

Target For Tonight online campaign  
Target – Kaiserlautern, Germany  
1<sup>st</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1944  
102 Squadron J Jelly

We are on our way to southern Germany on the coldest night of the year so far. Over the North Sea 10/10ths cloud cover and there is a hell of a bang and I thought we had been hit but it was just ice on the wings breaking off and hitting the tail section.

“Enemy coast ahead Skipper.” “Thanks Ben. Eyes peeled everyone.” Flak comes up through the 5/10ths cloud and this time we really are hit. “Check the damage Chris. Tail controls feel sloppy.” Ten minutes later Chris comes on the intercom, “Bloody great hole port aft and its sheared some control cables. I’ve managed a lash up repair but try not to put too much pressure on the elevators.”

We’ve come this far might as well press on. If the worst happens we can always land in Belgium or Switzerland.

Sometime later as we enter German airspace the cloud has really built up and driven us up to our maximum angels. “Check for a recall Ronnie.” “Wilco Skipper.” “No, no recall.”

The searchlights have no joy piercing the cloud cover and the cloud is so thick that all it creates is a pale blanket below us. Even the nightfighters seem to have given it up as a bad job.

“Ten minutes to target.”

Very light flak and no nightfighters on the way in.

“Bombs gone.”

Just at the moment when we turn for home a Do217N-2 appears on our 6 o’clock level. Tom shouts on the intercom at the same time as he opens fire, “Break left. Bandit on our tail.”

The Dornier is hit in the fuel tank and immediately breaks off the attack as a stream of fuel vapour envelopes his fuselage.

“Good shooting Tom.”

Just South of Birkenfeld a burst of flak hits our fuel tank and although we manage to avoid a fire the rupture causes us to lose too much fuel.

“OK chaps this is the situation we are losing fuel and won’t have enough to make it home. I am going to put her down in Allied occupied Belgium rather than risk crashing in the Netherlands or ditching in the sea. Gather up all maps, code books and documents and be ready to get out as soon as we come to a stop as the crate will be full of fumes.”

We circled a likely looking field on the outskirts of Brussels before committing to a landing. Apart from bending a prop on the number two engine the landing was fine. Piece of cake.

Hopefully we can get back home in time to take part in the next op.

30% on target.