

A/C SERIAL NO.R5868
SECTION 2B

INDIVIDUAL HISTORY

AVRO LANCASTER B.Mk.1 R5868/7325M
MUSEUM ACCESSION NUMBER 74/A/12

Built by Metropolitan-Vickers at its Mosley Road works, Manchester. After completion taken by road to A.V.Roe plant at Woodford. Part of a batch of 100 originally ordered as Manchesters in 1939 of which only the first 43 were built as such, the remaining 57, including R5868 being completed as Lancasters as part of contract No.982866, serial numbers R5768 -R5917, delivered between Mar 41 and Aug 42.

- 20 Jun 42 Complete and awaiting collection from Woodford following assembly and testing.
- 29 Jun 42 Delivered to No. 83 Squadron, RAF Scampton, Lincs. The Squadron had commenced conversion from Manchesters that April. Allocated to 'B' flight. The acceptance check on the airframe was carried out by LAC Pollard who, with LAC Ron Paget and Sergeants Jim Gill and Harry Taylor looked after R5868 throughout her time on the Squadron.
- 5 Jul 42 Flying log book of Air Gunner Flight Sergeant (Later Warrant Officer) Harry Lavey DFM (photocopy with DoRIS, ref. X002-5569/001) records one hour formation flying and fighter affiliation practice flight, with further similar flights on the 6th and 7th July, with Lavey as rear gunner on all these flights.
- 8 Jul 42 45-minute training flight, takeoff at 14.30 - Lavey (rear gunner) logbook. Pilot for the 5-8 July flights was S/Ldr Hilton.
- 08/09 Jul 42 First operational sortie with No 83 Squadron. against Wilhelmshaven. Coded OL - Q .Took off at 00.05; Piloted by S/Ldr Ray L.Hilton, DFC with a load of 1260 4 LB incendiary bombs. 4 hours 13 minutes. The other crew members on this first mission included P/O D.R.Waterbury, Sgt.R.Beavan, F/Sgt H.Kitto, Sgt.C.H.Crawley, P/O A.F.McQueen, and rear gunner Sgt. H. Lavey (See logbook copy). On later operations Beavan, Kitto and Lavey were replaced by Sgt. J.Mcfarlane, F/Sgt P.J.Moore and F/Sgt (Later Pilot Officer) Llewellyn Edgar 'Jack' Warren - (so named because he had been a steeplejack pre-war; sadly KIA over Essen 12 March 1943). Hilton was the B flight Commander, on his second operational tour. From the outset Hilton insisted that Queenie was flying one wing low. The ground crew tried everything to rectify the fault, the ground crew even flying on air test, but no solution was found. Around this time R5868 acquired her first nose art - a nude female kneeling in front of a bomb, on the port side just aft of the front turret. Operational Sortie No. (1)

- 11 Jul 42 Following 30 minute training flight earlier that day (Lavey Logbook - Lavey was rear gunner) flown in dusk raid on submarine yards at Danzig. Took off at 16.50. Dropped 5 1000lb high explosive bombs. 10 hours 5 minutes duration. A total of 44 Lancasters attacked the yards - the heaviest daylight attack and the most distant raid yet made against a German target by Bomber Command, involving a 1,500 mile round trip. For this and a subsequent attack on the Krupp works at Essen on 18 July, 'Queenies' pilot, S/L R.L.Hilton, was awarded a bar to his DFC.
The ORB records that bombs burst on or near the target and after leaving the target the gunners put out searchlights and attacked gun positions with machine gun fire. The recommendation for D.F.M of Harry Levey records that the attack was made from 2,500 feet. (DoRIS photocopy). (2)
- 14 Jul 42 20-minute NFT flight, take off 15.15-Mills (rear Gunner) Logbook. Pilot PO Partridge.
- 14/15 Jul 42 Mine dropping sortie to Bordeaux. Pilot P/O J.E.Partridge.7 hours 40 minutes. Mines dropped in the Gironde River - splashes seen as mines hit the water. See also Mills logbook extract X003-3604/001 (3)
- 16 Jul 42 1.05 hour practice flight - formation flying. (Lavey Logbook).
- 17 Jul 42 40-minute training flight - Pilot F/Sgt Calvert. Logbook extract of Flight Engineer F/Lt G.Dunmore.
- 18 Jul 42 Daylight raid on Krupps Works, Essen. Pilot S/L Hilton DFC. Dropped six 1000 pound bombs. 4 hours duration.10 Lancs, 4 of them from No 83 Squadron, took part; R5868 was one of only 3 to reach the target; en route two FW 190s were noticed approaching . Hilton received the DSO and P/O A.F.McQueen, his mid upper gunner the DFC for this raid. Rear gunner was H. Lavey - see logbook copy. His DFM recommendation records that on this occasion he directed evasive action and counter attacks against the attacking FW190s resulting in R5868 escaping damage. (4)
- 19/20 Jul 42 Dropped six 1000 pounders on Vegesack. Pilot F/Sgt D.Calvert. Six-hour flight. Dunmore logbook. Landed at RAF Coningsby. (5)
- 20 Jul 42 15-minute flight from Coningsby to base- Dunmore logbook.
- 21 Jul 42 30 minute training flight, take off mid-day; Lavey logbook.
- 21/22 Jul 42 Dropped 112 x 30 pounders on Duisburg. Pilot S/L Hilton DFC.3 hours 41minutes duration, took off at 23.45 - Lavey (rear gunner) logbook. Bomb bursts and fires seen in target area. (6)
- 23/24 Jul 42 Duisburg. 1 X 4000 lb, 6 X 500 lb, 2 X 250 lb. Pilot F/Sgt L.T.Goodfellow. Flight time 3 hours 57-minutes.9/10 cloud over target. (7)

- 25/26 Jul 42 Return raid on Duisburg. S/L Hilton. 1 X 4000lb 'Cookie', 6 x 500 2 x 250 lb. bombs dropped. 3 hours 32 minutes. Intercepted over the target by an enemy fighter, but escaped unscathed.
- The interception report records that at 02.19 at 15,000 feet over Duisburg, the aircraft was intercepted by a single engined fighter, spotted by the rear gunner 300 yards away. At the same time he and the mid upper gunner saw two FW190s 300 yards away to port. The pilot corkscrewed and evaded the fighters. At 02.25 20 miles NW of Duisburg at 14000 feet the mid upper gunner saw a Bf110 1000 yards away to port, which closed twice to 5-600 yards and continued closing for another 6 minutes as the pilot took evasive action. No shots were exchanged and the 110 broke away to port. The crew on this occasion included Flight Engineer Sgt Beaven, Navigator P/O Waterbury, front gunner Sgt Gilchrist mid upper gunner P/O McQueen, rear gunner Sgt Warren and W/Op F/Sgt Kitto. (8)
- 26 Jul 42 35 minute training flight Lavey (mid upper gunner) logbook and Mills (rear Gunner) logbook extract, taking off at 11.30am.
- 26/27 Jul 42 5 hours 8 minutes flight to Hamburg, taking off at 23.05. Pilot P/O J.E.Partridge DFC .Dropped 1,260 4 lb incendiary bombs. Holed in port wing on way out by Flak ships. Bombs seen to fall in centre of town about aiming point. Centre of town well alight. Searchlights shot out by gunners. Mid. Gunner - Harry Lavey, whose DFM recommendation records that the gunners shot up flak ships in then Elbe Estuary after the aircraft had been hit. Rear Gunner Sgt Edward Mills DFM and bar -photocopied logbook extract X003-3604/001. (9)
- 5/6 Aug 42 Damaged on minelaying sortie over the Gironde River. Pilot W/C D.Crighton-Biggie. 7 hours 14 minutes. Slight flak damage. (10)
- 6/7 Aug 42 4 hour 3 minute flight to Duisburg. Pilot P/O J.Marchant. One x 4000 lb and 900 x 4lb incendiaries. Flash of 4000 LB seen by rear gunner. (11)
- 9/10 Aug 42 Bombed Osnabruck as alternative target. Pilot S/L R.L.Hilton DFC Dropped one x 4000lb and 900 x 4lb incendiaries. Flight time 3 hours 57 minutes. Bombs seen to burst but position not known. (12)
- 10/11 Aug 42 Bombed Mainz. Flight time 5 hours 38 minutes Pilot P/O Hodgson. One 4000lb 'cookie' and 8 x 30 lb bombs. (13)
- 15 Aug 42 Squadron moved to RAF Wyton to become a founder member of the newly formed Pathfinder Force which initially consisted of 4 Squadrons.
- 18 Aug 42 Participated in the first operation of the PFF, against Flensburg. Carried flares only. Pilot S/L Hilton. No attack. Flight time 5 hours 5 minutes. One of six No. 83 Squadron aircraft on the raid. Hazy conditions meant that R5868 was one of four of the six not to drop its flares. (14)

- 24/25 Aug 42 Frankfurt. 221 x 30 lb. Pilot S/L Hilton DFC. 5 hours 45 minutes. (15)
- 8/9 Sep 42 Frankfurt. 6 flares. 8 x 250 lb. Pilot F/Sgt. L.T. Jackson. No attack. Flares dropped but cloud and haze plus intercomm failure prevented bombing. Flight time 5 hours 24 minutes. (16)
- 13/14 Sep 42 Bremen. One 4000 lb 'cookie' and 6 x 4 cluster flares. Pilot S/L Hilton. 4 hours 24 minutes. Bombs seen to burst amongst buildings between railway and river near the aiming point. (17)
- 14/15 Sep 42 Wilhelmshaven. 6 X 4 flares, 8 x 250 LB. Pilot S/L Hilton. Flight time 4 hours 6 minutes. W/Op F/Sgt H. Kitto wounded by fire from another 4 engined twin fin aircraft overtaken on return flight over the sea. (18)
- After this date most operations were flown as a pathfinder.
- 2/3 Oct 42 Krefeld. 4 x 7 flares. 10 x 250 incendiaries. Pilot S/L Hilton. Flight time 3 hours 4 minutes. Four separate bundles of flares dropped showed only fields. Area scouted for 20 minutes and finally bombed concentration of fires. (19)
- 5/6 Oct 42 Following 30 minute test/training flight, mission to Aachen. Pilot F/Lt. J.E. Partridge DFC, mid upper gunner Harry Levey - see logbook copy. Rear gunner Sgt Edward Mills – see logbook photocopy X003-3604/001. Flight time 5.45 hours. No attack so 4000 lb 'cookie' not dropped. Weather U/S. 2 x 4 flares dropped, remainder brought back. (20)
- 6/7 Oct 42 Osnabruck Pilot S/L Hilton. 1 x 4000 lb, 10 flare canisters, Flight time 4 ¼ hours. Bombed from 14000 feet at 21.40 hrs. (21)
- 13/14 Oct 42 Kiel. Pilot S/L Hilton. 1 x 4000 lb 8 flare canisters. Flight time 5 hours 25 minutes. Bombs seen to burst on aiming point. (22)
- 22 Oct 42 15-minute NFT flight, Pilot F/L Partridge, taking off at 12.15; Mills (rear gunner) logbook X003-3604/001.
- 06 Nov 42 Raided Genoa, Italy, dropping a 4000-pound 'cookie' Pilot S/L Hilton. Bad weather caused diversion to Mildenhall on return. Flight time 9 hours 20 minutes. Of 15 aircraft sent, the squadron lost two in the target area and two more in fatal crashes whilst attempting diversionary landings. (23)
- 7/8 Nov 42 Return raid on Genoa. 16 flares and one 4000 lb 'cookie'. Pilot S/L J.K.M Cooke DFC. Flight time 7 hours 10 minutes. Bombs seen to explode near north edge of river harbour. (24)

- 8 Nov 42 1.30 hour afternoon practice bombing flight - Pilot F/L Partridge, mid upper gunner Harry Lavey - Lavey logbook; rear gunner Sgt Edward Mills.
- 9/10 Nov 42 Hamburg. One 4000lb plus 10 flare clusters. Pilot S/L Hilton. Flight time 5 hours. Bad weather over target area. 4000 lb dropped near Ratziburg. (25)
- 13/14 Nov 42 Genoa. Pilot S/L Hilton. Flight time 7 hours 55 minutes. (26)
- 15/16 Nov 42 Genoa. 9 flares and 3 x 1000 lb GP bombs. Pilot P/O R.N.H.Williams DFM. Flight time 7 hours 20 minutes. (27)
- 29/30 Nov 42 Turin. 1x 4000 lb Pilot Sgt H.A.Partridge. Flight time 7 hours 25 minutes. (28)
- 2/3 Dec 42 Frankfurt. 1 x 4000 lb and 10 x 250 lb incendiary canister. Pilot P/O J. Marchant. Flight time 5 hours 55 minutes. (29)
- 21/22 Dec 42 Munich. 1 x 4000 lb. Pilot F/LT J.Hodgson DFC. Flight time 7 hours 7 minutes. (30)
- 08 Jan 43 Pathfinder Force became No 8 (P.F.F.) Group Bomber Command.
- 16/17 Jan 43 First of 'Queenie's' eight visits to Berlin. Pilot S/L Hilton. Flares only carried. No attack claimed. Flares brought back except one canister of 4 white flares. Flight time 7 hours 20 minutes. After 25 minutes over the target area the crew could not distinguish any pinpoint in the poor visibility, so made no attack.. (31)
- During a break from operations the aircraft may have been re-engined with Merlin 22s.
- 11/12 Feb 43 Wilhelmshaven. Pilot F/Sgt H.A.Partridge. 1 x 4000 lb and 3 x 500 lb GP bombs dropped but flares and Target Indicators brought back as instructed. Flight time 5 hours 23 minutes. A large explosion followed by a fire which could be seen for about an hour took place in the target area. (32)
- 13/14 Feb 43 Lorient. 1 x 4000 lb plus flares. Pilot F/Sgt H.A.Partridge. Flight time 4 hours 40 minutes. Many bombs fell on the towns' outskirts. (33)
- 14/15 Feb 43 Milan. Pilot S/L J.K.M. Cooke DFC. 1 x 4000 lb plus flares. Some flares brought back. Flight time 7 hours 35 minutes. New type of flak shell noted. (34)
- 16/17 Feb 43 Lorient. 1 x 4000 lb plus target indicators. Pilot S/L S.Robinson DFM. Bomb sight Unserviceable. Flight time 4 hours 22 minutes. (35)
- 18/19 Feb 43 Wilhelmshaven. 1 x 4000 lb plus incendiaries. Rear turret unserviceable for $\frac{3}{4}$ of trip. Flight time 4 hours 22 minutes. (36)

- 19/20 Feb 43 Wilhelmshaven. 6 x 500 lb plus 4 red Target Indicators. Pilot W/C Hilton. Flight time 4 hours 7 minutes. The pilot had recently left the squadron after a long successful tour and was now a staff officer at Group HQ. (37)
- 25/26 Feb 43 Nuremburg. 1 x 4000 lb plus incendiaries. Pilot F/O F.J. Garvey, a Canadian. Flying time 6 hours 24 minutes. By this time the aircraft was apparently known on the Squadron as 'The Queen' (Ashton papers) and known for her mechanical reliability, never once having to return from a mission due to mechanical defects (Ashton papers) (38)
- 26/27 Feb 43 Cologne. 1 x 4000 lb plus incendiaries. Pilot F/O F.J. Garvey. Bombs dropped but bombing circuit unserviceable - bomb doors damaged by bombs falling on them. Flight time 3 hours 24 minutes. (39)
- 28/1 Mar 43 St. Nazaire. 1 x 4000 lb plus target indicators. Pilot P/O U.S. Moore DFM. Flight time 4 hours 34 minutes. Bombs seen to explode on red target indicators. (40)
- 1-2 Mar 43 Berlin. 1 x 4000 lb plus target Indicators. Pilot U.S. Moore. Minor flak damage. Flight time 6 hours 15 minutes. Navigation and crew co-operation good. (41)
- 8 Mar 43 One hour training flight - Pilot Garvey, rear gunner Lavey (Lavey logbook).
- 8/9 Mar 43 Nuremberg. 1 x 4000 lb plus target indicators and incendiaries. Pilot was again Canadian F/O (later F/L) Frederick.J.'Rickie'Garvey, who flew 'Queenie' more than any other pilot. Flying time 6 hours 47 minutes, taking off at 19.57. From 5 Mar to 14 Jul 43 Bomber Command was involved in the Battle of the Ruhr, hitting industrial targets in that area. 'Rickie' Garvey was a Canadian in the RAF, son of Art Garvey, a sports editor on the Vancouver Province Newspaper. Ricky himself became a reporter with the same paper, worked his way to England on a freighter in 1940 and was the first pilot in Bomber Command to complete 60 trips without a break. He was awarded DFC, then a DSO on completing his second tour of operations only to be killed a few weeks later on a training flight in an Oxford.)
- This is the first of 32 flights in R5868 recorded in the flying logbook of Bomb Aimer Flight Warrant Officer O.L. (Len) Thomas, AFM, (X001-3548-then a Flight Sergeant); see also logbook copy of rear gunner Harry Lavey - his last flight in this aircraft. (42)
- 9 Mar 43 30 Minute night flying test. Pilot Garvey. Thomas logbook.
- 10 Mar 43 1 ½ hour training flight - Dusk and dark landings -Pilot S/L Shaw. Dunmore logbook.

- 11/12 Mar 43 Stuttgart. 1 x 4000 lb plus flares, target indicators and incendiaries. Pilot F.J. Garvey. Mid-upper turret and Gee system both unserviceable. Flight time 5 hours 37 minutes. (43)
- 12/13 Mar 43 Essen. 1 x 4000 lb plus 3 x 250 lb plus 5 target indicators. Pilot F/O F.J.Garvey. Flight time 4 hours 8 minutes. One big explosion seen. (44)
- 27/28 Mar 43 Berlin. 1 x 4000 lb plus 2 X 250 LB and 12 target Indicators. Pilot F/O Garvey. Flight time 6 hours 56 minutes. See also Thomas logbook, which records an attack by an 'ME 109' (45)
- 29/30 Mar 43 Berlin.1 x 4000 lb plus target Indicators. Pilot F/O F.J.Garvey. Aircraft suffered flak damage. Flight time 7 hours 8 minutes. Coned by searchlights for 9 minutes with a FW190 and later a Me110 on the tail at one stage. See also Thomas logbook 'Coned. Hit in several places ...Bloody Glad to get back..'. (46)
- 2/3 April 43 St.Nazaire. 6 x 1000lb, 4 x 500lb and four red target indicators. Pilot F/Sgt G.A.McNichol. Flight time 4 hours 36 minutes. (47)
- 9 Apr 43 30 Minute Night flying test - Pilot F/O Garvey. Thomas logbook.
- 13 Apr 43 40 Minute Night Flying test - Pilot Garvey. Thomas logbook.
- 14 Apr 43 30 Minute Night Flying test. Pilot Garvey. Thomas logbook.
- 19 Apr 43 30 Minute Night Flying Test. Pilot Garvey. Thomas logbook.
- 22 Apr 43 1.20hour fighter affiliation flight. Pilot Garvey. Thomas logbook. Followed by a 1.15-hour night flying training flight. Landed at RAF Scampton. Pilot Garvey - Thomas logbook.
- 26 Apr 43 1.30 hour Night Flying Training. Pilot Garvey. Thomas logbook.
- 15 May 43 Simulation bombing and air test, 2.00 hours. Pilot Garvey. Thomas logbook.
- 18 May 43 Air Test. 2.00 hours. Pilot Garvey. Thomas logbook.
- 20 May 43 Altitude test with war load. Pilot Garvey. Thomas logbook. Flying time 3.25 hours.
- 21 May 43 Air Firing. Shot drogues away. Pilot Garvey. Thomas logbook. 1.15 hours.
- 23/24 May 43 Dortmund.1 x 4000lb HE, 6 x 1000 lb, 5 target indicators. Pilot F/O F.J Garvey. Flight time 4 hours 33 minutes. Thomas logbook. (48)
- 25 May 43 30 Minutes Night Flying training. Pilot Garvey. Thomas logbook.

- 25/26 May 43 Dusseldorf. 1 x 4000lb, 4 x 1000lb, 5 target indicators. Pilot F/O Garvey. Flight time 4 hours 8 minutes. Thomas logbook. (49)
- 27 May 43 30-minute night flying training flight. Pilot W/Cdr Shaw. Dunmore logbook. (50)
- 27/28 May 43 Essen. 1 x 4000lb, 4 x 1000lb, 6 x 500lb. Pilot F/Sgt R.King. Flight time 4 hours 34 minutes. (50)
- 29/30 May 43 Wuppertal. 1 x 4000lb, 1008 x 4lb incendiaries, 72 x 4'X' incendiaries. Pilot F/O M.R.Chick. Flight time 4 hours 48 minutes. This was Sugars' 50th operational mission. (51)
- 11/12 Jun 43 Munster. 1 x 4000lb. Pilot F/O M.R.Chick. Flight time 4 hours 52 minutes. Aircraft coned by searchlights on bombing run. (52)
- 12/13 Jun 43 Bochum. 1 x 4000lb, 2 x 1000lb. 12x90x4 incendiaries. Pilot F/O Chick. Flight time 4 hours 36 minutes. Bombs hung up on run over target. Finally bombed at 01.48 from 19000 feet. (53)
- 16/17 Jun 43 Cologne. 1x 4000lb, 12X90X4 incendiaries. Pilot F/Sgt M.K.Cummings. Flight time 4 hours 7 minutes. On their return from the trip, Cummings received his commission, only to be lost with his crew in another Lancaster the next night. Bombed from 20000 feet. (54)
- 19/20 Jun 43 Montchanin. 5 x 1000 lb, 8 500lb. Pilot P/O H.Mappin. Flight time 5 Hours 45 minutes. Took off at 22.43, returning at 04.28. All but one of this crew were lost over Krefeld on 20/21 June 43. They had hit the target successfully, making the first run at 7000 feet at 140 knots, dropping the 1000 pounders near a switching station; On the second run the 500 pounders were dropped across two long buildings. (55)
- 21/22 Jun 43 Krefeld. 1 x 4000 lb, 12X90X4 incendiaries. Pilot F/O Chick. Flight time 4 hours 18 minutes. (56)
- 22/23 Jun 43 Mulheim 6 x 1000 lb, 1x 4000 lb, 8 green target indicators. Pilot F/Lt F.J. Garvey. Flight time 4 hours 7 minutes. Suffered slight flak damage. Thomas logbook. (57)
- 24 Jun 43 1.30 hours fighter affiliation. Landed at Winthorpe. Pilot Garvey. Thomas logbook.
- 24/25 Jun 43 Elberfeld. 5 target indicators, 1 x 4000lb and 6 x 1000 lb. Pilot F/Lt Garvey. Flight time 4 hours 24 minutes. Fires visible from 100 miles. Photo after this, the 58^t operation - Flypast Oct 1991 p.61. Shows original Demon nose art. Also Claims to Fame (027910) p.33. (58)

Photo of Garvey and crew, May/June 1943, when R5868 had 'Devils of the Air' nose-art; Lancaster Squadrons In Focus – Special Edition (Postlethwaite 2012) It is unclear exactly when this nose art was applied - see entry for 26 Nov 43, but see photos RAFM P031148-9 after 58th sortie.

- 26 Jun 43 55-minute flight - Beam approach. Pilot Garvey. Thomas logbook.
- 27 Jun 43 45-minute practice bombing flight. Pilot Garvey. Thomas logbook.
- 28/29 Jun 43 Cologne. 4 green target indicators, 1 x 4000 lb, 6 x 1000 lb. Pilot F/L Garvey. Flight time 4 hours 19 minutes. (59)
- 03/04 Jul 43 Cologne. 4 green target indicators, 1 x 4000 lb, 6 x 1000 lb. Pilot F/L Garvey. Flight time 4 hours 45 minutes. (60)
- 6 Jul 43 45 Minute fighter affiliation flight - head on, tail, vertical and beam attacks. Pilot Garvey. Thomas logbook.
- 8 Jul 43 40 minutes night flying training. Pilot Garvey. Thomas logbook.
- 08/09 Jul 43 Cologne. 4 green target indicators, 1 x 4000 lb, 5 x 1000 lb. Pilot F/L Garvey. Flight time 4 hours 48 minutes. Windscreen holed. No injuries. With this raid P/O (Later F/Lt) Hugh A. Ashton, Garvey's rear gunner completed his 30th sortie and received the DFC at the end of this his first tour. (61)
- 12/13 Jul 43 Turin. 8 x 500 lb 6X8X30 incendiaries. Pilot F/O Walter.R.Thompson. Flight time 9 hours 30 minutes .Poor weather en route, with thick cloud almost covering the Alps but clear over the target. Take off 10.46. Landed back at 08.15 hours.

In later years in his book 'Lancaster To Berlin' (Goodall, 1985) the pilot recalled (page 124) that he was not at all impressed with the way Sugar flew - the aircraft was still flying right wing low and Thompson could not trim out the fault. Take off was at 10.46; intended to hasten Italy's' surrender this raid followed immediately upon Mussolini being deposed. The target was the Fiat works. Sugars' crew dropped their bombs a few seconds late but Thompson was sure the target was hit.

The route back took them over the Bay of Biscay, where they spotted a U-Boat on the surface recharging its batteries; the sighting was reported and a Beaufighter later sank the submarine. (62)

- 24/25 Jul 43 Hamburg. 1 x 4000 lb, 4 x 1000 lb. Flight time 6 hours 11 minutes. In 4 major raids on the city to 2 Aug 43 Bomber Command dispatched some 3000 sorties and dropped over 8,500 tons of bombs. This sortie saw the first use of window to confuse enemy defences. This first raid saw the dropping of 2,300 tons of bombs - a record for Bomber Command to that date - and the use of 16 No 83 Squadron aircraft, a record since the unit joined the Pathfinder force. Pilot- S/L R.J.Manton. (63)

25/26 Jul 43 Essen. 1 x 4000 lb, 3 x 1000 lb, 5 green target indicators. Flight time 4 hours 37 minutes. Passenger; Major-General Fred Anderson USAAF to observe the operation. One of 600 aircraft despatched. The raid left fires visible over 100 miles away, the smoke rising to 20,000 feet. Pilot - F/L Garvey. Gen. Fred Anderson was commander of the US 8th Air Force, and remarked that the fires were one of the most awe-inspiring sights he had ever seen.

Also carried was the Group Navigation Officer, S/L A.Price.
Thomas logbook. (64)

27/28 Jul 43 Hamburg. 1 x 4000 lb 3 x 1000 lb 5 green target indicators. Pilot F/L Garvey. Flight time 5 hours 34 minutes. General Anderson again a passenger. Thomas logbook. (65)

29/30 Jul 43 Hamburg. 1 x 4000 lb 10 x 500 lb. Pilot S/L Manton. Flight time 5 hours 42 minutes. (66)

12/13 Aug 43 Milan. 1 x 4000 lb 4 green Target Indicators. Pilot F/L Garvey. Flight time 7 hours 47 minutes. Thomas logbook. - '13000 feet. Light flak. Easiest trip to date ' (67)

14/15 Aug 43 Milan. 1 x 4000 lb, 3 x 500 lb, 4 yellow target indicators. Pilot F/Lt Garvey. Flight time 8 hours 7 minutes. Thomas logbook. (68)

68th and Final sortie with No 83 Squadron. Air Ministry Bulletin 13750 of 26 Apr 44 records that at this time R5868 had completed 450 flying hours, nearly 368 of them operational.

During its time with 83 Squadron the aircraft was serviced by the same groundcrew, with Sgt J.Gill in charge.

Sep 43 Due to conversion of 83 Squadron to Lancaster Mk.III aircraft, transferred to No 467 Squadron at RAF Bottesford, Leics. Coded PO - S
Joined 'B' Flight as a replacement S-Sugar the previous aircraft being ED500 which crashed in Cheshire.

There has been some controversy over the total number of sorties Sugar flew with No 467 Squadron since official records only indicate 125 sorties not the 137 bomb symbols painted on its port side by the end of the war. The problem is discussed at length by Stuart Howe in his 1991 Flypast two part article. R5868's first 12 sorties with No 467 Squadron were credited to the Squadron's previous 'Sugar' JA981 which R5868 replaced as of 31 August 1943.

JA981 crashed in the North Sea on 15 Sep 1943 with the loss of its crew. Howe points out that R5868 is known to have had 10 'bombs' too many on its side which had to be flown off before more were added. The logbooks of Sgt Steve Bethell, air gunner, and Sgt Worden, also an air gunner in P/O McClelland's crew, both confirm that sorties 70,76, 77 and 79 were flown in R5868, with bomb aimer P/O Griffins' logbook also recording the 76th

sortie in R5868. Sortie 80 is officially recorded as having been flown in JA901, and 81 in ED547, though the logbooks of Sgt Bethell, Sgt Worden and P/O Griffin all record these two missions in R5868. However, in August 2009 Steve Bethell wrote to the RAF Museum recalling that when his crew acquired R5868 as of 1st September 1943, she had 'about 70 bombs and a couple of gongs on the nose'

- 14 Sep 43 1 ½ hour practice high level bombing flight, taking off at 19.55. Flight Engineer Flying Officer Albert Wilfred Martin – logbook RAFM X002 -5793 (Bethell, Griffin, Martin and Worden logbooks).
- 16 Sep 43 One hour training flight - Bombing, evasive action and beam approach (Bethell, Griffin, Martin and Worden logbooks). Took off at 15.40.
- 17 Sep 43 One hour air test including corkscrew manoeuvres and Beam practice, taking off at 15.45 - Bethell, Griffin, Martin and Worden logbooks.
- 27/28 Sep 43 Hanover. 1x 4000 lb, 104 x 30 lb, 1,260 x 4 lb incendiaries. Pilot P/O A.M. Finch. Flight time 5 hours 23 minutes Recommended aircraft unreliable for ops. On returning 'Sugar' was forced to divert to Wittering due to minor defects and poor weather conditions. (69)
- 29 Sep 43 Bochum. 1 x 4000 lb, 104 x 30 lb, 1,260x 4 lb incendiaries. Pilot P/O Neale Maughan McClelland, second pilot John Colpus. Flight time 4 hours 50 minutes. Took off at 18.00. (Bethell logbook). Air gunner was K. Worden (logbook extract); Flight Engineer Albert (Bert) Martin. (70)
- 01 Oct 43 30-minute night fighter and beam approach training flight - Bethell, Griffin, Martin and Worden logbooks.
- 2/3 Oct 43 Munich. 1 x 4000 lb, 84 x 30 lb, 600 x 4 lb incendiaries. Pilot F/Lt H.B. Locke. Flight time 8 hours 17 minutes. This was the second 1000-ton raid on Munich in a month, with nightfighters out in force. (71)
- 3/4 Oct 43 Kassel. 1x 4000 lb, 24 x 30 lb, 1,440 x 4 lb incendiaries. Pilot 22-year old F/O John A. (Jack) Colpus. Flight time 6 hours 11 minutes. (72)
- 4/5 Oct 43 Frankfurt. 1 x 4000 lb, 1,440 x 4 lb incendiaries. Pilot P/O B.R. Jones. Flight time 6 hours 51 minutes. All 12 of the squadron's Lancasters returned safely. (73)
- 7/8 Oct 43 Stuttgart. 1 x 4000 lb, 72 x 30 lb, 990 x 4 lb incendiaries. Pilot F/O Jack Colpus. Flight time 6 hours 50 minutes. Landed at RAF Tangmere. All 17 of the Squadron's aircraft made diversionary landings, mostly at Tangmere. Due to this mass diversion the crews were unable to take part in operations the following night because, after getting their aircraft home to Bottesford, they would only have got a maximum of two hours sleep. The squadron was therefore only able to despatch four fresh crews on this next mission, to

bomb Hanover, despite having serviceable aircraft. Sugar seems to have been lent to No 207 Squadron at neighbouring Langar for this raid, together with one other No 467 squadron aircraft. (74)

- 8/9 Oct 43 Uneventful sortie to bomb Hanover with No 207 Sqn, based at Langar. Pilot -P/O Barnett. Recorded in No 207 Squadron Operations Record Book. 'Secured quite a fair prang with one particularly large explosion' Dropped 1 x 4000 lb, 16 x incendiary canisters. Flight time 5 hrs.53 mins. (75)
- 18/19 Oct 43 Hanover. 1x 4000 lb, 104 x 30 lb, 1,260x 4 LB incendiaries. Pilot the late P/O Neil.M.McClelland from NSW. Flight time 5 hours 15 minutes. Records note 'This aircraft S is only fit for a conversion unit' - Sugar was feeling her age. Took off at 17.25- Bethell, Griffin, Martin and Worden logbooks. (76)
- 30 Oct 43 Night Flying training – 30 minutes - pilot F/O Colpus; Navigator & air Bombers Flying logbook of Sgt S T (Bridgely) Bridgewater.
- 3 Nov 43 Dusseldorf. 1 x 4000 lb, 108 x 30 lb, 1,560 x 4 lb incendiaries. Pilot P/O McClelland. Flight time 4 hours 21 minutes.
- This was another flight in 'Sugar' by the then 19 year old air gunner Steve G.W. Bethell, who in his letter of 15 Oct 1973 recalled that Sugar was affectionately held to be capable of finding its own way back from any target in Europe, but a navigator was carried just in case! Take off was at 17.00. (Steve Bethell, Griffin and Worden logbooks). See also Flypast April 2004 pp.38-39 for details from logbook of wireless operator Sergeant Stan Bray. (77, and RAF Winthorpe (RAFM X008-1029) for reprint of same article)
- 5 Nov 43 Training flight - 'Bombing and Beam'. 1.10 hours, take off 14.30. (Bethell, Martin, Griffin and Worden logbooks, also Bray extract in Flypast).
- 10/11 Nov 43 Modane. 1 x 4000 lb 108 30 LB, 840 x 4 lb incendiaries. Pilot P/O A.Fisher. Flight time 7 hours 35 minutes. The attacking force was over 300 Lancasters, the target the French end of the Mont Cenis railway tunnel. (78)
- 11 Nov 43 Squadron moved to RAF Waddington, Lincs. Base shared with another Australian unit, No 463 Squadron. R5868 left Bottesford at 16.30 for the 30 minute flight to Waddington. (Bethell, Griffin, Martin, Bray and Worden logbooks).
- 15 Nov 43 35-minute flight to Syerston to collect another aircraft (Bethell, Griffin Martin, Bray and Worden logbooks).
- 16 Nov 43 40-minute training flight (Bethell, Griffin, Martin, Bray and Worden L/Bs)

- 18 Nov 43 25-minute training flight (Bethell, Griffin, Martin, Bray and Worden logbooks). Photos of crew standing behind by rear door and tail of R5868 at this time; Flypast April 2004 pp.36 and 39.
- 18/19 Nov 43 Berlin.1 x 4000 lb, 52 x 30 lb, 1,170 x 4 lb incendiaries. Pilot P/O McClelland. Flight time 8 hours 21 minutes. Shot-up over Bonn. This was the beginning of the 'Battle of Berlin' and R5868 was one of 20 Lancasters put up by the Squadron. Took off at 17.15. (Bethell, Griffin, Martin, Bray and Worden logbooks). Suffered damage to intercom and radio. (79)
- 22 Nov 43 35-minute training flight. (Bethell, Griffin, Miller and Worden logbooks)
- 22/23 Nov 43 Berlin. 1 x 4000 lb, 48 x 30 lb, 900 x 4 LB incendiaries. Pilot P/O McClelland. Flight time 6 hours 31 minutes. Took off at 16.50. (Bethell logbook) Flight engineer on this raid was P/O F.G.Miller instead of the usual Bert Martin (logbook extract on file).Bomb aimer was P/O H.Griffin.(Logbook extract on file) and air gunner K.L.Worden (logbook extract also on file). Wireless operator Bray. (80)
- 23/24 Nov 43 Berlin.1 x 4000 lb, 64 x 30 lb, 1,230 x 4 lb incendiaries. Pilot P/O McClelland Flight time 6 hours 31 minutes. Took off at 17.05. (Bethell, Griffin, Martin and Worden logbooks) (81)
- 26 Nov 43 Another raid on Berlin; bomb load 10,500lb.

When R5868 joined No 467 Sqn the Kneeling nude was reportedly replaced by a red devil (Mephistopheles-to whom Faust sold his soul in German legend) thumbing its nose, dancing in flames with the motto 'Devils of the Air' beneath it. This was painted on by Sgt A.W.Martin, Flight Engineer in Pilot officer Neale M.McClelland's crew when Sugar joined the unit. (82)

However, when Steve Bethell wrote to the RAF Museum in August 2009 he recalled no such red devil. He noted that in early October 1943 Flight Engineer Bert Martin decided to dope over the existing bomb log and replace it with a nude holding the bomb, he being the artist. He started also to replace the bombs underneath the nude, painting 10 in two blocks of five before 'rain stopped play'; the rest of the bombs were never added, remaining in this state on this date.

As 'Sugar's' mission tally approached the 100 mark the press began to take an interest and 'higher authority' decided that the nude would have to go. In her place was inscribed Herman Goering's vain boast 'No enemy plane will fly over the Reich Territory' applied in the hangar one night by LAC Ted Willoughby, one of Sugars engine fitters in Feb 1944 assisted by F/Sgt Dan Smith. An arrow pointed to the growing number of bomb markings and the DSO ribbon 'awarded' after the first tour of 30 missions and a DSO after 60.Sugar was later awarded a bar to the DFC. These also reflected awards given to Sugars' crew members.

Aircraft and crew had a narrow escape during this mission, her 96th, when they collided with another Lancaster at 20,000 feet over the target area; In May 1974 the crew of that night - pilot Jack Colpus, Navigator F/O David J. Stevens, Bomb Aimer F/Sgt David Bridgewater, Radio Operator Sgt Peter MacDonald, rear gunner Sgt Frank Rutt, Flight Engineer F/Sgt Ken Smith and Mid-upper gunner Sgt L.M.Jackson were re-united with the aircraft at Hendon.

Photo - Flight International 30May 1974. The Squadron ORB recorded at the time; 'Flying officer J.A Colpus tried 'Aussie Rules Football' with another Lancaster and tried to bump it out of the sky. The aircraft went into a severe dive to port, but by applying full rudder and aileron trim the aircraft straightened, but it still needed a lot of pressure on both the rudder pedals and the control column to maintain height. The aircraft was our old reliable 'S for Sugar' and it had completed nearly 80 trips. In this kite the pilot and navigator go to sleep coming home, for it knows its way back from almost any target'.

See Flt Lt Smith Flight Engineer's logbook MF0069/17 and extract from Colpus logbook on Lancaster correspondence file, September 2012. See also DoRIS copy of Navigator and Air Bombers' logbook Sgt S T (Bridgely) Bridgewater 'collision with Lancaster (Skellingthorpe) over target' and note by his son on the incident in Flypast February 2016 p.100.

The collision occurred just after bombing the target, and the aircraft landed at Tholthorpe, Yorkshire.

The other Lancaster, (DV311) from No. 61 Squadron, also struggled home safely. Repairs to R5868 included a complete port outer wing.

Jack Colpus wrote his own account of the raid; 'Arrived at the target on time at about 20,000 feet with no cloud cover-contrary to met forecast. The whole Berlin area was a mass of waving searchlights about 40 miles in diameter. We completed our bombing run and had just selected bomb doors closed when we were coned by searchlights. They seemed to come from all directions at once. Evasive action corkscrew turns which were made in attempt to escape, failed. Heavy flak thumped in all around us, with puffs of black smoke and cordite smell, indicating how close they were. After a while, which seemed like eternity, the flak stopped as if by magic, which meant only one thing. Fighters were coming in.

I decided on desperate action and dived steeply down to the left and picked up speed to reach 300 mph at 10,000 feet before pulling out to the right and up. At that moment the searchlights lost us, although I was still dazzled. We were climbing as quickly as possible to gain height to get away from the light flak and back into the main bomber stream when suddenly the plane lurched and dived to port.

I thought we had lost power on one engine, but the rear gunner said we had hit another Lancaster. Full right rudder, full rudder bias and full aileron trim was applied, but Sugar still kept turning to the left. Further action was necessary, so power on the engines on the port side was increased and on the starboard side decreased until we were able to fly on course. All four motors were then switched to run off the port wing fuel tanks in an effort to eventually raise the port wing to a near level position. We jettisoned the bomb containers to lighten the load. The plane was now under control flying at the slow speed of 140 mph and gradually losing height. We decided to fly home straight to base at 140 mph -we would

soon be out of the bomber stream which was taking a dog-leg route back. After about two hours, due to a lighter fuel load, we were able to maintain height at about 5000 feet. The crew made ready to bail out if necessary, as the amount of damage sustained could not be ascertained, and now that evasive action would not be possible, we would be sitting ducks for flak or fighters. Full right rudder was required for the 4-hour trip back. The engineer went into the bomb aimer's compartment and assisted me by holding the rudder pedal with a strap around it, to give my leg a rest.

When nearing the coast of England we were directed to land at Linton-on-Ouse as Waddington was covered in fog. At Linton-on-Ouse we were given priority landing behind a plane which was overshooting. At this time we were about 500 ft too high on the approach, but I decided to land as time was getting short.

As we touched down on the runway at 120 mph (about 20 mph too fast due to the steeper angle of descent) the port wing stalled. If I had made a normal approach at the correct speed, the plane would have stalled before landing and crashed. The aircraft ground looped at the far end of the runway due to the high landing speed and excessive braking. Inspection of the damage revealed that about 5 feet of the (port) wing tip was missing and a portion of the remaining damaged area which was turned down at right angles, caused the turning problem. S-Sugar was classified category Q and sent back to the manufacturers. The other Lancaster, from No 61 Squadron, was coned in searchlights and was taking avoiding action when we collided. The skipper confirmed this, when he landed at Waddington a few days later especially to see me to discuss circumstances. We were very lucky.'

15/16 Feb 44 First sortie following repair, to Berlin. 1 x 4000 lb, 6 x 30 lb, 900 x 4 'X'. Pilot the late P/O John (Jack) William McManus from Western Australia – a Qantas pilot post-war. (Photocopy of McManus logbook held by DoRIS, ref. X002-5656). Flight time 6 hours 48 minutes. A total of 891 aircraft were despatched on this raid, 18 of them from No 467 Squadron. On take off Sugar swung twice but got off on the third attempt. Over the target the aircraft lost an engine; for rear gunner Sgt Cliff K. Fudge from Bristol it was his 8th trip; over Berlin he celebrated his 21st birthday, as featured in the Daily Sketch on the 17th. February. Although 43 aircraft were lost, all of No 467 Squadrons' aircraft returned. (83)

19/20 Feb 44 Leipzig. 1 x 4000 lb, 36 x 30 lb, 1,050 x 4 lb incendiaries. Pilot P/O J.W.M. McManus. Flight time 7 hours 24 minutes. 79 bombers were lost on this raid, mostly to fighters. This caused a suspension in raids on Berlin and other northern targets, with the assault being switched to targets in southern Germany, using southerly approach routes to avoid fighter concentrations. The total attacking force was 823 aircraft, the largest yet on this target. Sugars' crew suffered sickness due to bad oxygen. (84)

20/21 Feb 44 Stuttgart. Pilot P/O McManus. Recorded that port outer engine shaky after take-off, cut out at 13000 feet. Bomb load jettisoned. Returned to base after 1 hour 47 minutes. This was Sugars first abortive sortie in 85 operational flights, taking off at 23.49 hours and returning at 01.36 hours, and was not reckonable as a completed sortie towards the final total.

23 Feb 44 Air/sea firing. 1.20 hours. Pilot P/O/Nemworth. (McManus logbook)

- 24/25 Feb 44 Schweinfurt. 1x 4000 lb, 104 x 30 lb, 900 x 4 lb incendiaries. Pilot P/O McManus. Flight time 7 hours 32 minutes. The 734 aircraft despatched followed up a daylight raid by the US 8th Air Force. (85)
- 25/26 Feb 44 Augsburg. 1 x 4000 lb, 92 x 30 lb, 650 x 4 lb incendiaries. Pilot P/O McManus. Flight time 7 hours 45 minutes. The 594 aircraft sent followed up a US 8th Air Force raid on the Messerschmitt works. Sugar was searchlight coned on the bomb run and came under heavy flak fire for 5 minutes. (86)
- 1/2 Mar 44 Stuttgart. 1 x 4000 lb, 72 x 30 lb, 800 x 4 lb incendiaries. Pilot P/O McManus. Flight time 8 hours 8 minutes. 557 aircraft despatched. (87)
- 18/19 Mar 44 Frankfurt. 1 x 4000 lb, 88 x 30 lb, 1,200x 4 lb incendiaries. Pilot P/O McManus. Flight time 5 hours 58 minutes. The Squadron put up a record 22 aircraft which dropped 118 tons of bombs. It was also the first time No 5 Group as a whole had dropped over 1000 tons of bombs in one night. 846 aircraft despatched. (88)
- 22/23 Mar 44 Frankfurt. 1x 4000 lb, 60 x 30 lb, 1,500 x 4 lb incendiaries. Pilot P/O McManus. Flight time 5 hours 12 minutes. Tail wheel tyre collapsed on landing (possibly due to flak damage). At one stage all four engines began to splutter but later picked up, to the relief of W/Op Sgt.M.Williams who had forgotten his parachute. (89)
- 24/25 Mar 44 Air Test (McManus logbook) , followed by Ops. to Berlin. Pilot P/O McManus. No attack. Port outer engine failed. Port inner with oil leaks. Bombs jettisoned. Flight time 3 hours 19 minutes. One of 811 aircraft despatched. Sugar was trailed by a night fighter for 15 minutes but finally lost in cloud and by evasion. This would not have counted towards a tour of operations for the crew, but may have been counted by the groundcrew and hence another bomb symbol-it has to be included to give the 137 sortie total. (90)
- 25/26 Mar 44 Aulnoye. 13 x 1000 lb. Pilot P/O R.E.Llewelyn Bombed with port outer engine failure - returned at 5000 feet resulting in just making Tangmere.. Flight time 5 hours 15 minutes. Railway yards were the target on this occasion. The pilot was lost on the night of 30/31 Mar. Aircraft overhauled after this flight. (91)
- 10 Apr 44 Air tested for intended ops that night. File letter from Mr K.R.Goldspink, a Flight Engineer Sergeant on that flight. This was a post overhaul test flight, but the aircraft would not reach operational height and it was rejected by the pilot, P/O 'Nobby' Clarke.
- 11/12 Apr 44 Aachen. 16 x 500 lb, 30 x 4 lb incendiaries. Pilot P/O A.B.L.Tottenham (killed in action, 26 September 1944, on ops against Karlsruhe). Flight time 4 hours 11 minutes. Another attack on railway yards and the

station at Aachen. (92)

18/19 Apr 44 Paris/Juvisy. 14 x 1000lb, fused 6 hour delay. Pilot P/O Tottenham. Flight time 4 hours 15 minutes. An Air Ministry Bulletin recorded that Sugar flew to the target and back faster than any other aircraft in the squadron. This mission dropped 1,105 tons of bombs on the marshalling yards. (93)

20/21 Apr 44 La Chapelle. 18 x 500 lb. Pilot P/O Tottenham. Flight time 4 hours 17 minutes. A further attack on marshalling yards near Paris with intense flak over the French capital. (94)

22/23 Apr 44 Brunswick. 1 x 2000 lb, 12 x 500 lb 'J' clusters. Pilot P/O Tottenham. Flight time 5 hours 27 minutes. Air Ministry Bulletin 13750 of 26 Apr 44 recorded that Sugar was the last aircraft in the Squadron to take off, but the first to return. (95)

24/25 Apr 44 Munich. 6 x 500 lb, 144 x 30 lb incendiaries. Pilot P/O Tottenham. Flight time 9 hours 39 minutes. Landed at Market Harborough. (96)
RAF photo after 96th sortie - P016764.

26/27 Apr 44 Schweinfurt. 1,800 x 4 lb incendiaries. Pilot P/O Tottenham. Flight time 8 hours 58 minutes. (97)

28/29 Apr 44 St Medard-en-Jalles. 6 x 1000 lb, 5 x 500 lb. Pilot P/O Tottenham. Flight time 7 hours 29 minutes. The target was an explosives works. The raid was called off due to haze causing insufficient illumination from the flares, but 25 of the 92 aircraft still attacked. (98)

Photo of nose of Sugar with bomb symbol added after the 98th operation- Bomber squadrons of the RAF p.260; Also a Very Special Lancaster (008332) p.11; RAFM P020925.

Around this time 'Sugar' was adopted by girls of the sugar section of the Australian Rationing Commission and wrote to her Australian crew members.

03/04 May 44 Mailly -le-Camp. 1 x 4000 lb, 16 x 500 lb. Pilot P/O Scholefield. Flight time 5 hours 33 minutes.

An Air Ministry bulletin for the Australian Press recorded that this was an attack on a concentration of German tanks and other army vehicles at a military depot; it was a clear night with bright moonlight. Sugar's pilot, P/O Scholefield of Cryon, New South Wales was quoted 'The depot looked like an inferno. I saw my stick of bombs land on the target. I have never seen what my bombs hit so clearly before, not even on practice bombing. There were a lot of enemy fighters about, but they did not interfere with our bombing run' Contemporary press reports recorded

1500 tons of bombs dropped on the target in half an hour -it was the home base of the 21st Panzer Division. (99)
RAFM photo after 99th operation - P249.

06/07 May 44 Sables - sur-Sarthe / Louailles 13 x 1000 lb. Pilot P/O Scholefield. Flight time 4 hours 46 minutes. (100)

10/11 May 44 Lille. 1 x 4000 lb, 16 x 500 lb. Pilot P/O Scholefield. Flight time 3 hours 28 minutes .During this raid on marshalling yards the squadron lost three aircraft, the heaviest loss it had suffered - the ORB noted little flak but plenty of fighters. (101)

11/12 May 44 Flew supposedly its '100th' operation - actually its 102nd or 103rd, counting two early returns, '- the crew returned to Waddington to find the station – and British Pathe News newsreel - waiting to toast the 'centenarian' which had just survived 10 determined attacks by two Ju88 night fighters. Violent evasive action left the Lancaster undamaged. Captain for the flight was New Zealander Pilot Officer T.N. Scholefield with the target a military camp at Bourg Leopold in Belgium. identification of the target, so no bombs were dropped to avoid civilian casualties. On reaching the enemy coast two Ju88's attacked alternately from both sides over 9 ½ minutes sometimes closing to 300 yards. The Lancasters' gunners damaged one of the attackers. Flight time 3 hours 36 minutes. One of 211 aircraft despatched.

Because of a serious error in the forecast winds many of the force were late on target. Sugar was one of those that had not completed its bombing run when the order 'stop bombing' was given. When first attacked Sugar was at 16000 feet but was down to 9000 feet when the attacks ended. The rear gunner, F/Sgt K E Stewart of Sydney later described the incident; 'We still had our bombs on board and therefore old Sugar wasn't as easy to handle as usual. The two fighters didn't attack at the same time, but came in alternately attacking first one side then the other. At times they were firing at us from a range of only 200 yards.

The mid upper gunner (Sgt. J D Wells) and I opened fire, and we feel sure that we damaged one.

Altogether we were attacked seven times in seven minutes. It was really grand the co-operation between all the crew which enabled us to get away. 'Old Sugar' went beautifully, and never faltered for a moment. She is a grand old bus'. Other crew included Radio Operator Flt Sgt R T Hillas, Flight Engineer R H Burgess, and bomb aimer Flt Sgt F E Hughes.

Flight engineer Sgt R.H.C. Burgess of Chester added 'Sugar flew up to her usual standard and that is a very high standard indeed. I like old Sugar, She's got good engines and you can trust them. The ground crew are like mothers to her, they check everything a second time before she takes off. See Air Ministry Bulletin 13946, 12 May 1944.

Returning to base at 1.22 AM, after the crew had rested, 'Sugar' was drawn

up outside the watch tower and welcomed back officially. The crew stood on a trestle placed by the nose, while station personnel gathered round. Beer glasses were raised and as an airman painted the 100th bomb on the fuselage, the onlookers gave three cheers to plane and crew. Photo- Flypast Oct 1991 p.62.

Photo taking off on this raid - Avro Lancaster in Unit service (006076)
Photo of '100 Not Out' chalked on bomb adjacent to Sugar - Lancaster at War (003650) p.122. Photo of crew after this raid - Claims to Fame (027910) p.34. Photo of celebrations after the raid - Aviation Classics 001 Avro Lancaster (2009) p.112; Lancaster Squadrons in Pocus Special Edition. (Postlethwaite 2012)

(102)

Scholefield later took his crew to visit the Metro Vickers factory and during a lunch break addressed the workers who had built Sugar.

'Sugar's ground crew at this time included engine mechanic Ronald Baulch, and armourer Gomer Mumford, both from Risca, South Wales (see file letter from Robert Baulch, April 2010)

- 12 May 44 Illustrated on p.519 of 'The Aeroplane' as having completed 98 missions at the time of the photo by which time it had dropped over a million pounds of bombs. Other photos of R5868 with 467 Sqn - Air Pictorial April 1961 p.123; Air Extra No 6 p.30.
- 23 May 44 Thorp logbook (see below) records 3.15 hour flight, taking off at 23.30hrs – 'Special Exercise', pilot F/O D.F. McLauchlan. This was the first flight with the Squadron by Sgt Thorp, newly posted in from training. He was with the Squadron until 19 September 1944, but made just the two flights on R5868 during this time.
- 26 May 44 Fighter Affiliation, 1.35 hours – pilot F/O Murphy; rear gunner F/Sgt Arthur Hedley Jenkins - see e-mails from Nathan Runham 10-11 June 2015 on correspondence file.
- 27 May 44 Correspondence from Mr Stephen Kluver in April 2014 revealed an additional, previously unpublished operation to Nantes, taking off from Waddington at 22.54, returning at 04.34. Pilot P/O Tom Davis, as recorded in the Waddington Air Movement Records (and Sgt Peter Marshal (Engineer) bomb aimer Bill McGowen, F/O Mark Edgerley (Navigator), F/Sgt Denis Kelly (Wireless operator), Sgt Jim Kluver (Mid Upper Gunner), F/Sgt Colin Allen (Rear Gunner). R5868 was in the third wave of attacking aircraft, carrying 14 x 1,000lb bombs, but was one of at least ten aircraft with 'Nil' recorded against target attacked – the target was reached in thin low cloud or haze at 01.43, but no target markers seen and orbited for some 25 minutes before being ordered home at 02.08 (and landed back with its bomb load intact) and therefore the operation was not counted as an operational

sortie for the mission tally. Only five aircraft actually attacked the target. This is explained in the Bomber Command War Diaries book;

'100 Lancasters and 4 Mosquitos of 5 group to attack a railway junction and workshops (at Nantes) The first 50 Lancasters bombed so accurately that the Master Bomber ordered the remainder of the force to retain their bombs. 1 Lancaster lost'

- 28 May 44 Correspondence with Mr Derek Thorp in January 2011 indicates another additional, and previously unpublished, operational flight undertaken by R5868 on this night. The rear-gunner's logbook of his father, Sgt J.F. Thorp of 'B' Flight, No. 467 Squadron (See RAFM MF 10066/20) records an operation 'Ops - Cherbourg Area - France Bombs, taking off at 22.50 , total flying time 3 hours 40 minutes', the aircraft being clearly recorded as Lancaster R5868 'S'. Pilot F/O D. F. McLauchlan, RAAF, Engineer Sgt R. Hodgkinson RAF, Navigator F/O H.C. Phillips, Bomb Aimer F/O G.P. Craven RAAF, Wireless Operator Sgt A.H. Smith RAF, and mid-upper gunner F/Sgt Eric J.L. Klemm RAAF. This was the first operational trip for this crew, and it is assumed that they didn't have their own aircraft and R5868 was available as spare aircraft. The Squadron ORB records that on that night this crew attacked St Martin de Varrevilles, but records their aircraft as LL789. However, the 'RAF Waddington: Raid Record Book 1943 Dec - 1944 June' also records R5868 as the aircraft for this flight. The Bomber Command War Diaries record that on this night as part of the preparations for the D-Day landings in the area 181 Lancasters and 20 Mosquitoes bombed three coastal gun positions, with one Lancaster being lost. (103)
- 06 Jun 44 St Pierre du Mont. 11 x 1000 lb, 4 x 500 lb. Pilot F/O I.Fotheringham. Flight time 4 hours 12 minutes. As part of D Day operations this was a raid on German coastal batteries by 14 of the squadron's Lancasters as part of a total of 114 attacking aircraft, with Sugar taking off at 02.53 hours. During the bomb run another Lancaster was spotted right above Sugar. Fotheringham and his crew were lost on 29 July 1944. (104)
- 06/07 Jun 44 Argentan. 4 x 1000 lb, 10 x 500 lb. Pilot F/O Fotheringham. Flight time 3 hours 59 minutes. This was one of a series of raids on the French railway system to disrupt German supplies and reinforcements.
- The Squadron records note that the starboard generator was u/s from the start of the trip and that allied ships were 'trigger happy'. (105)
- 08/09 Jun 44 Rennes. 12 x 500 lb, 2 x 1000 lb Pilot F/O Fotheringham. Flight time 6 hours 11 minutes. Landed Metherringham. Another attack on marshalling yards. (106)

- 12/13 Jun 44 Poitiers. 11 x 500 lb, 3 x 1000 lb. Pilot F/Sgt K.V.Millar. Flight time 6 hours 35 minutes. Had some difficulty dropping hung-up bombs.
Navigator/Bomb-aimer Angas Hughes – his only sortie in ‘Sugar’ (107)
- 14/15 Jun 44 Aunay sur Odon. 11x1000 lb, 4 x 500 lb. Pilot F/O Fotheringham. Army support mission. Flight time 4 hours 35 minutes. Lost power on port engine; to maintain correct speed for run in to target reduced height to 7500 feet.(108)
- 24 Jun 44 1.35 hour cross-country flight. Pilot F/Sgt M G Johnson. ‘Gee’ packed up.
- 24/25 Jun 44 Prouville (Somme area). 2 x 1000 lb, 14 x 500 lb. Pilot F/O G.C.Skelton. ‘P’ plane (V1) launching site installations. Flight time 3 hours 22 minutes. As one of 16 467 Squadron Lancasters despatched from Waddington, (of which two failed to return) this was Sugars first raid on a V1 site, one of seven such attacked by Bomber Command that night.
Coned by searchlights after bombing. One fighter contact before and on leaving coast. Broke away after two corkscrews by Sugar. No guns fired. (109)
- 27/28 Jun 44 Vitry. 9 x 1000 lb, 4 x 500 lb (Two with 72 hour fuse). Pilot F/O Fotheringham. Flight time 7 hours 31 minutes. (110)
- 29 Jun 44 Beauvoir. 11 x 1000 lb, 4 x 500 lb. Pilot was the newly commissioned Pilot Officer Maxwell (Max) George Johnson. Crew F/Sgts .N.J Palfery, John C. Whitelaw, Ray Dunn, E.C. Evans, F.S.Cavanagh, and Pat Hounslow.
A photocopy of his logbook is held by DoRIS, ref. X001-3518/001 and records light flak during the sortie. Buzz-bomb site. Daylight attack. . Flight time 3 hours 35 minutes. This was the Squadron’s first daylight operation and Sugars first such sortie since Essen in July 1942.
(111)
- 30 Jun 44 35-minute practice flight. Johnson logbook records ‘F/A + Monica practice’.
- 04/05 Jul 44 St Leu d’Esserent. 11 x1000 lb, 4 x 500 lb. Pilot F/O W.R. Williams. ‘Buzz Bomb’ (V1) site. Flight time 4 hours 23 minutes. This was the main flying bomb storage depot north of Paris.
(112)
- 07/08 Jul 44 Return visit to Buzz-Bomb stores site at St. Leu d’Esserent. Same bomb load. Pilot P/O Johnson. Flight time 4 hours 49 minutes. The V1s were being stored in some quarries. Photo landing after this flight - A Very Special Lancaster (008336) p.19.
Flak and fighters encountered - the Luftwaffe had concentrated their nightfighter effort, some 130 aircraft, on defence of this one target.
(113)
- 14 Jul 44 Johnson logbook records two-hour formation practice flight.
- 14/15 Jul 44 Villeneuve/ St Georges. 16 x 500 lb, 2 x 500 lb with 6 hour fuse. Pilot P/O

Johnson. Flight time 6 hours 44 minutes. ' Medium flak ' recorded in Johnson logbook (114)

- 16 Jul 44 Johnson logbook records high level bombing practice flight, duration 2.40 hours.
- 18 Jul 44 Caen. 11 x 1000 lb, 4 x 500 lb. Daylight raid. Pilot F/Sgt I.R Cowan Flight Engineer F. Geoffrey W. Mills; crew's first operational mission. Took off in darkness at 03.55, returning at 7.15am (see Lancaster file letter from Mr Mills, 16 October 2006).
Flight time 3 hours 30 minutes. 1, 080 aircraft dropped 5000 tons of high explosive on enemy strongpoints prior to the ground offensive by British and Canadian troops. (115)
- 18/19 Jul 44 Mainplane damaged during night attack on railway yards at Revigny in Northern France - medium flak and 126 rivets popped in starboard mainplane according to Johnson logbook. At first repairs not thought feasible but later carried out.
Pilot F/O Johnson Flight time 5 hours 7 minutes. Bomb load 13 x1000 l with 12 hour delayed fuse and 4 x 500 lb also with 12 hour fuse. (116)

On recent flights increasing numbers of wing rivets had been popping and as the squadron was now in the process of converting to H2S it was an opportune time for repairs to be carried out.

At the time it was thought Sugar was unlikely to be returning to operational flying ,as indicated in a contemporary press release;
'S-Sugar, the famous veteran Lancaster of RAF Bomber Command, which was the first heavy bomber to complete 100 war flights, is unlikely to fly again on operations. On her last, and 114th flight to bomb the railway yards at Revigny in Northern France, on July 18th, Sugars mainplane was damaged and repairs are not considered feasible. When Sugar was on its way to Revigny, an enemy fighter was observed closing rapidly at 2000 yards range. Evasive action was taken, and the fighter broke away at 700 yards. 'I thought we had been hit in the starboard wing' said the pilot F/O M.G.Johnson of Geelong, Victoria 'but afterwards I found that the noise I had heard was the springing of rivets.

We went on to the target, all the same, and we not only Bombed, but obtained a photograph of the aiming point at the moment of bombing. On the way home we were approached a second time, by a Bf 109. But this fighter sheered off without firing a shot, after our rear gunner had given it several short bursts. We reached base with the rest of our squadron, though we had started ten minutes after them'. One account records 128 popped rivets on this occasion.

- 03 Aug 44 Following dismantling by a team including Corporal H Smith (See Daily Mail, 5 February 2003), despatched for repair in works (probably Bracebridge, close to Waddington) by A.V.Roe.

The aircraft was inspected by A.I.D Inspector Mr. William Bell, who categorised it as recommended for repair, despite the fuselage skin being very wrinkled where it adjoined the bomb bay floor, but there was no major structural damage – see file letters, 14 Feb 2002 and 18 Feb 2002.

Photo of nose section at around this time after c.114 sorties - Lancaster-Classic Aircraft No.6 (006969), also Daily Mail 5 February 2003, with Cpl H.Smith i/c the working party that dismantled the aircraft. Also Lancaster Squadrons Special edition (Postlethwaite 2012)

17 Nov 44 Awaiting collection. Had been repainted and given four new Merlin 22 engines. Extent of other repairs not known other than the fitting of H2S and the fitting of the 'Rebecca' navigation aid.

03 Dec 44 Returned to No. 467 Squadron at Waddington. During 'Sugars' absence Lancaster NF910 was coded PO-S, becoming PO-Q when R5868 returned.
Acceptance flight on this date by Air Commodore D Bonham-Carter DFC. His crew included Wing Cdr Day and S/L McCabe, both engineer officers.

In his letter of 4 May 1971 Air Commodore Bonham-Carter commented 'S for Sugar finished the war as a rather different Lanc to that of the start of its career. At one stage it was given a new fuselage, retaining the original wing. Later new wings were fitted!'

Photo of Sugar in late 1944 - Bomber Squadrons of the RAF p.260. Some time between this date and February 1945, 'Sugar' was given a yellow outline to her fuselage code letters, a practice which began for 5 Group aircraft in late August 1944.

08 Dec 44 Urft Dam. 14 x 1000 lb. Pilot W/C J.K.Douglas. Daylight attack Landed at Ford. Flight time 4 hours 25 minutes. Pilot was the Squadron's new CO. The target area was obscured by 8/10 cloud; orbiting was not permitted and the force withdrawn. Sugar was not involved in two further attempts to breach this dam with the object of trapping German forces with the Americans in front and floods behind. The rest of the crew on this operation comprised Sgt.B.H.Parker, W/O J.B.Nanscawen RAAF, P/O H.M.Stuart RAAF, P/O J.A.Strickland RAAF, F/Sgt B.O.Bean RAAF, F/Sgt M.G. Thompson RAAF. W/Cdr Douglas was lost on 7/8 Feb 45. (117)

17/18 Dec 44 Munich. 1 x 4000 lb. Pilot S/L E.L.Langlais. Flight time 9 hours 9 minutes. No 467 Squadron supplied 22 of the 288 aircraft despatched. This crew was lost 4 Mar 45. (118)

18/19 Dec 44 Gdynia. 9 x 1000 lb. Pilot F/O P.K.Shanahan. Flight time 9 hours 19 minutes. This was an attack on shipping and dock installations at this Baltic port. (119)

- 21/22 Dec 44 Politz. 1 x 4000 lb, 5 x 1000 lb. Pilot F/O G.A.Stewart. Landed at Leuchars. Flight time 10 hours 51 minutes. The target was a synthetic oil plant near Stetin in Poland.. This was Sugars longest flight of the war. The target was the largest synthetic oil plant still in operation. (120)
- 27 Dec 44 Rheydt. 13 x 1000 lb. GP. Fuel load 1,650 gallons. Pilot F/Lt Maxwell George Johnson. The rest of the crew were P/O Palfrey, P/O Whitelaw, F/S Hoonslow, F'S Dunn, F/S Cavanagh, and F/S Evans. Daylight raid. Flight time 4 hours 53 minutes. This was another attack on railway marshalling yards. (121)
Recorded in M.G. Johnson logbook as his 29th operation. See logbook photocopy X001-3518/001.
- 1-2 Jan 45 Gravenhorst - Mittelland Canal. 13 x 1000 lb. Pilot F/O W.K.Boxsell, Navigator V.E. Auborg (Auborg logbook). Flight time 6 hours 38 minutes. Landed at Lossiemouth due to bad weather conditions in the Waddington area. (122)
- 2 Jan 45 Returned from Lossiemouth to base at Waddington (Auborg logbook) Flight time 2.05 hours.
- 05 Jan 45 Although not recorded in the Squadron ORB, the logbook of mid upper gunner Albert F Wallace records him flying in Sugar in an early morning flight captained by F/O Laurie W Baker ,taking off at 01.12 on a six hour round trip to Royan Port where 12,400 Lbws of bombs were dropped onto troop concentrations in the area, encountering moderate flak. (123)
- 13/14 Jan 45 Politz. 1 x 4000 lb, 11 x 500 lb. Pilot S/L E.L.Langlais. Flight time 10 hours 10 minutes. This was more successful than the previous attack on this oil plant. Light flak and searchlights were encountered over the target. (124)
- 14/15 Jan 45 Merseberg. 1 x 4000 lb, 9 x 500 lb. Pilot F/O J.J.Cross. Landed at East Moor. Flight time 9 hours 11 minutes. This was another synthetic oil plant. (125)
- 16/17 Jan 45 Brux, Czechoslovakia. 1 x 4000 lb, 12 x 500 lb. Pilot F/L Frank Lawrence; Engineer Sgt Dennis Baldry Logbook copy with DoRIS –X004-2456/001) . Hit by light flak. ‘Defences all the way’ (Baldry LB)
Bomb aimer slightly injured. Flight time 9 hours 43 minutes
- A further synthetic oil plant raid, this flight to Czechoslovakia needing a maximum fuel load of 2,154 gallons. The damage occurred during the bombing run when a flak fragment pierced the perspex on the port side of the optical glass in the bomb aimer’s blister.
(126)
- 22 Jan 45 2.15 hr flight High Level Bombing ‘Detail Finally Abandoned, due to low cloud and decreasing visibility’ (Baldry LB)

1-2 Feb 45 Siegen. 1 x 4000 lb, 11 x 500 lb. Pilot F/L Frank Lawrence, Engineer Sgt Baldry. Flight time 6 hours 11 minutes. This was another attack on railway marshalling yards by 271 Lancasters. Two No 467 Squadron aircraft were lost during this raid. (125) 'Mod L&H Flak. Easy' (Baldry LB) (127)

02/03 Feb 45 Karlsruhe. 1 x 4000 lb, 150 x 4lb incendiaries. Pilot S/L Langlais. Flight time 7 hours 4 minutes. 280 Lancasters despatched. (128)

At this time 'Sugar' made a tour of USAAF bomber bases in East Anglia including Thorpe Abbots, home of the 100th Bomb Group. Photos - Aviation News Vol. 2 No.4 p.10; Courage Honor Victory (Hawkins). Flown by Australian Wing Commander from No 460 Squadron.

This goodwill tour of 8th Air Force bases lasted six weeks and Sugar carried two engine fitters and airframe fitter Cecil Brownlee plus representative crewmen from No 5 group including Wing Commander F.M. Osborn from Coningsby.

The rest of the aircrew were RAF, not Australian, including the Flight Engineer F/L Keen.

10 Feb 45 Flew to Bovington, Herts to start the tour. Bases visited included Great Ashfield and Woodbridge, an emergency strip on the east coast also the Mustang base at Debden, Essex.
RAFM photos of this tour - P993-95; P7009-7012.

16/17 Mar 45 Wurzburg. 1 x 4000 lb, 150 x 4lb incendiaries. Pilot F/Lt P.K.Shanahan. Flight time 6 hours 40 minutes. (129)

19 Mar 45 Two hour 40 minute flight to Martlesham Heath.

20/21 Mar 45 Bohlen. 1 x 4000 lb, 14 x 500 lb. Pilot F/O L.W.Baker. Flight time 8 hours 19 minutes. This was a 1,560 mile round trip to attack an oil works where defences were moderate. One 500 lb returned to base. (130)

22 Mar 45 Bremen. 14 x 1000 lb. Daylight attack. Pilot W/C I.H.A.Hay. Flight time 5 hours 19 minutes. Pilot was the new squadron commander. The target was a railway bridge with plenty of flak over the target area Photo of No 467 Squadron formation on this occasion, including Sugar - Flypast Oct 1991 p.63; RAFM P7008. (131)

23/24 Mar 45 Wesel. 13 x 1000 lb. Pilot F/O L.W.Baker. Flight time 5 hours 32 minutes. This was a preparatory raid for the Rhine crossing. Wesel was captured the next day with only 36 casualties. 32 Lancasters arrived over Wesel at 17.30 hours and commenced the attack. A ground observer recorded that the town 'dissolved in a cloud of smoke, lit by huge flames'. Heavily fortified with machine gun nests and tank obstacles, Wesel had withstood earlier bombing attacks. The full moon that night provided good visual bombing. The ORB records 'Wizard trip. Everything went according to plan.' (132)

- 25 Mar 45 Air-Sea Firing; Archer LB, Pilot PO Palmer – extract on R5868 correspondence file.
- 27 Mar 45 Farge. 11 x 1000 lb. Pilot F/O Baker. Daylight attack. 7 small flak holes in wings. Flight time 4 hours 35 minutes. This was an attack on oil storage tanks some 12 miles downriver from Bremen.95 Lancasters despatched.(133)
- 03 Apr 45 The No 467 Sqn Battle Order for this day lists the crew of R5868 as; Pilot-W/C Hay; Flight Engineer Sgt Barrett; Navigator F/Sgt Hodgson, Air Bomber P/O Kiernan; W/Op F/S Baker; 2nd Pilot F/O Miller, plus two gunners including F/S Neumann in the mid upper turret.
- 04 Apr 45 Nordhausen. 1 x 4000 lb, 16 x500 lb. Pilot W/C Hay. Daylight attack. Flight time 7 hours 9 minutes. Nordhausen was a road and rail centre. On this flight an 8th crew member was carried, acting as second pilot. 95 Lancasters despatched. (134)
- 06 Apr 45 Ijmuiden. 14 x 1000 lb. Pilot S/L W.M.Kynock. Daylight attack. No attack made as allied troops already at the location. Turned back by the Master Bomber. Flight time 3 hours 18 minutes.54 Lancasters involved. (135)
- 09 Apr 45 Hamburg. 13 x 1000 lb. Daylight raid. Pilot W/C Hay. Flight time 4 hours 18 minutes.40 Lancasters attacked oil storage tanks. The attacking Lancasters were themselves attacked by Me 262 jets which damaged one of them. The No 467 Squadron Battle Order for the day adds F/S Ward as Flight Engineer, P/O Ridings as Air Bomber, Sgt Wing as wireless operator, Sgt Carter as mid upper gunner . (136)
- 16/17 Apr 45 Pilsen. 1 x 4000 lb, 13 x 500 lb. Pilot F/O R.A. Swift. Landed at Boscombe Down. Flight time 8 hours 23 minutes. Railway yards were again the target. (137)
- 18/19 Apr 45 Komatau (Czechoslovakia). 18-x500 lb. Pilot F/O Baker. Landed at Lyneham. Flight time 8 hours 8 minutes. Another attack on marshalling yards. No flak or fighters. Returned to base the following day. (138)
- 23 April 45 Final operational flight, to Flensburg, flown by Flying Officer Laurie Baker. Mid-upper gunner Albert Francis Wallace. Photo at this time in Avro Lancaster - The Definitive Record (Holmes 1997) No bombs were dropped on this final mission due to thick 10/10 cloud. Flight time 5 hours 24 minutes. Bomb load 8 x 1000 lb, 6 x 500 lb. Shipping was the target on this occasion involving 59 Lancasters. (139)
- This was originally recorded as her 137th operational mission. having flown at least 795 operational hours and dropped some 466 tons of bombs. The only RAF heavy bomber with more missions than this was No 103

Squadrons' Lancaster Mk 111 ED888 'Mike Squared' with 140 up to 24 December 1944; that aircraft was however scrapped at Tollerton, Notts in January 1947.

- 25 Apr 45 Flown by W/C Hay to Brussels to finalise repatriation of allied POWs. Returned the same afternoon with between 18 and 20 POWs who were landed at Westcott before returning to Waddington. George Wing described the trip; 'The memory will always be with me of those lads faces, even though at the time I was only 20 years old myself, to see them sat on the floor of the aircraft, and some of them trying to negotiate the main spar, and the cheers when we came over the white cliffs of England. One of my happiest flights' Sugar was the first aircraft to undertake such a mercy flight.
- May 45 Involved in POW repatriation flights from Germany to UK. Photo - Air Extra No.3 p.8-9. The aircraft also flew food supply missions over Europe. The POW flights began with a proving run to Kitzingen airfield near Frankfurt as a prelude to 'Operation Exodus' during which each Lancaster officially carried up to 23 men. No 467 Squadron made 27 such flights, a number involving Sugar. to/from the main embarkation points of Brussels or Juvincourt in France.
- 04 May 45 Exodus flight, piloted by W/C Hay from Waddington to Jouvincourt, letting off the POWs at Dunsfold on the way back to Waddington.
- 06 May 45 Took off from Waddington at 13.57 for Jouvincourt to collect 24 POWs, landing at 15.54. Took off again at 16.58, landing at Wing at 18.35, quickly disembarking the POWs, taking off for Waddington at 18.46, landing at 19.19 (See file letter from Navigator on this flight, Lyle Pattison)
The rest of the crew comprised Pilot F/L M.G. Bache DSO, Flight Engineer F/Sgt E. Wilson, Air Bomber P/O S.H. Nelson, Wireless Operator P/OC.J. Dreger, Mid upper gunner P/O L.G. Court, and Rear Gunner W/O J.M. Jay - an all RAAF crew. No 467 Squadron had 11 other Lancasters also ferrying back ex POWs on this its last mission before V.E. Day.
- 07 May 45 The Squadron commander, Air Commodore Elworthy, was Sugar on a tour of German cities to observe the effects of the bombing raids and check the suitability of some German airfields to accept heavy allied aircraft to fly PoWs directly out of Germany. The 6 hour 45 minute trip included Amiens, Mannheim, Kitzingen, Wurzburg and Frankfurt; only the pilot (Wing Commander Ian Hay, and Navigator F/O A.R.T. (Reg) Boys, DFC were allowed to leave the aircraft on landing, and Sugar became the first Lancaster to land on an 'enemy' airfield. See 'The Burst' July/August 1991 pp.39-41 for details - extract in aircraft history file. Photo at Kitzingen -Claims to Fame (027910) p.35.

At this stage with some semi official argument over Sugars exact total of operations, the last 12 bomb symbols on the nose were painted out, leaving 125 - see photo above.

- 08 May 45 End of hostilities in Europe.
- 12 May 45 Exodus flight to/from Brussels. Pilot F/O L.W.Baker.
- 28 May 45 End of Operation Exodus - since 4 May 74,000 ex POWs had been brought home.
- Jun 45 Photographed at Waddington with engines covered - A Very Special Lancaster.
- 16 Jun 45 Squadron moved to Metherringham, Lincs to prepare for service with Tiger Force against Japan, although in the event Japan capitulated on 15 August and the squadron did not deploy to the Far East.
- 14 Jul 45 Letter to Air Historical Branch from Air Commodore T. Fawdry, Bomber Command administration, reporting that R5868 was surplus to requirements, but due to its record number of sorties enquiring 'whether any special disposal arrangements were required' for the aircraft 'the aircraft itself is in very good condition and suitable to carry out exhibition flights if necessary' (PRO AIR2/10,185); this suggestion was accepted by the Air Ministry Librarian who then had responsibility for historic aircraft. The AHB replied on 30th July requesting that the aircraft be retained in storage.
- 9 Aug 45 Allotted from No.467 Squadron to No.15 MU as a museum piece (PRO AIR 2/10, 185) - aircraft still at Waddington.
- 23 Aug 45 To No 15 MU, RAF Wroughton as exhibition aircraft.
- 30 Sep 45 No 467 Squadron disbanded together with 'Tiger Force'.
- Mar 46 Recorded on home census.
- 01 Aug 47 Declared non-effective stock.
- 13 Mar 56 Allotted maintenance serial 7325M
- 16 Mar 56 Struck off charge as an exhibition aircraft and transferred to the Historical aircraft collection of the Air Historical Branch ,still at Wroughton, being joined at Wroughton by other AHB aircraft during that year.
- Mid 1958 To AHB store at RAF Fulbeck, Lincs. Stored dismantled.
- Apr.59 To RAF Scampton, Lincs to be displayed and looked after by the station.
- 14 May 59 Displayed at the presentation by the Queen Mother to No 617 Squadron of a standard commemorating the outstanding service of the unit. The aircraft was hangared on this occasion, still wearing its wartime colours and code PO-S. Photo – Aviation Classics 001 Avro Lancaster (2009) p.112.

- 15 Sep 59 Displayed during Battle of Britain Weekend at Scampton.
- 1960 Placed on display at main gate of RAF Scampton in No 467 Sqn markings. Photos in position; Air Extra No 3 p.8; Flypast Nov 91 p.51; Air Combat Vol. 3 No 6 p.187; Aeroplane Monthly Jul 74 p.768 (as at 1964). Aircraft Illustrated Annual 1983.p.42. Flypast Feb 86 p.55; Lancaster Legend (Lincolnshire Echo) 7 April 1997 p.29 (as at 1959); Scale Models Mar 1970 p.352; Royal Air Force Flying Review Nov 1960 p.46; Airfix Magazine Nov 60 p.261; Delta - RAF Scampton Magazine Dec 1972 p.6. Flypast November 2003 p.48, as of 1960 (colour); Aviation Classics 001 Avro Lancaster (2009) p.112.
- Oct 1960 Vulcan equipped No 83 Squadron returned to Scampton; when it was realised that Sugar had such strong links with the station and unit the No 467 Squadron codes were replaced by the original No 83 Squadron markings as OL - Q. Around this time the aircraft was moved back slightly as it was supposedly a traffic hazard to vehicles on the A.15 road.
- 1961 Display enhanced with addition of 'Grand Slam' and 'Tallboy' bombs. Photos - Illustrated London News 15 April 1961. Wingspan International May/June 2001 p.39 (1961 photo); Aviation Classics 001 Avro Lancaster (2009) p.112.
- The aircraft was inspected regularly by the station commander and had an officer in charge of it; latterly some internal items were removed for use in airworthy specimen PA474. Photos as of 1965; RAFM photo collection PC73/59/80-90 inclusive.
- 07 Jul 70 Surveyed on site by F/O R.M.Forder of No 71 MU, Bicester, accompanied by Jack Bruce Deputy Keeper of the RAF Museum. An external survey estimated that it would take 2000 man hours to externally restore the aircraft for display.
- 26 Aug 70 Aircraft allotted to RAF Museum Hendon from RAF Scampton.
- Nov 70 Dismantled at Scampton by No 71 MU.Photo; Control Column Jan 71 p.8. Transferred to RAF Museum on indefinite loan from 23 Feb 1971.
- 24 Nov 70 Moved to No 71 MU Bicester for refurbishing - left Scampton the previous day on 8 Queen Mary trailers. Heavily corroded, especially in the wings and toilet area. Stripped by painters from St.Athan and given anti-corrosion treatment; interior repainted; control surfaces recovered by a team from No 27MU Shawbury. Engines steam washed;
- New perspex panels made for canopy and turrets using wooden box formers with domestic type heaters heating the Perspex until it formed the required

shape, and replacement astrodome used from a Shackleton; mock-up H2S radome produced at Bicester. For details see 'Ever Better – the history of 71 Mu (Wise 2003)-

Restoration team led successively by Chief Tech Henry, Sgt Thomason and Ct Stanley

During restoration the front turret yielded a clip of 3 bullets dated 1941.

All wood and perspex parts were replaced. Photos during restoration – Air Classics Quarterly Review Summer 1976 p.55.

Photo assembled at Bicester - RAF News W/E 4 March 1972 p.5.

12 Mar 72 Move to RAF Museum Hendon by road completed in 6 Queen Mary loads with an overnight stop at Northolt

25 Mar 72 Erection at Hendon completed. Repainted inside & out at Hendon by a team from RAF St Athan. Photos being assembled at Hendon - Air Extra No 3 p.7; A Very Special Lancaster p.31 (008332); Air Classics Quarterly Review Summer 1976 pp.56-57.

The aircraft had to be assembled in the open due to height restrictions in the hangars and painted when moved inside - the aircraft was winched inside minus one outer wing with just 2 1/2 inches clearance from the tail and the side of the building.

Once inside the missing wing was reattached and the aircraft repainted as 'S-Sugar' of No 467 Squadron as it was at the end of the European war.

08 Aug 72 Final external restoration work completed.

Nov 72 On view in main aircraft hall when Museum opened. Photos as initially displayed - RAF Yearbook 1974; Air Extra No3 p.8; Avro Lancaster (0240120 p.209; A Very Special Lancaster p.1 & 33; Air Classics Quarterly Review Summer 1976 pp.58-59.

Jun 73 Ceremony to mark end of internal restoration and fitting out by Sugars' wartime fitter, the late Ted Willoughby. The dinner included many people involved in Sugars' wartime service. Some equipment continued to be fitted after this date however.

Aug 1982 Moved into newly constructed Bomber Command Museum; Photos-Air Extra No39 p.18; Flypast Nov 91 p.52; Wingspan International May/June 2001 p.40, plus internal views of aircraft in present condition. With outer wings removed the aircraft was towed into the new display hall. Photos as currently displayed in Bomber Command Hall – Flypast April 2004 pp 37 and 42.

At the Imperial War Museum South Lambeth for many years could be seen the nose section of another former No 467 Squadron Lancaster, Mk 1 DV372. 'Old Fred' which finished the war with No 1651 Conversion Unit and was struck off charge at 24MU Ternhill on 4 October 1945, having flown alongside Sugar between 5 Nov 43 and 12 Jun 44 as PO - F. It was on display at South Lambeth from 19 November 1946, having been delivered there June 1946 following donation by the Air Ministry (See PRO File AIR 20/6289). Photos; Scale Models Mar 1970 p.347; Aeroplane Monthly 1986 UK Aircraft Collections and Museums Guide p.14. Full article – Flypast December 2009 pp.42-48. It moved to the IWM's Duxford site in September 2012, but returned to South Lambeth in 2014.

For full-sized replica of R5868 cockpit, see <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lincolnshire-36132331>

TEXT; ANDREW SIMPSON

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