

Peter Brown's operational history compiled by Dave Gilbert, Losses Archivist, IBCC, 16 March 2023

I can say for certain that he was posted into 625 Sqn (Scampton) from 1668 HCU effective 13/5/45.

Unfortunately 625 Sqn stopped keeping Records of Events after they completed Op. Manna and from then on only recorded Summaries of Events. They do not list individual crews, instead simply stating (for example) that '8 aircraft took off on operation "DODGE"'. However, this was not the dead end I feared it would be. Fortunately the Appendices to the ORBs contain training manifests and five of these feature Peter Brown, as follows (AIR27/2144 page 207 onwards refers):

5/7/45 Flew as Rear Gunner in aircraft -P2 skippered by F/L Zala. Purpose not stated. 9 aircraft detailed plus 1 reserve

Unknown date (in the fold of the binder on TNA scanned copy so can't see it) Flew as Rear Gunner in aircraft -J skippered by F/L Zala. 8 aircraft detailed + 1 reserve

2/8/45 Flew as WOp/AG on Op. Dodge training in aircraft -C2 skippered by F/L Turner. 4 aircraft detailed

17/8/45 Flew as WOp/AG on Op. Dodge training in aircraft -C2 skippered by F/L Turner. 7 aircraft detailed

1/9/45 Flew as WOp/AG on Op. Dodge training in aircraft -E2 skippered by F/L Turner. 8 aircraft detailed

These are the pre-ops he took part in and by inference he therefore probably flew five ops.

The corresponding Summary of Events for the period listed above included the following actual ops (AIR 27/2143 page 931 onwards refers):

5/7/45 9 a/c on Post Mortem flight- all returned same day.

23/7/45 2 a/c on Op Dodge.

2/8/45 4 a/c on Op Dodge (all returned 4/8)

5/8/45 3 a/c on Op Dodge (2 returned 7/8, last one returned 11/8)

17/8/45 7 a/c on Op. Dodge (all returned 20/8)

21/8/45 9 a/c on Op. Dodge (8 returned 24/8)

28/8/45 3 a/c on Op. Dodge (2 returned 29/8, last one returned 31/8)

1/9/45 8 a/c on Op. Dodge (7 returned 3/9, last one returned 4/9)

9/9/45 7 a/c on Op. Dodge (5 returned 12/9, 2 returned 13/9)

14/9/45 10 a/c on Op. Dodge (all returned 18/9)

The squadron was stood down following the last op listed above.

What's striking is the close correlation between the training flights and the actual op dates (see yellow highlighted dates) and the exact match with the numbers of aircraft despatched (see blue highlights), all of which increase my confidence enormously.

I also note that at the foot of each of the manifests in every case it mentions rations which would not have been issued if they were simple training flights. I think that shows beyond doubt that they were pre-op air tests.

So, we have one Post Mortem and three Op Dodge ops. The op between 5/7 and 2/8 continues to elude me since there were no ops detailed in the Summaries between 5/7 and 23/7 and the a/c numbers don't correspond with the 23/7 op. Without a definitive date I don't think I can any more on this. A date could be ascertained only by viewing the originals at TNA. However, we can take this as being an actual op. and not just a training flight since it once again discusses the issuing of rations.