



Ministry of Defence

Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB
United Kingdom

Ref: FOI2015/00971

Telephone [MOD]: 020 7218 4848

E-mail: Cio-foi@mod.uk

Mr Colin Leicester

23rd February 2015

request-250117-
xxxxxxxx@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.xxx

Dear Mr Leicester,

Thank you for your email of 25th January requesting the following information:

"Could you please supply Service Documents for the above named RAF personnel believed shot down in 1944 now buried in Limmer War Grave cemetery Hanover Germany.

If possible could you also supply any copies of flight logs for the above person.

We would also be grateful to receive any information regarding the mission in which this flight was shot down."

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that some information in scope of your request is held.

Some of the information you have requested falls within the scope of the absolute exemption provided for at section 21 (Information reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means) of the FOIA and has been withheld.

Information contained in the records of service personnel is exempt from disclosure under section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act because it is reasonably accessible to members of the public at a cost of £30 per application.

You can access details on how to apply for information under this scheme at the following link below:-

<https://www.gov.uk/requests-for-personal-data-and-service-records>

Brief records held in AHB(RAF) show that 1505068 Sergeant Harry Monks was flying as the Flight Engineer on Lancaster PB646 of 227 Squadron, then based at RAF Balderton. The aircraft took off at 17.04 on 6th December 1944 to take part in a raid on Giessen, Germany, but was lost with all crew.

Further details may be contained on the RAF casualty file which is available through the publication scheme.

We can confirm that the Ministry of Defence does not hold the flying log books from this period. Surviving Flying Log Books are largely either in the hands of their originators or their descendants or were destroyed in the 1960s. The RAF Museum has in recent years built up a small collection of flying log books donated by their owners or the next-of-kin. A few of particular interest are held in the National Archives. The addresses to contact are:

National Archives
Ruskin Avenue
Kew
Richmond
Surrey
TW9 4DU

The Royal Air Force Museum
Grahame Park Way
Hendon
London
NW9 5LL

enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk research@rafmuseum.org

Tel: 020 8876 3444

020 8205 2266

Details of the raid and other flights undertaken by Sgt Monks whilst serving with 227 Sqn should be contained in the Squadron RAF Form 540 - Operations Record Book. The Operations Record Books (ORBs) of RAF units from this period are no longer held by the Ministry of Defence but have been deposited, in accordance with the Public Records Act, at The National Archive (TNA) at Kew, London where they are on open access to the public. The ORBs document the activities of the units concerned and contain information on taskings undertaken by the units including the flying sorties carried out by the aircrew and the aircraft involved. The quality of ORBs is variable and some contain more information than others. The ORB for 227 Squadron, covering the period concerned, is held under reference AIR 27/1410.

A report on the raid from a whole force perspective may be available in the Bomber Command Night Raid reports from 01 October 1944 to 05 May 1945 which are held in TNA under Reference AIR 14/3412.

A catalogue of TNA's holdings is available via their website www.nationalarchives.gov.uk together with all the necessary details to arrange a visit. If you are unable to visit TNA yourself, the AIR 27 series of documents are available to view on line for a fee, at the above web site. TNA also offer a paid research service or alternatively provide lists of independent private researchers who may undertake the work for you for an agreed fee. Details are available by following the link on the website: 'Records > paying for research'.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, 1st Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.ico.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

MOD Information Rights team