

Second World War - Pilot Officer J R J Laidlay, Sergeant R J Whiffen, Aircraftman D Campbell: killed; aircraft accident, Dyce, Blenheim N3608, 254 Squadron, 3 September 1940

The following is from the National Archives: AIR 81/308

Means of Identification

To be answered by Units in the Field.

(c) To be erected by G.R.U. as soon as possible.

(4750-205) Wt. 30 lbs—37yo Dec pads 12/39 T.S. 700

U = No damage.

9. Was Accidents Branch notified? Yes.

REPORT ON FLYING ACCIDENT OR FORCED LANDING NOT ATTRIBUTABLE TO ENEMY ACTION

1. Unit. <u>No. 254 Squadron.</u>	Command. <u>Coastal.</u>	5. Nature of Flight.	Day.	Night.
2. Serial No. of Form. <u>13</u>		(i) Operational		
3. Date of Incident. <u>3.9.40.</u>		(ii) Non-operational		
4. Site of Incident—		See footnote A (a) Solo ab initio .. <u>Yes.</u>		
(A) Aerodrome, name of		(b) Dual ab initio		
(B) Landing ground, name of		(c) Other non-operational		
(C) Place, if not (A) or (B) <u>Kincoddie.</u>		Quote "Yes" in appropriate space.		
6. Pilot.		Total.	At Night. (See footnote B)	
Name <u>Laidley.</u>	Hours flown solo on type quoted in Part 7	<u>20.15</u>		
Rank <u>P/O.</u>	Hours flown solo on all types	<u>251.45</u>		
Number <u>7970.</u>	Hours flown by instruments		(See footnote C)	
	Hours on Link Trainer			

7. TYPE OF AIRFRAME AND ENGINE and extent of damage (see footnotes to this section).

Details of airframe and engine.	Airframe.	Engine.			
		Stern or Port.	Starboard.	Centre Port.	Centre Starboard.
Type	<u>Blenheim</u>	<u>Mercury</u>	<u>Mercury</u>		
Mark or series	<u>IV</u>	<u>XV</u>	<u>XV</u>		
R.A.F. No.	<u>H.3600</u>	<u>130026</u>	<u>130102</u>		
*Total hours run					
*Date last installed in airframe					
†Extent of damage	<u>W</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>W</u>		

- * To be quoted only for incidents involving defect or failure of airframe or engine.
 † Extent of damage to be indicated as—
 W = Write off unrepairable or lost.
 R = Repairable but beyond unit's capacity to repair.
 M = Repairable at unit.
 U = No damage.

8. Did fire occur—(i) In air? Yes. (ii) On ground? Continued.
 9. Was Accidents Branch notified? Yes.
 10. Was Salvage Organisation notified? Yes.
 11. Is a Court of Inquiry or Investigation being held? Not yet known.
 12 (a). Number of occupants killed Three.
 12 (b). Number of other occupants, who received injuries necessitating admission to sick quarters or hospital None.
 13. This flight is being included in this unit's flying hour summary on Form 765A: ~~Form 765A~~
 (delete as necessary).

NOTES.—A (Part 5)—Applicable only to elementary or intermediate training at flying training schools.
 B (Part 6)—Night flying hours required only if incident occurred at night.
 C (Part 6)—Instrument and Link Trainer hours required only if loss of control at night or in bad visibility or if by day was the sole or a contributory cause of the accident.

14. Summary of pilot's report (to be given in every case). In addition, in cases of engine failure, information should be given of the behaviour of engine and details of throttle movement immediately before failure.

Height at which engine failure occurred.

Not applicable.

During take-off run. A.

Before reaching 500 ft. B.

After reaching 500 ft. C.

Quote A, B, or C as appropriate.....

15. Technical report by unit's specialist officer.

(i) Remarks.

The aircraft collided with W.3529 in the air, caught fire and dived into the ground vertically when it is presumed the petrol tanks exploded as parts of the aircraft are scattered over a radius of 50 yards. The main part of the fuselage and engines are buried about 8 feet deep, and it continued to burn until extinguished by a spring of water burst by the aircraft. Nothing left to salvage, except scrap.

(ii) Is Form 1022 being rendered?

No.

(304.) A. DANGER. No

16. Remarks by Unit Commander and notes of any action taken as a result of this incident (other than action noted 10, 11, and 15 (ii)).

(i) Diagnosis of primary cause of accident or forced landing.

Aircraft collided with Blenheim W.3529 in the air at 2000 - 3000 feet.

(ii) Diagnosis of secondary cause of accident or forced landing.

Aircraft dived into the ground.

(iii) General remarks (including any recommendations with regard to personnel, training, airframes, engines or a

There was apparently no attempt to use parachutes and all occupants were killed.

Signature (Sd.) H.V. Hoskins. Commanding No. 254 Squadron.

Date 4.2.

Hw. 6/7

Form 115. 2543/701/P.1.

COPY.

No. 254 Squadron,
R.A.F. Station,
Dyce, Aberdeen.

4th September, 1940.

Flying Accident on 3.9.40. Involving
Blenheim aircraft Nos. V.3629 and V.3678.

Sir,

I have the honour to report on the above accident notified by signals A.366 and A.367, 3.9.40.

The flying training programme for the flight concerned was formation attacks on another flight. This programme was cancelled but two aircraft took off without the formation leader. These had the following crews:-

	<u>Pilot</u>	<u>Air Gunner</u>	<u>Passenger.</u>
N.3628	P/O Laddlay. (No. 7970)	Sgt. Whiffen. (No. 747997)	A.C.I. Campbell (No. 638834)
N.3624	Sgt. Hanna (No. 816023)	---	A.C.I. Wainman (No. 948167)

From eye witness accounts the aircraft were practicing attacks approximately 8 miles North of Dyce Aerodrome and collided at 2,000 - 3,000 feet.

The wing fell off one machine and the other aircraft caught fire.

The aircraft crashed in positions 1 mile apart and both were completely burnt out, all occupants being killed. There were no parachute descents.

The pilots concerned were recent arrivals at this Squadron and were being trained for operational duties. They had previously carried out attacks both single and in formation.

/ The

452.

James

This message must be sent BY AIR OR BY W.T.		This message must be sent BY AIR OR BY W.T.		Originator's Instructions* Degree of Priority*		TIME OF ORIGINAL	
By W.T.		By W.T.		Immediate		T.O.B.	
By W.T.		By W.T.		Below this line is the Signature only		T.O.B.	
Time	Reader	Sender	System	Time	Reader	Sender	System

* The Signal Department is responsible that these details are correspond to the appropriate portion of the message form and that all possible references before delivery of the message (the message form) to the receiver.

SECTION

The flying experience of the pilots is as follows :-

Blenheim Flying.

	<u>Dual.</u>	<u>1st Pilot.</u>	<u>2nd Pilot.</u>	<u>Total Flying.</u>
P/O. Laidlay.	7.06	20.15	4.00	261.50.
Sgt. Hanna.	8.30	14.30	4.45	202.15

Your obedient Servant,

(Sgt.) H.V. Hoskins. S/Ldr.

Commanding, No.254 Squadron.

The Under Sec. of State, -
Dept. P.4.Cas. and C.I.Actds.

Copies to:- Headquarters, 18 Group.
Officer i/c Records.

Aircraft dived into the ground.

Remarks (including any recommendations with regard to personnel, training, airframes, engines or accessories).

There was apparently no attempt to use parachutes and all occupants were killed.

Dept. Q.J.

5A

Dept. Q.O/P.4. Casualties.

5 September, 1940.

Sir,

I am commanded by the Air Council to inform you that they have with great regret to confirm the telegram in which you were notified that your son, Pilot Officer John Reginald James Laidlay, Royal Air Force, was reported on the 3rd September, 1940, to have lost his life as the result of an aircraft accident near Dyce, Aberdeenshire.

The Air Council desire me to express their profound sympathy with you in your bereavement.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(Sgd) Charles Evans.

I.C. Laidlay, Esq.,
Lindores,
Fife.

This message must be sent AS WRITTEN and may be sent by W/T.				This message must be sent IN CYPHER and may be sent by W/T.				Originator's Instructions* Degree of Priority*			
Signature				Signature				Immediate			
* Originator to insert "NOT" if message is not to go by W/T over any part of the route. (Below this line is for Signals use only.)											
System in	Time in	Reader	Sender	System out	Time out	Reader	Sender	System out	Time out	Reader	Sender

* The Signal Department is responsible that these details are transposed to the appropriate portion of the message form and that all possible distinguishing signals, etc., by omitting to remove their signification from the address, etc., is avoided. Before delivery of the message these details are

2 A

Form 96A.
A. (Aval).

MESSAGE FORM

Office Serial No
Office Date Stamp

Call ☒ IN
and :—
Preface OUT

No. of Groups
GR

3A

IMMEDIATE
DESPATCHED
EN CLAIR

(Above this line is for Signals use only.)

TO* **I. C. LAIDLAY Esq.**
LINDORES, FIFE.

Am Air Ministry

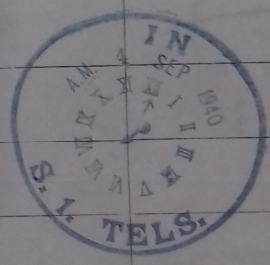
Originator's Number
P 57-Cas 98

DATE
4-9-40

(Write horizontally.)

..... Deeply. Regret to inform you that
your son Pilot Officer JOHN REGINALD JAMES LAIDLAY
on Sept 3rd 1940
is reported as having lost his life as the result
of an aircraft accident. on
Letter follows. The Air Council express their
profound sympathy.

Under-Secretary of State, Air Ministry.



This message must be **AS WRITTEN**
and may be sent by W/T.
Signature

This message must be sent **IN CYPHER**
and may be sent by W/T.
Signature

Originator's Instructions* Degree of Priority*
Immediate

TIME OF ORIGIN **0700**

System in				System out			
Time in	Reader	Sender		Time out	Reader	Sender	

T.O.R.
T.H.I.

* The Signal Department is responsible that these details are transposed to the appropriate portion of the message form and that all possibility of compromising
disturbing signals, etc., by omitting to remove their signification from the address, etc., is avoided. Before delivery of the message these details are to be re-inserted in P. I.
(1232) Wt. 2050—2070 200 Pads 9/38 T.S. 700

SECTION.

2 A

ACTION COPY

EMS

2472

Received A.M.C.S. 2120 hours 3/9/40.

Telegram en clair to C.I. Accidents and P.4.Cas. (R) H.Q. C.C.
H.Q. 18 Group H.Q. 41 Group from 254 Squadron.

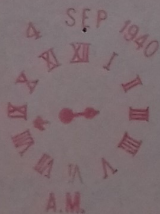
A.357 3/9.

F.A. (A) Blenheim Mk IV N3608 (B) No. 254 Squadron
R.A.F. Dyce (C) 8 miles north of Dyce (D) P/O Laidlay J. 7970
killed T/Sgt. W.Op/AG Whiffen R.J. 747997 killed A.C.1. ACH
Campbell D. 638834 killed (E) R.A.F. Dyce (F) S.A.A. (G)
Collision in mid-air. Inquiry not necessary (H) Cat. 3.
Aircraft completely burned out. No assistance required
(J) N.A.

Time of Origin: 1830

Advance copies sent to P.4.Cas., D.R.M. Passed to Records.
Advance copy for ZA (87)

RECEIVED



CASUALTY
SECTION.

Crash Circulation.



==1830

C WA ADDRESSED TO (C1 ACCIDENTS)

CC WA LAIDLAY J.

WH B4++++

WRIGHT 2058 KK

RECEIVED



CASUALTY
SECTION

