

AWM 65

[652]

CHALLIS, COLIN JAMES

418066

AUSTRALIAN ARCHIVES
ACCESS STATUS

OPEN

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE.

OFFICERS AND AIRCRAFTMEN.

Photo U.K. 2247
13.12.46

The following Biographical details are requested for use at
R.A.A.F. Overseas Headquarters, WFOCCL, -

Surname..... CHALLIS. Number..... 718066.

Christian Names..... COLIN JAMES.

Air Force Rank and Position..... SERGEANT. AIR GUNNER.

Degree, Decorations, etc..... None

Present Appointment and Location..... R.A.A.F. P.R.C. BOURMOUTH.

Date of Birth..... 6/3/1923. Place..... LITHGOW. NSW. AUS.

Educated..... Glentworth Public School
Lurg State School. Benalla High School

Date of Entering Service..... 25/7/1942.

Previous Service Experience..... None

Places of Training in R.A.A.F. NO. 1. I.T.E. 307443. VICTORIA
NO. 2. WADLO PARKES. NSW. NO. 2. BAGLA. PORT VIKING. SA.

Civilian Career and Activities.....
Student until 15 then from then on engaged
in the labour of tinny production some office work.

Clubs, Recreations, etc..... Benalla Tennis Club
Benalla Football and Cricket Clubs

Fathers name..... T.H. JAS. JAMES. CHALLIS

Wifes Name..... None

Children..... None

Home address..... C/O. S. McMillan Kilferna. Benalla. Victoria.

Signature..... Colin J. Challis

Date..... 19/4/1943.

Date Embarked Australia..... 6/3/1943

Destination..... UNITED KINGDOM.

PRO. FORM.
1/R. 5.

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE.

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.C.

NAME (in full)..... CHARLES COLIN JAMES..... NUMBER..... A 718066

RANK AND MUSTERING..... F.O...... AC..... DECORATIONS..... 29th 43 5000

NUMBER I.T.S. COURSE..... 27..... O.T.U. 27 A.F.U. etc. 16584..... 1652, H.C. 4.

DATE LEFT AUSTRALIA } 6-3-43.....
CANADA } DATE OF ARRIVAL U.K. 17-4-43.....
Sth. AFRICA)

SQUADRONS..... (RAAF) 460 SQD. BIRMGHAM. 466 SQD. DRAIFIELD

AIRCRAFT FLOWN..... LANCASTER. HALIFAX

COMMAND & TYPE OF ACTIVITY..... BOMBER

OPERATIONS OR TRAINING WITH AMERICAN PERSONNEL, SQUADRONS, OR AIRCRAFT.....
..... N.A......

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 | (h) Personnel in Photographic Reconnaissance Unit, Transport Command, etc., should give a brief report of their work. |
| (h) Other Australians in crews | |

(a) 336-40..... (b) 6-44..... (c) BRUNNEN..... (d) HAMBURG.....
ESSEN..... DORTMUND..... STUTTGART..... HAGAN..... (e) ITZERRODE.....
BRUNNEN..... (f) COLDENG..... STETIN..... MANNHEIM..... MILAN..... (g) BREITENBURG.....
NA..... (h) NA..... (i) one..... (j) BREITENBURG.....
WIT. BY FORCE BY. H.A.B. d/c. HOLLER. BABLY.....
1ST TOUR..... 5..... 2nd TOUR..... 6.....
NA.....

DATE..... 5-6-43..... SIGNATURE..... Charles James
(Use other side, or attach extra sheets, if necessary).

COPY OF CITATION OF NON-IMMEDIATE AWARD OF DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS.

Flying Officer Colin James CHALLIS (Aus. 418066) No. 456 (R.A.A.F.) Squadron.

Spare

Flying Officer Challis has now completed two tours of operations. On one occasion, when detailed to attack Bochum, whilst in the target area, the aircraft was illuminated by searchlights and severely damaged by anti-aircraft fire. This officer, although wounded, remained in the turret and continued to give the necessary observations to the pilot. He has at all times shown himself to be a courageous and efficient Air Gunner.

COPY OF CITATION OF NON-IMMEDIATE AWARD OF DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS.

Flying Officer Colin James CHALLIS (Aus. 418066) No. 466 (R.A.A.F.) Squadron.

Flying Officer Challis has now completed two tours of operations. On one occasion, when detailed to attack Bochum, whilst in the target area, the aircraft was illuminated by searchlights and severely damaged by anti-aircraft fire. This officer, although wounded, remained in the turret and continued to give the necessary observations to the pilot. He has at all times shown himself to be a courageous and efficient Air Gunner.

Gazetted

21.9.45

F/O. C.J. CHALLIS - BENALLA, VICTORIA

F/O Challis comes from Benalla, Victoria, and left Australia on 6th March, 1943, coming to England via the U.S.A. He did his first tour on Lancasters with 460 Squadron.

His most exciting trip was to Bochum on Sept. 29, 1943, his 15th trip, when the aircraft was caught by searchlights while approaching the target. Every effort was made to evade them, but unsuccessfully, and the aircraft was hit by flak at 21,000 feet. Everything stopped, including the hearts of the crew - the props just idling - and the aircraft dropped like a stone to 13,000 feet, when three of the motors picked up. However, though the aircraft was still coned by the searchlights and heavily engaged by the A.A. the skipper pressed on and bombed his target from 13,000 feet. The Bomb Aimer was hit by shell splinters on both hands, and F/O Challis was slightly injured by a splinter which grazed his cheek, took his gunsight away, and embedded itself in the gun mounting. Another piece penetrated his flying boots, Irvine trousers, battledress trousers and sock, lodging between his skin and his sock without causing more injury than a bruise. The pilot and navigator were awarded D.F.C's and the Bomb Aimer a D.F.M. for this trip.