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Traces of World War 2

RAF - No. 46 Squadron

10/05/1940 - 10/06/1940

46 SQUADRON - Fighter, [Hawker Hurricane](#) Mk I

The outbreak of war found No 46 Squadron at Digby, equipped with Hawker Hurricanes. Action with the Enemy quickly when, at the end of October 1939, Squadron Leader Barwell and Pilot Officer Plummer attacked a formation of 12 Heinkel 115s, destroying one each, and scattering the remainder.

The next 6 months were uneventful, consisting in the main of providing air cover for the shipping convoys steaming along the East Coast; a few enemy aircraft were sighted but no contacts were made.

In May 1940, the Squadron was selected to form part of the Expeditionary Force in Norway, which had been invaded by the Germans on 9 April.

The Hurricanes were embarked on HMS Glorious and, despite doubts that a Hurricane could take off from a carrier flight deck in a flat calm, they all took off without difficulty thanks to the efforts of the ship's engineers who managed to get the Glorious up to a speed of 30 knots. No 46 Squadron assembled at Bardufoss and began operation on 26 May; patrols were maintained over the land and naval forces at Narvik without respite, some of the pilots going without sleep for more than 2 days.

Many air combats took place, and in its brief campaign in Norway the Squadron accounted for no less than 14 enemy aircraft, besides probably destroying many others. On 7 June the Squadron was ordered to evacuate Norway immediately and, on the night 7/8 June, the seven Hurricanes were successfully flown back to [HMS Glorious](#) - a dangerous procedure as none of the aircraft were fitted with deck arrester hooks.

The ground parties embarked on HMS Vindictive and SS Monarch of Bermuda and reached the UK safely, but the Squadron's aircraft and eight of the pilots were lost when [HMS Glorious](#) was sunk by German warships on 9 June 1940. The two pilots who survived were the Squadron Commander Sqn Ldr (later ACM) "Bing" Cross and the Flight Commander, Flt Lt (later Air Cdre) "Jamie" Jameson.

The Squadron re-formed at Digby, becoming operational once again at the end of June, and for the next 2 months was occupied in uneventful convoy and defensive patrols before moving south to Stapleford Tawney, the satellite of North Weald, for the defence of London during the Battle of Britain.

The Luftwaffe's main effort at the time was against coastal objectives and shipping off the coast of Essex and Kent. The Squadron was in action continuously and had many successful engagements against far superior numbers of enemy bombers and their escorting fighters. The enemy sustained such shattering losses amongst his long range bomber force that a change of tactics was necessary, and he tried to force a decision by using fighter bombers flying very high and making every possible use of cloud cover; interception became difficult and the British squadrons had to change their tactics too - mainly going over the maintenance of fighter patrols at height ranging between 20 and 30,000 feet.

No 46 Squadron took part in the "security" patrols and, early in November, whilst on patrol over Foulness, encountered some 50 Italian bombers and fighters; at least 8 of them were destroyed, with no casualties or damage to the Squadron, and the remainder of the formation scattered in disorder.

The Battle of Britain, in which No 46 Squadron had taken a full and successful part, was over, and the Squadron settled down to a few months of uneventful defensive and convoy patrols, leavened by an occasional escort duty to medium bombers in their attack on objectives on Occupied France.

Mark Andrew, BBC WW2 People's War, ['My older brother in the RAF in Norway and Battle of Britain'](#):

'My older brother was Sergeant Pilot Stanley Andrew who served in 46 Squadron of The Royal Air Force at RAF Digby, Lincolnshire from September 1st 1939 until May 1940 when they went to Norway on HMS Glorious.

He was one of the 18 Hurricane Pilots who flew off the Carrier Flight Deck on May 26th 1940 for a 40 mile flight over the North Sea to land at difficult airstrips in Norway.

He was lucky not to be on Glorious when she was sunk on June 8th but 8 of his 'mates' were lost.

He was back at Digby until September 1st 1940 when they were posted to RAF Stapleford Tawney near RAF North Weald - Essex

He was killed when his plane crashed after a patrol on September 11th

His Squadron Leader at Digby and in Norway was 'Bing' Cross, He and Flight Lieutenant Pat Jameson [from New Zealand] were the only 2 RAF Survivors from Glorious. He died June 18th 2003 at Air Vice Marshall Sir Kenneth Cross, KCB, CBE, DSO, DFC.'

Operations and losses 10/05/1940 - 10/06/1940

Not all operations listed; those with losses are.

11/05/1940: Embarkation on HMS Glorious, UK

29/05/1940: Patrol, Norway. 3 Planes lost, 2 KIA

08-09/06/1940: Sinking of HMS Glorious. 7 Planes lost, 8 MIA

Losses 01/01/1940 - 09/05/1940 (incomplete)

Flying Officer (Pilot) [Walter T. Scott](#), RAF 37832, 46 Sqdn., age 27, 06/03/1940, [Scopwick Church Burial Ground](#), UK

/05/1940: Embarkation on HMS Glorious, UK

While [HMS Glorious](#) at Greenock completes the embarkation of 46 Squadron's Hurricanes, the reconstituted [263 Squadron](#), with 18 new Gladiator IIs, is moving to the Fleet Air Arm station at Cambeltown (on the Clyde) in preparation to joining HMS Furious, now repaired and ready for further service.

29/05/1940: Patrol, Norway

Nine Hurricanes were up on patrol when they met a big force of 26 Luftwaffe bombers approaching Vestfjorden. The Hurricane pilots attacked three He.111 of KG 100 and KG 26, north of Lødingen. At least two of the Heinkels were shot down. Heinkel 111 6N+BA crash-landed at Ulvsvåg on Hamarøy. Two Hurricane pilots lost their lives.

See also: [WW2 Aircraft Wrecks Norway](#)

The Heinkel 111 6N+BA of Stab./KG 100 was flown by Oblt Wolfgang Metzke. Gruppenkommandeur Hptm Artur von Casimir also onboard. They were both unhurt, and taken prisoner. One of the crew was dead, two were wounded.

F/O Banks shot down a Bf 110 of Stab I/ZG 76 in the same combat. Oblt Hans Jäger and Uffz. Helmut Feick made a forced landing at Kobbvika, and became POWs. It was probably this A/C which shot down Flg Off Lydall.

Another He.111 attacked by Lydall, made a forced landing at Dverberg on Andøya

Type: Hawker Hurricane Mk. I

Serial number: L1816, PO-?

Operation: Patrol, Norway

Lost: 29/05/1940

Pilot Officer (Pilot) [Neville L. Banks](#), RAF 40979, 46 Sqn., age unknown, 29/05/1940, [Narvik New Cemetery](#), Norway

Crashed into Skjæringstad river at Strand in Lødingen.

Type: Hawker Hurricane Mk. I

Serial number: L1988, PO-?

Operation: Patrol, Norway

Lost: 29/05/1940

Flying Officer (Pilot) [Jack W. Lydall](#), RAF 39669, 46 Sqn., age 24, 29/05/1940, [Narvik New Cemetery](#), Norway

Crashed at Tjeldøya. See [WW2 Aircraft Wrecks Norway](#) for pictures of the crash site.

Type: Hawker Hurricane Mk. I

Serial number: L1794, PO-?

Operation: Patrol, Norway

Lost: 29/05/1940

PO J. F. Drummond

Bailed out safely and was rescued by HMS Firedrake.

08-09/06/1940: sinking of the HMS Glorious

58 Men of the RAF died when the aircraft carrier HMS Glorious was sunk by the German battlecruiser Scharnhorst. Eight pilots of 46 Sqn. were lost; only two survived.

Pilot Officer [Lancelot G.B. Bunker](#), RAF 70845, 46 Sqn., age 25, 08/06/1940, missing

Flying Officer [Robert M.J. Cowles](#), RAF 39783, 46 Sqn., age 21, 09/06/1940, missing

Flying Officer [Philip J. Frost](#), RAF 29978, 46 Sqn., age 21, 09/06/1940, missing

Flying Officer [Herbert H. Knight](#), RAF 70374, 46 Sqn., age 21, 09/06/1940, missing

Flying Officer [Michael C.F. Mee](#), RAF 37414, 46 Sqn., age 23, 09/06/1940, missing

Flight Sergeant [Edward Shackley](#), RAF 513599, 46 Sqn., age 27, 09/06/1940, missing

Flight Lieutenant [Charles R.D. Stewart](#), RAF 37512, 46 Sqn., age 23, 09/06/1940, missing

Sergeant [Bernard L. Taylor](#), RAF 564769, 46 Sqn., age 23, 09/06/1940, missing

The other Squadrons with losses on the HMS Glorious were:

[263 Squadron](#): 10 MIA (pilots)

[802 Sqn](#): 16 MIA (ground crew)

[823 Sqn](#): 12 MIA (ground crew)

[825 Sqn](#): 1 MIA

'[Serving in H.M.S. Glorious](#)': 11 MIA

Sources

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[YouTube: Battle of Norway \(1\)](#)
[YouTube: Battle of Norway \(2\)](#)

Books

Links

[Air Aces](#)
[Airwar over Denmark](#)
[Allied World War II Casualties in the Netherlands](#)
[Australian Wargraves](#)
[Battle-of-Britain.com](#)
[De Belgen in Engeland 1940-1945 \(in Dutch\)](#)
[Belgian Aviation History Association Archaeological Team](#)
[British Aviation Archaeological Council - Books and research links](#)
[CWGC Cemeteries Netherlands](#)
[Czechoslovak airmen in the RAF 1940-1945](#)
[Håkans aviation page \(from Sweden, in English\)](#)
['High flight', poem by John Gillespie Magee](#)
[An Irish Airman Foresees His Death, poem by W.B. Yeats](#)
[Jagdgeschwader 27 \(in German\)](#)
[Lucht oorlog \('Aerial War', in Dutch, with many photos\)](#)
[The National Ex-Prisoners of War Association](#)
[Nordic Aviation during WW2](#)
[Pilotfriend.com: aircraft of WW2](#)
[Polish Air Force 1940-1947 Operations Record Books](#)
[RAF Battle of Britain](#)
[De Slag om de Grebbeberg \(Dutch\)](#)
[Warbird Alley](#)
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[www.bomber-command.de](#)

[The Aerodrome - Aces and Aircraft of World War 1](#)

This page is dedicated to the men of 46 Squadron.

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