

DATE: 23/24th April 1940
 PLACE: 50 miles SW of Aalborg
 TIME:
 AIRCRAFT: Armstrong Whitworth Whitley Mk. IV K9048
 UNIT: No. 51 Bomber Squadron, No. 4 Bomber Group, Dishforth, Yorks.
 CODE: MH-
 MISSION: Bombing raid to Aalborg Aerodrome, up at 2210 hours.
 CREW: 39521 F/Lt. Bernard W. Hayward - pilot, RAF POW
 39106 F/Lt. Keith T. Milne - navigator, RAF POW
 550360 Sgt. J.B. Ritchie - , RAF POW
 619153 A/C F. Hargreaves - , RAF POW
 531756 LAC A.W.G. Lyne - , RAF POW

REMARKS: Three aircraft from No. 58 Squadron, Linton on Ouse, and one from No. 51 Squadron and two from No. 10 Squadron, Dishforth, bombed Aalborg. One aircraft failed to return. (AIR25/93).

23.4.1940: Overcast. Cloud at 2000 feet. Moderate southerly Wind. Visibility five miles. Operation Order No. 71 was received at 1500 hours. Two aircraft stood by as reserve for No. 10 Squadron. Only one of the aircraft was needed and Z.D.L. 247 Whitley K9048 took off at 2210 hours, but failed to return. On the 28.4.1940 at 2315 hours the following announcement was made from Hamburg Broadcasting Station: - "A Whitley Armstrong Bomber has been brought down and the following are prisoners of War - Milne, Hayward, Ritchie and Lyne". (AIR27/491)

No informations on A/C Hargreaves, but he was also taken prisoner of war. (A.H.B. 25/2/1983).

Colditz Castle is situated between Dresden and Leipzig in Germany. It was originally built nearly 1000 years ago, and although it had been partially destroyed many times, was always rebuilt. It stood on a high cliff over the River Mulde and from a distance looked so beautiful and majestic.

But the first RAF POW officers to arrive there in early November 1940 found it anything but. It was cold, dismal and dark, but for many it was to be home for over 4 years. The courtyard was nearly 150 feet square and surrounded by buildings almost 100 feet high. This was to be the main assembly for a long time. The inner courtyard was smaller but just as confined. Little sunlight was to be seen here. The rooms looked out on the courtyards and these were already mainly occupied by Polish officers captured in 1939.