

*Email received:*

*You wonder happen also in our days. Now you change words with a former "enemy" of your father. I was by chance German, your father defended also by chance Polish interests. We both did our best for our fatherlands.*

*Your father has been a successful fighter in his "Mustang". He and his five comrades caught me on their Surprise Raid over Denmark Oct 18th 1944. Your father shot me down. I recovered month later - which saved my life: End of the war was May 8th 1945, and when I left hospital there was no much time left for more fighting. Franek knows a lot about the "meeting" on Oct 18th. Perhaps he gave you already enough material. I can provide you with my short report ( 2 pages) about the shot-down, copies of "Pilots personal combat report Form F" telling the event Oct 18th and "The Tragic Loss of Aleksander Pietrzak". Please tell me your postal address so I can mail you what you want.*

*Nice to have got contact with the only son of the brave man who saved my life by shooting me down.*

*Best regards  
Arno Rose*

*(Arno passed away on 22 March, 2010 at his home in Pfinztal/Karlsruhe.)*

## **Arno Rose - Account of the Crash on 18th October 1944**

*OCR transcription of a scanned typescript sent to the family by Arno Rose, the Luftwaffe pilot shot down by W/O. Aleksander Pietrzak's section on 18th October 1944. Handwritten marginal notes in the original are given in square brackets where legible. Uncertain OCR readings are marked [?].*

***(The details submitted by Arno Rose not confirmed by Aircrew Remembered)***

### **Crash on 18th October 1944**

19 years old, Corporal (Unteroffizier der deutschen Luftwaffe), I was posted to the Jagdgeschwader (Fighter Wing) JG 102 at Aalborg-East to become a fighter pilot.

I came from the Instructors School (Fluglehrerschule) Brandenburg-Briest. Although I had already finished all exams as flight-instructor, we were all ordered to become fighter pilots as soon as possible. General Galland had planned the "Big Bang" (Großer Schlag): masses of fighters should stop the Allied bomb-offensive and regain superiority in the air above Germany. Our group was called "Windhunde" (greyhounds), signalling rapid transformation into fighter pilots - within four weeks only, owing to our "experience" as flight-instructors.

My fighter training was finished, and I waited with others to be posted to a combat fighter wing among the Defence of the Reich (Reichsverteidigung). To avoid idle time, and for training purposes, we were ordered to use "Arados" 96 or 66 as much as possible. We liked these "pleasure flights" (Lustflüge), officially declared as "flying on instruments" (Instrumentenflug/Blindflug) - nonsense, of course.

On Wednesday, the 18th of October 1944, our home airstrip at Aalborg-East was once again muddy and couldn't be used. As usual in such a case, we were driven to Aalborg-West, the vaster and better airport.

From there I took off first in the morning, at 07:50, in the Arado Ar 96 No. 127, made my turn and got back at 08:55.

The next trip was made at exactly 12:00 in the same plane, but this time I was accompanied by Corporal Hubert Heine in another Ar 96. Weather was good, nearly no clouds.

I was the leading plane (Rottenführer). Heine acted as "Rottenflieger," flying combat formation, i.e. at a distance of 40-50 metres, once at the 4 or 5 o'clock position, then changing to the other side at the 7 or 8 o'clock position.

We looked for German ships coming through the Kattegat from East Prussia, carrying refugees who had escaped the Russians. We made a low-level flight - the most preferred form of flying for young airmen.

After visiting the ships we returned to the Danish coast north of Frederikshavn. We looked after the gliders on the airfield there, enjoyed the cheers of our comrades beneath, and continued along the beach southwards. At Voorsa I turned right, up country, course Aalborg. Hubert Heine followed.

Immediately after the turn he became the first victim of attacking "Mustangs" near Agersted. Being at an altitude of only some 10 to 20 metres, he tried to escape, making at last a forced belly landing. He got off the plane unhurt, but his Arado was destroyed by the continuous fire from the attacking P-51s.

Lacking radio equipment, he couldn't give the alarm. Meanwhile I needed full concentration on my low-level flight, and therefore didn't notice what had happened.

Coast AA-soldiers told me later on that two P-51s had cornered me from both sides. Hearing the impacts in the fuselage of my plane, I instinctively eased the control stick back. Quite close to my left side a Mustang with a peacock-butterfly marking (Pfauenauge = Kokarde) rushed along. I made a sharp turn to the right - just crossing the trajectory of the other P-51. There was a wave of fire. Obviously the engine was burning.

I lost consciousness. There is no remembrance of what happened next, with my Arado No. 127 on fire and me inside.

The first impression after the crash was - my flying boots, walking; I marched forward on grass. Then I recognised, vaguely, a boy with a cap on his head, accompanying me - a herd-boy, perhaps. He stared at me, terrified, eyes wide open and arms outstretched, as if he wanted to give me some assistance.

Next memory: a sharp pain. I was lying on a hard floor (tiles?), in a dark, narrow room (a corridor?). Somebody with spectacles on his nose (a doctor?) had touched my burned hand. Again I lost consciousness.

Finally German soldiers (who? which unit?) came and took me in a "SanKra" (Sanitätskraftwagen = ambulance) to a hospital in Aalborg, managed by nuns. As far as I remember they had huge white hoods in triangle form - "Josephininnen" (nuns of the Order of Saint Joseph), perhaps.

I suffered from some wounds, broken bones and scalds.

I soon recovered - I was a tough young sportsman of 19 then - and my next take-off was on 27th November 1944. Lack of fuel delayed the newly necessary repetition of combat training. Therefore the "misfortune" of 18.10.1944 probably saved my life: being posted to a fighter combat unit to defend the Reich in autumn 1944, I would have had no chance against the Allied predominance in the air.

Nevertheless, I tempted providence once more. As a passionate airman and patriot I became a member of "Schulungslehrgang Elbe," the code word for the ram-fighter unit of the German Air Force, which only once had its chance, on the 7th of April 1945.

But that's another story.

Arno Rose.

## **Re: Surprise Raid, AALBORG Area, 18 October 1944**

*Transcription of a printed web-forum thread (Mighty Eighth Air Force Public Message Board), evidently included with Arno Rose's account as it identifies the Polish pilots and combat reports from the same engagement. Original page footer: <http://www.com-web.com/wwwboard/messages/10568.html>, dated 09.10.2001. Board timestamps in the original are corrupted by the scan (rendered "19101"); they most likely read 2001.*

## **Re: Surprise Raid, AALBORG Area, 18 October 1944**

Posted by Carsten Petersen on September 25, 2001 at 14:23:22:

In reply to: "Surprise Raid, AALBORG Area, 18 October 1944," posted by Helmut on September 25, 2001 at 05:26:04:

Dear Helmut,

I don't know very much about this raid, but I hope that this helps:

The German defence in northern Jutland sounded Flakalarm at 11:44 hours in Hanstholm as 6 Mustangs crossed the coast at low level. The planes were fired at by Marine Flak Abteilung 814, which fired 75 rounds of 10.5 cm, 177 rounds of 3.7 cm and 728 rounds of 2 cm without hitting any planes. The German navy (of course) claimed to have hit several planes.

The planes continued in over Jutland. The 6 Mustangs came from No. 316 Squadron:

Mustang III SZ-K Serial No. 360 W/C Rutkowski, Kazimierz, Stanisław P.0692

Mustang III SZ-V Serial No. 855 F/Lt J. Walawski, Janusz Jerzy P.1808

Mustang III SZ-N Serial No. 356 F/Lt Z. Nentwich, Zygmunt P.1610

Mustang III SZ-Y Serial No. 865 F/Lt T. Karnkowski, Stefan P.0973

Mustang III SZ-L Serial No. 386 F/Lt A. Chalajda, Antoni P.1595

Mustang III SZ-A Serial No. 841 W/O A. Pietrzak, Aleksander P.783147

***(The details submitted by Arno Rose not confirmed by Aircrew Remembered)***

The Polish Mustangs continued from Hanstholm to north of Aalborg, where they detected some German planes further northeast. They claimed 6 German planes within the next few minutes:

1 Me 109 - W/C Rutkowski and F/Lt Nentwich

2 Me 109 - F/Lt Walawski

1½ Me 109 - F/Lt Karnkowski

1½ Me 109 - W/O Pietrzak

The German planes came from JG 102, which was stationed at Aalborg Ost and Knivsholt, near Frederikshavn. One of the German planes was flown by Leutnant Werner Haugk, who was a very competent pilot with about 300 combat missions behind him. He was born in Gelsenkirchen in April 1912 and was a Stuka pilot in the early part of the war. He sank more than 10,000 BRT of shipping, plus a destroyer, as a Stuka pilot. He was later transferred to the Zerstörers and received the Ritterkreuz as such in August 1944. He served at that time as a Fahnenjunker-Oberfeldwebel in 4./ZG 76, under his brother Helmut. He had at that time 8 victories (4-engined bombers). He came to JG 102 in the summer of 1944.

The Polish Mustangs continued south along the eastern coast of Jutland and turned west near Vejle, crossing out over the North Sea near Esbjerg. The Polish pilots claimed to have shot up the German army camp at Oksbøl on their way out over Jutland. The Germans claimed that they flew over the airfield at Esbjerg (further south). The Flak defence at Esbjerg fired all together:

55 rounds of 2 cm; 4 rounds of 3.7 cm; 330 rounds of MG - without hitting anything.

*[Handwritten marginal notes on the original: "Local Kennzeichen/Nationalitätszeichen - waren polnische Mustangs?" and "Was über eine 'Ranger Operation'?"]*

## **AALBORG Area, 18 October 1944**

Posted by Carsten Petersen on September 27, 2001 at 17:19:15:

In reply to: "Re: Surprise Raid, AALBORG Area," posted by Franek Grabowski on September 25, 2001 at 18:26:08:

Hello, Dear Helmut,

I have been going into my old files and found a few things for you:

### 18.10.44

I have read two WAST reports, and they said:

- 3./JG 102, Wiesminde, Bf 109G-6 Nr. 163716, KL+FD, taktisk Nr. 344, Fw Karl Bodek, killed. Bodek was born 9.5.18 in Vossvalde, O/S Kreis Gr. Strehlitz. Erkennungsmarke: Zug Lw. 14 Nr. 29. Grablage: Heldenfriedhof Frederikshavn/Dänemark, Grab Nr. 863.

- 1./JG 102, Aalborg, Bf 109G-6 Weisse 141, Ofhr. Werner Rudolf Haugk, instructor at JG 102, während eines Schulfluges bei plötzlicher Feindberührung durch feindliche Jäger abgeschossen (Luftkampf). Ritterkreuzträger. Erkennungsmarke 69063/28. Born 29.4.1912, Weidenau. Grablage: Alter Ehrenfriedhof Frederikshavn/Dänemark.

*[Handwritten: "nur ein paar km von Agersted entfernt" - only a few km from Agersted.]*

The Danish 'Civil Defence' reported:

- Dronninglund, about 24 km SW of Sæby: German a/c crashed.

- Åsa harbour, about 22 km SSW of Sæby: 1 German a/c shot down. Machine-gun fire. 1 person wounded.

- Søråa, about 19 km SSW of Sæby: 1 German a/c shot down, 1 person badly wounded.

- Agersted, about 16 km SSW of Sæby: 2 German a/c shot down.

*[Handwritten beside the Agersted entry: "das könnten Schmidt u. ich sein (2 Ar 96!)" - that could be Schmidt and me (2 Ar 96s!).]*

### RAF Station Coltishall - O Flash No. 4, 18/10/44

Pilot's Personal Combat Report, Form 'F'

A. 18th October 1944

B. 316 (Polish) Squadron

C. Mustangs Mk. III

D. About 10 miles NE of Aalborg

E. 1206 hrs [handwritten: "stimmt!!" - correct!!]

F. North Sea: 5/10 to 2,000 ft; Danish Coast: 2/10 at 2,000 ft

G. Nil

H. Nil

J. 6 Me 109F's destroyed, all crashing on the ground

K. Nil

I was leading 6 Mustangs on a Ranger Operation over Denmark. The Danish Coast was crossed at Klitmøller, where intense, accurate heavy flak was encountered. Then we flew along the Danish Coast about 5 miles inland, at a height from 2,000 ft to zero feet, in general direction NE. About 10 miles north of Aalborg I ordered a right-hand turn, steering South. At that time one of the pilots reported unrecognised aircraft flying on our port side, at about 1,000 ft, first steering West. We turned immediately to port and started the chase, during which we recognised the aircraft as Me 109F's. During the turn my port section was nearer to the enemy, so I ordered them to throttle back, in order not to scare the enemy aircraft and to achieve complete surprise. Closing, the next section which followed me spotted another 3 Me 109F's on the port side and below. At the same time the enemy aircraft must have seen us, as they, diving, made a shallow turn to the NE. In the area the Squadron practically caught up with the E/A. I attacked the right-hand one in the section of three; the left and the middle one were attacked by the remainder of my section, the remaining three E/A being dealt with by the next section.

I delivered my attack from line astern, firing several short bursts from a distance of 200 closing to 100 yards. I saw strikes on the port wing and fuselage, and, when closing, saw more strikes on the fuselage, then flames with greyish smoke pouring out. Turning to port after finishing the attack, I saw the other ME's crashing on the ground, and mine crashed on the beach farm, where smoke was rising. When closing I passed another Mustang, which had probably been firing too.

After this combat I assembled the sections and, flying in line abreast on the deck, I continued the flight, flying slightly east of our route. In the Vejle area we encountered meagre, accurate heavy flak. Avoiding this, I turned to starboard, shortly afterwards to port, leaving Varde slightly on my port side. In the Varde area we again met intense, accurate heavy and light flak. In the woods, 2 miles west of Oksbøl, we spotted a German camp, from where we again encountered flak. Some of our aircraft attacked this camp. It was here we saw an enemy ack-ack shell fired from an unidentified position burst overhead a gun position, presumably killing all the crew. We crossed the Danish coast at Vejrestrand, and here I received a message that the aircraft of one of my pilots was damaged, as I set course for the Frisian Islands, and, flying along them, crossed the English coast north of Yarmouth.

I claim ½ Me 109F destroyed.

Ammunition used: 144 rounds .05 cal.

Cine Camera Gun used.

**W/Cdr Rutkowski DFC, Wing Commander**

## **General**

Flying as No. 2 in the port section, when NE of Aalborg I noticed and reported 3 unidentified aircraft flying on our port side, about 1,000 ft, steering firstly east. I made a port turn and attacked the right-hand one, identified in the meantime as a ME 109F, from dead line astern, firing a short burst from a distance of 300 yards. I saw strikes on the engine and cockpit. At the same time I noticed that the W/Cdr had opened fire, so I broke away. After he had completed his attack I noticed a greyish smoke coming from the E/A, which was climbing slightly. I attacked him again dead astern and below, firing a lengthy burst from 100 to 50 yards. I saw the enemy aircraft catch fire, crashing on the ground.

I claim ½ Me 109F destroyed.

Ammunition used: 40 rounds .05 cal.

#### **F/Lt Nentwich**

##### **General**

Flying as No. 2 in Wing Commander Rutkowski's section, and being in the Aalborg area shortly after receiving a warning, I noticed three Me 109F's flying firstly in an easterly direction at 1,000 ft. I turned to port and, after a short chase, I attacked the left-hand side E/A from the port side, at an angle from 5 degrees to zero, firing three short bursts from 300 closing to 200 yards. Firing the second and third burst I saw strikes on the cockpit and the engine; the E/A caught fire and crashed on the ground. Turning to port I noticed another E/A who must have been fired at, as I saw a stream of petrol leaking out. I attacked him from the port at an angle of 10 degrees to 5 degrees, firing one long burst from 200 to 100 yards. I saw strikes on the engine and the port wing, and shortly afterwards the E/A crashed on the ground.

I claim 1½ Me 109F's destroyed.

Ammunition used: 384 rounds .05 cal.

Cine Camera Gun used.

#### **F/Lt Karnkowski**

##### **General**

I was leading the port section of two. When in the Aalborg area, one of the pilots reported 3 unidentified aircraft flying at 1,000 ft on our port side, in an easterly direction. I made a port turn, identifying them as Me 109F's. The E/A, diving, made a shallow turn in a NE direction. I picked up the leading enemy aircraft and attacked from dead line astern, firing one long burst from 200 to 100 yards. I noticed strikes on the cockpit, and a short time afterwards he crashed on the ground. At the same time I noticed two other Me 109F's below and to port, in a port turn, at a height of about 300 feet. I attacked the right-hand one from starboard and slightly below, at an angle of about 20 degrees, firing one short burst from 100 yards. Immediately afterwards I saw him crash on the ground. The second ME in the meantime made a sharp turn to port, and I lost him against the background. I then joined the formation and continued the flight. In the woods, 2 miles west of Oksbøl, I fired at a German camp.

I claim, therefore, 2 Me 109F's destroyed. Gyro gunsight used.

Ammunition used: 418 rounds .05 cal.

#### **F/Lt Walawski**

##### **General**

I was flying as No. 2 in F/Lt Chalajda's section. When NE of Aalborg, one of the pilots reported three unidentified aircraft flying at 1,000 ft on our port side. After turning, I recognised them as Me 109F's, and I noticed a further three Me 109F's flying on my port side, below and behind. I attacked the left-hand

one from port at an angle of 45 degrees, firing two bursts from 200 yards. The E/A turned sharply onto its back and crashed in flames on the ground, exploding. Immediately after that I attacked the leading E/A, which made a very slight right turn. I fired one long burst from line astern, from 200 yards. I saw the E/A catch the telephone pole with his wing, crashing in flames on the ground. I afterwards rejoined my formation, and when two miles west of Oksbøl I saw a German camp in the woods, at which I fired.

I claim 1½ Me 109F's destroyed.

Ammunition used: 400 rounds .05 cal.

**W/O Pietrzak**

### Kriegstagebuch des Seekommandanten Südjütland

18.10.44

1247-1313 Uhr: Durchflug von 6 Feindflugzeugen vom Typ 'Mustang' im Tiefflug über Fliegerhorst Esbjerg, Flughöhe 5-30 m. 2 Feindflugzeuge gaben Feuerstöße ab, ohne Schaden anzurichten. Die feindlichen Ziele wurden von Marine-, Luftwaffen- und Heeresflak unter Feuer genommen. Treffer konnten nicht beobachtet werden. Der Abflug der Feindflugzeuge erfolgte in nordwestlicher Richtung.

(translate: 12:47–13:13: Six enemy 'Mustang' aircraft flew over Esbjerg Airbase at low altitude (5–30 m). Two of the enemy aircraft fired bursts but caused no damage. The enemy targets were engaged by Navy, Luftwaffe, and Army anti-aircraft units; no hits were observed. The enemy aircraft departed in a north-westerly direction.)

Munitionsverbrauch:

5./204: 59 Schuss 2 cm

6./204: 4 Schuss 3,7 cm

8./204: 330 Schuss MG

*[Handwritten note on the original, partly illegible: "...gefallen südöstlich der Westküste, Aalborg, ...habe Sylt(?)]"*

***(The details submitted by Arno Rose not confirmed by Aircrew Remembered)***