

119259 Flying Officer Peter Edward 'Slosher' Raw, D.F.C. Joined 609 Squadron 30th June 1942, Killed in Action with the rank of Flight Lieutenant with 183 Squadron 21st March 1944.

Peter 'Slosher' Raw, an insurance broker in Ealing before the war, was one of four brothers of which only one, Michael, survived the war, (receiving the Air Force Cross in 1955). Another brother, Squadron Leader Anthony William Raw, also won the AFC, as well as the Distinguished Flying Cross like Peter, and their father, Commander Frederick E. Raw, had previously won the Distinguished Service Cross whilst serving in the Royal Navy. He had fought at the Battle of Jutland and was awarded the DSC for the Dover Patrol in 1917. He suffered a heart attack in his garden and died in 1932. Peter was killed in action over Holland as a Flight Lieutenant in 183 Squadron on 21st March 1944 during a fighter sweep by six Hawker Typhoon aircraft, which had taken off at 14:25 to patrol the area around Nijmegen, Holland. Coming under heavy anti-aircraft fire, Peter's aircraft, Typhoon MN247 either took a direct hit whilst making a low level attack on a barge which lay on the Maas river by Vorten / Vierlingsbeck, Holland, going down in flames, or hit the mast of the barge, causing him to crash into a nearby field. His brother Anthony was killed with 156 Squadron, a Pathfinder unit of Bomber Command, a few months later on 11th September. The other brother, Pilot Officer John Frederick Raw died on 30th April 1941 and is buried in Wiltshire. Peter boxed competitively, and had joined 609 Squadron in the company of Roy Payne and Humphrey Gilbert on 30th June 1942, all of them coming from the same Operational Training Unit, and all ex-Army. According to Roy Payne, speaking in 2002 "there are a whole load of cannon shells embedded in the grass runway at Duxford. Peter Raw was coming in to land, and when he selected Flaps the cannons started blazing. Gave him a hell of a shock. Someone had connected the wiring incorrectly." His 'personal' Hawker Typhoon MKIB while with 609 (West Riding) Squadron, serial number DN406 coded PR-F, carried the name of his wife, Mavis, painted on the cowling.

Peter Raw and Roy Payne trained together for a time before they joined 609 Squadron. At Christmas 1941 they were both stationed at RAF Montrose, Scotland, at which time Peter was still an Army Officer (he had originally joined the Honourable Artillery Company and was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant before joining the Somerset Light Infantry) wearing khaki uniform, mixing mainly with other Army Officers on the course, whereas Roy was an Airman. At that time they only really saw each other on the flight line as they both lived in separate Messes. It wasn't until February 1942 that Roy was commissioned and ended up in the same Mess as Peter.

They were officially posted to No. 8 Service Flying Training School, Montrose, Scotland on 7th September 1941, before being posted on 26th February 1942 to No. 55 Operational Training Unit at Usworth on 17th March 1942. They were then officially posted to their first operational fighter squadron from there on 1st July - joining 609 (West Riding) Squadron at RAF Station Duxford, Cambridgeshire on the following day (although they actually arrived on 30th June). Leaving Duxford on 18th September, they were posted to RAF Station Biggin Hill, Kent with the Squadron, where they remained until moving to RAF Station Manston, Kent on 31st October. Peter left the squadron on 17th June on a posting to Hawker Aircraft at Langley, with Roy leaving the squadron on 21st July.

Form 540 Operations Record Book, 609 (West Riding) Squadron.

1942

Duxford

Jun. 30. ...Arrival today of yet 3 more English pilots - P/O.'s Gilbert, Raw and Payne - from O.T.U., and all previously in the Army (P/O. Gilbert was previously a make-up artist in Hollywood). For the first time for many a day, there are now almost as many English pilots in the Squadron as Belgian.

Jul. 12. ...F/O. Astbury and P/O. de Selys, walking near Dispersal, also have an escape when P/O. Raw's cannon mysteriously go off when he is coming in to land.

Aug. 2. ... At 15.16½ F/Lt. Atkinson and P/O. Raw are scrambled to defend base from just such a raid, but do not have to do so, and are only up half an hour.

Aug. 11. ... P/O. Raw, waiting patiently while a tail wheel is put on the Hurricane, suddenly finds another party of airmen at the other end carefully removing an oil pipe, the C.O. having quietly given bits of 609's Hurricane away in a burst of shortsighted generosity.

Aug. 12. ... P/O's Payne and Raw do some local flying in a Wellington.

Aug. 28. ... At Duxford today P/O. Raw performs bomber affiliation in PR 2.

Aug. 29. ...At 13.00 F/Lt. Atkinson and P/O. Wells are scrambled. Though they only take 3 and 4 minutes respectively to get off, they are half an hour too late, Group not having permitted an earlier take-off on account of the presence of other fighters. P/O. Raw, however, airborne on local flying from Duxford in one of the experimentals at 13.20, asks for a vector and after 20 minutes or so sights an E/A S.E. of Braintree at 33,000ft, about 2 miles away. He himself reaches 27/28,000ft, and is somewhere near Southend, when his engine gives trouble and he has to abandon the chase. This E/A, like others lately seen high-flying over England, is believed to have been a Ju 86P

Aug. 31. ... At 18.10 F/Lt. Atkinson and P/O's Dopere, Evans and Raw go on dusk patrol, landing 19.30 and reporting one mine.

Sept. 25. ...the only flying is the sending of 3 fresh a/c to Hawkinge, a visit by F/O. Solak in the Hurricane to Wales, a ride given by P/O. Raw to an ATC boy in the Maggie, and a Typhoon flight by W/C. Findley D.F.C., Group E.O.

Sept. 26. ...F/O. Hagger and P/O. Raw patrol N. Foreland to St Margaret's Bay. Hagger's R/T goes U/S, it begins to get dark, the weather is bad, and Raw cannot get a homing owing to still having 12 Group crystals. He lands at Kenley with the aid of a flare path (just in time for a party), Hagger at Gatwick, and both stay the night.

Sept. 30. ...P/O. Raw and the C.O. land at 19.25, by which time it is even darker.

Oct. 10. ... P/O. Raw flies the Hurricane to Hixon.

Oct. 21. ...609 has another athletic triumph when its rugger team defeats the Station team, P/O. Raw being one of the forwards.

Oct. 22. ...P/O. Raw flies the Tiger to Heston.

Nov. 13. ...P/O. Raw and Sgt. Payne play for Biggin against Kenley at rugger, getting most of the way in the Tiger. Biggin wins with some ease.

Dec. 15. ...P/O. Raw, who took off on seeing rockets towards Deal, then appears. He reports having seen other rockets near Margate, and on getting thither, to have found a dogfight in progress between a Whirlwind (which claimed a damaged and was damaged) a Typhoon and several 190's. P/O. Raw saw the Typhoon, on fire, rear itself up in a final effort and pump lead into the nearest 190 from point blank range as it overshot. Raw, after a head-on squirt at one 190, chased another back to France, using all his ammo but unable to close the range...Final night action is the knocking out in the first round by P/O. 'Slosher' Raw of his opponent in a boxing contest.

Dec. 17. ...Today a misfortune occurs which temporarily mars the bright escutcheon of the squadron's progress. F/O. Evans and P/O. Raw, on the last patrol of the day, are repeatedly told of the movements of bandits in the area south of Dover. All set to find them, they see two a/c approach from France, and getting on their tails, climb after them. Not sure of their identity, they hold their fire. F/O. Evans dives below to examine the markings of the one he is following. It has square wing tips - and it is too dark to distinguish markings. He has not heard any friendlies mentioned. The A/C turns back towards France, and convinced that it is an ME190E, Evans fires a short burst. Both A/C then open fire in head-on attacks, and after the third the other a/c catches fire and dives into the sea. It proves to have been a clipped-wing Spitfire - recent new equipment of 91 Sqdn at Lympne. Though signals have mentioned them, none have stated that they

were being used operationally over the Channel. No one blames F/O. Evans - but chiefly the system that allows two separate sectors, independently and in ignorance of each other's action, to put two independent sections on to the same E/A. 609 can only regret.

Dec. 19. ...F/O. Evans, P/O. Raw and the I.O. today give evidence at the inevitable court of enquiry, held at Hornchurch, concerning the shooting down of the 91 Squadron Spitfire 2 days ago. Other witnesses are Hornchurch, Biggin and Swingate controllers, and the surviving pilot of the 91 section.

Dec. 21. ...F/Lt. Atkinson and P/O. Raw, with railways south of Treport as their objective, take off at 11.40 and become separated at Cayeux in 10/10 cloud at 2,000ft. Atkinson searches the rly from Gamaches to Hangest-sur-Somme, but finds no trains. Raw is luckier, finding a goods train on the Eu-Aumale rly, and after 3 attacks the engine is left. a mass of steam and smoke, and strikes are seen on the trucks. The pilots meet again on recrossing the coast E of Le Treport and get back at 12.42.

Enemy Casualties: 1 Locomotive Cat. B and rolling stock damaged (P/O. Raw)
Our " Nil.

Dec. 27. ...Today the chief activity is a Rhubarb by P/O. Raw and Sgt. Chef de Saxce, who leave at 11.38 with railways radiating from Abancourt in mind. On finding cloud down to 6/800ft. and vis about 1,000yds, Raw wisely turns back...Other flying being limited to one patrol and a flight by P/O. Raw to Biggin in the Tiger, Intell. in the afternoon arranges a film show.

Jan. 10. ... A wave of sickness - flu, more or less, - has stricken the C.O., F/O. Roelandt, F/O. Creteur and (soon) P/O. Raw.

Jan. 14. ...F/Lts Atkinson and de Selys, F/O's Lallemand and Ziegler, and P/O. Raw attend a cocktail party at Grosvenor House, London, where a painting of Air Commodore Harald Peake, founder of 609 and former Director of Public Relations, is presented by that department to the squadron (who hand it on to Peake to hold for the duration). Speeches are made by G/C. Lord Willoughby de Broke, F/Lt. Atkinson, (for the C.O., who is again sick) and the Air Commodore, the proceedings being further graced by the presence of Air Marshal Peck, the Parl Sec of Air (Lord Sherwood) and others. Though the squadron representatives are invited to dinner by Peake, they in fact take advantage of the option to fry other fish.

Jan. 17. ...F/O. Raw (20.50 - 21.50) chooses railways in the Le Treport / Dieppe area. N of Aumale he sees approaching rapidly on his starboard bow 2 white lights which prove to be on the wing tips of a Ju.88 which passes less than 100ft. beneath him. But he loses it before he can engage.

Jan. 18. ...1.6 coastal patrols, 1 convoy patrol, 2 scrambles and 3 intruders. The second scramble is a self-appointed affair caused by F/O. Raw (from the ground) reporting 'totter' rockets over Ramsgate - but it turns out that this was flare-dropping practice by an Albacore.

Jan. 19. ...P/O. Raw, who sets off at 21.00, attacks one engine at Zarren (receiving Flak), and two more in Cortemarck, producing a goodly spurt of steam from one of them.

Enemy Casualties: 2 Locos. Cat. B (F/O. Raw)

Jan. 20. ...Enemy Casualties 1 Fw.190 damaged (F/O. Raw). Two minutes after the departure of the Rhubarb F/Os Lallemand and Raw take off on standing patrol. They are flying west towards Dungeness when 'totter' rockets are seen at Dymchurch, then 2 Fw 190's below, flying east inshore of a convoy. Lallemand had begun to dive when both E/A made a climbing turn towards him...Meanwhile Raw has pursued E/A No. 2 towards France, but loses sight of it owing to oil on his windscreen. Finally he sees it return towards Dover, and being shot at by the convoy...At 14.25 F/Lt. Atkinson, who has spent the day watching pilots come down with victory after victory, philosophically takes off on a stooge patrol with F/O. Raw. He returns in 23 minutes, having himself shot down a Fw 190, with a damaged for Raw. And very peculiar 190s they were. They saw them turning in front of them 5 miles E. of Dover, and Swingate said they were friendly. And friendly they looked and behaved: they rocked their wings and their crosses, on a grey background, were enclosed by most misleading yellow roundels. On Atkinson's first attack, however, they turned and headed quickly for France, using the usual jinking and crossing-over tactics. This enabled the Typhoons to gain slightly, and both fired at each alternately, seeing strikes on both. When Raw finished

his ammo, he continued shooting with his camera. Atkinson, after several bursts from 300 closing to 250yds, saw a flash on the wing and the 190 dived into the sea 15 miles SE of Dover

Jan. 27. ...10 patrols and a successful Rhubarb by F/O. Raw and F/Sgt. Haddon (the latter's first). Going in near Cayeux, they separate, and Raw finds a stationary goods train, laden with coal, at Coubbel. After 2 bursts with the new SAPI ammo the engine explodes, vomiting black smoke and flame and pieces, the Typhoon returning with black particles and paint scorched. Engine is claimed totally destroyed. Haddon attacks trucks at Chepy, and blows pieces off, then further on attacks a goods train from which soldiers are unloading boxes. After the first attack they hide among the trucks, and Haddon rakes the train in 3 more attacks, and leaves the engine swathed in steam. He later finds he has been hit by a .303 bullet - probably from the soldiers.

Enemy Casualties: 1 Loco. Cat. A (F/O. Raw)
1 Loco Cat. B and rolling stock damaged (F/Sgt. Haddon)

Jan. 30. ...F/O. Raw with some difficulty shoots down an escaped balloon, and several others are reported in the sea. For some reason the I.O. has to give an account to Group of all the days activities - whose, result, if the balloon be excepted, is precisely nil.

Feb. 3. ...Meanwhile F/O. Raw chases Atkinson on the theory that he may be a 190.

Feb. 4. ...The MO, F/O. Raw and Sgt. Payne are among those who play for Manston V. Hawkinge at rigger for the AOC's cup. They win 5 - 3, and the soccer and hockey are also won.

Feb. 7. ...With more Typhoons available than of late, and the weather being conducive, 609 starts Rhubarbs again in a big way, F/O. Raw putting up a record by bagging no less than 5 engines and a barge. Taking off at 1151 with Sgt. Leslie, coast is crossed at Bray Dunes in cloud at 2000 / 2500ft, and pilots separate. Raw then attacks as follows:- 1). Solitary engine between Furnes and Dixmude: strikes on cockpit and tender, engine stopped, driver believed killed, much steam. 2). Goods train approaching Dixmude from E: one attack stops it, and engine blows up with black smoke, flames and debris (Cat. A - totally destroyed). Some tracer here. 3). Goods train between Dixmude and Thourout: strikes and steam, train stops. Raw pulls up suddenly on seeing telegraph wires, bangs head on roof, hits wires. 4). Goods train between Thourout and Roulers, already stopped and letting off steam, perhaps as a precaution: strikes and steam from side. 5). Goods train west of Dixmude: strikes, stopped with clouds of steam. 6). Single barge near lock on Canal de Loo: strikes and wisps of smoke. He also started to attack another train just E. of Dixmude, but had to take evasive action from grey flak puffs and tracer. Sgt. Leslie attacks 6 tracks being loaded at a station N. of Roulers, seeing strikes on one. At Roulers yards, after 2 dummy runs, he attacks 8 - 9 covered trucks from 30ft. Pulling up violently to avoid a chimney, he hits some telegraph wires presumably, as some are found in his radiator on landing. After seeing thick white smoke pouring from all the trucks, Leslie recrosses coast at 8000ft.

Enemy Casualties: 1 Loco. Cat. A (F/O. Raw)
4 Locos. (Cat B) "
1 Barge Cat. III "
8 - 9 trucks fired (Sgt. Leslie)

Feb. 18. ...Evening sees more Intruder activity, featuring the C.O., F/O. Raw, F/O. de Selys and Adj. Pilot Blanco...F/O. Raw (22.39 - 23.34) finds a lot of trains at Hazebrouck, and attacks one W of the town, seeing strikes and steam. Similar results are obtained on another, N of the town. As might be expected, there is intense light flak from all sides, but not being aimed, it is easily evaded. After attacking a barge SE of Aire (hits probable), Raw insists on returning to Hazebrouck, but this time the Flak is a bit too much.

Enemy Casualties: 2 Locos Cat. B (F/O. Raw)

Feb. 23. ...Afternoon sees another performance of Exercise King-o, 609 supplying 6 of the 25 participants. This time the police and home guard turn out in force, and after making several arrests express considerable ire at not having been warned, especially as the Navy are carrying revolvers, and held one of them up. All 609 get back unapprehended, except F/O. Cameron again, who is caught by the police and finally turns up after dark, having visited friends at Margate. Easily first back of the whole outfit is F/O. Van Lierde, who as a veteran escaper of real life is a bit hurt at being asked to take part at all. He gets back by jumping on 2 successive army lorries, lying on the roof, and getting off again unobserved (he hotly denies

that one of the lorries was the one that dropped him!) All the rest of 609 make it on foot, except F/O. Skett, who does part of the journey on a bus, helped by Cameron (he also encounters some electrified barbed wire. F/O. Raw, who includes the exercise as part of his training for a coming boxing contest, frightens a Land Girl, who runs away blushing.

March 7. ...an evening Roadstead of 6 Typhoons (C.O., F/Lt. Wells, F/Os Cameron Evans, Raw and de Selys) from the Somme to Boulogne, protected by Spitfires. They see nothing, however, except light and heavy Flak from the forts of Boulogne harbour.

March 10. ...F/O. Raw flies the Tiger to Heston to box in the evening for Fighter Command versus Ack Ack. Though he wins on points, his side loses by one point.

March 14. ...By night the month's first Intruders get out, in the shape of F/Os Raw and Van Lierde. Raw, after having his first attack interrupted by Flak near Lille, finds two more trains heading east close together S.E. of Lille. 3 attacks immobilise both with a flash and clouds of steam. Raw then becomes interested by a large white ball which hangs suspended in the air for several seconds.

Enemy Casualties: 2 Locos. Cat. B (F/O. Raw)

March 19. ...Patrolling weather once more, entailing 14 sorties – all eventless except that F/O. Raw, with F/O. Payne, again indulges his penchant for reporting black dinghies.

March 29. ...The rest crowd into intell. Office, all demanding to do Rhubarbs. 2 couples – Haabjoern and Smith, Raw and Payne – finally set out, but return on finding the Channel cloudless and vis. 40 miles...Captain Orde, one of 609's 2 honorary members (if the Hon. Air Commodore, the Earl of Hareward, be excepted) arrives on the instructions of Air Commodore Peake (who shows an unflagging and beneficent interest in the squadron) to embark on a new set of squadron portraits. In the course of the week the following members are depicted: S/L. Beamont (in oils). F/Lts Atkinson and Wells, F/Os Evans, Lallemand, Raw and Ziegler.

March 31. ...9 patrols before lunch. Afterwards F/Os Raw and Payne make another abortive attempt at a Rhubarb, finding 2/10 cloud at 600ft.

Manston.

April 1943...April again sees 609 on large-scale offensive operations, and though these are themselves eventless for the squadron, one of them ends in a diversion which marks a new epoch for the squadron – attacks on shipping. 4 E or R boats, a Flak ship and a 200-tonner are the casualties inflicted on the enemy's sea-borne traffic, and in this F/O. Raw again stars.

April 1. ...The weather, however, is suitable for Rhubarbs, and at 10.05 F/Os Raw and Smith embark on a successful one to Belgium – the latter's first, except for some Arabian ones in the Middle East, where he is reputed to have destroyed 13 aircraft, 2 in the air and 11 on the ground, with Gladiators and Hurricanes. After crossing in E. of Dunkirk in cloud, they separate at Dixmude, and F/O. Raw attacks his first train between Courtrai and Deynze, making his second attack through a signal box. The second is stopped near Langstral, and his third pranged between Deynze and Thielt – strikes are seen on all, and plenty of steam. One of his cannons has jammed by now, after an inspection of Swevezele A/D he reaches the coast, then returns and bags his fourth train on the Bruges-Ghent line, this time seeing many flying bits. Coast recrossed NE of Ostend, again in cloud.

Enemy Casualties: 4 Locos Cat. B (F/O. Raw)

April 4. ...There is then a period of sudden fog, F/O. Raw landing from patrol just in time. Later on there is Ramrod 46, 9 Typhoons again escorting 8 Whirlibombers for an attack on Abbeville marshalling yards – the first time 609 has acted in this role on Typhoons. Taking off at 1816, R.V. is made with 2 Spit sqdns from H'church, and landfall made at Cayeux, Whirlwinds at 8500ft, Typhoons 500ft. lower and behind. The bombing, executed in a dive to 7000ft, is successful, and there is no opposition. Half way across the Channel 609 are vectored by Swingate to a 'special target', and off Boulogne several R-boats and a small motor Flak ship are sighted. S/L. Beamont manoeuvres his formation (2 Typhoons have returned with the

Whirlwinds) to attack from upsun and astern, and this evidently achieves surprise, for the vessels do not open fire until after the leader's attack. It is then intense, from the 2 R-boats attacked and from the Flak ship. The C.O. instructs each pilot to make one attack only, and he himself, followed by 4 others, attacks the last pair of R-boats, F/Lt. Wells and F/O. Evans the Flak ship. This and the nearer R-boat are set on fire, and the second R-boat is also damaged. Adjutant Pilot Blanco has part of his rudder shot away, but lands safely. Bandits are then reported by Hornchurch, and the West Riding Squadron returns home, landing at 1940.

Enemy Casualties: 1 R-boat Cat.II) S/L. Beamont D.F.C., F/O. Cameron (Irish), adj. Pilot
1 R-boat " III) Blanco (Belgian), F/O. Raw, F/O. Van Lierde (Belgian)
1 Motor Flak Ship Cat. II: F/Lt. Wells & F/O. Evans (Canadian)

Our " 1 Typhoon Cat. B (Adj. Pilot Blanco unhurt).

F/O. Raw has a cutting engine and is lucky to get back without trouble.

April 5. ...In the afternoon there are 8 patrols, some of them convoy, and then 2045, at only half an hour's notice, the 6 pilots that are available (led by F/O. Raw) take off with instructions to sweep from Somme to Gris Nez. They are: F/O. Raw, F/O. Smith, F/O. Roberts & P/O. de Moulin, Adj. Pilot Blanco and P/O. Van Neste. Delay in their mission is caused by two aircraft. which head suspiciously for the French coast, one mysteriously switching on their rear nav. Light, and it is some time before they are identified in the gloaming as Typhoons (probably 1 sqdn). 609 reach the coast S. of Boulogne whence they are shot at, and proceed north. Near Gris Nez Swingate reports target is south. Further confusion is then caused by the words 'Carry on', actually not intended for our A/C, and as it is getting dark, and pilots are inexperienced and not night operational, they head for base. Swingate however gets a vector, and Raw calls for 3 other pilots to join him, but only his No. 2 (F/O. Smith) hears. The target is found to be 4 E/R boats off Le Touquet, but only Raw sees them, and they all open up such intense fire on his approach that at first he is driven off. He reduces height and comes in at 100ft. from the south, holding fire till 300 yards away, and closing to 50. Flak on the same intense scale opens up half a second after he does from the 3 other vessels, but not from the 2 attacked. On his primary target he sees flashes sparks and flying pieces, and has the impression that it blows up. Strikes are then seen on the second vessel. He himself is surprisingly unhit. He lands at 21.38.

Enemy Casualties: 1 E/R Boat Cat. II) F/O. Raw
1 E/R " " III)

April 9. ...F/Os Raw and Skett, who follow at 19.26, also have an interesting time – Raw has reached Dispersal preparatory to flying to Hornchurch (terminus for London) in the Tiger. Swingate vectors them to a black H.S.L. proceeding N.E. at speed, with 4 other vessels to the south. 10 or 12 Fw 190s are then seen in ragged line abreast, with more above. Not discouraged, Raw turns to attack the hindmost, but the 190 leader has the same idea and a short burst is exchanged without visible result. The boats join in with light Flak, and the section turns for home, Skett with 4-5 190s on his tail, but out of range. After some further patrolling between Dover and Dungeness, they land.

April 18. ... At 18.17 8 Typhoons, consisting of the C.O. & S/L. Lee, F/Os Evans and Davies, F/Os Raw and Payne, F/O. Cameron and Sgt. Leslie, take off as Rear Cover for Ramrod 64. They patrol from Dunkirk to Ostend 3 – 10 miles from the coast, but though bandits are reported near Dunkirk, Ostend and finally Flushing, none are seen despite excellent vis. They all land again by 19.04.

April 20. ...F/O. Raw (23.38-01.15) gets caught by 2 S/Ls near Morseele A/D, but evades them and follows the railway all the way to Ath, then to Deynze/Ecloo canal. After several attempts to attack barges thereon, he proceeds N.W. and turns up behind Ostend, but turns away again and comes out at 5,000ft. at Blankenberghe. 2 miles off Ostend he finds 2 ships of 100 or so tons, and after various attempts to attack, finds he can only do so towards shore. A 4-second burst produces strikes and flashes, and 3 or 4 guns on the ship reply. Near Dunkirk he sights 8 E/R boats and calls Ops. to tell the C.O. to wait for him, with a view to assembling a fresh striking force. The result, on landing, is that he finds a sleepy Station Commander waiting for him at Dispersal!

Enemy Casualties for the night: 1 200-ton Ship Cat. III (F/O. Raw)

April 22. ...the continued 'bad' weather leads today to daylight Rhubarbs. Airborne 0706-0800, F/Os Raw and Payne set out for the Belgian railway system. Crossing the coast over cloud, they break it 10 miles inland, and passing Ledeghem A/D attack an engine E. of Courtrai which comes to a halt belching steam. The tender sprouts Flak, as does a nearby village. They then separate, and Raw attacks a train of cattle

trucks E. of Lille, the 'cattle' consisting of many people in blue uniform, who run away. Proceeding E. he sees Payne attacking an engine near St. Genois, which appears to blow up: black smoke and pieces which include the entire cab cover fly off, and he is afraid Payne has hit it in person. Raw then proceeds to get strikes on 2 barges in L'Escault area, incidentally hitting a warehouse beyond, from which smoke issues. 3 of his cannons then stop. The pilots then rejoin each other, after which Payne attacks another train 1 mile E. of Coutrai, which tries to escape by accelerating. The Typhoon being faster, this manoeuvre is doomed to failure, and the engine is left in parlous condition. Finally, near Roulers, Raw with his one cannon attacks 5 trucks and leaves 2 smoking, after which they return, to be welcomed home by a little tracer from Deal.

Enemy Casualties: 1½ Locos Cat. B (F/O. Raw)
2 Barges Cat. III " "
2 Trucks damaged " "
1 Loco. Cat. A (F/O. Payne)
1½ Locos Cat. B " "

our " Nil.

Altogether quite a nice bit of offence.

April 29. ...2 scrambles. The first (of base) lasts 5 minutes; the second (5 miles S. of Dover) sees no bandits – these retiring after orbiting Calais – but the pilots, Raw and Roberts, report a 1500-ton ship near the harbour.

May 1. ...Good news of the day is the award of the D.F.C. to F/Ly Atkinson (now supernumerary C.F.I. at 50 O.T.U., Milfield) and to F/O. Raw.

May 13. ...Meanwhile 609 as usual has a/c at readiness for Intruding, and at 23.08 F/O. Raw takes off for Chievres. He finds no activity there, and fails to find trains in the Ghent area, but reports 7 vessels of 600 tons off the Dutch coast. He lands at 00.24.

May 16. ...Of the offensive sorties, Raw is first off (23.28-00.48) on a night Rhubarb directed at Arques ship lift. He drops his bombs in the 'target area', and recrossing the coast N. of Boulogne, sights E-boats and 200-ton vessels not far from the harbour. He attacks the former from the landward, seeing strikes all over and a cloud of smoke like an explosion, thereafter getting much Flak from 2 other E-boats. Later (02.53-04.08) he goes out again, this time on an Intruder sortie to Poix and Abbeville. There is no activity at the former and only a few lights at the latter, so returning to his happy hunting ground and this time has a crack at 1 of the 200-tonners, obtaining a good quota of strikes. He is then seen off by intense Flak, light and heavy, from ships and shore.

Enemy Casualties for the night: 2 x 250lb bombs near Arques Ship Lift)
1 E-boat Cat.III) F/O. Raw D.F.C.
1 200-ton vessel Cat.III)

May 19. ...After 2 morning patrols, day Readiness temporarily ceases in the afternoon to permit 609 West Riding sqdn to form itself into a hollow square consisting of W/C. de Goat D.F.C. and all other squadron personnel except the I.O. (released for photography) and W/O Abrahams (released), in honour of the A.O.C. (Air Vice Marshall Saunders) and F/O. Lallemand (Belgian). The parade, which has given a headache to the Adjutant (who in despair has given up all attempts at rehearsal, startles everyone, and especially participants, by going off in a most soldierly manner (perhaps the previous military experience of F/O. Raw has something to do with it.

May 23. ...F/O. Raw flies to Langley to see S/L. Beamont, with a view to joining him at Hawkers.

June 3. ...Most startling event today occurs at 18.54, when all available a/c (six in all) are scrambled, and get off in 6 minutes – F/O. Raw, from Dispersal, getting off in 1½, before No. 2 of the cockpit Readiness section. 30+ E/A are plotted, but the plot fades, and the whole 'blip' is suspected of having been caused by a thunderstorm.

June 6. ... F/O. Raw and Payne hie them to Ilkley to address the workers of the S.U. Carburettor factory. As a result production is expected to treble.

June 16. ...Party in various pubs in evening in honour of F/O. Raw.

June 17. ...F/O. Raw D.F.C. departs on posting to Hawkers Aircraft. Co. as test pilot. He has built up a reputation as a highly responsible and fearless pilot, with great offensive spirit. As a result of his keenness he has reached the end of his tour of duty more quickly than most.

From Bob Walling's Diary

Dec 21st. ...About lunchtime, P/O Raw did a rharb and shot up another train and a goods yard. 137 with their Whirlwinds last night bombed a train and fixed it up satisfactorily, and hit an ammunition dump which blew up, and a small ship, so it was a good show. This chap is definitely on the offensive now, and we are all 'sweating' on getting a dusting by Jerry when 'his patience is exhausted'.

Jan 17th. ...P/O Raw met a JU88 head on, but it was gone before he could fire and he could not find it again.

Jan 19th. ...P/O Raw flew a 'B' Flt kite and attacked a train, the engine of which he blew up.

Feb 10th. ...Payne and Raw were scrambled in the evening, but had no luck.

Mar 13th. ...Peter Raw flew to Henlow to box for Fighter Command; won his fight, but the lad who was opposing him was under weight so the fight did not count, but I don't expect the other bloke was comforted by that.

May 6th. ...Peter Raw has also got the DFC, though nobody knows quite what it is for, as he has not shot down any Jerries and has only destroyed 17 trains – anyway, its one more gong for the outfit – so we should worry.

Media Reports

Train - Buster Hit By Engine Debris

An R.A.F. "train-buster" shot up five engines in Belgium yesterday and flew so low in attacking one that bits of it flew up and dented his wing.

In strafing another his plane crashed through telegraph wires and he was fired at. The gunners missed him and on the way home he attacked a barge.

Other pilots shot up three more goods engines and three barges in Northern France. One fighter is missing.

On Saturday night Germany had her fifth raid of last week.

The Rhineland was attacked during reconnaissance flights over western Germany and mines were laid in enemy waters. Three R.A.F. planes are missing.

Daily Sketch 8th February 1943.

(Peter Raw, DFC)

LONDONER GOES TRAIN BUSTING WITH R.A.F. IN NIGHT

R.A.F. Fighter Command aircraft were out again during the night, continuing their offensive against enemy communications. Of the four trains attacked, one was in Germany.

One of the members of the West Riding of Yorkshire Typhoon Squadron that took part first attacked a stationary train near Lille, and then tackled two trains travelling close together south of the city. "I saw my cannon shells hitting the locomotives," he said today. "There was a big flash and clouds of steam."

Searchlight Hunt

The pilot, a 23 - years - old Londoner, who is a prominent amateur boxer and swimmer, then attacked the engine of the second train. Two searchlights hunted for the Typhoon, but the pilot returned safely to base.

Another pilot saw a red glow from a train in the same area and attacked it from behind. Despite AA fire all our aircraft returned safely.

Evening News, 15th March 1943.

(Peter Raw, DFC, and Remy 'Mony' Van Lierde)

Battle-Scarred Typhoon

A former Ealing (London) insurance clerk who is now flying a Typhoon in the West Yorkshire Squadron of Fighter Command came back from a train attack in Northern France yesterday with one wing blackened by smoke and soot from the engine which he blew up, says Air Ministry News Service.

He said: "I saw the goods train on the Le Treport line. My second burst blew it up.

"When I reached home one wing was slightly burnt and had soot and smoke marks on it."

(Peter Raw, DFC)

Typhoon fell to flak

"Can you check up through your contacts on the details which led to the death of P/O P E Raw, who was killed on March 21 1944. I understand that he was flying with 609 Squadron and that he was shot down over Holland, but I would like to know the circumstances in which this happened."

Answer

There was little happening over the eastern part of occupied Europe that day, most air actions taking place to the west, were in the early afternoon the American 4th Fighter Group flew a strafe in the Bordeaux area, claiming nine Luftwaffe aircraft shot down and a further ten destroyed on the ground – for the loss of seven Mustangs – and a Coastal Command was also lost in the Biscay area.

A pair of 418 Squadron Mosquitoes had flown a daylight Ranger to Luxeil, where they caused much damage to the Luftwaffe, but the only event to take place in north was a fighter sweep by Typhoons. 183 Sqn had put up six aircraft, these departing at 1425 hours, and came in over Holland to patrol the Nijmegen area. Heavy flak was experienced, and MN247, flown by Plt Off Raw, took a direct hit and went down in flames.

The stricken aircraft crashed at Vierlingsbeck, and the pilot did not escape.

Flypast. April 1985.

Typhoon's attack

I SHOULD LIKE to reply to your column, Question and Answer from Flypast April 1985, concerning the piece 'Typhoon fell to flak' also to make a slight correction to John Foreman's answer.

Typhoon MN247 of 183 Squadron was flown by P/O Peter Edward Raw (119259), was making a low level attack on a barge which lay on the Maas river by Vorten / Vierlingsbeck, Holland. During his attack he collided with the mast of the barge which caused him to crash into a nearby field killing him.

P/O P.E. Raw is buried at Eindhoven – Woensel Cemetery, plot No. K K Grave No. 14.

Flypast May 1985.

BEGINNERS LUCK

BY CHRIS GOSS

...Flying Officer Raymond Lallemand shot down Leutnant Hans Kummerling's Fw 190A-4 werknnummer 7037 coded black 8 of 8/JG26. Two Fw190's of 8/JG26 had been tasked to carry out a recce for the activities later that day and were unlucky to meet Lallemand and Flying Officer Peter Raw who were on a defensive standing patrol. The luckless Kummerling was seen to crash into the sea off Cap Gris Nez at 09.25 hrs, his Rotten-flieger being chased towards the French coast by Peter Raw...

Aviation News. 22nd October 1993

Signals

FLAK SHIP CAT 11 SHARED BY F/LT WELLS AND F/O EVANS ONE R-BOAT CAT 11 AND ONE R-BOAT CAT:111 SHARED BY S/LDR BEAMONT. ADJ. PILOT BLANCO BELGIAN. F/O RAW. F/O CAMERON AND F/O VAN LIERDE BELGIAN.

SECRET. From Duxford. Copy for F/O Ziegler. 609 Squadron

29/8/1942

COMPOSITE REPORT - DEFENSIVE PATROL.

One Experimental Typhoon, 609 Squadron, (P/O Raw) took off Duxford 1320 hrs on local flying. At about 1350 he was informed of a hostile raid (No 100R) identified by ROC as D0.217. After being vectored for 20

minutes our pilot sighted the e/a at 1411 hrs NW of Braintree, when e/a was travelling SE. Our pilot reached 27-28000 feet when his engine developed a fault and he returned to base, landing Duxford at 1430. E/a's height estimated at 33000 feet and believed to be a JU 86P.

Pilots Scores November 1942 - December 1943

E/A - 1 Damaged
Trains - 2 Cat. A, 16½ Cat. B
Barges - 3 Cat. II - III
Shipping Attacks - 8

RAF Manston History

...On the 15th December, 1942, there was quite a battle over the sea near Ramsgate when No.'s 609 and 137 were scrambled to deal with five FW's which were in the area. Pilot Officer Amor made the first contact and was seen, on fire, attacking a German. Pilot Officer Raw saw this, warned him that he was on fire, and chased another raider towards France.

(20th January 1943)...within two hours Flight Lieutenant Atkinson had brought down one more and Flying Officer Raw had damaged one.

Recommendation

Christian Names :- PETER, EDWARD.

Surname :- RAW.

Rank :- P/O

Current Decorations :- NIL.

Number :- 119259.

Command :- FIGHTER

Group :- No. 11 (F).

Unit :- No. 609 WR. Squadron. MANSTON.

Nationality :- BRITISH.

If R.A.F. - Whether R.A.F. or R.A.F.V.R. :- R.A.F.V.R.

.....

Particulars of Meritorious service for which the recommendation is made, including date and place.

P/O. Raw is a pilot of exceptional courage and ability, and is always eager to hunt and engage the enemy. During a period of three months he has attacked and immobilised 17 locomotives, 11 by day and 6 by night, during offensive operations over France and Belgium. Recently he has taken part in two attacks on enemy shipping, and in the face of intense Flak has severely damaged two and scored hits on two more enemy motor minesweepers. He has also damaged a FW. 190 raider.

Recognition Recommended Distinguished Flying Cross.
Appointment held (or Trade) Section Leader of "A" Flight.

Date 7/4/43.

R.P. Beamont.
Squadron Leader, Commanding,
No. 609 WR. Squadron, A.A.F.

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COVERING REMARKS BY STATION COMMANDER.

P/O. Raw has displayed the offensive spirit to a very marked degree. He has taken advantage of every opportunity to seek out and attack the enemy. I strongly support the recommendation of his Squadron Commander.

Date 9.4.43 W/C Commanding R.A.F. Station, MANSTON, KENT.

COVERING REMARKS BY SECTOR COMMANDER.

This Officer has achieved excellent results against enemy transportation targets. He recently displayed a particularly high standard of courage and tenacity when he pressed home an attack against a force of enemy minesweepers in the face of intense opposition and in failing light. I endorse the recommendation for the award of the D.F.C.

12.4.1943.

A.S. Adnam
Group Captain, Commanding,
R.A.F. Station, Hornchurch.

Approved.

T. Leigh-Mallory
Air Marshall,
Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief,
Commanding, Fighter Command.

Date 29/4/43

ROYAL AIR FORCE.