

Sgt, Pilot, Geoffrey Harold Rowson Operations

1.6/7 Dec 42 Mannheim

2.8/9 Dec 42 Turin

9/10 Dec 42 Turin ret early

20/21 Dec 42 Duisburg ret early

3.21/22 Dec 42 Munich

4.8/9 Jan 43 Duisburg

11/12 Jan 43 Essen ret early

12/13 Jan 43 Essen ret early

5.16/17 Jan 43 Berlin

6.17/18 Jan 43 Berlin KIA

1. Bombing, overshoots and TR 1335 training. 6 aircraft for mining operations and two aircraft for night cross countries. One aircraft, Sgt Rowson, did not take off – aircraft u/s. The rest were diverted to various aerodromes. Three aircraft completed tasks, remaining two aircraft returned early due to technical troubles.

1.7 aircraft for raid – Mannheim. Owing to adverse weather encountered, bombing on visual identification of target was only made by one aircraft. Four aircraft bombed estimated position of Mannheim by PFF flares and navigational aids. 2 aircraft abandoned mission owing to oxygen failure and the other receiving a recall signal in error.

6/7 December 1942 Mannheim

R5548A Sgts G.H.Rowson, P.Lane, J.E.West, J.Bell, J.C.Brittain, G.Axup, H.C.Beebe. 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC. Up 1736 Down 0040. Cloud over Mannheim area. Bombed area where flares were burning. Terrific flash followed dropping of bombs. Red glow seen through gap in cloud.

1.10 aircraft operated against Turin. Many fires seen in town aiming point. One particularly large fire in south of town. Target area well lit by incendiaries. All aircraft except one, which was diverted to Linton, returned safely to base. Weather mainly no cloud, slight haze.

8/9 December 1942 Turin

R5738D Sgts G.H.Rowson, P.Lane, J.E.West, J.Ball, J.C.Brittain, G.Axup, H.C.Beebe. 1 x 4000lb 8 SBC. Up 1752 Down 0113. Bombs successfully dropped on Turin town. Own bursts not seen. Blazing buildings and many large fires seen in centre of town. Slight flak encountered.

1.9 aircraft to attack Turin – 2 aircraft abandoned mission owing to failures. Remaining aircraft bombed target or target area, smoke and haze hindering pin-pointing and results of bombing.

9/10 December 1942 Turin

R5738D Sgts G.H.Rowson, P.Lane, J.E.West, J.Bell, J.C.Brittain, G.Axup, H.C.Beebe. 14 SBC. Up 1731 Down 1840. Mission abandoned owing to artificial horizon being u/s. Bombs jettisoned safe.

1. Local formation and bombing training, also day cross country. 9 aircraft detailed for ops against Duisburg. 6 aircraft successfully attacked town in weather conditions of good visibility and no cloud but slight ground haze. Some good results were seen and several large fires were seen to start in the town. 2 aircraft abandoned task owing to technical troubles and the remaining aircraft, P/O Eales, failed to return. No news has since been received.

20/21 December 1942 Duisburg

R5575L Sgts G.H.Rowson, P.Lane, J.E.West, J.Bell, J.C.Brittain, G.Axup, H.C.Beebe. 14 SBC. Up 1819 Down 2044. Returned early owing to rear and mid upper turrets being u/s. Also engine trouble. Jettisoned incendiaries safe

1. Fighter affiliation. 9 aircraft for ops against Munich. 8 aircraft claim to have attacked target in weather conditions of 10/10ths cloud at 4-5,000' but with good visibility. Most of the aircraft were forced to bomb through gaps in the cloud which greatly hampered the success of the raid. Several fires were seen reflected through the cloud. One aircraft abandoned task on account of intercom failure. F/Sgt West was attacked by fighters and received much damage to his aircraft, also three of his crew received severe injuries during the attacks. With great difficulty, together with his navigator, F/Sgt West managed to fly his aircraft to Bodney where he managed a crash landing without further injuries to any of the crew.

21/22 December 1942 Munich

R5572F Sgts G.H.Rowson, P.Lane, J.E.West, J.Bell, J.C.Brittain, G.Axup, H.C.Beebe. 1 x 4000lb. Up 1720 Down 0010. Estimated primary objective bombed. Thin cloud over target. Fires and flares directed us to built up area. Own bomb seen to burst through break in clouds. Several fires seen reflected through cloud.

8.1.43 Five Lancasters detailed to attack the town of Duisburg and three aircraft detailed for mining in "Pumpkin" area. All five claimed to have attacked Duisburg. The weather over the target was 10/10ths cloud. All aircraft bombed on observing the marker flares but owing to the weather no results were observed. Of the three mining aircraft, all dropped their mines successfully. Sgt Rowson landed at Newmarket aerodrome and the undercarriage collapsed, wrecking the aircraft. None of the crew was injured. Night training also detailed.

8/9 January 1943 Duisburg – Bomb load 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC

ED310A Sgts G.H.Rowson, P.Lane, J.E.West, J.Bell, J.G.Brittain, G.Axup, O'Donahue. Up 1724 Down 2207. Target not identified visually. PFF flares clearly seen over target area. Some cloud but visibility generally good. Own bombs not seen to explode. Nothing else observed. Poer undercarriage collapsed on landing.

11.1.43 6 aircraft detailed for ops and one on night cross country and bombing. F/O Keir has been awarded the DFC and F/Sgt Crouch (Aus) the DFM. 5 aircraft took off for ops against Essen. Two of the aircraft were abortive owing to engine trouble, the remaining three aircraft successfully reached and bombed on the marker flares. No results seen owing to 10/10ths cloud. All returned safely to base.

11/12 January 1943 Essen – Bomb load 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC

W4175U Sgts G.H.Rowson, Robinson, J.E.West, J.Bell, J.G.Brittain, G.Axup, Beebe. Up 1709 Down 1950. Mission abandoned owing to engine trouble. Bombs jettisoned safe.

12.1.43 6 aircraft detailed to attack Essen. One aircraft returned early due to engine trouble. The remaining five aircraft reached and successfully bombed the target or target area. Results not seen owing to 8 – 10/10ths cloud and ground haze but marker flares were seen and bombed.

12/13 January 1943 Essen – Bomb load 1 x 4000lb 12 SBC

R5575L Sgts G.H.Rowson, P.Lane, J.E.West, J.Bell, J.G.Brittain, G.Axup, Beebe. Up 0348 Down 0603. Mission abandoned owing to engine trouble. Bombs jettisoned safe.

16.1.43 12 Lancasters took off to attack an aiming point in Berlin. 11 claim to have bombed the target or target area, several large fires being seen many miles after leaving the city. There was little cloud over the target and visibility was moderate. One aircraft abandoned the mission at Mano, the rear turret being u/s.

16/17 January 1943 Berlin

R5575L Sgts G.H.Rowson, P.Lane, J.E.West, J.Bell, J.G.Brittain, G.Axup, Beebe. 14 SBC. Up 1634 Down 0053. Clear visibility but haze and smoke when we reached Berlin. Marker green flares seen

17.1.43 14 Lancasters detailed to attack Berlin – 11 aircraft took off and successfully bombed the target. Weather – moonlight and good visibility, slight haze. Two aircraft returned early due to technical troubles and one aircraft, Sgt Rowson, is missing. No news received after leaving base. Aircraft diverted owing to weather on return. Defence was heavier and many fighters seen.

17/18 January 1943 Berlin – 1 x 4000lb 8 SBC

R5575L Sgts G.H.Rowson, P.Lane, J.E.West, J.Bell, J.G.Brittain, G.Axup, Beebe. Up 1703 – aircraft and crew missing.