

Target for Tonight Steve Dixon's online campaign

Mission 9

Target Rail Yard – Villeneuve-St. Georges, France 11/12 May 1944

Aircraft: Berlin or Bust 102 Squadron

After a jolly decent time thanks to a 48 hour pass while our old bus was being patched up and a new astro dome fitted, the chaps were feeling considerably bucked on their return to duty.

Looks like the old second front can't be that far off as our target for tonight is French railyards again, this time just south of Paris.

At the briefing the Old Man is giving us a right ear bashing about the importance of accurate bomb aiming as the target is very close to civilian housing. It appears on our last little jaunt 102 Squadron were terribly Second 11 with our accuracy definitely not up to snuff compared to the other squadrons.

Finally with all pre flight checks done it was our turn for take off. Piece of cake. Assembly was just off Felixstowe and in this clear weather we can see the Essex coast and all the way down to the Thames Estuary.

“Problem Skipper.” Peter Ellwood my Flight Engineer on the intercom. “We've got a problem with the hydraulics and the bomb bay doors won't operate.”

“Can you fix it, Peter?”

“No dice skipper.”

“Pilot to crew – we are going to have to abort. As we are slap bang in the middle of the bomber stream I am going to have to loose a lot of height before trying to turn for base. Sam send a message back to base that we are returning with bombs on board and...”

“BREAK LEFT! BREAK LEFT! Ju88 6 o'clock low.” Rattle of the quad guns in the tail accompanied this as Bert opened up with everything that he had got.

A second or two later a fireball passed below us as another member of the Strength Through Joy brigade met his maker.

As the flat Norfolk countryside slipped below us we sent out today's recognition signal so that they could light up the flare path as we circled our base. I put us down as if I were landing on eggs.