

AWM 65

[195]

BARKER, EDWIN JACK  
420113

AUSTRALIAN ARCHIVES  
ACCESS STATUS

OPEN



IRC. FORM  
1/R. 5.

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE.

RTTA  
Overseas Headquarters,  
Kodak House,  
KINGSWAY, W.C.2.

SECRET & CONFIDENTIAL.

The following biographical details are required for R.A.A.F.

Historical Records, Overseas Headquarters. These forms are to be filled in and returned to the Officer Commanding Repatriation Disposal Section, No.11 (R.A.A.F.) F.D.R.U.

NAME (in full) BAKER EDWIN JACK NUMBER 420113

RANK AND MUSTERING P/O WAG/ASV DECORATIONS

NUMBER I.T.S. COURSE 21 O.T.U. - A.F.U. etc. NIL

DATE LEFT AUSTRALIA } 11.10.42  
CANAL }  
SEN. AFRICA } DATE OF ARRIVAL U.K. 22.11.42

SQUADRONS 458

AIRCRAFT FLOWN WELLINGTON

COMMAND & TYPE OF ACTIVITY COASTAL COMMAND, AS (ACEC's BARRAS)

OPERATIONS OR TRAINING WITH AMERICAN PERSONNEL, SQUADRONS, OR AIRCRAFT

NIL

DETAILS OF OPERATIONS - with dates to be given as fully as possible under the following applicable headings:-

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| (a) Number Operational Hours    | (b) Number Operational Sorties, Day-night   |
| (c) Targets Attacked            | (d) Attacks on enemy surface vessels - type, size, etc.   |
| (e) Attacks on enemy submarines | (g) Outstanding sorties or incidents  |
| (f) Combats with enemy aircraft | (i) Personnel in Photographic Reconnaissance Unit, Transport Command, etc., should give a brief report of their work. |
| (h) Other Australians in crews  |   |

(A) 354.25 (B) 64 AIR WENT 22 DAY

(C) Shipping AND ALTERNATIVE LAND TARGETS

(D) 10 ATTACKS (E) NIL (F) NIL

(G) 1 MAGAZINE AND 1 2000 TN MV SUNK OFF ADYENNA

H. P/O PAIPET DEC. 363 MORT. P/O PAIT D SECOND MORT

NAY 7/15 WAIGHT G.P. W/O W/O Richards Lm. 696

7/15 BYANA P.J.K. OCH GARDNER

(O) TARGETS, BARRAS AND MV'S

DATE 19.3.49 SIGNATURE E.J. Baker

(Use other side, or attach extra sheets, if necessary).

FROM MIDDLE EAST: 22/9/44

Italy September 17th. Carrying highly inflammable cargo - possibly petrol in drums and ammunition - a 2,000 ton motor vessel which was creeping down the Italian Adriatic coast bound apparently for a port in the vicinity of Rimini was sunk by an aircraft of an Australian Wellington squadron early Thursday morning. The Wellington which was captained by 416363 W/O H.R. Priest of Stirling West, South. Australia, was on anti-shipping patrol of the upper part of the Western Adriatic Coast when at one point it made contact with a scattered south bound convoy consisting of three motor vessels and a similar number of escort craft. Singling out one cargo ship the Wimpy shadowed it for an hour and a quarter by which time it was between 5 and 6 miles off the coast opposite Ravenna. At that point Priest decided to make the attack. Flares were dropped illuminating the vessel clearly and a stick of bombs was sent down straddling the target. For a while nothing happened then the rear gunner saw a red glow near one of the guns which was firing at the Wellington from the ship. When the glow appeared the gun immediately ceased fire. After circling the ship for a while without seeing further evidence of damage, the Wimpy resumed patrol. It had reached the northern extremity of its patrol area when looking back, the crew saw a vivid flash of a huge explosion followed by a tongue of flame lighting up the sky. As the aircraft turned and flew southward approaching the ship the fire grew in intensity and when the Wimpy reached the scene of attack, the vessel was a mass of flames from stem to stern with thick pall of smoke rising 5,000 ft above it. At intervals there were fresh explosions which belched out more flame and smoke. When the Wellington returned to base, the crew learned that another aircraft to the same squadron which was over the motor vessel when it first blew up was tossed into the air with an involuntary gain of height at a rate of 3,000 ft per minute. Further confirmation of the sinking of the ship came from the Navy later that morning. In addition to Priest, those who took part in this most successful attack were 425782 F/S P.W. Pettitt Second pilot of Norman, N.S.W., 413705 F/O F.P. Wright, navigator of Nerabeen, N.S.W., 412696 W/O L.M. Richards, Wop/Ag of Lismore, N.S.W., 420113 W/O E.J. Baker, <sup>Wop/Ag</sup> Wop/Ag of Wentworthville, N.S.W.

Sgt.

Sgt. W.H.Markland A.G. of Preston Lancashire, England. Markland was not normally in Priest's crew; he was standing in for 404003 F/Lt. A.K.J. Byrne of Brisbane who was recovering from an attack of Malaria. The crew has been flying together a fortnight short of twelve months and has only 37 hours operational flying left to complete its present tour.