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Paul Galland

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Edit
View history
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Appearance
Text
Small
Standard
Large
Width
Standard
Wide
Color (beta)
Automatic
Light
Dark

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Paul Galland (2 November 1919 — 31 October 1942) was a Luftwaffe ace and brother of Luftwaffe ace Adolf Galland and Wilhelm-Ferdinand Galland. He had claimed 17 aerial victories in 107 combat missions.[1] Flying with Jagdgeschwader 26 "Schlageter" (JG 26—26th Fighter Wing) in the Western Front, he was killed in combat with Royal Air Force Supermarine Spitfire fighters on 31 October 1942.

Contents
hide
(Top)
Early life and career
World War II
Channel Front
Death
Summary of career
Aerial victory claims
Awards
Notes
References
Citations
Bibliography

Early life and career [edit]

Galland was born on 3 November 1919.[2] The family with the French Huguenot ancestry, had settled in Westerholt in 1752. Galland was the last of four sons of Adolf Galland (senior) and his French wife Anna, née Schipper. Upholding the family tradition, Galland (senior) worked as the land manager or bailiff to the Count von Westerholt.[3] Galland and his brother brothers were Fritz, Adolf and Wilhelm-Ferdinand. Their father had pet names for all his family members. Paul was known as "Pucky", Fritz was called "Fritzlein", Adolf was "Toffke", Wilhelm-Ferdinand was "Ferdi". Fritz and Paul were also called "Fräulichen" or since they were expecting a girl, occasionally "Anna". Fritz and Adolf joined the Luftwaffe.[4] Galland was trained as a fighter pilot at the Jagdfliegerschule 3 (JFS 3—5th Fighter Pilot School) in Wesendorf near Wolfsburg.[5] Wesendorf was part of Luftgau XI (Air District XI), with its headquarters in Hanover, Walter Weyding.[6][Note 1] He also was a flight instructor at the Reichsmarschall (Empire Marshal) Hermann Göring.[7]

World War II [edit]

World War II in Europe began on Friday 1 September 1939 when German forces invaded Poland. The Luftwaffe's Jagdgeschwader 40 was transferred from the Ergänzungsstaffel, a Jagdgeschwader (JG 2—26th Fighter Wing) to 8.(F.)/Aufklärungsgruppe (Reconnaissance Group) 122 (8th Squadron, 122nd Reconnaissance Group).[8][Note 2] Galland was a squadron of III. Gruppe (3rd group).[9] His time was commanded by Staffelkapitän (squadron leader) Oberleutnant Gustav Sprick while III. Gruppe was headed by his brother Adolf. On 20 August, his brother was appointed Geschwaderkommodore (wing commander) of JG 26 and Hauptmann Gerhard Schöpfel, who led 9. Staffel, succeeded him as Gruppenkommandeur (group commander) of III. Gruppe.[10]

Galland passed his test in Staffel at a time when III. Gruppe was equipped with the Messerschmitt Bf 109 F series at Bonn-Hangelar. On 1 April, the Gruppe was sent to France, at first based at Saint-Dizier, airfield number 1 June it was ordered to the airfield at Egerszöt, north of Abbeville.[11] Sprick was killed in action on 28 June, he was succeeded as commander of III. Gruppe by Oberleutnant Hans-Jürgen Westphal.[12]

A Focke-Wulf Fw 190 fighter similar to those flown by Galland.

Channel Front [edit]

On 6 July 1941, the Royal Air Force (RAF) flew "Circus" No. 35 and targeted Lille and the Fives-Lille engineering company. In defense of this attack, Galland claimed his first aerial victory over a Supermarine Spitfire fighter.[13] This aerial victory was not confirmed, and he was credited for his first victory on this basis.[14] Westphal was wounded on 13 August and command of 9. Staffel passed on to Hauptmann Johann Schnell.[15] Galland claimed his second victory, a Spitfire shot down, on 3 September 1941 when he shot down a Spitfire at 17:30. The RAF flew "Circus" No. 93 that day, targeting the Maringhem aerodrome.[16] He claimed a Spitfire on 1 June it was ordered to the airfield at Egerszöt, north of Abbeville.[17] Sprick was killed in action on 28 June, he was succeeded as commander of 9. Staffel by Oberleutnant Hans-Jürgen Westphal.[18]

Galland claimed his second confirmed aerial victory during Operation Donnerkeil. The objective of this operation was to give the German battleships Scharnhorst and Gneisenau and the heavy cruiser Prinz Eugen protection in the breakout from Brest to Germany. The Channel Dash operation (11–13 February) began.[19] The Kriegsmarine was condemned Operation Cerberus by the Germans. In support of the Luftflotte, Adolf Galland was air superiority plan dubbed Operation Donnerkeil for the protection of the three German capital ships. Sources vary with respect to the number of aerial victories Galland was credited with during this operation. According to Caldwell, Galland was credited with shooting down a Bristol Beaufighter heavy bomber from 455 Naval Air Squadron shot down at 13:45 on 12 February north of Gravelines.[20] While authors Mathews and Foreman list him with four Swordfish torpedo bombers shot down in the timeframe 13:45 to 13:50 in the vicinity of Gravelines.[21]

On 10 April, the RAF flew two "Rodeos", providing a diversion for a "Ramrod" short range bomber attack missions targeting Boulogne. JG 26 lost three aircraft, including two pilots killed in action, for two aerial victories claimed. Galland claimed a No. 313 Squadron Spitfire shot down at 17:43.[22] His next claim was filed on 24 April following combat in defense of "Circus" No. 132. That day, the RAF targeted an installation at Lillers and Allouagen and Wallaschen in the Netherlands. In this encounter, Galland shot down a Spitfire from No. 122 Squadron northwest of Ostend.[23] The next day, the RAF sent six Douglas A-20 Havoc "Boston" light bombers to attack Abbeville at 16:40. Galland shot down a Spitfire protecting the bombers.[24] Galland claimed a No. 306 Polish Squadron Spitfire shot down at 17:57 on 28 April southeast of Calais.[25] This was Galland's 17th "Circus" No. 136 to airfields in northern France.[26] On 1 May, RAF Fighter Command sent four "Rhubarb" missions, one "Ramrod" and one "Circus" mission to northern France. Galland claimed a No. 174 or No. 303 Squadron Spitfire destroyed at 16:00 near Calais.[27]

Fighter Command planned three "Circuses" on 1 June. III. Gruppe was scrambled at 13:20 and directed to Ostend. Pilots' reports of the attack from above and out of the sun. Within quick succession, three Spitfires were shot down from No. 350 (Belgian) Squadron and one further from No. 71 (Eagle) Squadron, an Eagle Squadron. At 15:54 five German fighters were recalled. In this engagement, Galland was credited with one Spitfire destroyed at 13:46.[28] On 29 June, "Circus" No. 195 attacked Hazebrouck with 12 "Boston" bombers. Galland claimed one of the escorting Spitfires from No. 64 or the No. 350 (Belgian) Squadron at 16:55.[29] On 30 July, Galland claimed two unconfirmed victories over Spitfires. That day, the RAF flew "Circus" No. 203 to Hazebrouck with the airfield at Abbeville/Drucat/Airfield. The attack was supported by several "Ramrod" attacks on the airfield at Saint-Omer/Wizernes and escorted by the Hornchurch Wing.[30] During the Dieppe Raid on 19 August, on III. Gruppe's third patrol of the day, Galland and his wingmen shot down five Westgarth airfield at 12:21. At 12:30, the flight intercepted low flying Spitfires and North American P-51 Mustang fighters from the Biggin Hill Wing. In this encounter, Galland claimed a Spitfire shot down at 12:43 in the vicinity of Dieppe.[31] According to Caldwell, Galland claimed another unconfirmed Spitfire destroyed on 27 August.[32] This claim coincided with those confirmed by the authors Mathews and Foreman; a Spitfire shot down at 15:06 12 kilometres (7.5 miles) east of Dover. The authors Mathews and Foreman credited Galland with two aerial victories on 27 August. A first Spitfire shot down at 11:47 15 km (9.3 mi) west of Cap Gris-Nez followed by a second Spitfire three minutes later 5 km (3.1 mi) west-northwest of Cap Gris-Nez.[33] These two claims are not listed by Caldwell.[34]

Death [edit]

On 31 October 1942, seventeen "Boston" bombers from No. 88 Squadron and No. 107 Squadron attacked the power stations in the vicinity of Lille (Ryser) and Béthune. Galland, with his wingman Oberfeldwebel Johann Ilshöner, shot down one of the Bostons. The "Boston" was flown by 2Z779 from No. 107 Squadron piloted by Pilot Officer Henry Collings on a mission to Point-à-Vendin.[35][36]

Five hours later, Galland and Ilshöner participated on a fighter escort mission to a fighter bomber raid on Canterbury,[37] At 18:15, intercepting Spitfires shot down Galland's Fw 190 A-4 (Werknummer 2462—factory number) approximately 20 km (12 mi) west of Calais.[38] Mathews and Foreman assume that the Spitfire responsible for his death was piloted by Flight Lieutenant Johannes Jacobus le Roux from No. 91 Squadron.[2] According to Ring, Galland was shot down by Flying Officer Jakub Nahnfor also from No. 91 Squadron.[39] In Caldwell's account, Galland was hit by anti-tank cannon fire from 1. Staffel of JG 26, who had called for help over the radio. In the rescue attempt, Galland's Fw 190 stalled during a low-level turn and crashed into the sea.[40] At that instant, Galland was attacked from above by the Spitfire and was shot down. Ilshöner then attacked the Spitfire and shot it down.[41][42] Posthumously, Galland was awarded the Honour Goblet of the Luftwaffe (Ehrenpokal der Luftwaffe) on 7 December 1942.[43]

Summary of career [edit]

Aerial victory claims [edit]

Mathews and Foreman, authors of *Luftwaffe Aces: Biographies and Victory Claims*, researched the German Federal Archives and found records for 17 aerial victory claims, plus five further unconfirmed claims, all of which were claimed on the Western Front.[44]

Chronicle of aerial victories [hide]

This and the – (dash) indicates unconfirmed aerial victory claims for which Galland did not receive credit.
The and the ? (question mark) indicates information discrepancies listed by Caldwell, Prien, Stemmer, Rodeike, Bock, Mathews and Foreman.

Claim	Date	Time	Type	Location	Claim	Date	Time	Type	Location
– Staffel of Jagdgeschwader 26 "Schlageter" –[45]
On the Western Front — 22 June – 31 December 1941
— [Note 3]	6 July 1941	—	Spitfire[46]	— [Note 3]	17 September 1941	—	Spitfire[47]	
– Staffel of Jagdgeschwader 26 "Schlageter" –[48]
On the Western Front — 1 January – 31 October 1942
1	September 1941	17:30	Spitfire[49]						
2	February 1942	13:45	Swordfish	northeast of Gravelines[50]	11	1 June 1942	13:46	Spitfire[51]	
3[Note 4]	February 1942	13:47	Swordfish	10 km (6.2 mi) north of Gravelines[52]	12	29 June 1942	16:55	Spitfire[53]	
4[Note 5]	February 1942	13:48	Swordfish		13	30 July 1942	—	Spitfire[54]	
5[Note 6]	February 1942	13:50	Swordfish	20 km (12 mi) north of Gravelines[55]	14	30 July 1942	—	Spitfire[56]	
6	10 April 1942	17:43	Spitfire	7 km (4.3 mi) north of Marquise[57]	15	19 August 1942	12:43	Spitfire[58]	Dieppe
7	24 April 1942	14:51	Spitfire	northwest of Ostend[59]	16[Note 7]	27 August 1942	15:06	Spitfire[60]	12 km (7.5 mi) west of Dover
8	25 April 1942	18:40	Spitfire[61]		17[Note 8]	29 August 1942	11:47	Spitfire	15 km (9.3 mi) west of Cap Gris-Nez[62]
9	26 April 1942	17:57	Spitfire[63]		18[Note 9]	29 August 1942	11:50	Spitfire	5 km (3.1 mi) west-northwest of Cap Gris-Nez[64]
10	1 May 1942	19:32	Spitfire[65]		19	31 October 1942	12:30	Boston	7 km (4.3 mi) southeast of Dikkemutse[66]
— [Note 3]	3 May 1942	16:00	Spitfire	Calais[67]					

Awards [edit]

- Iron Cross (1939) 2nd and 1st Class[68]
- Honor Goblet of the Luftwaffe on 7 December 1942 (posthumously) as Leutnant and pilot[69]

Notes [edit]

1. ^ Flight training in the Luftwaffe progressed through the levels A1, A2 and B1, B2, referred to as A/B flight training, a training method developed and practiced in aerobatics, navigation, long-distance flights and dead-stick landings. The B courses included high-altitude flights, instrument flights, night landings and training to be awarded in difficult situations.[70]
2. ^ For an explanation of Luftwaffe unit designations see Organization of the Luftwaffe during World War II.
3. ^ ^ ^ This unconfirmed claim is not listed by Caldwell, Stemmer, Rodeike and Bock.[45]
4. ^ ^ ^