

## Archive Report: Allied Forces

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### 28/29.12.1944 No. 429 Squadron Halifax III NR197 AL-Z F/O. Drewery

Operation: Gardening

Date: 28/29th December 1944 (Thursday/Friday)

Unit: No. 429 Squadron

Type: Halifax III

Serial: NR197

Code: AL-Z

Base: RAF Leeming, Yorkshire

Location: Sandefjord, Norway

Pilot: F/O. Bertram Ernest Drewery J/87449 RCAF Age 25. Killed

Fl/Eng: Sgt. John Daniel Richmond 1283210 RAFVR Age 23. Killed

Nav: F/O. Lloyd John Gordon Catheralle J/37534 Age 23. Killed

Air/Bmr: F/O. Joseph Patrick Leonard Cullen J/36888 RCAF Age 25. Killed

W/Op/Air/Gnr: P/O. Adam Raeburn McDonald J/92473 RCAF Age 28. Killed

Air/Gnr: Fl/Sgt. Karl Emerson Kelly R/200438 RCAF Age 20. Killed

Air/Gnr: Fl/Sgt. James Raymond Giblin R/136304 RCAF Age 27. Killed

#### REASON FOR LOSS:

Taking off at 16:00 hrs. from RAF Leeming in Yorkshire and set course for Sandefjord on Norway's SE coast.



The aircraft was sent to drop mines ([gardening](#); see list of codenames for areas) in the Oslo Fjord in an attempt to stop shiploads of German soldiers bound for the Eastern front. Three of the aircraft dropped their mines in the designated area. Halifax NR197 set course for Sandefjord on the South Eastern coast of Norway, carrying four mines, three which would detonate after a short time in the sea and the fourth after four days. The other aircraft witnessed it spin out of control and crash upon impact near the target area, all of the crew perished.



*Above: Sgt. John Daniel Richmond (courtesy John Daniel Richmond)*

An eye witness described how, after hearing the air raid warning signal, he saw a large bomber coming in from the North East at a low altitude. It's lights were flashing alternatively red and green from the wing tips of the aircraft as it passed Framnes mechanical workshop and he later heard the German AA guns fire at the aircraft.

Shortly afterwards, he heard an explosion and was told that an aircraft had crashed into the Jahres Chemical factory where he worked. Another eye witness remembers the German soldiers cheering as the damaged bomber was hit by German AA guns from Sandefjord harbour.

*A second eyewitness account from Gunnar Stenersen who was a seven year old on the day described how when he was in the garden of his house watching several large airplanes in formation heading northwards at a high level. The night was calm with a clear moon high in southeast with only a few clouds around. It was wartime with total darkness, cold, but no snow on the ground. After the airplanes had passed and the sound of their engines faded away, all became quiet again. After a while when moving back to his house, he again heard the sound of an airplane, but could not see it. His house was located between the Framnes mechanical workshop (shipyard) and Jahres Chemical factory, quite close to the fjord.*

*Suddenly he saw a large airplane, which was later known to be Halifax NR 197, flying very very low along the fjord, and*

close to the shore closest to him. Several German ships were at the shipyard and from one of them he heard the tramping on deck and on ladders accompanied with shouting. Gunfire started from the ships and he saw tracers hit the plane. The plane had to pass over and close to the ships in its steady course along the fjord. Then he saw the face of a man looking out of a square window. He later saw pictures of the Halifax and believed that this window was the position of the radio operator which is below and behind the pilot on the port side of the airplane.

At that moment he ran to his mother who was standing beside the entrance door to the house. He ran in, screamed, passed the hall and down the stairs and into a bathroom in the basement of the house which was normally used as a shelter. On the way to the shelter he could hear the German gunfire, the roaring motors, the sound of crashing and then an enormous explosion. The electric lamp faded off and on again several times. He had the feeling that his home was severely damaged, so he and his mother rushed outside and found that the house was still standing but the calm night was changed by a great fire at the chemical factory. His house, which was the closest one without any damage, was soon changed to an area for the rescue team and temporary place for rescuing survivors who were living near the factory.

He thought back to the man's face he saw looking out of the airplane. It was night and very dark, so he wondered how he could have seen the face so clearly. However, there was light from various sources, the airplane itself, the German gunfire and from the moon which was also from the right direction, but most of all, the Halifax must have been very close.



Above left: parts from the Halifax discovered and right: memorial service to the crew 1994

#### Burial details:

F/O. Bertram Ernest Drewery. Sandefjord Churchyard. Collective Grave B.1.7-12. Born on the 28th December 1919 the son of Warner Percy and Violet Winnifred (née Bennett) Drewery of Charing Cross, Ontario, Canada. Grave inscription reads: *"Sweet And Peaceful Be Thy Rest Forget You, We Can Never."*

Sgt. John Daniel Richmond. Sandefjord Churchyard. Collective Grave B.1.7-12. Son of Alexander Buchan and Elizabeth Richmond of Gravesend, Kent, England and brother of Gordon and Thomas Richmond. Grave inscription reads: *"He Died That Others May Live."*

F/O. Lloyd John Gordon Catheralle. Sandefjord Churchyard. Collective Grave B.1.7-12. Born on the 20th April 1921 the son of George Henry and Kristjana Catheralle of New Westminster, British Columbia, Canada. Grave inscription reads: *"Go, Blithe Spirit, Son And Brother, Peace Defended - Wanting World War II"*.

F/O. Joseph Patrick Leonard Cullen. Sandefjord Churchyard. Collective Grave B.1.7-12. Born on the 30th March 1919 the son of of James Patrick and Abigail Mary Cullen of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Grave inscription reads: *"May His Soul Rest In Peace"*

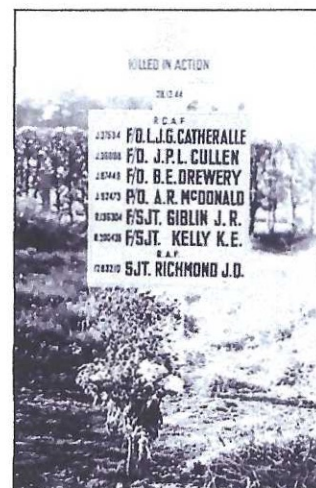
P/O. Adam Raeburn McDonald. Sandefjord Churchyard. Collective Grave B.1.7-12. Born on the 18th January 1918 the son of Robert Scott and Marg Raeburn McDonald of McMasterville, Quebec, Canada. Grave inscription reads: *"In Our Hearts A Memory Kept Of The One We Loved And Will Never Forget, Mother And Family."*

Fl/Sgt. Karl Emerson Kelly. Sandefjord Churchyard. Collective Grave B.1.7-12. Born on the 19th May 1924 the son of James and Florence of New Liskeard, Ontario, Canada. Grave inscription reads: *"Jesus Said I Am The Resurrection And The Life John XI.25."*

Fl/Sgt. James Raymond Giblin. Sandefjord Churchyard. Collective Grave B.1.7-12. Born on the 05th April 1917 the son of Jack and Mabel Giblin from Ontario, Canada. Grave inscription reads: *"I Have Conquered Earth's Confining Sod And Willingly Gone Forth To Be With God"*

Researched and dedicated to the relatives of this crew by Linda Ibrom for Aircrew Remembered June 2017 with thanks to John Daniel Richmond (nephew of Sergeant Richmond). Information on crash from Finn A. Thorsen. Also to 'Operation Picture Me' for some of the crew photos. With thanks also to Kevin Drewery - nephew of the pilot who corrected the hometown details of the pilot - July 2017. Thanks to Gunnar Stenersen for his eye witness account.

#### The crew:





F/O. B.E. Drewery

Sgt. J.D. Richmond

F/O. L.J.G. Catheralle



F/O. J.P.L. Cullen

P/O. A.R. McDonald

Fl/Sgt. K.E. Kelly

Fl/Sgt. J.R. Giblin

RS 20.04.2019 - Inclusion of eye witness account from Gunnar Stenersen

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