance. The damaged undercart was lowered by the emergency air system, and observing that the port wheel/tyre was also damaged, the Pilot with great skill touched down very gently and held the port wheel off the ground for as long as possible. The inevitable swing to port was comparatively peaceful and the aircraft came to rest in the centre of a dispersal point. No injuries were sustained by any crew member from Berlin to Woodbridge.

The Station ambulance was awaiting as the crew exited from the rear door. Mixed with the enormous relief of being on the ground once again was disbelief that it was finally over and done with. Sorrow for those who failed to survive was to come later.

The Medical Officer had apparently stood down his staff on the assumption that the flight was so grossly overdue it could not have survived. He was still wearing uniform over pyjamas when he authorised an issue of rum. Naturally, signatures were required for this bounty.

That same day, after short but disturbed sleeps and breakfast, the four crew members were despatched back to their squadron near Grimsby. Carrying their helmets and parachutes, careworn, tired and forelorn, they travelled via London back north, in those days, a wearisome journey. Without English money, a kind-hearted lady ticket collector insisted on giving them sixpence for cups of tea. This was to sustain them until they boarded squadron transport late that night.

N.B. The crew was informed at Woodbridge that 19 gallons of fuel had been syphoned from the tanks. The aircraft was classified as 'scrap'. The official damage report was to list virtually all major functions and structure as U/S.

1944 *F. W. Bennett*