

Aircraft Crashes and Forced Landings in the Mid-West Region during WW2

MARTIN GLEESON

7 Hilltop Drive, Dooradoyle, Co. Limerick

A comprehensive listing and discussion of the various aircraft which crashed or made unscheduled landings in the counties of Limerick, Clare and Tipperary during the Second World War is presented. Fatalities were relatively small but decisions on what to do with the captured crews presented problems for the authorities, given the official policy of neutrality. Most were allowed to leave, especially where they had lost their way or the planes had simply run out of fuel. Those who were interned had relatively comfortable conditions.

One of the most difficult issues arising from Ireland's neutral stance in World War Two was the policy to be applied when military aircraft crashed or made forced landings here. As the war progressed the Irish authorities developed their procedures for dealing with these aircraft and more importantly their crews. The decisions reflected the political ambiguity in the government declared neutrality. Any German airmen who landed in neutral Ireland were interned for the duration of the conflict and were handed over in 1945 to the British who then sent them back to Germany.¹ No American servicemen were ever interned. They were promptly sent across the border to Northern Ireland or allowed depart in their aircraft. For Commonwealth and Allied flyers policy was less clear. The earliest landings involved flying-boats and aircraft that could take off again. These crews were allowed depart having been treated as 'distressed mariners'. Training or ferry flights were also generally free to leave after being given fuel and directions. However from September 1940 airmen whose aircraft could not fly were interned, especially if they were deemed to have been on an operational mission. Two special camps were opened in the Curragh army base in County Kildare, one for the Germans in August 1940 and a second for the British in October. The last British internees were released in June 1944.²

The first aircraft came down in the Mid-West Region, near Kilmihil, Co. Clare, on 25 October 1941. It was a Royal Air Force Vickers Wellington IC from 103 Squadron based at Elsham Wolds in Lincolnshire.³ The Wellington was a large twin-engine bomber with a crew of six. It was the mainstay of RAF Bomber Command for the first three years of the war and proved to be a very reliable, versatile aircraft. This crew had taken off as part of a force to bomb Frankfurt. Bad weather along the route caused them to become lost and they dropped their bombs on an unknown target in Germany. In attempting to return to their base they did not realize the tail and cross winds were so strong. Their radio equipment failed, a common occurrence during the war, so they were unable to obtain a 'fix' to establish their position. The fuel was almost exhausted and it became imperative to bale out before control of the aircraft was lost. They had just made out a coastline but thought it might be Wales. All parachuted successfully, with only a few minor injuries, in the Kilmihil and Quilty areas. The Wellington finally came to earth at 07.30 hours in a field owned by Mr. John Flanagan of Clonwhite, near Kilmihil.⁴

Within a few hours the crew of four Britons and two Canadians had been found and brought to Quilty (four) and Kilmihil (two) Garda barracks. Later they were handed over to

¹ T. Ryle Dwyer, *Guests of the State* (Dingle, 1994) pp 232-9.

² *Ibid.*, p. 180.

³ 103 Squadron RAF Operational Record Book, Air 27/813, Public Record Office, London.

⁴ Files G2/X0896 and S.I. 309, Military Archives, Dublin.



the military and taken via Limerick to the Curragh Camp where they were interned.⁵ The wreckage was later salvaged by the Air Corps and taken to Baldonnel in Co. Dublin, their main base.⁶ While in the Curragh this crew was involved in many escape attempts. Two succeeded in doing so during August 1942. A further two were released separately in 1943. The final two were not handed back to the British authorities until June 1944, as part of the last group of Allied internees to be sent to Northern Ireland. It should be noted that the privileges accorded to the Allied and German internees were very generous, e.g. daily parole, weekends in Dublin, good rations, a wide range of leisure and sporting activities outside the camp, even further education.⁷ It was not poor conditions they were trying to escape from, rather a desire to rejoin their comrades and the war effort. Interestingly the IRA internees held nearby received no such concessions.

The next incident, on 3 December 1941, was the only crash or forced landing with fatalities in the Mid-West region. An RAF Short Sunderland flying-boat was trying to return to its base at Lough Erne in Northern Ireland.⁸ This large modern four-engined airplane from 201 Squadron had been on a convoy escort and anti-submarine patrol. The radio equipment failed and the crew became lost in the prevailing bad weather. Fuel was running low, so when a coastline was sighted a landing was attempted just offshore although the crew did not know their location. This occurred at 18.45 hours, ½ to 1 miles, off White Strand, Doonbeg.⁹ On touching down in the rough sea a float was ripped off and the flying-boat overturned. The crew abandoned it but was soon in trouble in the dark and stormy night. Several local people risked their lives to try to save one of the airmen in the surf, but their efforts were in vain. Altogether nine of the eleven crew died, but only six bodies were recovered. Two were buried in Doonbeg and four in Milltown Malbay. This crew comprised nine Britons, one Canadian and one New Zealander.¹⁰ The two survivors were given assistance in local houses before they were taken by the military to Mallow Military Hospital. On recovery they were sent to the Curragh and interned. One, the Canadian pilot, escaped to Northern Ireland in August 1942 but subsequently was shot down and killed over Germany.¹¹ In the post-war years, the sole survivor returned to Doonbeg a number of times to visit the family who had helped him.¹²

The first American aircraft and crew to alight in the Mid-West force-landed at Rineanna airfield at 17.50 hours on 6 July 1942.¹³ This was during the initial build-up in Britain of the United States Army Air Force (USAAF). The aircraft itself was a Douglas C-47 transport, a militarized version of the famous twin-engined DC-3 airliner. On board were fifteen crew and passengers, all military personnel. The crew had lost their way proceeding from Labrador in Canada via Iceland to Prestwick in Scotland. Running low on fuel the sight of Rineanna must have been a tremendous relief. The personnel on board were accommodated at the airfield overnight before being allowed depart the following day for Northern Ireland. The order to release them came directly from the Taoiseach, Eamon de Valera.¹⁴ Rineanna would play host to nine more USAAF aircraft before the end of the war, and in the process save many lives.

What Rineanna in Clare was to land-based aircraft so was Foynes across the Shannon estuary in Limerick to flying-boats. The latter type of aircraft by 1939 provided the surest method of trans-oceanic air travel. Land-based aircraft with this capability were still several years away from entering regular service. Gradually from 1939 British (British Overseas Airways Corporation) and American (Pan American Airlines and American Export Airlines)

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ File ACF-S-104, M.A., Dublin.

⁷ Ralph Keefer, *Grounded in Éire* (Montreal, 2001); Ryle Dwyer, *Guests of the State*.

⁸ 201 Squadron RAF O.R.B., Air 27/1177, PRO, London.

⁹ Files G2/X/0922 and S.I. 311, M. A., Dublin.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Commonwealth War Graves Commission website.

¹² Personal correspondence, James Masterson (ex-201 Squadron RAF 1941), 1989-95; Interviews, Patrick Shanahan, Doonbeg, 1989-93.

¹³ Files G2/X/1031 and S.I. 319, M. A., Dublin.

¹⁴ Ibid.

airlines began using Foynes as a safe transit stop on trans-Atlantic journeys and also to and from Lisbon in Portugal, another neutral country. In this way Foynes continued to be a working flying-boat base. An RAF Catalina IB found refuge at Foynes on 19 November 1942 after the crew became lost due to radio and engine malfunction.¹⁵ The Consolidated Catalina was an American-built twin-engined flying-boat used for many purposes such as; reconnaissance, air-sea rescue, anti-submarine and anti-ship patrols. This example belonged to 302 Ferry Training Unit based at Lough Erne.¹⁶ Apparently sent out to search for possible shipwreck survivors it had taken off at 05.00 hours on the previous day. It finally landed in the Shannon Estuary near the mouth of the Fergus river, possibly close to Rineanna Point, at 00.40 hours on the 19 November. The crew of nine had been airborne for nearly 20 hours. The Catalina was towed to Foynes and the crew accommodated overnight at nearby Mount Trenchard. Permission was given to leave and the crew took off at 13.45 hours for their base. Foynes would see more Catalinas during the war, both civil (BOAC) and military (RAF).

The next incident was unique to the Mid-West Region landings because it was brought about, indirectly, by combat with the German Air Force (Luftwaffe). On 23 December 1942 a USAAF Lockheed P-38F Lightning of the 95th Fighter Squadron, 82nd Fighter Group left St. Eval in Cornwall to reinforce the Allied landings in French North Africa (Operation Torch).¹⁷ The P-38 was a long-range twin-engined fighter of advanced design. Over the Bay of Biscay they were attacked by Luftwaffe Junkers Ju 88C long-range fighters. Second Lieutenant Arthur L. Brodhead, Jr. pursued one and claimed it shot down.¹⁸ Having become separated from his comrades he decided to return to England but lost his bearings. Eventually finding himself over land he could not determine his location. With fuel running low he had to attempt a forced landing. He achieved this on the Rine peninsula just offshore from Ballyvaughan in Co. Clare at 14.05 hours.¹⁹ Due to its inaccessible position for recovery the P-38 was later blown up by Irish Army engineers. Brodhead was accommodated locally overnight before being taken to Dublin the following day and later sent to Northern Ireland. He survived the war and passed away in 1974.²⁰ Surprisingly the two main wheels can still be seen in Ballyvaughan.

The first of seven aircraft to force-land in the Mid-West during 1943 was a USAAF Boeing B-17F Flying Fortress. This four-engined heavy bomber landed safely at Rineanna at 12.53 hours on 21 March 1943.²¹ It was flying from the USA to Britain via a series of airfields along the Southern Atlantic route. This was the preferred path in winter time when ferrying aircraft to Britain. The crew of ten had left Marrakesh in Morocco hoping to reach St. Eval in Cornwall. They lost their bearings because of bad weather and had to land due to a low fuel state. After refuelling the following day the crew and aircraft were allowed depart for Northern Ireland. However this B-17 would have a short life. Assigned to the 305th Bomb Group it was shot down, by German fighters on 16 April 1943, with a different crew.²² Once in Britain the crew went to the 306th BG. Sadly seven were killed on 29 July 1943 while on a mission to Kiel in Germany when their B-17 was shot down by fighters.²³

The next landing was more spectacular and is still well remembered in Lahinch, Co. Clare. A USAAF Consolidated B-24D Liberator four-engined heavy bomber left Gander, Newfoundland for Prestwick in Scotland. En route the crew became lost in bad weather and had radio failure. Eventually finding a beach that looked suitable they made a skillful wheels-

¹⁵ File G2/X/1099, M. A., Dublin.

¹⁶ James J. Halley, *Royal Air Force FA100-FZ999* (Tonbridge, 1989).

¹⁷ Steve Blake & John Stanaway, *Adorimini – a History of the 82nd Fighter Group in World War 2* (Idaho, 1992).

¹⁸ *Combat Report*, Arthur L. Brodhead, Jr., 23 December 1942.

¹⁹ Files G2/X/1116, S.I. 317 and ACF-S-152, M. A., Dublin.

²⁰ Personal correspondence, family of Arthur L. Brodhead, Jr., 1995-9.

²¹ Files G2/X/1158 and ACF-S-162, M. A., Dublin.

²² Cliff Bishop, *Fortresses of the Big Triangle First* (Elsenham, 1986) pp 49, 169, 245.

²³ American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) website; Paul M. Andrews and William H. Adams, *The Mighty Eighth Combat Chronology Supplement*, 1977.

up landing near Lahinch at 07.35 hours on 10 July 1943.²⁴ The crew of ten, from the 567th Bomb Squadron, 389th Bomb Group, plus one passenger were uninjured.²⁵ Before the day was over they were in Northern Ireland. All survived the war and three returned to Lahinch in July 1993 to unveil a plaque to remember the event. Their aircraft was blown up after salvage of whatever was possible from it.²⁶ Some parts remain buried in the sand and most walkers on the beach do not know of the drama that occurred there many years ago.

The only civilian aircraft lost in the Mid-West Region during World War Two was a BOAC operated De Havilland DH.91 Albatross four-engined modern airliner on 16 July 1943 at Rineanna airfield.²⁷ Considered by many to be one of the most graceful aircraft ever built it was also noted for its structural fragility. On the approach to Rineanna part of the flap structure failed causing an immediate crash-landing approximately a mile north-west of the airfield. Of the five crew and nine passengers only one received slight injuries but the airliner was a write-off. The passengers were all Board members or high-ranking officials of the airline on a special flight from the UK to Rineanna, planned as the first of a series of BOAC route inspections²⁸

An unusual event happened on 5 November 1943 when two USAAF Douglas C-47As landed at Rineanna. Again this was precautionary due to the crews having become lost in bad weather and fuel was running low. The eight crew and passengers on board each aircraft were from the 77th Troop Carrier Squadron of the 435th Troop Carrier Group. They had travelled from the USA by the South Atlantic ferry route and were on the last leg of that long journey to England having taken off from French Morocco late on 4 November. After rest and refuelling of their aircraft they left for Northern Ireland on 6 November. The crews later flew missions over Normandy on D-Day in June 1944 and over Holland during Operation Market Garden in September 1944. During the latter battle, while flying a different aircraft to the one he landed at Rineanna, 1/Lt. Harrison was shot down and seriously wounded.²⁹

The sole Luftwaffe casualty in the Mid-West, and indeed the only belligerent aircraft to crash or force-land in Co. Tipperary during the war, occurred on 13 December 1943 at Ballycommon, near Dromineer.³⁰ The Focke-Wulf FW 200C Condor, with a crew of eight, was on a long-range reconnaissance mission over the North Atlantic. The aircraft developed engine trouble and the crew eventually became lost. Using flares, a wheels-up landing was made at 19.35 hours in the dark. The uninjured crew quickly destroyed the Condor. They were subsequently interned in the Curragh until 1945. Both crew and aircraft were from the 7 Staffel of Kampfgeschwader 40 (7th Squadron of Bomber Wing 40).³¹ This large four-engined former airliner design had earlier in the war sunk numerous Allied ships leading Winston Churchill to christen it 'the scourge of the Atlantic'.

The next three months saw six USAAF aircraft force-land at Rineanna. The first on 18 December 1943 was a B-17G with ten on board.³² On a delivery flight from the USA to Britain, the crew became lost and were very low on fuel. Again the crew flew to Northern Ireland next day after refuelling. By a strange twist of fate this aircraft, with a different crew, force-landed in another neutral country, Sweden on 9 April 1944 but did not escape internment a second time. It had been damaged by anti-aircraft fire while on a raid to Poznan in Poland.³³ Unfortunately the crew that flew it into Rineanna were not so lucky. At least nine went to the 379th BG after reaching England. Eight were in another B-17 shot down over the continent on 8 February

²⁴ Files G2/X/1203 and S.I. 318, M. A., Dublin.

²⁵ USAAF Accident Report, 10 July 1943.

²⁶ File ACF-S-173, M. A., Dublin.

²⁷ Files G2/X/1209 and S.I. 482, M. A., Dublin.

²⁸ BOAC accident summary (British Airways Archives, Heathrow); Lettice Curtis, *The Forgotten Pilots* (3rd ed., London, 1985) pp 193-4.

²⁹ Files G2/X/1249 and ACF-S-185, M.A., Dublin; Jesse M. Harrison, USA ex-435th TCG 1943, personal correspondence, 2003.

³⁰ Files G2/X/1259 and S.I. 308, M.A., Dublin.

³¹ Luftwaffe Quartermaster General Loss Returns, Luftflotte 3, 13 December 1943.

³² Files G2/X/1264 and ACF-S-191, M.A., Dublin.

³³ Bo Widfeldt & Rolph Wegmann, *Making For Sweden Part 2*, (Surrey, 1998) pp 47-8.

1944. Two died, five became POWs and one evaded capture. A ninth member of the Rineanna crew also became a POW in 13 May 1944 when the B-17 he was in was shot down.³⁴

Similar circumstances caused a B-24H to land on 4 February 1944.³⁵ Engine problems developed while it was at Rineanna and an aircraft was sent from Northern Ireland with spare parts and a mechanic. The crew of ten had to stay until the problem was rectified. Both aircraft left for Northern Ireland on the 10th. Nine of the ten crew were in another B-24 on 22 April 1944 when it was shot down over England by a German long-range fighter.³⁶ Three died and at least four more were injured.³⁷ At the time they were with the 754th Bomb Squadron of the 458th Bomb Group and were returning from a mission to Germany. One of the survivors was later interned in Switzerland when the B-24 he was in was forced to land there due to engine trouble.³⁸

The crew of the next USAAF B-17G to force-land at Rineanna on 8 February 1944 must have been surprised to find the B-24 mentioned above there already. Shortage of fuel was the reason given for this landing. The ten crew members had flown from Labrador in Canada. In contrast to the lengthy stay of the B-24 this B-17 landed at 14.10 hours, was refuelled and departed for Northern Ireland at 17.35 hours on the same day.³⁹ Like many wartime aircraft its service life was relatively short. It was shot down, with a different crew, on 11 May 1944 over Holland during its twentieth mission.⁴⁰

A previously unseen type of aircraft in the region force-landed at Rineanna on 22 February 1944. It was a USAAF Martin B-26B Marauder, a fast twin-engined medium bomber. As usual the five crew had become lost and had run low on fuel after taking off from Morocco to fly to England. Again after refuelling they were permitted to depart the same day.⁴¹ This Marauder would later serve with the 322nd Bomb Group (Medium) of the USAAF 9th Air Force. It saw action through the Normandy campaign before suffering a landing accident on 1 August 1944, without injury to the crew apparently.⁴² A very similar situation happened the day after, on 23 February 1944, when another USAAF Liberator, a B-24J, landed at Rineanna for the same reasons. It too had set out from Morocco. Likewise, after being refueled, the crew of ten departed, all in the space of some five hours.⁴³ From the last three incidents it is clear both the Northern and Southern ferry routes were in operation at the same time. Sad to relate, nine of this crew were on another B-24 shot down by anti-aircraft guns over Belgium on 24 April 1944. Eight were killed while one became a POW.⁴⁴

The last USAAF aircraft to arrive at Rineanna was another C-47 A on its way to England via Morocco on 5 March 1944. As usual, lost and with fuel running low, a landing was urgent. The nine on board were all safe due in no small measure to the recently constructed *EIRE* markings dotted around the coastline. These were made from stones and numbered to help identification. The C-47 landed at 12.05 hours and was flown off at 15.50 hours after refuelling.⁴⁵ Many of the USAAF aircraft and crews to crash or force-land in neutral Ireland during 1943 and 1944 were replacements, not yet assigned to any unit until reaching the UK.

Another RAF Catalina, this time a Mark IVB, made a precautionary landing at Foynes

³⁴ Paul M. Andrews & William H. Adams, *The Mighty Eighth Roll of Honour* (1997); idem., *Combat Chronology*; US National Archives, Records and Administration (NARA) website, WW2 US POW file; AMBC website.

³⁵ Files G2/X/1280 and ACF-S-202, M.A., Dublin.

³⁶ Ian McLachlan, *Night of the Intruders* (London, 1944).

³⁷ ABMC website; Andrews & Adams, *Chronology*.

³⁸ Andrews & Adams, *Roll of Honour*; NARA website, US POW file.

³⁹ Files G2/X/1282 and ACF-S-204, M.A., Dublin.

⁴⁰ Paul M. Andrews & William H. Adams, *The Mighty Eighth Combat Chronology* (1997).

⁴¹ Files G2/X/1285 and ACF-S-207, M.A., Dublin.

⁴² Personal correspondence, Trevor J. Allen, U.K., 1994.

⁴³ Files G2/X/1287 and ACF-S-209, M.A., Dublin.

⁴⁴ Andrews & Adams, *Chronology*; 392nd Bomb Group website.

⁴⁵ Files G2/X/1288 and ACF-S-210, M.A., Dublin.

on 9 March 1944 at 15.08 hours.⁴⁶ It was being ferried across the Atlantic via the West Indies by 45 Group, RAF Transport Command.⁴⁷ The crew took off from Bermuda on the 8th and when they landed due to lack of fuel said they had been in the air for 26 hours. Catalinas were capable of staying aloft for such long periods. The crew of six were extremely tired and were allowed stay overnight. After refuelling the flying-boat was flown to Castle Archdale as the base on Lough Erne had been renamed.⁴⁸ This RAF crew comprised four nationalities, British, American, Canadian and Australian. This Catalina would eventually see service in the Indian Ocean.⁴⁹

Almost six months later, on 5 September 1944, another RAF Catalina IVB landed at Foynes. On this occasion it had travelled via the Northern ferry route, from Gander Lake in Canada. Intending to fly to Largs Bay in Scotland the crew had experienced bad weather for most of their journey. They attempted to land at Castle Archdale but were unable to do so due to poor visibility. They were instructed, by the RAF, to divert to Foynes. Permission for this had been sought from and granted by the Irish authorities. The crew was exhausted after their gruelling 18-hour trip and remained at the BOAC complex in Foynes overnight. After refuelling the following morning the Catalina was flown to Castle Archdale. Of note are the ages of the five crew which ranged from 47 to 21.⁵⁰ Unlike the earlier Catalina this aircraft did not travel far during its service life. It was assigned to a flying-boat training unit based at Killedeas, also on Lough Erne.⁵¹

The last of twenty aircraft to crash or force-land during the war in the Mid-West came down on 7 April 1945.⁵² Surprisingly it was a single-engined Supermarine Spitfire, perhaps the most famous aircraft of WW2. Most Spitfires were short-range fighters, but some were adapted as long-range photo reconnaissance aircraft fitted with cameras instead of guns. It was one of the latter type, a Mark PR XI, which force-landed near Miltown Malbay in Co. Clare.⁵³ The Canadian pilot, Flying Officer Edward A. Miller was flying from Haverfordwest in Wales with 8 Operational Training Unit. He had taken off on an extended training flight that involved flying to points in Scotland, England and back to Wales. His entire flight was in cloud. The Spitfire's radio failed when the pilot attempted to locate his airfield and he lost his bearings. After being airborne for just over four hours he found a suitable site and made a very good wheels-up landing.⁵⁴ He stayed overnight at Rineanna before travelling to Northern Ireland. His aircraft was salvaged later and likewise was sent north of the border. Due to the imminent end of the war in Europe it was not considered worth repairing and was eventually scrapped.⁵⁵ This very aircraft appears to hold a unique distinction among wartime Spitfires. It had been on the strength of the Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough, England in 1944. During a test flight it went in to an almost terminal dive. The pilot barely managed to pull it out and land the damaged aircraft. Later it was ascertained to have reached a speed of 606 mph (Mach 0.89), probably the fastest ever accurately recorded by a Spitfire during the war.⁵⁶

In summation twenty aircraft crashed or force-landed in the three Mid-West counties of Clare, Limerick and Tipperary from 1939 to 1945. Twelve were from the USAAF, six RAF, one BOAC and one was from the Luftwaffe. Of 167 men on board, 9 were killed, 16 interned but 142 were released without delay. This ratio was much better than elsewhere in Ireland and due

⁴⁶ Files G2/X/1290 and ACF-S-211, M.A., Dublin.

⁴⁷ Carl A Christie, *Ocean Bridge* (London, 1995) pp 195 & 305.

⁴⁸ David J. Smith, *Actions Stations 7, Military Airfields of Scotland, the North East and Northern Ireland* (Cambridge, 1983) pp 59-61.

⁴⁹ James J. Halley, *Royal Air Force Aircraft JA100-JZ999* (Tonbridge, 1990).

⁵⁰ Files G2/X/1339 and ACF-S-236, M.A., Dublin.

⁵¹ Halley, *RAF JA100-JZ999*.

⁵² Files G2/X/1399 and ACF-S-254, M.A., Dublin.

⁵³ RAF Form 1180 (Accident record form), EN 409, 7 April 1945, RAF Museum, Hendon.

⁵⁴ Personal Correspondence, Edward A. Miller, Canada 1995.

⁵⁵ RAF Form 78 (Aircraft history card), EN 409, RAF Museum, Hendon.

⁵⁶ Dr Alfred Price, 'Precursor of the Blackbird, Photographic Reconnaissance Variants of the Spitfire, Part 2', *Air International*, December 1990, p. 341.

in large measure to the availability of Rineanna and Foynes as safe landing sites. By nationality the figure of 167 breaks down as 112 Americans, 35 British, 10 Canadians, 8 Germans, one Australian and one New Zealander.

One more forced landing needs to be mentioned. Though it occurred after the war had ended many people think it was a wartime incident. An RAF Avro Anson I on a training flight from Bishop's Court in Northern Ireland became lost in bad weather on 19 November 1946.⁵⁷ The crew of four from 7 Air Navigation School landed safely on the north bank of the river Shannon, just opposite Limerick Docks.⁵⁸ That night they stayed in Cruise's Hotel. Later the crew returned to Northern Ireland, but most of the aircraft was left *in situ*.⁵⁹ Unlike the majority of the other crashes or forced landings this particular incident was not subject to wartime censorship and was well covered in the local and national newspapers.

The author would be grateful for any other information or photographs concerning the crews or aircraft mentioned in this article or on similar incidents anywhere in the country during World War 2. [e-mail: mandkgleeson@eircom.net]

APPENDIX

Crews of Aircraft which Crashed or Force Landed in the Mid-West Region during WW2

The format for the aircraft reference is: date of crash or force-landing - aircraft type - individual serial number - individual code – unit - location of crash or force-landing.

For aircrew details: rank – name - individual service number - duty in crew – age – nationality - wartime fate. Pilots are listed first, then other crew positions where known and passengers last (if any). All crew and passengers on USAAF aircraft were Americans.

(1) 25 October 1941 Wellington IC T2506 PM-C 103 Squadron Kilmihil, Co. Clare.

P/O Ralph G. Keefer	J4876	Pilot	24	Can.	interned	escaped 28-8-1942 RCAF.
Sgt. Leslie G. Diaper	1375190	Co-pilot	20	Eng.	interned	released 15-6-1944.
P/O John P.S. Calder	J4695	Observer	26	Can.	interned	released 1-7-1943, KIA 21-7-1944.
Sgt. Albert C. Dalton	636611	WOp/AG	19	Eng.	interned	escaped 29-8-1942, KIA 7-9-1943.
Sgt. Maurice B. Brown	987421	WOp/AG	28	Eng.	interned	released 15-6-1944.
Sgt. Alexander Virtue	1378792	Gunner	29	Eng.	interned	released 9-1943, died 10-6 1944.

(2) 3 Dec. 1941 Sunderland II W3988 ZM-P 201 Squadron off Doonbeg, Co. Clare.

F/Lt. James G. Fleming,	DFC 40380	Pilot	21	Can.	interned	escaped 28-8-1942, KIA 6-9-1944.
P/O Wilfred S. Emmett	NZ401377	2 nd Pilot	26	N. Z.	RNZAF	died in crash, body not recovered.
Sgt. Eric W. Jackson	999009	3 rd Pilot	24	Eng.		died in crash, body not recovered.
P/O Eric G. Marker	101048	Observer	20	Eng.		died in crash, body not recovered.
Sgt. Sydney J. Epps	522263	WOp/AG	25	Eng.		died in crash, buried in Miltown Malbay.
Sgt. Maurice W.G. Fox	933498	WOp/AG	20	Eng.		died in crash, buried in Miltown Malbay.
Sgt. James C. Masterson	911625	WOp/AG	21	Eng.		interned released 18-10-1943.
LAC Frederick W. Lea	904349	Rigger	21	Eng.		died in crash, buried in Miltown Malbay.

⁵⁷ *Limerick Leader* 20 November 1946; Ray Sturtivant, *The Anson File* (Tonbridge, 1998).

⁵⁸ RAF Bishop's Court O.R.B., Air 28/991, PRO, London.

⁵⁹ File ACF-S-264, M.A., Dublin.

LAC Arthur Doncaster	743595	Fitter	30 Eng.	died from crash, buried Doonbeg.
LAC Andrew P. Walker	972825	Fitter	19 Scottish	died in crash, body not recovered.
ACI Albert E. Bennett	1081395	Rigger	19 Eng.	died from crash, buried Doonbeg.

Note: A fourth unidentified member of this crew is also buried in Miltown Malbay.

(3) 6 July 1942 C-47-DL Skytrain 41-7764 Rineanna Airfield, Co. Clare.

1/Lt. B.C. Sauer	O-427665	Pilot	
2/Lt. F.G. Altman	O-724108		
2/Lt. H.W. Blank	O-724121		
2/Lt. T.C. Dick	O-724148		
2/Lt. M. Flores	O-443641		
2/Lt. J.B. Goudy	O-659116		
2/Lt. George L. Ludolph	O-443737		MIA 8 July 1943.
2/Lt. W.C. Smith	O-443717		
T/Sgt. R.P. Lenser	6994860		
Sgt. R.A. Mihelitch	1904733		
Corp. D.D. Berkheimer	6898524		
Corp. W.J. Grace	33116985		
Pte. F.C. Lynch	6101207		
Pte. C.A. Walker	39168923		
Pte. B.E. Williams	36078750		

(4) 19 November 1942 Catalina IB FP202 302 FTU Fergus River, Co. Clare.

F/Lt. Cecil G. Moore	68976	Pilot	
F/O John D. Henderson	132077		
F/Sgt. Mark Mehr	R.83970		Canadian
F/Sgt. Norman E. Carter	R.83378		Canadian
F/Sgt. John R. Woodcock	R.87023		Canadian
F/Sgt. Willaim E. Bitz	R.58577		Canadian
F/Sgt. M. Hewen	1489484		
F/Sgt. A. Blackwell	1169378		
Corp. D.V. Sweeting	568527		

Note: The first six are known to have survived the war

(5) 23 Dec. 1942 P-38F-15-LO 43-2098 '63' 95 FS, 82FG Ballyvaughan, Co. Clare.

2/Lt. Arthur L. Brodhead, Jr. O-496339 Pilot 21

(6) 21 March 1943 B-17F-40-BO 42-5220 Rineanna Airfield, Co. Clare.

1/Lt. B. Davis		Pilot	
F/O Carl D. Brown	T-000080	Co-pilot	MIA 29 July 1943
2/Lt. John G. Fogarty	O-733424	Navigator	KIA 29 July 1943
2/Lt. Robert L. Alexander		Bombardier	KIA 29 July 1943
T/Sgt. L.F. Ayscue		Engineer	
T/Sgt. Earl W. Norlen	37166578	Radio-operator	MIA 29 July 1943
S/Sgt. L. L. Meyer		Assistant Engineer	
Sgt. Perry G. Pedersen	07071226	Assistant Radio-operator	MIA 29 July 1943

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S/Sgt. Larry D. McCoy	13087069	Gunner	MIA 29 July 1943
Sgt. Jesse O. Wheeler, Jr		Tail-gunner	KIA 29 July 1943

(7) 10 July 1943 B-24D-95-CO 42-40784 567 BS, 389 BG Lahinch, Co. Clare.

2/Lt. Max E. Van Benthuyzen	O-383260	Pilot	
2/Lt. Albert H. Leighton	O-675084	Co-pilot	
2/Lt. Manuel A. Protos	O-738886	Navigator	24
2/Lt. William E. Fowler	O-2043684	Bombardier	
T/Sgt. Lester D. Walton	15102605	Engineer/Top Turret Gunner	
T/Sgt. Henry J. Crawford	33314817	Radio Operator	
S/Sgt. Chester V. Miller	11089630	Assistant Radio Operator/Waist Gunner	
S/Sgt. John L. Busch	6998037	Waist Gunner	
S/Sgt. James C. Bean	18108329	Tail Turret Gunner	
S/Sgt. Charles H. Miller	33199009	Assistant Engineer/Ball Turret gunner	27
W.O. Benjamin Ziev	2116388	Passenger	

(8) 16 July 1943 DH.91 Albatross G-AFDK B.O.A.C. Rineanna Airfield, Co. Clare.

Capt.ain Geoffrey P. Moss	Pilot	
Mr C. Caseley	Flight Engineer	
Mr D.M. Revell	Radio Officer	
Miss R. Gilmour	Stewardess	
Miss A.H. Wigmore	Stewardess	
Mr Keith Granville	BOAC Traffic Control Officer	
Mr D.S.S. Macdowall	BOAC Establishment Director	
Mr John Marchbank	BOAC Board Member	
Mr Simon Marks	BOAC Board Member	
Mr G.T. Mellor	BOAC Chief Accountant	
Mr Neil Richardson	BOAC Supt of Airways Routes	Slightly injured.
Mr P.J.B. Wimbush	Secretary of the Board of BOAC.	
Commodore Gerard d'Erlanger, CBE	BOAC Board Member	
Sen. Commander Pauline M. Gower, MBE	BOAC Board Member	

Note: All on board were civilians. The last two named were also top-ranking officers of the Air Transport Auxiliary, a civilian aircraft ferrying organization.

(9) 5 Nov. 1943 C-47A-40-DL 42-24074 '29' 77 TCS, 435 TCG Rineanna Airfield.

1/Lt. Jesse M. Harrison	O-675587	Pilot	22
2/Lt. Charles R. Hazelwood	O-677494	Co-pilot	
2/Lt. Richard W. Canavan	O-798746	Navigator	
S/Sgt. Emilio J. Giacomini	33290043	Flight Engineer	
Sgt. Charles S. Darby	33206019	Radio Operator	KIFA 17 October 1944
2/Lt. Philip J. Sebek	O-745196	Passenger	
Sgt. Donald B. Pinochi	37317784	Passenger	
Corp. Henry S. Brockgraitens	37408429	Passenger	

(10) 5 November 1943 C-47A-45-DL 42-24098 77 TCS, 435 TCG Rineanna Airfield.

2/Lt. Harold J. Krauss	O-799926	Pilot
2/Lt. Robert E. Davies	O-742567	Co-pilot
2/Lt. George E. Murrin	O-809402	Navigator
S/Sgt. Lawland E. Wynne	38235854	Flight Engineer
Corp. Oscar E. Prince, Jr.	18165964	Radio Operator
M/Sgt. Eddie A. Martin	38005695	Passenger
Sgt. David D. Leibowitz	327242988	Passenger
Crp. Norbert T. Vondenbenken	35668068	Passenger

(11) 13 December 1943 FW 200C-6 0237 F8 + MR 7./KG 40 Ballycommon, Co. Tipp.

ObLt. Egon Scherret	564'	Pilot	23
Uffz. Hans Meidel	62564/201	Co-pilot	23
Uffz. Karl Schwarzkopf	62753/118	Observer	22
Fw. Hans Rassk	62564/13	Radio Operator	23
Uffz. Ulrich Winkler	62565/141	Radio Operator	21
Obfw. Willi Voll	62564/24	Flight Engineer	27
Fw. Alfred Thiem	62564/26	Air Gunner	23
Uffz. Bruno Arndt	62564/163	Air Gunner	21

Note: All uninjured and interned.

(12) 18 December 1943 B-17G-20-DL 42-37985 Rineanna Airfield, Co. Clare.

2/Lt. Herbert D. Rossberg	O-804509	Pilot	KIA 8 February 1944 over Europe.
2/Lt. Matthew J. Bauer	O-688731	Co-pilot	POW 8 February 1944 over Europe.
2/Lt. John A. Kupsick	O-685654	Navigator	Shot down 8 February 1944 over Europe, evaded capture.
2/Lt. Virgil J. Gerth	O-746574	Bombardier	POW 13 May 1944 over Europe.
S/Sgt. Charles E. Atkinson	15084516	Top Turret Gunner	POW 8 February 1944 over Europe.
S/Sgt. Albert F. Paplaskas	11087519	Left Waist Gunner	KIA 8 February 1944 over Europe.
S/Sgt. George F. Bennett	15339963	Radio Operator	POW 8 February 1944 over Europe.
Sgt. John Chidder	15338131	Gunner	
Sgt. Thurman P. Smotherman	37417414	Right Waist Gunner	POW 8 February 1944 over Europe.
Sgt. Frederick H. Brown, Jr.	31084894	Tail Gunner	POW 8 February 1944 over Europe.

(13) 4 February 1944 B-24H-15-FO 42-52404 Rineanna Airfield, Co. Clare.

2/Lt. Charles W. Stilson	O-536780	Pilot	WIA 22 April 1944 over UK.
2/Lt. Joseph E. Worton	O-807093	Co-pilot	WIA 22 April 1944 over UK.
2/Lt. Raymond E. Sawyer	O-810330	Navigator	WIA 22 April 1944 over UK.
2/Lt. Melvin C. Marshall	O-752764	Bombardier	WIA 22 April 1944 over UK, died next day.
T/Sgt. Bruce W. Grabo	36235705		
S/Sgt. James E. Blake	17169314	Top Turret Gunner	
S/Sgt. William R. Pearce	12158599	Radio Operator	KIA 22 April 1944 over UK.
Sgt. William L. Johnson	34257791	Ball Turret Gunner	WIA 22 April 1944 over UK.
Sgt. Clarence C. Connelly	13143715	Left Waist Gunner	Interned Switzerland 12 July 1944.
Sgt. Arthur Silverman	11113807	Right Waist Gunner	KIA 22 April 1944 over UK.

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(14) 8 February 1944 B-17G-35-BO 42-31971 Rineanna Airfield, Co. Clare.

2/Lt. John J. Duffy	O-685261
2/Lt. William O. Rottstedt	O-803278
2/Lt. Daniel James	O-676285
F/O Paul L. Himtermeier	T-61451
Sgt. Edmond Balling	33005284
S/Sgt. L. D. Regan	35522533
S/Sgt. Edward French	15104561
Sgt. John Dingee	31248246
Sgt. Merle Lindsey	19079454
Sgt. Raymond Woolsey	32808528

(15) 22 February 1944 B-26B-50-MA 42-95944 Rineanna Airfield, Co. Clare.

Capt. William Slade	O-421341
Capt. Dallas W. Taylor	O-487701
1/Lt. Robert W. Williams	O-794914
S/Sgt. Fred Michaelsen	34404401
Corp. Kenneth Ayooob	39104786

(16) 23 Febuary 1944 B-24J-105-CO 42-109825 Rineanna Airfield, Co Clare.

2/Lt. Carl F. Ellinger	O-808808	Pilot	KIA 24 April 1944.
2/Lt. Neil H. Morton	O-813556	Co-pilot	KIA 24 April 1944.
2/Lt. Joe L. Wieland	O-691844	Navigator	KIA 24 April 1944.
2/Lt. Ross H. Hall	O-684154	Bombardier	KIA 24 April 1944.
S/Sgt. Ralph Olson	37290262	Radio Operator	KIA 24 April 1944.
S/Sgt. Aubrey D. Coble	39460628	Top Turret Gunner	KIA 24 April 1944.
Sgt. Harvey H. Weeks, Jr.	15071843	Left Waist Gunner	KIA 24 April 1944.
Sgt. Harry E. Phillips	38449700	Ball Turret Gunner	KIA 24 April 1944.
S/Sgt. Pierre Dilley	35355509		
Sgt. Merle J. Hasenfratz	39410914	Tail Gunner	POW 24 April 1944.

(17) 5 March 1944 C-47A-15-DL 42-23395 Rineanna Airfield, Co. Clare.

Capt. Clarence B. Anderson, Jr.	O-665499	Pilot	
Capt. Lamb B. Myhr	O-419797		
Capt. Selor D. Browne	O-855474		
1/Lt. Merrill E. Smith	O-729256		
1/Lt. Norman J. Womack	O-525184		
2/Lt. Allan M. Wrang	O-800800		
T/Sgt. George A. Bishop	19075980		
Sgt. Edward K. Ott	13124623		
Sgt. Edward Daley, Jr.	31149309		KIA 7 June 1944.

(18) 9 Mar.1944 Catalina IVB JX330 45 Group, RAF Transport Command Foynes.

Capt. R. Adams	Pilot	American.
F.O.C. C. Foreman	Co-pilot	American.

P.O Charles Wm. McGregor Shaw 404612	Navigator	29	Australian.
Sgt. J. G. Gascoigne	Radio Operator		Canadian.
Sgt. J. Locke 1582748	2nd Radio Operator		British.
Sgt. C. O-J Woodward	Flight Engineer		American.

(19) 5 Sept. 1944 Catalina IVB JX422 45 Group, RAF Transport Command Foynes.

Capt. Frederick W. Lancing	Pilot	47	American.
Mr Charles A. Childs	Co-pilot	29	American.
Mr John H. Harley	Navigator	21	English.
F/Sgt. Tomas A. Baxter	Flight Engineer	23	Canadian.
Mr Marcel M. Morris	Radio Operator	33	English.

Note: Only F/Sgt. Baxter was a member of the RAF, the other four were civilians employed by RAF Transport Command.

(20) 7 April 1945 Spitfire PR XI EN409 '29' 8 OTU Miltown Malbay, Co. Clare.

F/O Edward A. Miller J27762	Pilot	25	Canadian.
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(21) 19 Nov. 1946 Anson I MG902 FF-MH 7 ANS Limerick Docks, Limerick City.

F/Lt. Kenneth Jeffrey	Pilot	21	English.
F/Sgt. Strainger G. Docking			English.
W.O Terence Thomas			English.
W.O Donald Messum			English.