

AWM 65

3405

MC KINNON, ALAN FRANCIS

407531

AUSTRALIAN ARCHIVES
ACCESS STATUS

OPEN

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE

The following biographical details are required for use at R.A.A.F. Overseas Headquarters, London.

AW 234^A/213^A

Training 24-3444

P.B.H. 9-1-44

P.D. 4-9-44

SURNAME.....Mc KINNAN.....NUMBER.....407631

CHRISTIAN NAMES...ALAN...FRANCIS

AIR FORCE RANK AND MUSTERING...P/O.....S.G. 460

DEGREES ETC.....

DATE OF BIRTH.....1918.....PLACE...ADELAIDE

EDUCATED.....

DATE OF ENTERING SERVICE.....1940

PREVIOUS SERVICE EXPERIENCE.....

PLACES OF TRAINING.....

CIVILIAN CAREER AND ACTIVITIES.....

SPORT (TEAMS REPRESENTED) CLUBS ETC.....

FATHER.....

WIFE.....

HOME ADDRESS...ADELAIDE...AUSTRALIA

SIGNATURE.....

DATE.....

DATE OF EMBARKATION.....

HEADQUARTERS USE ONLY - DO NOT FILL IN

AWARDS...D.F.C.

CATEGORY...Missing...INTERVIEWS.....

RADIO.....OTHER REFERENCES.....

Overseas Headquarters,
Kodak House,
KINGSWAY, W.C.2.

PRO. FORM.
P/R. 5.

SECRET & CONFIDENTIAL

The following biographical details are required for use at R.A.A.F.

Overseas Headquarters. These forms are to be filled in and handed to the
Adjutant of your unit immediately.

NAME..... Allen Francis McKinnon..... NUMBER..... 407531
(In full)
RANK AND MUSTERING..... F/O Pilot..... DECORATIONS..... D.F.C.
NUMBER I.T.S. COURSE..... 8
X DATE LEFT AUSTRALIA 17.7.41
CANADA
STH. AFRICA
DATE OF ARRIVAL UNITED KINGDOM..... 1.2.41
O.T.U. - A.F.U. etc. 27 O.T.U. Lichfield
PRESENT UNIT..... 1662 Con. Unit..... AIRCRAFT FLOWN..... Halifax V & II
Lancaster. I & III
PREVIOUS UNITS (with dates) AND AIRCRAFT FLOWN..... Wellington Ic & IV. Oxford
460 (R.A.A.F) Squadron - 1656 Con Unit. 3 F.I.S. 1503 B.A.T. Flight.

DETAILS OF OPERATIONS (details of operations with dates to be given as fully as possible under the appropriate headings as shown)

- (a) Number Operational Hours (b) Number Operational Sorties, day-night
(c) Target bombed
(d) Attacks on enemy surface vessels - type size etc.
(e) Attacks on enemy submarines (f) Combats with enemy aircraft
(g) Other attacks and incidents. (h) Other Australians in crew.

(a) 186 hrs. 55 mins. (b) 30 Sorties. (Night).....
(c) 13.3.42. Dupp Kirk. 25.3.42. Lille. 2.4.42. Le Havre. 5.4.42. Selegne. 10.4.42.
Essen. 14.4.42. Dortmund. 25.4.42. Rostock. 28.4.42. Kiel. 4.5.42. Stuttgart.....
6.5.42. Stuttgart. 19.5.42. Mannheim. 21.6.42. Mine laying Terschelling.....
22.6.42. Emden. 26.6.42. Mine laying Friesland. 18.7.22.1.42. Stuttgart. 8.12.42.....
Mine laying England. 9.12.42. Turin. 20.12.42. Duisberg. 21.12.42. Munich.....
27.1.43. Dusseldorf. 2.2.43. Cologne. 11.2.43. Wilhelmshaven. 13.2.43. Lorient.....
14.2.43. Milan. 25.2.43. Nuremberg. 28.2.43. St. Nazaire. 1.3.43. Berlin.....
11.3.43. Stuttgart. 12.3.43. Essen. 22.3.43. St. Nazaire.....
(d) Nil (e) Nil
(f) Attacked by M.F.110. 25.4.42. when returning across Denmark. Seen.....
Rostock. E.A. shot down by rear gunner.

use other side if necessary.

"G FOR GEORGE"
AUSTRALIAN SQUADRON'S VETERAN LANCASTER

"G for George", a Lancaster belonging to an Australian squadron in England, made its last war flight on the night of April 20th when it was in the attack on Cologne. It has been flown on ninety operations, by twenty nine pilots, nearly all Australians.

In the words of Wing Commander H.D. Marsh, of Cottesmore, New South Wales, the commander of the squadron to which "George" belonged -- "It has always been considered an honour to fly in "G for George", and especially to complete a tour of operations in this reliable old aircraft. This squadron has fine traditions, and "George" has been pre-eminent in helping us to uphold them."

Apart from the crews which have flown in "George", there is one man who has an important place in the bomber's history. He is Flight Sergeant H. Tickle, a tall, robust Australian, from Parkside, Adelaide, and he has charge of the maintenance flight that looks after the aircraft's repairs. As a new Lancaster, "George" arrived on the bomber station where Tickle works on October 22nd, 1942. It went on its first mission, to Mannheim, on December 6th, with a pilot who was also from Parkside, Flight Sergeant Saint-Smith. Tickle and Saint-Smith together launched "George" on its extraordinary career. Saint-Smith did thirteen trips in "George", and after each of them, a little figure with a halo was painted on the fuselage. Tickle saw that "George" remained in perfect condition. In civilian life the supervisor of a garage, Tickle says that he has always had unusual luck with aircraft named "George" - he once looked after a Wellington of the same name - and that he adopted this "George" almost as soon as it appeared on the station.

"When 'George' first came here," he said, "I did the initial check-over. I've been seeing to it ever since, and taken a personal interest in it. I think the world of it - it's a great aircraft, and always comes out on top. It bears a lot of scars; nobody's ever counted the flak holes." It was always either Tickle himself, or a corporal of his maintenance crew, who personally carried out "George's" repairs. Tickle was never quite at ease until it had touched down after an operation, and taxied back to its dispersal point. He always talks to the pilot and asks him for details of the trip. These he recorded in a little book, which now comprises the aircraft's history of active service. He also superintended "George's" vast library of maintenance forms, in which the damage and repairs were noted.

"George" and Tickle combined to set such an example of hardwork and reliability that they became quite well known outside the station and the Air Force. Workers in the south of England, who test small parts for aeroplanes, heard of the partnership, and asked for photographs of the bomber and the N.C.O. They then wrote him to say that they have hung these up on the walls of their factory. They congratulated him, asking him to pass on their good wishes to "George", and they told him that the record has been an inspiration to all of them.

Tickle's personal book about "George", which begins with its trip to Mannheim, could be called the diary of a bomber. By the time "George" was approaching its 600th hour of flying, the book already recorded three occasions in which "George" had been damaged by fighters, and fifteen occasions on which it had been hit by flak. Accidents of other kinds were duly included also. There was the occasion when "George" had a misadventure on the ground, and Pilot Officer R.A.N. Douglas, of Albany, Western Australia, as well as Tickle, remembers it. "It's a marvellous aircraft," he says, "and Flight Sergeant Tickle looked after it very well. He thought the world of it. I remember I had a taxiing accident in it one night, and "George" was damaged. Tickle was very decent about it. He said it wasn't my fault, and that I couldn't help it. But I knew he must have been upset".

One of the most exciting entries in Tickle's book is dated October 22nd, 1943, when "George" carried a heavy load of bombs to Kassel. Flight Sergeant W.A. Watson, of Clarence River, New South Wales, was the pilot. The bomber ran into a violent electrical storm. "The weather was the worst I have ever seen", says Watson. "There was lightning all round us, and balls of fire. Blue flames played around the propellers. 'George' was then making its 67th trip, but stood up to everything. Once, there was a flash, and a lump of ice came whizzing in. It hit the engineer on the head, but only slightly bruised him. 'George', of course, got us back safely."

"George" survived a severe testing on the night of June 16th, 1943, when, over Cologne, it collected 17 flak holes in the wings, tail-plane, fuselage, mid-upper turret, propellers and undercarriage. Tickle has noted in his book that on August 27th, 1943, "George" had a lucky escape, and so did the bomb aimer. "Hole in the mid-upper turret." There is another interesting item for September 6th: "Had to give her the works. Came home on three engines." On December 16th: "A hot trip to Berlin. A hole in the fuselage. Fighter came close, read the letter,

and left hurriedly." On January 29th: "George" was first away to Berlin, and last back."

Italy, and the Ruhr, have been among "George's" targets. Several crews have completed their tours in her, and then left to act as instructors. The bomber has only had one major inspection, and that was when it had completed three hundred and forty three of the operational hours that it has now flown.

Among the two hundred men who have spent, between them, six hundred and sixty four hours, and five minutes, of operational flying time in "George", many have been decorated, or promoted.

Flight Sergeant A.F. McKinnon, of Adelaide - later made a Flight Lieutenant and now reported as being missing - piloted "George" on two occasions. He has the D.F.C. Pilot Officer J. Hills, D.F.C. of Yealering, Western Australia, and his crew only did one operation in "George", but it was the last of their operational tour, the target being Stettin, on January 5th, 1943. Flying Officer C.E.M. Agg, bomb aimer, of West Perth, and Flying Officer J.E.C. Radcliffe, navigator, of Cobram, Victoria, both of whom flew on the same night in "George" with Hills, have been awarded the D.F.C.

When Pilot Officer H. Carter, of Sydney, piloted "George" on the first of nineteen trips, he was a Flight Sergeant. He took the aircraft four times over Berlin, and it was while bombing this target on August 31st, 1943, that incendiaries from another aircraft fell through the tailplane. On returning from another trip to Berlin, Pilot Officer Carter said of "George": "It flies like a bird, although this was its 76th trip."

Besides the distinguished list of aircrew that "George" has carried so sturdily, it once had an Australian war correspondent as a passenger, Captain Hooper. He went to Berlin in "George" on January 16th, 1943, when the bomber not only received thirteen flak holes in the starboard wing, tailplane and rudder, but lost the use of the two of its engines, which iced up directly over the target. A predicament which "George", of course, easily survived.

On its ninetieth and last war flight, Flying Officer J.A. Critchley, of Brighton, Victoria, was its pilot. The bomber kept up its reputation and acquitted itself as well as ever. The crew, and in fact the whole of the squadron, were delighted that "George" finished its operational career on a German target. It was Critchley's third successive trip in this veteran aircraft.

"George" will now have painted on its fuselage, not only the thirteen haloed figures of Sergeant Saint-Smith, but also other insignia. There are 90 small bombs painted there, one for each operation, and there is also the D.F.C. and the C.G.M. These last are the affectionate tribute paid to "George" by the men who remember the bomber as the luckiest and the most reliable that they have ever flown, and the best ever serviced.

The operations made by "G for George" are as follows:-

December	6th 1942	Mannheim	June	28th 1943	Cologne
"	8th "	Mining	August	17th "	Peenemunde
"	9th "	Turin	"	22nd "	Hanover
"	17th "	Mining	"	23rd "	Mannheim
January	16th 1943	Berlin	"	27th "	Nuremberg
February	3rd 1943	Hamburg	"	30th "	Rheydt
"	7th "	Lorient	"	31st "	Berlin
"	11th "	Wilhelmshaven	September	3rd "	Berlin
"	13th "	Lorient	"	5th "	Mannheim
"	14th "	Milan	"	6th "	Munich
"	16th "	Lorient	"	22nd "	Hanover
"	21st "	Bremen	"	23rd "	Mannheim
"	26th "	Cologne	"	27th "	Hanover
March	1st "	Berlin	"	29th "	Bochum
"	3rd "	Berlin	October	2nd "	Munich
"	5th "	Essen	"	3rd "	Kassel
"	8th "	Nuremberg	"	4th "	Ludwigshaven
"	9th "	Munich	"	7th "	Stuttgart
"	11th "	Stuttgart	"	9th "	Hanover
"	12th "	Essen	"	18th "	Hanover
"	22nd "	St. Nazaire	"	20th "	Leipzig
"	26th "	Duisberg	"	22nd "	Kassel
"	27th "	Berlin	November	2nd "	Dusseldorf
"	29th "	Berlin	"	18th "	Berlin
April	3rd "	Essen	"	22nd "	Berlin
"	4th "	Kiel	"	23rd "	Berlin
"	9th "	Duisberg	"	26th "	Berlin
"	10th "	Frankfurt	December	2nd "	Berlin
"	13th "	Spezia	"	3rd "	Leipzig
"	16th "	Pilsen	"	16th "	Berlin
"	18th "	Spezia	"	21st "	Frankfurt
"	20th "	Stettin	"	23rd "	Berlin
"	26th "	Duisberg	"	29th "	Berlin
"	30th "	Abortive	January	1st 1944	Berlin
May	4th "	Dortmund	"	5th "	Stettin
"	23rd "	Abortive	February	19th "	Leipzig
"	27th "	Wuppertal	"	20th "	Stuttgart
"	29th "	Essen	"	24th "	Schweinfurt
June	11th "	Dusseldorf	"	25th "	Augsburg
"	12th "	Bochum	March	18th "	Frankfurt
"	14th "	Oberhausen	"	22nd "	Frankfurt
"	16th "	Cologne	"	26th "	Essen
"	21st "	Krefeld	"	30th "	Nuremberg
"	22nd "	Mulheim	April	9th "	Villeneuve-St-Georges.
"	24th "	Wuppertal	"	10th "	Aulnoye
"	25th "	Gelsenkirchen	"	20th "	Cologne

DFC

3/5/43.

234A.

Adelaide

14.

Pilot Officer Allan Francis McKinnon, ~~Royal Australian Air Force, No. 460 (R.A.A.F.) Squadron~~ Pilot Officer McKinnon has proved himself an outstanding captain of heavy bomber aircraft. He has completed numerous successful sorties over Germany, Italy and Occupied France, always pressing home his attacks regardless of enemy opposition. His sorties have included two raids on Cologne and two on Essen. He also took part in a raid on Berlin in March 1943, when great damage was inflicted. From this mission, Pilot Officer McKinnon secured a most valuable photograph of the target area. His courage and skill as a pilot have frequently enabled him to find his way to the target and bomb it effectively, without mishap, in hazardous circumstances.