

SQUADRON LEADER TERRY DODWELL DFC and BAR

RAF OPERATIONS

Terry was shot down over Landin, 30 Kms west of Berlin on the night of 18 July 1944 by a Heinkel Eagle Owl night fighter piloted by German Ace, Heinz Strunig. Terry's navigator, George Cash, survived and joined the Caterpillar Club by parachuting safely to earth, spending the last months of the war in a German prison camp. Terry (referred to by the lady we met in the churchyard as 'der englischer flieger') was buried by the villagers of Landin next to their church in the grave of the unknown warrior. His Rolex watch was retrieved by the Red Cross and sent back to England. I wear it today.

1409 Met Flight had been formed in April 1943, based in Oakington, and Terry joined the flight in the following month. Air Vice Marshall Bennett (founder of the Pathfinders) explained in *Pathfinder* that the flight consisted of a small handful of crews, flying Mosquitos, who were particularly trained in weather recognition so as to make reliable reports when they returned. The Mosquito's frame was made of wood, which led to the aircraft being nicknamed 'the Wooden Wonder'.

In Bennett's words:

When a flight was called for, the code name 'Pampa' was used, and normally came from C-in-C Bomber Command. 1409 Flight flew by day or night as and when required. Their penetrations into Germany were quite deep, even in broad daylight in clear weather. Naturally they flew high and fast, but the danger was extreme, and it was a most nerve-racking job for the crews concerned. They had no guns of any sort.

Terry's perilous assignments with 1409 Met Flight were rewarded with a DFC in October 1943 and a bar to the DFC in February 1944. The citation for the first award stated 'this officer has displayed great skill and devotion to duty. As pilot, he has undertaken a large number of sorties, many of them involving a penetration far into enemy territory. Nevertheless, Flying Officer Dodwell has completed his missions with great skill and has achieved important successes thereby rendering most valuable service'. There was no specific citation for the second award, possibly because of strict secrecy requirements.

Terry was the pilot or first pilot in all of his 90 operational flights. These consisted of 25 operations with 110 Squadron in Bristol Blenheims (a light bomber based on the design of a 1930s civil airliner). The Blenheim had become obsolete early in the war because of its poor performance and low maximum speed. It was for this reason that the Blenheim was largely deployed on night operations, with occasional use in the daytime if there was sufficient cloud cover.

Terry's second operational tour started with 109 Squadron flying Mosquito IVs with photographic missions across Europe. After this was consolidated into 1409 Met Flight in April 1943 the first variant of the Mosquito was developed for photo reconnaissance, namely the PR Mark IX. Terry completed a total of 54 operations with 109 Squadron and 1409 Met Flight.

The final 19 of his operational flights (including the flight from which he did not return) were made when he was flying the new Bomber Mark XVI, which was converted to carry a 4,000 lb 'cookie'. This variant of the Mosquito had a pressurised cockpit, a flying 'ceiling' of 37,000 feet and a maximum speed of over 400 mph.

Terry had started flying, in Tiger Moths, in May 1939. He did his first solo in August 1939 and completed his elementary training in May 1940, when his flying transferred to Avro Ansons, which he piloted from the following month. This advanced training at No 6 Flying Training School, RAF Little Rissington, Glos was completed in August 1940 after he qualified for the award of his flying badge. Terry, as Sgt Dodwell, was then transferred to Unit 17 OTU (Officers Training Unit) Upwood, training as a Blenheim pilot until he joined 110 Squadron.

November 1940 – May 1941

110 (Hyderabad) Squadron

1940

Nov 22	Blenheim I	Night Ops – Dortmund
Nov 24	Blenheim I	Night Ops – Hamburg
Nov 27	Blenheim I	Night Ops – Cologne
Dec 22	Blenheim I	Night Ops – Gelsinkirschen

1941

Jan 3	Blenheim IV	Night Ops – Bremen
Jan 9	Blenheim IV	Night Ops – Gelsinkirschen
Feb 10	Blenheim IV	Night Ops – Hanover
Feb 15	Blenheim IV	Night Ops – Homburg
Feb 23	Blenheim IV	Night Ops – Boulogne
Feb 26	Blenheim IV	Night Ops – Cologne
April 4	Blenheim IV	Night Ops – Cologne – Recalled

April 6	Blenheim IV Night Op – Aerodromes
April 7	Blenheim IV Night Ops – Bremerhaven shot down Messerschmitt Night Fighter but own aircraft badly shot up
April 8	Blenheim IV Night Ops – Bremerhaven
April 14	Blenheim IV Day Ops – located and attacked convoy near Hague
April 16	Blenheim IV Day Ops – Heligoland
April 18	Blenheim IV Night Ops – Neuzen
May 2	Blenheim IV Ops – North Sea and Dutch coast patrol attacked Rotterdam
May 4	Blenheim IV Ops – located shipping French coast attacked 3 destroyers
May 6	Blenheim IV Ops – off Borkum leading formation
May 8	Blenheim IV Ops – 0 feet attack on Kiel Canal – hit water – back on one engine
May 10	Blenheim IV Ops – 0 feet attack on oil tanks at Rotterdam
May 12	Blenheim IV Ops – Borkum 0 feet Formation Leader
May 15	Blenheim IV Ops – Rotterdam – Recalled
May 16	Blenheim IV Ops – located shipping French coast attacked 3 destroyers

On the conclusion of his first tour, Terry rejoined Unit 17 OTU Upwood where he was responsible as flying instructor for training pupils in flying Ansons and (from May 1942) Blenheims. In November 1942, having been assessed as an Above Average MB (Medium Bomber) pilot he started a course of dual instruction in Mosquito IIs. This led to his transfer to 109 Squadron in January 1943.

Jan 1943 – April 1943

109 Squadron

Jan 23	Mosquito IV Ops – Lorient
Feb 4	Mosquito IV Ops – Turin photography
Feb 25	Mosquito IV Ops – Aachen
Feb 26	Mosquito IV Ops – Cologne photography
Feb 28	Mosquito IV Ops – Munchen landed on one engine c/s gear Starboard Engine u/s

Mar 2 Mosquito IV Ops – Homborn
Mar 3 Mosquito IV Ops – Hamburg photography
Mar 8 Mosquito IV Ops – Cologne
Mar 10 Mosquito IV Ops – Essen
Mar 12 Mosquito IV Ops – Essen
Mar 26 Mosquito IV Ops – Duisburg
Mar 28 Mosquito IV Ops – St Nazaire
Mar 29 Mosquito IV Ops – Borkum
April 2 Mosquito IV Ops - Lorient
April 3 Mosquito IV Ops – Essen
April 8 Mosquito IV Ops – Duisburg

May 1943 – May 1944

1409 Met Flight

May 27 Mosquito IV PAMPA
June 5 Mosquito IV PAMPA
June 21 Mosquito IX PAMPA
July 4 Mosquito IV PAMPA
July 10 Mosquito IX PAMPA – Ailly – Paris
July 14 Mosquito IX PAMPA – Rouen
July 23 Mosquito IX PAMPA – Copenhagen – Lubeck
July 27 Mosquito IX PAMPA – Osnabruck Munster Hamburg
Aug 12 Mosquito IX PAMPA – Paris
Aug 16 Mosquito IV PAMPA
Aug 19 Mosquito IX PAMPA – Paris Dijon Geneva

Aug 24	Mosquito IV PAMPA – Cherbourg Berck
Aug 27	Mosquito IX PAMPA – Calais Boulogne
Aug 31	Mosquito IX PAMPA – Ailly Paris Berck
Sept 2	Mosquito IX PAMPA – Paris Brussels
Sept 5	Mosquito IX PAMPA
Sept 21	Mosquito IV PAMPA – St Valerie Paris
Sept 24	Mosquito IX PAMPA – Mannheim Stuttgart
Sept 26	Mosquito IX PAMPA – Lorient Nantes Lannion St Nazaire
Oct 2	Mosquito IX PAMPA – Borkum Nordeney
Oct 4	Mosquito IX PAMPA – Frankfurt Mainz
Oct 7	Mosquito IX PAMPA – Egmond Oldenberg Emden
Oct 17	Mosquito IX PAMPA – Middleburg Munster Haarlem
Oct 19	Mosquito IX PAMPA
Oct 22	Mosquito IX PAMPA – Mannheim Blankenburg
Nov 4	Mosquito IX PAMPA – Marburg Munster Rotterdam
Nov 7	Mosquito IX PAMPA – 55NO7E-56NO4E
Nov 8	Mosquito IX PAMPA
Nov 10	Mosquito IX PAMPA – Chalon-s-Saone Geneva Dijon
Nov 12	Mosquito IX PAMPA – Reims Besancons Orleans
Nov 15	Mosquito IX PAMPA – Heligoland 56N 040E
Nov 22	Mosquito IX PAMPA – Hanover Cardelegen Hamburg
Nov 25	Mosquito IX PAMPA – Texel Hanover Cuxhaven
Nov 26	Mosquito IX PAMPA –
Nov 30	Mosquito IX PAMPA

1944

Jan 2 Mosquito IX PAMPA

Jan 10 Mosquito XVI PAMPA

At the end of this extended tour Terry, starting as Flight Lieutenant officer in charge of AFDU Flight Bourne (later 1696 Flight) flew a wide range of aircraft namely Spitfire, Hurricane, Tiger Moth, Proctor, Mosquito XVI, Martinet and Oxford. This was for a variety of purposes including flight moves, night affiliations and aircraft tests. Prior to joining 571 Squadron he had been appointed Squadron Leader officer in charge of 1696 Flight and on joining his new squadron was appointed officer in charge of 571 Squadron's A Flight.

May – July 1944

571 Squadron

June 12 Mosquito XVI Ops – Cologne Gelsenkirschen

June 15 Mosquito XVI Ops – Gelsenkirschen

June 16 Mosquito XVI Ops - Berlin

June 25 Mosquito XVI Ops - Homberg

June 26 Mosquito XVI Ops – Gottingen [abandoned ball bearing factory target after aircraft turned on its back in thunderstorm, dropped cookie on Aachen marshalling yards]

June 28 Mosquito XVI Ops - Saarbrucken

June 30 Mosquito XVI Ops - Homberg

July 4 Mosquito XVI Ops – Scholven [main target was power station. Very intense heavy flak and numerous searchlights coning accurately. 2 ½ mins late bombing]

July 6 Mosquito XVI Ops – Scholven [intense heavy flak encountered]

July 10 Mosquito XVI Ops – Berlin [moderate heavy flak over Leipzig]

July 16 Mosquito XVI Ops - Berlin

July 18 Mosquito XVI Ops – Berlin [failed to return - a/c shot down by Schrage Musik – upward firing cannon]