

## **PILOT OFFICER GORDON ALLAN GRAHAM**

Gordon was born at Yorkton, Saskatchewan on 13 February 1918. His father was born in Damascus, Ontario and worked as a Salesman and his mother was born in Toledo, Iowa, USA. His father died in 1942. He had two brothers Alexander and Carl. Gordon went to Central Public School from 1932-1933 and Crescent Heights High School from 1933-1938, both in Calgary. He enjoyed skating, golf, swimming, model aircraft and photography. Gordon worked as a Repair and Shipping clerk for Singer Sewing Machines in Calgary between 1939 and his enlistment into the RCAF on 9 April 1941, with the service number of R92982. Following aptitude testing and a medical, he was selected for training as a Pilot. He completed basic military training, then completed No 37 Course at No 12 Elementary Flying Training School from 1 September 1941 to 24 October 1941. He was assessed as above average and his Sqn Cdr recommended him for a commission. The RCAF decided to continue his pilot training, when many were re-mustered as Navigators and Bomb Aimers. Gordon completed advanced pilot training and was awarded his RCAF pilot's badge. He was then sent to the UK on 12 December 1942.

Gordon arrived in UK on 18 December 1942 and was sent to No 3 Personnel Reception Centre, Bournemouth, a seaside town on the south coast of England. He was sent to No 14 (Pilots) Advanced Flying Unit (AFU) on 19 January 1943, where a flying instructor checked his pilot ability and showed him the differences between flying in Canada & Europe. He then continued to 14 AFU on 1 March 1943. On 9 March 1943, he was sent to No 19 Operational Training Unit at RAF Kinloss in Moray, Scotland. At Operational Training Unit, he would have crewed up with a Navigator, Bomb Aimer, Wireless Operator and one Air Gunner to fly the Whitley training aircraft. Gordon and his crew were then sent to No 1661 Heavy Conversion Unit at RAF Winthorpe, Notts on 24 May 1943, where they were joined by a Flight Engineer and a second Air Gunner. Gordon Graham was commissioned as a Pilot Officer on 13 June 1943 and given a new service number of J18225.

His crew were qualified as a seven-man crew to fly the Lancaster. The Graham crew were posted onto the famous 9 Squadron on 8 July 1943. The following day, Gordon went as second dickie pilot with the experienced Flt Lt Dicky Bunker. Gordon completed another 16 Ops against many of the most defended cities in Germany, and one Op to bomb Milan, on 7 August 1943, with a flight time of 8 hrs 27 mins. List of Ops below.

OP	DATE	TARGET	REMARKS
1	09 July 1943	Gelselkirchen	Graham only as second dickie with Bunker
2	24 July 1943	Hamburg	
3	25 July 1943	Essen	Intercom failure. MUT electrical failure
4	27 July 1943	Hamburg	
5	29 July 1943	Hamburg	
6	02 August 1943	Hamburg	5 Group recall
7	07 August 1943	Milan	
8	09 August 1943	Mannheim	
9	22 August 1943	Leverkusen	
10	23 August 1943	Berlin	
11	30 August 1943	Munchen-Gladbach	
12	03 September 1943	Berlin	
13	22 September 1943	Hannover	
14	03 October 1943	Kassel	
15	04 October 1943	Frankfurt	
16	08 October 1943	Hannover	
17	03 November 1943	Dusseldorf	
18	18 November 1943	Berlin	Second dickie PO J G McComb 161589



The Gordon Graham crew.

(Standing L to R) - Sgt Kenneth Mellor (AG), Sgt Arthur Williamson (WOp), Sgt Walter Statham (FE), Flt Sgt Hector Altus, RAAF (AG)

(Seated L to R) - Sgt Ronald Innes (BA), Pilot Officer Gordon Graham, RCAF (Pilot), Fg Off Duncan MacDonald (Nav)

From Op 2 – Op 18, Gordon flew with exactly the same crew which was very unusual, due to sickness, leave, family etc.

On 18 November 1943, Gordon and his crew in Lancaster DV284 WS-G took off from RAF Bardney at 1725 hrs to bomb Berlin. Nothing was heard from DV284 after take-off and they failed to return to base. After the war, a report emerged of the Lancaster's crash, shot down by anti-aircraft guns at around 2153 hrs. It came down around 1km south-west of Burgwerben and 2km north of Weissenfels, a town 35 km south west of Leipzig. In addition to the 7-man crew, they carried a new Pilot to the Squadron - Pilot Officer John Graham McComb, who was a second dickie Pilot, learning the standard operating procedures of the squadron. Second dickie pilots unsettled and distracted the regular crew and the loss rate on these Ops was so great, they were stopped later in the war. The 8 airmen who failed to return were:

- Pilot Officer Gordon Allan Graham (J/18225) RCAF – Pilot.
- Sergeant Walter George Statham (1536256) RAF – Flight Engineer.
- Flying Officer Duncan MacDonald (139297) RAF – Navigator.
- Sergeant Ronald McKenzie Innes (1551722) RAF – Bomb Aimer.
- Sergeant Arthur Fenwick Williamson (1036493) RAF – Wireless Operator/Air Gunner.
- Flight Sergeant Hector Ferdinand Altus (416819) RAAF – Mid Upper Gunner.
- Sergeant Kenneth Mellor (1230793) RAF – Rear Gunner.
- Pilot Officer John Graham McComb – Second dickie Pilot

NOVEMBER		No 9 Squadron	
Date	Hour	Aircraft Type and No.	Pilot
3-11-43	1060	LANCASTER DV284	P/O GRAHAM.
3-11-43	1700	LANCASTER DV284	P/O GRAHAM
5-11-43	1120	LANCASTER DV284	P/O GRAHAM.
15-11-43	1130	LANCASTER DV284	P/O GRAHAM
18-11-43	1740	LANCASTER DV284	P/O GRAHAM
Summary for 9 SQDN 1943		1. LANCASTER	
Used 9. SQDN Aircraft		2. _____	
Detd 26-11-43 Types		3. _____	
Signature F. WILLIAMSON		4. _____	

  

BARDNEY		Time carried forward:- 109.30 148.10	
REMARKS (including results of bombing, gunnery, exercises, etc.)		Flying Times	
		Day	Night
N.F.T.		1.00	
OPERATIONS — DUSSELDORF			4.15
HIGH LEVEL BOMBING		1.00	
HIGH LEVEL BOMBING		1.05	
OPS. - BERLIN - MISSING			
MONTHLY TOTAL		3.05	4.15
GRAND TOTAL		112.35	152.25

J. G. G. Haslam F/Lt  
OC 'A' Flt.

W. C. M. D. R.  
DEATH PRESUMED No 9 SQDN

CENTRAL DEPOSITORY  
JUN 1946  
ROYAL AIR FORCE

TOTAL TIME ...



Above is the logbook of the Wireless Operator/Air Gunner- Sergeant Arthur Fenwick Williamson

No. 9 Squadron,  
Royal Air Force,  
Bardney, Lincoln.

30th November, 1943.

Dear *Mr. Williamson,*

Thank you for your letter of 28th November. As requested, I am giving below the names and addresses of the next of kin of the other members of your son's crew.

*Pilot* Pilot Officer G.A. Graham. (No. J.18225). Wife, Mrs. Patricia E. Graham, 13½, Waegwoltic Avenue, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

*2<sup>nd</sup> Pilot* Flight Sergeant J.G. McComb. (No. 1081005) Mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Liddell, 32, Ashley Gardens, Belfast, Antrim. ✓

*Eng* Sergeant W.G. Statham. (No. 1536256). Mother, Mrs. S.A. Statham, Great Haywood, Stafford, Staffs. ✓

*Nat.* Flying Officer D. MacDonald. (No. 139297). Wife, Mrs. Jane MacDonald, 29, Main Street, Glasgow, S.E. ✓

*Barb* Sergeant R.M. Innes. (No. 1551722) Wife, Mrs. E. Innes, 76, Great Northern Road, Aberdeen. ✓

*Gunner* Flight Sergeant H.F. Altus. (No. AUS.416819). Mother, Mrs. M. Brooker, Wilkawatt, S. Australia.

*Gunner* Sergeant K. Mellor. (No. 1230793). Father, Mr. H. Mellor, 13, Co-op Street, Lower Hopton, Mirfield, Yorkshire. ✓