

The following information was taken from 527 Squadron's Operational Record Books.

Kluska Flights and death

Operations

Biggin Hill. 3.10.43. F/Sgt. Kluska – Blenheim carried out 4 circular runs at 4,000' for Swingate.

Biggin Hill. 4.10.43. F/Sgt. Kluska – Blenheim carried out one run at 18,000' for Ventnor.

Biggin Hill. 8.10.43. F/Sgt. Kluska – Blenheim carried out four height runs for Pevensey.

Biggin Hill. 13.10.43. F/Sgt. Kluska – Blenheim carried out 3 circular runs of 7 miles radius for Pevensey.

Biggin Hill. 15.10.43. F/Sgt. Kluska – Blenheim carried out 3 circular runs of 5 miles radius for Pevensey.

Biggin Hill. 17.10.43. F/Sgt. Kluska – Blenheim carried out 2 circular runs of 7 miles radius for Polling.

Biggin Hill. 20.10.43. F/Sgt. Kluska – Blenheim carried out one circular run of seven miles radius for Polling.

Biggin Hill. 24.10.43. F/Sgt. Kluska – Blenheim carried out two circular runs of 7 miles radius for Polling.

Biggin Hill. 9.11.43. F/Sgt. Kluska – Blenheim – W/O. Wood, F/Sgt. Barker carried out 3 runs for Rye. Flying time – 2 Hrs.

Biggin Hill. 10.11.43. F/Sgt. Kluska – Blenheim, W/O. Wood & F/Sgt. Barker carried out two runs for Polling. Flying time 1 Hr. 35 mins.

Biggin Hill. 29.11.43. F/Sgt. Kluska – Blenheim – W/O. Wood, F/Sgt. Barker carried out 4 circular runs for Rye. Flying time. 2 Hrs. 45 Mins.

Castle Camps. 1.12.43. 12.00. F/Sgt. Kluska in Blenheim – Crew W/O. Wood, F/Sgt. Barker, LAC. Harvey returned from Biggin Hill on completion of Calibration of Rye and Polling. Flying time 30 mins.

Castle Camps. 4.12.43. 11.10. F/Sgt. Kluska in Blenheim – Crew W/O. Wood, J. Sgt. Rosser, carried out 2 runs for High Street then returned with engine trouble. Flying time 2 hrs. 5 mins.

Castle Camps. 5.12.43. F/Sgt. Kluska in Blenheim – Crew W/O. Woods, J. Sgt. Rosser carried out 4 runs for High Street. Flying time 2 hrs. 40 mins.

Castle Camps. 11.00. F/Sgt. Kluska in Blenheim and Crew carried out 4 runs for High Street. Flying time 2 hrs. 50 mins.

Castle Camps. 10.12.43. F/Sgt. Kluska in Blenheim – Crew. F/Sgt. Saville, F/Sgt. Barker, carried out Calibration with Great Bromley. Flying time 1 hr. 15 mins.

Castle camps. 11.12.43. F/Sgt. Kluska in Blenheim – Crew W/O. Wood, Sgt. Rosser, LAC. Harvey, Calibrated High Street. Flying time 2 hrs. 55 mins.

Castle Camps. 13.12.43. 13.40 F/Sgt. Kluska in Blenheim – Crew W/O. Wood, F/Sgt. Barker, LAC Harvey, attempted Calibration of High Street, but returned due to station being saturated by Operation Flying. Flying time 50 mins.

Castle Camps. 15.12.43. 11.45 F/Sgt. Kluska in Blenheim – Crew F/O Inwood, F/Sgt. Cailles, attempted Calibration of High Street, but returned due to Wireless trouble while flying over ten tenths of cloud. Flying time 50 mins.

Castle Camps. 15.12.43. 15.05 F/Sgt. Kluska in Blenheim – Crew F/O. Inwood, F/Sgt. Cailles, flew over High Street with successfully tuned gear. Flying time 1 hr. 10 mins.

Castle Camps. 19.12.43. 13.55 F/Sgt. Kluska in Blenheim – Crew W/O. Wood, J. F/Sgt. Barker, carried out 2 vectors for High Street. Flying time 1 hr. 50 mins.

Castle Camps. 21.12.43 11.50 F/Sgt. Kluska in Blenheim, Crew F/O. Inwood, F/Sgt. Barker, attempted Calibration of Great Bromley but returned with R.T. trouble. Flying time 1 hr. 20 mins.

Castle Camps. 22.12.43 11.00 F/Sgt. Kluska – in Blenheim Crew, W/O. Wood, F/Sgt. Marshall, W/O Barker, attempted runs for Great Bromley but returned with Special Gear trouble. Flying time 1 hr. 45 mins.

Castle Camps. 23.12.43 10.10 F/Sgt. Kluska in Blenheim, Crew – W/O. Wood, F/Sgt. Barker, LAC Harvey, carried out Calibration of Great Bromley. Flying time 1 hr. 5 mins.

Castle Camps. 24.12.43. F/Sgt. Kluska in Blenheim – Crew. W/O. Wood, J.F/Sgt. Cailles, Calibration of High Street but later returned with R/T. trouble. Flying time 2 hrs.

Castle Camps. 27.12.43. 12.00 F/Sgt. Kluska in Hurricane airborne for Stoke Holy Cross but returned to base with R/T. failure. Flying time 1 hr. 15 mins.

Castle camps. 27.12.43. 14.30 F/Sgt. Kluska in Blenheim – Crew. W/O. Wood, Calibrated High Street. Flying time 1 hr. 45 mins.

Castle Camps. 29.12.43. 10.15 F/Sgt. Kluska in Blenheim – Crew W/O. Wood, F/Sgt. Cailles, Calibrated High Street and Great Bromley. Flying time 3 hrs. 45 mins.

Castle Camps. 31.12.43. F/Sgt. Kluska in Blenheim – Crew. W/O. Wood, P/O. Sercombe. Calibrated High Street. Flying time 1 hr. 40 mins.

Operations at RAF Castle Camps were then suspended due to the movement from RAF Castle Camps to RAF Snailwell.

25.2.44. F/Gt. Kluska relieved F/Lt. Pamment to North Coates.

On the night of the 19th March 1944, about 22.00 hours, Blenheim V.5795 was damaged on the ground at North Coates, by one of a number of incendiary bombs which fell on the airfield. The damaged aircraft is being repaired at North Coates.

26.3.44. F/Sgt. Kluska, S. ceased attachment at R.A.F. North Coates.

Honours, Awards, Promotions

F/Sgt. Kluska, S. (Pilot) promoted to Temporary Warrant Officer wef. 2.2.44.

527 Squadron were then instructed to move again. They departed RAF Snailwell to RAF Digby at the end of April 1944. On the 28th April 1944, the Squadron ceased attachment to R.A.F. Station Snailwell, and moved to R.A.F. Station, Digby, in accordance with H.Q.A.D.G.B. Cypher Serial no. 413 dated 20th April 1944. The aircraft as detailed below were ferried to Digby by F/Lt. Calderwood, F/Lt. Shillitoe, F/O. Geldart, W/O. Kluska, W/O. Potter and W/O. Herbert on the 27th and 28th April 1944.

Accident to Blenheim V.5795

8.5.44. F/Lt. Calderwood and W/O. Kluska flew to Snailwell. F/Lt. Calderwood picked up Hurricane C. and returned to Digby. W/O. Kluska flew on to Biggin Hill and picked up F/O. Setterfield returning to Digby.

9.5.44. It was arranged for V.5795 to fly to Inverness at 13.30 hours and T.1830 to fly there also and bring crew of V.5795 back. F/Lt Calderwood tested T.1830 and found hydraulics satisfactory. F/O. Setterfield asked permission to fly in Blenheim to Inverness and permission was granted.

Blenheim V.5795 W/O. Kluska, W/O. Frederick Edward Wood, 563292 and F/O. Charles Henry Setterfield, 155643, took off at 14.10 hours for Inverness.

Blenheim T.1830 F/Lt. Shillitoe and W/O. Cooper took off at 14.30 hours for Inverness.

News from Flying Control at 18.30 hours that F/Lt Shillitoe phoned to say V.5795 overdue.

Confirmed that overdue action was taken and were informed that Ops. had organised search.

F/Lt Shillitoe then returned to Digby in T.1830 21,20 hours. No news at all of missing aircraft.

10.5.44. No news of missing aircraft in morning. At 18.00 hours R.A.F. Dumfries phoned us; our aircraft V.5795 had been found on mountain Hart Fell north of Moffat, Dumfries, all three members of crew dead.

Telegrams sent to Next-of-Kin, Group informed us S/Ldr. Elger and his Engineer Officer F/O. Cooper, were on way by rail to view crash. H.Q. No. 75 Wing informed of F/O Setterfield's death, and agreement reached on question of funeral arrangements with Dumfries. Unofficial news that aircraft struck hill and tore off Port Wing and Engine, rest of aircraft carrying on and crashing further on.

S/Ldr. Shute on sick leave visited us, and discussed calibration and his operation. Group Captain McNab extended his sympathies, also requested us to fly Group Captain Campbell to Linton-on-Ouse which F/Lt. Calderwood did.

Detailed F/O. Inwood for F/O. Setterfield's funeral, and F/Sgt. Savill and W/O. Cailles for W/O. Kluska's funeral. Commanding Officer's letters of sympathy sent off to Next-of-Kin in all three cases. P/O. Longman, W/O. Wood, W/O. Barker attended W/O. Wood's funeral on 17.5.44.

Court of Inquiry ordered for Wednesday the 17th May, 1944.

17.5.44.-18.5.44. Court of Inquiry into crash of Blenheim V.5795 was held at R.C.A.F. Digby. President S/Ldr. F.R.C. Elger, 526 Squadron. Member F/Lt. H.C. Wingfield, 526 Squadron.

Courtesy Andrew Almanza