

## 427 SQUADRON - WAR DIARY

### SUMMARY OF EVENTS

1. NUMERICAL STRENGTH OF UNIT AS AT 1ST OF NOVEMBER 1942.

NIL

7/11/42

2. 427 Squadron is formed on a nucleus of 10 crews from 419 Squadron, three crews being posted and seven crews attached, and with the assistance of 419 Squadron ground personnel which will be replaced when 427 personnel arrive. The Squadron took over 18 aircraft, 16 of which were serviceable, a fine achievement of the part of F/O Scott, the Engineer Officer and his Staff. On the first evening, 427 Squadron undertook its first air activity, in the nature of a Bulls Eye Exercise. Three crews took part and the exercise was carried out successfully. Our thanks are due to W/Commander Fleming, OC 419 Squadron and his officers for their assistance in staff work.

The following Officers arrived on posting. S/L Williams, Flight Commander, F/O W.J. Rogers Adjutant; P/O Durocher, Gunnery Leader; P/O Bennett, P/O Kent, P/O Charlesworth.

8/11/42

W/Commander Burnside, the Officer Commanding 427 Squadron arrived at Middleton St George and came to Croft with the Station Commander, G/Cpt. McKechnie, where he was introduced to the Squadron personnel that had already arrived. Difficulties are being experienced as the Squadron has no parachutes, navigation gear, flying clothes or any stationery and forms. The Station are cooperating to the best of their ability but do not hold enough equipment to supply the Squadron to any extent. Three crews were detailed for a night cross country flight but only two took off. Difficulties arising at the last moment with regard to signal equipment prevented the third aircraft from taking off. The two aircraft completed the exercise successfully. The following Officers arrived on posting. P/O S. Hensby, P/O G.A. Martin, P/O D. Mortimer, P/O C.M. Taylor, P/O R.J. Hayhurst.

9/11/42

The CO had a meeting of the Officers in the morning and expressed his desire for a good Squadron spirit and team work and stated that sports must be encouraged. The Command training instructions were discussed and programmes drawn up to make the Squadron fully operational at an early date.

10/11/42

Air Vice Marshal Brook, R.C.A.F. made a social visit to acquaint himself with the aerodrome. He inspected part of the Station. Flying training in the nature of circuits and bumps was carried out.

11/11/42

S/L Porte of 4 Group accompanied by the Group Medical Officer visited the camp and enquired about difficulties being experienced. He promised to try to expedite the delivery of transport etc. In the afternoon S/Ldr Sinclair R.C.A.F., from Records arrived and informed us that he would make the Squadron up to full strength at an early date. He informed us that if we had any personnel difficulties to contact him and he would try to eradicate them.

✓/42

Air Training continued in the nature of circuits and bumps. The adjutant visited Station HQ and Middleton St George and obtained a small supply of forms and stationery. S.H.Q. did not hold Squadron requisites and 419 and 420 Squadrons only had meagre supplies.

DATE

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

- 1/42  
Circuits and Bumps continued. The Canadian Y.M.C.A. representative arrived and promised to equip the crew room with a billiard table, table tennis set etc. In the afternoon W/Commander Hutchins and W/Commander Durham R.C.A.F. visited the Squadron. W/Commander Hutchins S.A.O. of 4 Group informed us that he would look into the difficulties being experienced and try to obtain transport at the earliest possible moment. Forty 419 Squadron personnel moved to Middleton St George. The following Officer arrived on posting: P/O L.D. Izzard.
- 14/11/42  
C.O. went to Leeming with G/Capt McKechnie to a conference of Station Commanders and Squadron Commanders presided over by the A.O.C. G/Cpt McCall R.C.A.F. visited the Station.
- 15/11/42  
W/Commander Pleasance DFC & Bar gave a lecture to air crews on "Night Fighters." The lecture was greatly appreciated and very instructive. Night flying was undertaken for the first time by the Squadron. Sgt Southwood has the misfortune to have an engine cut on his third take-off. The aircraft "O" for orange became airborne and then hit some trees and finally crashed in a field approximately half a mile from the drome. The crew of three luckily escaped without injury but the aircraft was a complete write off. The crash wagon and ambulance were on the scene in a very short while and are to be congratulated on their prompt actions.
- 16/11/42  
Circuits and Bumps were continued. Night flying was cancelled on account of ground haze. Two Halifax's belonging to 419 Squadron, landed. One had to remain owing to a burst tyre.
- 17/11/42  
Circuits and bumps were continued but had to be curtailed owing to a ground haze forming whilst two aircraft were still airborne. After doing an extra circuit each, they landed without mishap. G/Cpt. Brooks, S.A.S.O. 4 Group visited the Squadron and informed us that we had to be ready by the 1st of December for operations. Ground personnel were arriving in increasing numbers.
- 18/11/42  
A misty day but some air to sea firing practice was carried out. F/Lt Walters, P. Staff 4 Group phoned about the state of our ground personnel and informed us that we would very quickly be made up to establishment strength.
- 19/11/42  
A few personnel, ground staff, arrived. Circuits and Bumps were continued. Nightflying was cancelled on account of weather. The following Officers arrived on posting: P/O C.M. Parsons, P/O A.J.B. Thompson, F/Lt J.N. Hagan, Medical Officer.
- 20/11/42  
Three crews went on a day Cross Country of approximately 3 hours duration. Air to Sea firing was also carried out.
- 21/11/42  
Circuits and Bumps and three details for air to sea practice.
- 22/11/42  
Only local flying carried out. Five pilots, W/Cdr. Burnside, S/Ldr Williams, P/O Bennett and Sgts Williams and Schmitt went with 419 Squadron as 2nd Pilot to Stuttgart, leaving from Middleton St George. S/Ldr Williams flew with P/O Brent of 419 Squadron and encountered heavy flak and on the return had to belly land. S/Ldr Williams suffering from shrapnel wounds in the arms and legs.

DATE

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

- 1/42 Air to sea firing carried out. The pilots returned from Middleton St George, less S/Ldr. Williams who had entered hospital, and appeared to have thoroughly enjoyed their first operational trip over Germany.
- 24/11/42 Air to sea firing continued. G/Cpt. Slemon, S.A.S.O. visited the Squadron. The following Officer arrived on posting: P/O N.W. Morrison.
- 25/11/42 No flying due to bad weather conditions. "A" and "B" flights are now getting things running smoothly although difficulties are being experienced through the shortage of transport and tools.
- 26/11/42 All the flying again cancelled due to weather. P/O G. Crampton, R.C.A.F Press representative visited the Squadron and enquired on the progress being made and about the comfort of the men.
- 27/11/42 No flying. Major Bebbon of 4 Group gave a lecture to all aircrew on "Flak". The lecture was greatly appreciated.
- 28/11/42 Air to sea, local, and circuits and bumps carried out. Four crews did night circuits and bumps for an hour each.
- 29/11/42 Six crews did night flying test on their aircraft for a Bulls Eye Exercise, but it was scrubbed.
- 1/42 Two Officers and four Sergeants (Aircrew) visited 13 Group H.Q. and were shown how they were plotted at the Filter Room and also visited the Group Operations Room. This visit was extremely instructional and it is hoped to arrange visits for all aircrew as it is thought that a knowledge of the intricate and accurate manner in which they are plotted will add to their confidence while flying over the North Sea.

3. Honours and Awards - Nil

4. Commissions. - Nil

5. Promotions.

F/O W.J. Rogers 66641 appointed to the rank of A/F/Lt w.e.f. 7.11.42. Auth: H.Q. 4 Group letter 1007/11/P2 dated 21.11.42.

1. Numerical Strength of Unit as at 1st of December, 1942.

<u>Aircrew - OFFICERS - Groundcrew</u>			<u>Aircrew - AIRMEN - Groundcrew.</u>	
RCAF	5	2	54	33
RNZAF	nil	nil	2	nil
RAF	12	1	31	161
WAAF	<u>nil</u>	<u>nil</u>	<u>nil</u>	<u>9</u>
TOTAL	17	3	87	203

- 1/12/42 2. The Squadron became officially operational. No flying was carried out as the weather was extremely misty. Lectures were given on Security by Flight Lieutenant Phillips and on Beam approach by Squadron Leader Allies.
- 2/12/42 Information was received that 6 crews were wanted for the first operations - minelaying near the Frisian Islands - but after briefing had taken place there was great disappointment that it was scrubbed. The six crews, however, went on a cross country exercise which was completed successfully.
- 3/12/42 A very cold day. No flying on account of ice. Sergeant Kavanagh arrived from Records Gloucester to inquire into our personnel difficulties. Records were contacted with regard to a W.O. Armourer and we were informed that one would be posted immediately. There was no night flying on account of the weather.
- 4/12/42 At mid-day instructions were received to send two aircraft on a minelaying operation. The aircraft were despatched to Middleton St George to be mined up (no mines being held at this station), but at 1600 hrs word was received that the operation was scrubbed.
- 5/12/42 An extremely windy and cold day. Group Captain Ross (R.C.A.F) the new Station Commander visited the station. Two aircraft were detailed for minelaying operations but they were again scrubbed.
- 6/12/42 The under-mentioned pilots went as Second Pilots with No. 420 Squadron, R.C.A.F. to Mannheim, this being the final part of their training for operations.
- |          |                   |         |                            |
|----------|-------------------|---------|----------------------------|
| R. 98109 | Sgt Higgins, F.J. | R106393 | Sgt Vandekerckhove, G.P.C. |
| 1387190  | Sgt Rodwell, A.   |         | P/O Taylor, C.A.           |
| R103722  | Sgt Hartney, H.D. | 124214  | P/O Parsons, C.M.          |
- All Pilots returned safely. Two A./C. were detailed for minelaying but at the last moment it was scrubbed, much to the disappointment of the crews concerned.
- 7/12/42 One crew did circuits and bumps. Two crews were detailed for a night cross country but it had to be cancelled on account of the weather.
- 8/12/42 Nine aircraft were prepared for a Bull's Eye Exercise with take off at 1700 hrs. Four aircraft were airborne when notification was received that the exercise was scrubbed. The aircraft were recalled without difficulty. An airman LAC Perry, had the misfortune to lose a finger by coming into contact with the wire cutting apparatus on the wing whilst spreading de-icing grease.
- 9/12/42 Circuits and Bumps and air testing. The details set off on a cross country flight which they completed successfully. One aircraft on a high flying test lost its bearing and was one hour and a half late returning to base.
- 10/12/42 Weather prevented any flying taking place. The day was misty and there were frequent showers.
2. 4/42 Three Lancasters, three Stirlings and a Wellington landed in the early morning from a Cross Country Flight. No local flying carried out on account of the weather.

- 12/12/42 Two aircraft were detailed for minelaying operations from Middleton St George but they were again scrubbed. Wing Commander Harritt of No. 4 Group visited the Squadron.
- 13/12/42 Circuits and Bumps were carried out. Two aircraft were detailed for mine laying operations from Middleton St George but it was again scrubbed. One aircraft went on a cross country exercise which was carried out successfully. The Commanding Officer went to Middleton St George to meet Air Vice Marshal C.R. Carr, C.B.E., D.F.C, A.F.C. the Air Officer Commanding, No. 4 Group, and was informed that the Squadron had until January 1st, 1943 to become fully operational.
- 14/12/42 Three aircraft went to Middleton St George to go on a minelaying operation and on this occasion it was not scrubbed. Two aircraft returned with their mines due to difficulties in pin pointing their position. The third, Sgt Gagnon & Crew, was successful. All returned safely. A Squadron Initiation Dance was held at the Croft Spa Hotel and was extremely successful. The Squadron has now, after many abortive attempts, become operational.
- 15/12/42 Four crews went to Middleton St George for minelaying operations but it was scrubbed.
- 16/12/42 Six aircraft were detailed for a "Bull's Eye" Exercise which was carried out successfully. The aircraft were marshalled before take off and got away in eleven minutes.
- 17/12/42 Four crews went to Middleton St George for minelaying operations but it was again scrubbed. Low cloud prevented any local flying.
- 18/12/42 No flying on account of weather conditions - low cloud, rain and mist.
- 19/12/42 Again no flying on account of weather. Ground crews are finding it extremely difficult to work on the aircraft as there are no hangars, all work must be done at the dispersal points and consequently there is no shelter.
- 20/12/42 One aircraft did some air to air firing practices but the weather closed down and he had to land at Driffield. Four crews were detailed for operations but they were scrubbed.
- 21/12/42 Nine aircraft proceeded on a Sea Rescue Search. Three taking off from Middleton St George. This was the first time that a comparatively large number were called upon. All got away successfully and carried out a search of the area ordered but with negative results.
- 22/12/42 Four aircraft went on a Bull's Eye Exercise which was carried out successfully. The crews remarked on the small number of searchlights. Night fighters were seen but no aircraft was attacked.
- 23/12/42 Air to Air training carried out, also local flying. Two pilots were on dual flying - converting from Wellington IC to Wellington III.
- 24/12/42 Weather prevented any flying. Low cloud and mist prevailed all day.
- 25/12/42 Xmas Day. The Squadron were "stood down" and the ground crews had a well earned break. The Officers served the mid-day meal in the airmen's mess, according to the R.A.F. traditions. The Mayor of Darlington supplied a pint of ale for each member of the Squadron.

26/12/42 The Squadron was "stood down" and the Xmas festivities continued.

27/12/42 Weather prevented any flying. The ground crews returned to work in full force and generally expressed their appreciation of the arrangements made for them over Xmas.

28/12/42 Air tests and local flying were carried out. Night circuits and Bumps were done, also consumption test flights.

29/12/42 Night flying tests were carried out by ten aircraft but the Exercise had to be scrubbed on account of the weather closing down.

30/12/42 Air tests and local flying. One crew did night circuits and Bumps. The wind was very gusty and the circuits and bumps were abandoned after three landings.

31/12/42 Fighter affiliation and Cross Country Flights carried out. One aircraft landed at Saltby. Air to Sea practice was also carried out.

1. NUMERICAL STRENGTH OF UNIT AT 1ST JANUARY, 1943

<u>STRENGTH</u>	<u>AIRCREW</u>	<u>GROUND CREW</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
RCAF OFFERS	7	2	9
RCAF AIRMEN	61	66	127
RAF OFFICERS	17	1	18
RAF AIRMEN	45	185	230
OTHER PERSONNEL	3	32	<u>35</u>
TOTAL			419

1/1/43 No flying was carried out due to weather conditions. The Squadron is prepared and anxious for a full operational programme and hopes that it will be called upon in the near future.

2/1/43 Six aircraft went to Middleton St George for mining operations but it was cancelled by Group Headquarters. Tractor starting trolleys etc. were sent over to Middleton St George by road and it was found that these facilities helped in getting the aircraft ready on time.

3/1/43 Six aircraft went on minelaying operations off the Frisian Islands. Three aircraft piloted by Pilot Officer Bennett, Sgt Chambers, and Sgt Johnson got a pinpoint and dropped their mines. The other three were not so fortunate with the weather and found the position allocated to them obscured by 10/10 cloud, consequently they were unable to obtain a pin point and returned to base with their mines. Aircraft "L" piloted by Sgt Chambers had a hole in the starboard wing about a foot square due to "flak".

All aircraft returned to Base safely. (Editors Note: These were the operational missions flown by the new No 6 RCAF Bomber Group).

- 4/1/43 Five aircraft were detailed for minelaying but the operations were cancelled on weather conditions. Local flying took place.
- 6/1/43 No flying - the weather still being bad. A lecture was given by Squadron leader McKay, "B" Flight Commander on Petrol Cock manipulations.
- 7/1/43 No flying due to weather conditions.
- 8/1/43 Seven aircraft were detailed for mining operations. Air tests were carried out but the operations were scrubbed.
- 9/1/43 Seven aircraft were detailed for mining off the Frisian Islands. Four were able to pinpoint their positions and drop their mines, but the remainder returned with their load. All Aircraft returned safely.
- 10/1/43 No flying due to weather conditions. A lecture was given on icing by the meteorological Officer.
- 11/1/43 Six aircraft were detailed for minelaying but it was scrubbed on account of icing conditions.
- 12/1/43 A full programme of training flying was arranged but had to be scrubbed owing to the weather closing down.
- 13/1/43 Air to sea practice was carried out by two crews, also a day Cross country flight.
- 14/1/43 Seven aircraft were detailed for operations against LORIENT. The weather during the day was misty and very cold. The crews were in the aircraft ready to take off when news was received that the operation was scrubbed due to icing conditions.
- 15/1/43 Seven aircraft were again detailed for operations against LORIENT. Six aircraft took off in six minutes. Sgt Chambers in "P" had to be scrubbed at the last moment due to engine trouble developing whilst running up. This was the first bombing raid undertaken by the Squadron. Squadron Leader M.A.L. Williams, "A" Flight Commander and crew in "K" failed to return, the other five landed at Tangmere. The pilots reported that they had successfully bombed the target and three photographs were obtained.
- 16/1/43 The five aircraft did not return from Tangmere due to weather. One aircraft was detailed for mining off the Frisian Islands. The weather was extremely poor all day and there was no surprise when the operation was cancelled. Flight Lieutenant Peters took over temporary command of "A" Flight due to S/L Williams being missing.

- 17/1/43 The aircraft away at Tangmere returned to Base. No further flying carried out due to weather conditions being unserviceable. Total flying for the day was 8:15 hours.
- 18/1/43 An intensive flying training programme laid on for today was cancelled due to bad weather. This programme was designed primarily to bring more of the crews up to full operational standard. Crews detailed were disappointed at having their programme scrubbed.
- 19/1/43 The weather continued to be unserviceable for flying of any sort. The aircrew attended an intelligence lecture by the local Operations Officer.
- 20/1/43 Five aircraft were detailed for a minelaying trip. At the last minute, however, the operation was scrubbed due to bad weather.
- 21/1/43 Six aircraft were detailed for minelaying off the Frisian Islands. Five only took off, P/O Parsons being a non-starter due to engine trouble. Four aircraft returned safely but Flight Lieutenant D.A. Shead and his crew consisting of Sgts Patrick, Oram, Sparling and Hoyt did not return from this operation. Sgt Vandekerckhove did not drop his mines due to his not being able to pinpoint.
- 22/1/43 No flying carried out this date and weather unserviceable.
- 23/1/43 No operations ordered for today. Weather continued very unsatisfactory and only two hours and forty-five minutes flying training was done all day.
- 24/1/43 Ten aircraft were detailed for an operational bombing trip. All the aircraft were bombed up and all crews ready to go when the operation was scrubbed due to bad weather.
- 25/1/43 Night aircraft were detailed for a minelaying trip. As was the case the previous day at the last minute the operation was scrubbed due to the weather. The Commanding Officer went to 13 Group Operations Room at Newcastle on a fighter liaison trip.
- 26/1/43 Nine aircraft were detailed for a main target bombing operation. Sight of the aircraft successfully bombed the target (see appendices). Sgt Hartney returned early due to engine trouble and landed at Harwell. Sgt Johnson returned to the home base, but the other aircraft landed as indicated due to lack of fuel. P/O Bennett and P/S Gagnon at Wing, F/S Cadeus at Sesland, Sgt Vandekerckhove at Dishforth, F/S Fellner at Exeter, Sgt Williams at Harwell. P/O Taylor crashed into a hillside at Edale near Sheffield on the way home to Base. Miraculously, only F/O Mortimer was hurt and his injuries are of a slight nature although he was admitted to Buxton Hospital. Aircraft crashed on the only flat surface within ten miles and although the aircraft was written off, the escape of all members of the crew was so fortunate it was, therefore, the feature story of some Sunday papers.

- 27/1/43 All the aircraft diverted the previous night returned to Base today with exception of F/O Mortimer in hospital, returned to Croft by train. No operational flying carried out this date.
- 28/1/43 No flying of any sort done this date due to weather being completely unserviceable.
- 29/1/43 Nine aircraft detailed for a bombing raid, only six took off, the other three being non-starters due to engine trouble. Sgt Vandekerckhove turned back due to severe icing. The other five aircraft successfully bombed the target, there being severe icing conditions and 10/10 cloud from Croft to the target and back necessitating some 5½ hours solid instrument flying on the part of the pilots. Sgt Vandekerckhove landed at Base as did Sgt Johnson and F/L Peters. W/C Burnside D.P.C. and Sgt Hartney landed at Narpoll. Sgt Williams landed at Feremore.
- 30/1/43 Two aircraft detailed for the Squadron's first daylight bombing raid. S/L Holley and P/O Bennet took off. S/L McKay return before reaching the objective due to weather being unfavourable for a daylight attack. P/O Bennet and his crew, consisting of P/O Kent and Sgt Phillips, Wallace and Smith, G.I. did not return and are missing from this operation. The aircraft diverted the previous night returned to base today.
- 31/1/43 Four aircraft and crews stood by at 0800 hrs today ready if needed for a daylight bombing operation but the operation was scrubbed by Group.
3. Honours and Awards - Nil
4. Commissions - Nil
5. Promotions - Nil
6. Postings (to and from the Unit)
- P/O W.R. Pullen J15729 Posted to this Unit from RAF Peaklington wef. 29/1/43
- P/O O.S. Milne J13068 Posted to this Unit from 230TU wef 27.1.43
- P/O J. Chasenoff C8455 Posted to this Unit from 421 Sqn wef 8.1.43
- P/O L.W. Somers J8819 Posted to this Unit from 1654 Con Unit wef 18.1.43
- P/O Greening 130516 Posted to this Unit from 1654 Con Unit wef 18.1.43
- P/O Ganderton J10133 Posted to this Unit from 14 OTU wef 21.1.43
- P/O WEP Seeder J13272 Posted to this Unit from 14 OTU wef 21.1.43

1. NUMERICAL STRENGTH OF UNIT AS AT 1ST FEBRUARY 1943.

<u>STRENGTH</u>	<u>AIRCREW</u>	<u>GROUND CREW</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
RCAF OFFICERS	10	4	14
RCAF AIRCREW	67	94	161
R.A.F. OFFICERS	15	1	16
R.A.F. AIRCREW	58	239	297
OTHER PERSONNEL	3	—	<u>3</u>
TOTAL			491

- 1/2/43 Three aircraft were detailed for a day-light bombing raid, but the weather was found unsuitable for this type of operation and the operation was scrubbed at noon. The Squadron was stood down for the rest of the day.
- 2/2/43 No operations were detailed for this date and it gave the Squadron an opportunity to carry out an intensive training program. Three night cross country trips were carried out as well as local flying.
- 3/2/43 Night aircraft were detailed for a main target operation in Germany. At briefing it was suggested that the severe layer of icing conditions might prevent the aircraft from completing the operation and this proved to be the case. The operation was scrubbed at the last moment.
- 4/2/43 Nine aircraft were detailed to attack the submarine base at Lorient. The aircraft took off in two lots. These carrying incendiaries first. Eight of the aircraft successfully bombed the target and returned to England. P/O Parsons and his crew did not return from this operation and are listed as missing. Photographs showed that Sgts Johnson and Schmitt bombed directly on to the aiming point, the only squadron on the operation with two aircraft bombing directly on to the aiming point. Six aircraft landed at base - the other two landed at Longmanston and Church Honeybourne. P/S Higgins overshot at Long Manston but damage was very minor.
- 5/2/43 No operations were detailed for this date and the Squadron had a stand down. The weather was unsuitable for all flying and no flying training was carried on.
- 6/2/43 Two aircraft were detailed for an operation mining trip. Two of the new crew, Sgt Erickson and Sgt Rames did the trip and both returned safely after dropping their mines.
- 7/2/43 Three aircraft were detailed to stand by for a daylight bombing trip but this operation was scrubbed. Five aircraft were detailed for a bombing trip on Lorient in the evening. Only four took off, the other being scrubbed due to Technical defect. These four aircraft successfully bombed the target and all returned safely to Base.

8/2/43 The Squadron was stood down today - "B" Flight had a flight party in Barlington which was very successful. Weather was unsuitable for flying.

9/2/43 No operations were detailed for today. The weather being unsuitable for any flying. Training or otherwise.

10/2/43 Four aircraft were detailed to stand by for a daylight bombing raid but this was scrubbed. Five aircraft were detailed for mining operations but this operation was also scrubbed at the last minute due to weather conditions.

11/2/43 No operations were scheduled for this date due to unfavourable weather conditions.

12/2/43 Six aircraft were detailed for mine laying. All aircraft took off but only five returned to base - Sgt Adlam and his crew crashed into the hills near Thornaby and all were killed. The photograph taken by F/S Borg of Lorient during the Feb 4th raid was in all the London papers to demonstrate the destruction caused by the R.A.F. raids.

13/2/43 Twelve aircraft were detailed to attack Lorient - Two of the aircraft returned to base early, one due to icing and one due to faulty navigation. The other Ten aircraft reached the Target but Sgt Ramus did not drop his 4000 lbs bomb due to a faulty release mechanism. The nine aircraft very successfully bombed the Target reporting larger fires than ever seen before. Six aircraft landed back at Base - The others landed at Marvell, Middle Gallep, Bansbury and Lexsing.

14/2/43 Five aircraft were detailed to bomb Colonge in Western Germany. Two aircraft returned early - one due to W/T. Failure and the other due to Turret trouble. The other three aircraft Captained by Sgts Follner, Williams and Schmitt successfully bombed the target.

15/2/43 Four aircraft were detailed for mine laying this date, but the operation was scrubbed and the Squadron had a stand down for the rest of the day - welcomed by the whole Squadron in view of the part that we had operated for three nights running.

16-2-43 Nine aircraft were detailed to bomb the submarine base at Lorient. All aircraft successfully bombed the target - Sgt Holloway and his crew landed in Southern Ireland, safe and uninjured with the exception of Sgt Tayler D.H. who was very slightly injured. The attack generally on Lorient was very successful.

17/2/43 Three aircraft were detailed for daylight stand by, but this operation was scrubbed due to unfavourable weather conditions. No other operations were scheduled for this date.

18/2/43 No operations were scheduled for this date and the Squadron had a standdown.

19/2/43 Seven aircraft were detailed to attack the naval arsenal at Wilhems-haven but only six aircraft took off - the seventh being scrubbed due to technical trouble. The six aircraft very successfully bombed the target and all returned safely.

20/2/43 Four aircraft were detailed to stand by for a daylight bombing attack, but this operation was scrubbed due to unfavourable weather conditions.

21/2/43 Four aircraft were detailed for a mine laying operation, but this was scrubbed at the last minute due to unfavourable weather.

22/2/43 Eight aircraft were detailed to bomb HAMBURG, but this operation was scrubbed due to unfavourable weather conditions.

23/2/43 The unfavourable weather continued and no operations were scheduled for this date.

24/2/43 Eight aircraft were detailed to bomb HAMBURG, but at the last minute the target was changed to WILHEMSHAVEN. All the aircraft successfully bombed the target through 10/10th's cloud and returned safely to Base. The Squadron bombed by means of hanging flares dropped by the Pathfinder aircraft.

25/2/43 Four aircraft were detailed for a mine laying operation. While the aircraft were marshalled a Mustang taxied into one of our Wellingtons. One of the other aircraft did not start due to electrical trouble. The other two aircraft successfully dropped their mines.

26/2/43 Seven aircraft were detailed to bomb COLOGNE in Western Germany. Five aircraft returned to Base safely. Sgt Taylor bombed COLOGNE successfully, but on the way home he crashed at R.A.F. Station North Luffenham and he and four of his crew were killed and his gunner critically injured. Sgt Harwood and his crew were missing from this raid.

27/2/43 No operations were scheduled for this date.

28/2/43 Three aircraft were detailed for daylight bombing operations but this was scrubbed. Six aircraft were detailed for a bombing raid on the Submarine base at St. Hazaire. Only five took off then being one non-starter due to mechanical trouble. One aircraft piloted by Sgt Hartney is missing and one aircraft piloted by Sgt Southwood ran out of petrol over Southern Ireland and the Crew parachuted to safety.

1/3/43 Two aircraft were detailed for a MINE-LAYING Operation. Both aircraft successfully completed the operation.

2/3/43 Three aircraft were detailed for a MINE-LAYING again this date. Two aircraft successfully completed this operation, but Sgt Lymburner and his crew did not return from this operation.

- 3/3/43 Three aircraft were detailed for a daylight BOMBING raid, but this was scrubbed. Six aircraft were detailed to bomb HAMBURG in North Western Germany. Sgt Schmitt returned on reaching the English Coast due to aircraft becoming unserviceable. The other five aircraft very successfully bombed the target and returned home safely.
- 4/3/43 The Squadron had a "stand down" this date and "A" Flight had a very successful party in Darlington.
- 5/3/43 Seven aircraft were detailed to bomb ESSEN in the Ruhr. All aircraft successfully bombed the target and six of them returned to base. F/Sgt Vandekerckheve lost a propeller 20 miles off the English Coast on the return journey and made an emergency landing at R.A.F. CATFOSS.
- 6/3/43 Three aircraft were detailed for a DAYLIGHT BOMBING raid on Germany but this operation was scrubbed. Four aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on ESSEN but at the last minute the operation was scrubbed due to weather.
- 7/3/43 No operations were detailed for this date and the Squadron had a "stand down".
- 8/3/43 No operations were detailed for this date and the Squadron had a "stand down" for the second day in succession.
- 9/3/43 Three aircraft were detailed for a DAYLIGHT BOMBING, but this Operation was scrubbed. There were no Night Operations detailed this date.
- 10/3/43 Due to unfavourable weather no operations were scheduled this date and the Squadron devoted the day to training.
- 11/3/43 The weather continued unfavourable and no Operations were scheduled this date.
- 12/3/43 Three aircraft were detailed for a DAYLIGHT BOMBING RAID on Germany but this was scrubbed. Eleven aircraft were detailed to bomb ESSEN. All aircraft successfully bombed the target and ten returned safely to base. W/Cmdr Burnside's aircraft was hit by flak before reaching the target, his Navigator was killed, and his Wireless Operator had his foot shot off. Nevertheless he successfully bombed the target and after many harrowing experiences made a successful forced landing at STEADISHALL.
- 13/3/43 No operations were detailed for this date and the Squadron had a "stand down".
- 14/3/43 Due to weather, there was a further stand down today.
- 15/3/43 Four aircraft were detailed for a DAYLIGHT BOMBING attack on Germany, but this operation was scrubbed due to weather. Six aircraft were detailed for MINE-LAYING but this operation was scrubbed at the last minute due to weather.

- 16/3/43 Six aircraft were detailed for MINE-LAYING but this operation was also scrubbed due to weather.
- 17/3/43 No operations were scheduled for this date due to weather.
- 18/3/43 Seventeen aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on ST HAZAIRE but the weather was found unsuitable and this operation was scrubbed. The A.O.C. congratulated the Squadron on having seventeen aircraft available for operations. The A.O.C. also rang through to congratulate the Squadron Commanding Officer on his performance during the March 12th raid on ESSEN.
- 19/3/43 Wing Commander R.C. Macinnes from R.C.A.F. Headquarters rang up the Squadron CO to inform him that Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer were interested in adopting the Squadron and invited him down for Tuesday the 23rd., to attend a conference with M.G.M. Officials to confirm arrangements for the adoption. Seventeen aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on ST HAZAIRE but this operation was also scrubbed due to weather.
- 20/3/43 For the third successive night, seventeen aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on the submarine base at ST HAZAIRE and for the third time this operation was scrubbed at the last minute due to unfavourable weather.
- 21/3/43 Twelve aircraft were detailed for MINE-LAYING operation off the Frisian Islands. Scrubbed at 1500 hrs.
- 22/3/43 Six aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on ST HAZAIRE at the same time twelve aircraft were detailed for MINE-LAYING. These two operations were scrubbed, however, due to weather. The Adjutant F/Lt. J. Chasenoff proceeded to R.C.A.F. Headquarters re-adoption by M.G.M.
- 23/3/43 No operations were scheduled this date.
- 24/3/43 Fifteen aircraft were detailed for a bombing raid on WILHEMSHAVEN but this operation was scrubbed after the aircrew had entered their aircraft due to bad weather. The A.O.C. of R.C.A.F. (Overseas) Headquarters, Air Marshal Edwards visited the Squadron.
- 25/3/43 Sixteen aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on COLOGNE but this operation was scrubbed due to weather.
- 26/3/43 Thirteen aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on DUISBURG. Twelve took off, the other scrubbed due to compass trouble, and all successfully bombed the target. Eleven aircraft returned to base and one aircraft piloted by Sgt Erickson landed at WATTESHAM. F/O Ganderton hit a tree in England returning to base, but there were no casualties although the aircraft was categorized A.C. W/Cmdr Burnside awarded a bar to his D.F.C. and P/O P.J. Hayhurst, awarded the D.F.C. for their effort on March 12th over ESSEN.

- 27/3/43 Fifteen aircraft were detailed to bomb COLOGNE but this operation was scrubbed early in the afternoon. The A.O.C. No. 6 Group visited the Squadron.
- 28/3/43 Fourteen aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on ST HAZAIRE. All aircraft successfully bombed the target and seven returned to base, the other seven aircraft landing away at diversion fields.
- 29/3/43 Three aircraft were detailed for DAYLIGHT BOMBING attack but this operation was scrubbed due to weather. Twelve aircraft detailed for main target at BOCHUM in the Ruhr. Eleven aircraft took off - one being a non-starter due to inter-com. trouble. Three aircraft turned back, one due to icing and two due to mechanical trouble. Seven of the remaining eight aircraft successfully bombed the target. Sgt McFadden and his crew are missing from this operation.
- 30/3/43 The Squadron had a well earned rest on this date. No operation being scheduled.
- 31/3/43 Due to weather, no operations were scheduled this date.
3. Honours and Awards - Wing Commander D.H. Burnside was awarded the Bar to his Distinguished Flying Cross also the Distinguished Flying Cross was awarded to P/O R.W. Hayhurst.
4. Commissions - R125621 Sgt Beaton J.J. (Nav) appointed to Pilot Officer w.e.f. 11/9/42  
R123450 Sgt White V.N. (B/A) appointed to Pilot Officer w.e.f. 3/7/42  
967166 F/S Ross D.B. (A.G.) appointed to Pilot Officer w.e.f. 30/12/42  
R87056 F/S Berg G.T. (B/A) appointed to Pilot Officer w.e.f. 10/12/42  
R95772 F/S Cadmus G.A. (Pilot) appointed to Pilot Officer w.e.f. 30/12/42  
R119518 Sgt Thornton G.M. (A.G.) appointed to Pilot Officer w.e.f. 21/1/43  
R79204 F/S Gagnon G.A. (Pilot) appointed to Pilot Officer w.e.f. 30/12/42
5. Promotions - C8455 F/O J. Chasonoff appointed to the rank of A/F/Lt w.e.f. 10/2/43  
J15895 P/O N.W. Morrison appointed to the rank of A/F/Lt w.e.f. 7/2/43  
110633 F/O K. Webster, appointed to the rank of A/F/Lt w.e.f. 19/3/43.

- 1/4/43 Three aircraft were detailed for a daylight bombing attack on GERMANY but this operation was scrubbed due to unfavourable weather. No other operations were scheduled for this date.
- 2/4/43 Five aircraft were detailed for a bombing raid on LORIENT. One Aircraft landed at Beaulieu because of generator trouble before crossing the coast. The other four aircraft successfully bombed the target. Two aircraft landed at Beaulieu, one with flak damage and the other two aircraft returned to Base.
- 3/4/43 No operations were scheduled for this date. Court Martial of Flight Sergeant Norseman Bomb Aimer took place at Middleton St George this date. Flying training was carried out both day and night.
- 4/4/43 Seventeen aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on KIEL in Germany. Two aircraft returned early due to technical trouble. All other aircraft successfully bombed the target and all returned safely to base. Sergeant Summer's aircraft was shot up by flak. The Squadron was the leading Squadron in the Group on this raid in respect of number of aircraft on the Target.
- 5/4/43 No operations were scheduled for this date.
- 6/4/43 No operations were scheduled for this date but six aircraft were detailed for a bulls-eye exercise. Sgt Ash swung on take-off, crashed into a tree and the aircraft exploded. Sgt Ash and Sgt Dobbs were both killed and the other three members of the crew were seriously burned about the face and hands.
- 7/4/43 No operations were scheduled for this date.
- 8/4/43 Ten aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on DUISBERG. Sgts Higgins and Erickson returned early due to icing. The other eight aircraft successfully attacked the target through 10/40 cloud and returned the following day.
- 9/4/43 No operations were scheduled for this date.
- 10/4/43 Sixteen aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on KIEL but this was altered to a bombing attack on FRANKFURT. The Squadron was all set to send sixteen aircraft to FRANKFURT but this trip necessitated the carrying of long range tanks - we reduced our commitment to ten aircraft. This was due to a shortage of long range equipment for which the Squadron had demanded three months previously and had received no results. However, the ten aircraft took off. Sgt Rodwell returned early due to rear gun trouble and F/Lt Taylor when only 45 minutes from the target was forced to turn back due to turret trouble. The other eight aircraft successfully bombed the target. F/Sgt Higgins crash landed at West Malling on the return trip due to flask damage to his aircraft. All members of the crew were safe and returned to the Unit, Sunday morning by air. F/Sgt Crew landed at Dunsfold and also returned by air on Sunday morning to Croft. F/O Webster landed at Snaith due to weather but immediately on refuelling returned to base. The other five aircraft landed at Base in the first instance.

- 11/4/43 No operations were scheduled for this date and the Squadron had a stand down.
- 12/4/43 Due to weather no operations were scheduled for this date. Wing Commander Burnside and F/Lt Chasanoff visited No 6 Group HQ to discuss matters affecting the Squadron both operationally and administratively with group personnel.
- 13/4/43 Three aircraft were detailed for a bombing daylight attack on Germany but this operation was scrubbed. Six aircraft were detailed for a bulls-eye exercise but this was scrubbed due to unfavourable weather.
- 14/4/43 Twelve aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on STUTTGART. One aircraft taxied into a petrol bowser and seventy minutes later a petrol bowser ran into another aircraft. The reserve aircraft's rear turret went unserviceable so only ten aircraft took off. All successfully bombed the target and nine landed at Coltishall and one at Swanton Morley. Wing Commander Mason and ICol Walmsborough of R.C.A.F. HQ visited the Squadron.
- 15/4/43 No operations were scheduled for this date due to the aircraft returning to base so late in the morning.
- 16/4/43 Fourteen aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on HANNHEIM. Sgt Chambers crash landed at Twinwoods due to engine trouble, the crew being only scratched and bruised. Twelve aircraft successfully bombed the target. The other aircraft piloted by Sgt Tomyndid not return from this operation and is listed as missing. Six aircraft returned to base, one aircraft landed at Harwell, two landed at Enstone and three at Upper Hayford. Of the twelve aircraft which successfully bombed the target, three came back with flak damage. The A.O.C. 6 Group visited the Squadron for the purpose of viewing the take off. The fourteen aircraft took off in  $6\frac{1}{2}$  minutes setting a new speed record for the Squadron re take-off time. The A.O.C. spent some time in the Officer's Mess before preceeding to Group. Two ball teams from the Squadron proceeded to Sedgfield Nr Durham to participate in the local "Wings for Victory" campaign by playing a game of Canadian softball. Alan Randall of the Canadian Press spent the day with the Squadron for the purpose of getting Squadron color for a series of articles he was writing on Bomber Command.
- 17/4/43 No operations were scheduled for this date and the Squadron had a stand down.
- 18/4/43 No operations were sceduled for this date. Information was received that the Squadron was to convert to Halifax aircraft. Five crews who had completed a conversion course at Topcliffe, reported to the Squadron.

19/4/43 Six crews departed to Topcliffe to undergo conversion training on to Halifax aircraft. Wing Commander Burnside was among them and S/Ldr, McKay took over command. Ten aircraft were detailed for a bombing raid on Germany but this was scrubbed due to weather.

20/4/43 No operations were scheduled for this date. S/Ldr McKay and F/Lt Chasenoff visited Leeming and Group Headquarters to obtain "gen" on the conversion and move of the Squadron to Leeming. No definite information was obtained but instructions were received to "gen" up all personnel on Halifax aircraft as quickly as possible.

21/4/43 One hundred and six ground crew personnel departed from Linton-On-Ouse to receive training on Halifax maintenance. No operations were scheduled for this date. Five aircraft of the Squadron were detailed for a bulls-eye exercise but this was scrubbed.

22/4/43 No operations were detailed for this date.

23/4/43 No operations were scheduled for this date.

24/4/43 Sixteen aircraft were detailed to take part in a bombing attack on DUSSELDORF but at the last minute this operation was scrubbed.

25/4/43 Six more crews departed for conversion at Topcliffe. Six crews arrived from Topcliffe fresh from O.T.U. because Topcliffe Conversion Unit could not handle them. The advance party consisting of two Officers and Twenty seven men departed for Leeming to prepare for the move of the Squadron.

26/4/43 Eleven aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on DUISBURG. All the aircraft successfully bombed the target and returned to base safely.

27/4/43 Fourteen aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on Germany but this operation was scrubbed and three aircraft were detailed for a mine laying operation off the Frisian Islands, One aircraft made only one circuit and landed due to engine trouble, one aircraft was late over the target area and brought its mines back and one aircraft although over the target area, could not pinpoint itself and also brought its mines back.

28/4/43 Four aircraft were detailed for MINE-LAYING. All aircraft returned safely to base but only two dropped their mines in the target area.

29/4/43 No operations were scheduled for this date.

30/4/43 No operations were scheduled for this date and the Squadron started moving its equipment to Skipton for the use of No. 432 Squadron. Five crews were also posted to No. 432 Squadron to give them a nucleus of trained crews.

- 1/5/43 The Squadron became non-operational on this date and plans were put into operation for moving the Squadron equipment and personnel. The Technical Equipment of the Squadron was taken to Skipton to form the new Wellington Squadron forming there. The Aircraft due to fly to Skipton this date were grounded due to weather. Information was received that the Squadron personnel were to proceed to Leeming on May 4th.
- 2/5/43 Twenty one aircraft of our Squadron took off from R.C.A.F. Station Croft and proceeded to R.C.A.F. Station Skipton to provide Aircraft for the new Squadron (No. 432 R.C.A.F. Squadron) S/Ldr W.A. McKay of Vancouver one of the original members of the Squadron and "B" Flight Commander was posted to take over a flight in No. 432 Squadron. Five of our crews were also posted to No. 432 Squadron to give them a nucleus of experienced aircrew. The Squadron is developing a feeling that No. 432 Squadron is a protage of No. 427 Squadron due to the fact that they acquired all of our equipment together with some of our personnel. The Squadron had its official going away party from R.C.A.F. Station Croft. Both the Sergeant's and Officer's messes were thrown open to all ranks and a party in true "Lion" style was held.
- (Editor's Note: The Squadron was simultaneously moving equipment to their new home R.C.A.F. Stn Leeming and converting to a new bomber the Halifax MK V).
- 3/5/43 Personal kit of the Squadron personnel was transported to Leeming on this date. The rest of the day was spent in cleaning up the various sections of R.C.A.F. Croft in anticipation of the move in of No. 1664 Conversion Unit.
- 4/5/43 All the Squadron personnel remaining at Croft proceeded by road transport to R.C.A.F. Station Leeming the morning of this date. The Squadron offices also moved this date. Facilities for receiving our personnel at Leeming were excellent and the Squadron settled in quickly. The contrast between a main station like Leeming and the Satellite Station at Croft amazed some of the members.
- 5/5/43 This date was spent in unpacking and setting up shop in the various sections. Some of our crews detached to Topcliffe for conversion training returned to Leeming. Everyone spent the day settling in.
- 6/5/43 Sections were still settling in and a bit of organization was being discerned in the general hullabaloo of the Squadron move. The aircrew leaders were busy cleaning up their respective sections and the office accommodation for each of them was very satisfactory. W/Cmdr Burnside addressed the whole squadron and in the evening the Squadron had its first party in the Officer's Mess at Leeming. The Officer Commanding and Flight Commanders of 408 and 432 Squadron attended and they met the Officers of 427 Squadron. The Commanding Officer of 432 Squadron invited the Officers of the Squadron to attend the opening of the mess at Skipton.

- 7/5/43 Eleven crews were posted from our Squadron to 426, 428 and 429 Squadron due to the fact that the conversion Unit did not have the facilities to convert them. No flying was carried out as yet due to our new Halifax Aircraft not having all Modifications completed.
- 8/5/43 No flying today, due to aircraft not being quite ready. The various sections are generally getting "gen'd" up. The B.B.C. dramatized the flight of the Commanding Officer and crew, on which they obtained their decorations. We were advised this date that F/Sgt Higgins had been awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal - first of the Squadron. Various Officers made their initial visit inot Harrogate.
- 9/5/43 Weather unsuitable for flying although two aircraft are now awaiting Air Test. Various sections organized lectures on new apparatus in our Halifax. Several crews going on leave - catching up on Op leave, missed during our Conversion. Today's reports would show that Harrogate is going to replace Darlington as the mecca of 427 Squadron.
- 10/5/43 Weather still vile - snowing all morning, turned to rain - aircraft still grounded. Further lectures held at various sections. W/Comdr Burnside gone on leave, leaving S/ldr Barthrowl in charge. The Adjutant had £55 (Pounds) stolen from his office. In a short time, by subscription it was soon replaced.
- 11/5/43 One crew got airborne, did routine flying testing aircraft. It was, the first authorized flight in the Squadron since our Conversion. Instruction still be carried out in various departments. The Squadron subscribed approximately 2300.00 dollars to Canada's 4th Victory Loan. The Commanding Officer received his D.F.G. officially from His Majesty the King.
- 12/5/43 One aircraft tested today, remainder still being modified or have compasses swung. Lectures and instruction still being carried out in various sections.
- 13/5/43 Two more aircraft tested today. One in particular "L" London has had an emblem painted on the side, depicting a winged lion dropping a bomb. It is quite a propos since we are officially now, the "LION SQUADRON". Normal routine went on through out the day. In the evening an Ensa concert took place on the station and the Cast were entertained in the Officer's Mess. 427 Squadron were very much in evidence, in looking after the female end of the cast.
- 14/5/43 Several more aircraft were tested this date and one crew did a daylight X-Country. Three crews are doing a Bulls Eye exercise in the evening. There was a further addition to our Ground Staff of thirty five more Canadians, recent arrivals in the United Kingdom.

- 15/5/43 Four day X-Countries took place followed by five at night. Considerable compass swinging went on, a common task at present due to the fact all our A/C are new. All crews, however, are taking considerable pride in their respective aircraft and several pet names have been painted on the sides of the "kites" e.g. "Z" Zombie, "P" Pampers - a Spanish word meaning South wind, influenced by the fact the pilot F/O Cadmus is a native of Buenos Aires. "V" Vicious Victor and "S" called the "Canadian WARRIOR".
- 16/5/43 There were two more day X-Country and some fighter affiliation. The boys have a great time shaking off the pseudo-enemy fighters (Spitfire). Four aircraft took part in a Bullseye exercise at night.
- 17/5/43 Two X-Countries in the afternoon together with some air to sea firing practice. At night four aircraft took part in an bulls-eye. A newcomer to the Squadron is S/Idr Piddington & Crew. He will be the Flight Commander of "B" Flight. F/O Stockdale has also joined the ranks of 427 Squadron. We had two crews posted away to 426 Squadron, so our strength to date is now twenty eight crews.
- 18/5/43 There was some local flying during the day and five crews took part in a Bullseye Exercise at night. Night flying during the past few days has been ideal from all reports, very similar to Canadian conditions. The pilots are gradually getting to know the little peculiarities of Halifax, are losing the "Wellington bias" of them. Influenced by the warm weather, outdoor and indoor sports are in full swing. Squash, tennis and soft ball are being played daily by a large number of the Squadron. Ten crews are now attached to R.C.A.F. Station, Topcliffe on a Conversion Course.
- 19/5/43 Local flying took place during the day and six crews did a night X-Country. The Squadron regrets losing the services of its engineering Officer F/Lt H. Lamb, who has been posted to Topcliffe. We welcome in his place, however, F/Lt Burton, who assumes his position as 427 Engineering Officer. Lectures are still in full swing throughout the various sections and the Squadron as a whole would appear to be in an intense state of training.
- 20/5/43 Four aircraft did some local flying today, doing air tests. There was no night flying owing to a Squadron stand down. Routine instruction and lectures were carried out per usual. Reports today, indicate the official opening of the Officer's mess at Skipton, satellite of Leeming was a large success. Many officers of 427 Squadron attended this opening.

21/5/43

Our crew did a X-Country in the afternoon, and several other aircraft were air-tested during the day. The visibility deteriorated resulting in the cancellation of night flying - four crews having cancellation of night flying - four crews having been detailed for a Bullseye. W/Comdr Burnside has returned from leave with his crew. Flying Officer Baines F.D.M. has been attached to the Squadron. He has been delivering lectures to the Bomb Airmen, primarily, and to some of the rest of the Air Crew on the uses of the MK XIV Bombsight. Everyone who has heard give these lectures admit, F/O Baines has a style all of his own and he has aroused the interest of one and all.

22/5/43

No flying took place today, owing to weather conditions, however, several aircraft compasses and loops were able to be swung. A delegation of wireless Operators under Pilot Officer Dormand went to Hull to visit the MF/DF Station there. Word has come through that F/O Ganderton has been promoted to the rank of Acting Flight Lieutenant. Pilot Officer Cadmus has been attached to Middleton St George Station for a week. He is taking a S.A.T. course there. A newcomer to the Squadron is Flight Lieutenant Mackay and Crew. He has just arrived from 1659 Conversion Unit. In connection with the coming of M.G.M. film company tomorrow, to film their adopted Lion Squadron, we have had F/Lt Tim Poad, Canadian Public Relations Officer with us the last couple of days. Since the Squadron had been informed that each Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer film star was going to adopt an aircraft, a vote was taken today as to which star gets which aircraft. Lana Turner topped the list followed closely by Greer Garson and Hedy Lamarr.

23/5/43

Six aircraft did local flying, levelling B'S and fighter affiliation. Normal ground instruction carried out.

24/5/43

Some local flying took place in the evening together with the usual ground instruction. In the afternoon the Squadron was formerly adopted by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Film Co. The whole Squadron assembled outside our hangar. Amongst those present were Mr. Eckman, Manager Director of the M.G.M. Film Co. in Great Britain, Mr. MacPherson, Reel Director for M.G.M., Group Captain Slemon from 6 Group Headquarters, Wing Commander Carecallon- Station Commander, Flight Lieutenant Tim Road, Public Relations Bureau for R.C.A.F., Wing Commander Burnside, Officer Commanding No. 427 Squadron. The Adjutant of 427, F/Lt J. Chasnoff opened the Ceremony by introducing Mr. Eckman, who in turn gave a speech of welcome to the Squadron on joining the ranks of M.G.M. as the Lion Squadron. He then presented W/Comdr Burnside with a bronze Lion - eighteen century designe with an inscription commemorating the occasion. At some future date, all members of the Squadron will be presented with Lion Medals, the holder of which will have certain privileges at any M.G.M. theatre. A draw took place as to which pilot gets Lana Turner's name for his aircraft. Seventeen names were drawn for names altogether. Sgt Johnson was the lucky pilot and amid an ovation from the Squadron he promptly chalked her name on his aircraft nearby. Fox Movietown news and several still photographers plus one or two London News agency-reporters, photographed the whole afternoons proceedings.

The celebration culminated in a party in the Sgt's Mess for the whole Squadron together with the visitors.

- 25/5/43      Seven aircraft did Fighter Affiliation during the day. Two more NCO's received their commissions today. F/O Vandekerchove and F/O Oakley. A new crew arrived from 1609 Conversion Unit, F/O Colquheun is the Captain.
- 26/5/43      Routine Instruction and activities took place today. The weather was duff and no flying took place. Information received that Squadron was expected to be ready to operate on Friday, May 29th.
- 27/5/43      More fighter affiliation took place also several Bombing details on Strenshill Practice Range. Five aircraft did night X-Country.
- 28/5/43      Today the Squadron became Operational. No Ops took place owing to a Standown. Normal activities went on through out the day.
- 29/5/43      Thirteen aircraft were detailed for a Bombing attack on Wuppertal twelve took off successfully, one was a non-starter due to engine trouble - our first Operational task in Halifax and a new target. All the crews returned to Base safely except one - F/O Cadmus, who landed at Turlaign. His aircraft was hit in several places by flak over the target resulting in one engine packing up. A cursory examination by the Engineer Officer resulted in the Aircraft having to be left behind and the crew returned by rail. Three other aircraft were badly hit by flak, piloted by F/O's Gagnon, Fellner and Crew.
- 30/5/43      No flying took place today, normal ground lectures and instruction carried out. The crews recently posted to the Squadron, Lt Lyttle and Crew, also F/O St Louis and Crew from 1659 C.U.
- 31/5/43      There was a Stand down today resulting in no Operational flying. F/Lt Webster returned from a 49 hour pass. He attended the days for Victory Week in an Official capacity in his home town of Bexley North. The outcome of which, a Halifax Bomber is to be donated by Bexley North to the Squadron and F/Lt Webster will become the pilot.
3.      Honour and Awards:      R98109 F/Sgt Higgins, FJ was awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal.

- 1/6/43 No operations were scheduled for this date due to bad weather. No flying training was carried out but intensive ground training was conducted to rectify any errors found to have been committed on our first operation on Halifaxes over Wuppertal on May 29th.
- 2/6/43 The weather continued unsatisfactory and no operations were scheduled for this date. Some of the Squadron Officers paid a social call to Harrogate.
- 3/6/43 The weather still continued unfavourable and the Squadron was very keen to get cracking on another operation on Halifax aircraft. No flying training was carried out.
- 4/6/43 Twelve aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on BOCHUM but this operation was scrubbed due to unfavourable weather. The Squadron was very keen to go on this trip. four crews detached to Topcliffe returned to the Unit on this date.
- 5/6/43 No operations were scheduled for this date. Lectures were carried out all day and six crews did night flying training.
- 6/6/43 Movies taken of the M.G.M. presentation played at the Empire Theatre in Leicester Square. No operations were scheduled and due to unfavourable weather no flying training was carried out. Lectures were carried out.
- 7/6/43 W/Commander Burnside proceeded to Westcott to take the engine handling course. S/Lieutenant Earthrowl assumed command of the Squadron in his absence. Thirteen aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on MULHEIM in Germany. However, this operation was cancelled at a late hour due to unfavourable weather. The remaining crews detailed to Topcliffe for conversion training returned to Unit.
- 8/6/43 No operations were scheduled for this date due to unfavourable weather. Most of the Aircrew went to Harrogate for a social whirl. P/O Ross had the first practice of our Squadron Cricket team.
- 9/6/43 Fifteen aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on ESSEN and again this operation was scrubbed due to unfavourable weather conditions. All personnel were getting more impatient to get another operation in on Halifax aircraft.
- 10/6/43 Weather unfavourable and no operations scheduled. Ensa show in the evening at which the Squadron was well represented.
- 11/6/43 Seventeen aircraft were detailed to attack DUSSELDORF in the greatest raid the R.A.F. ever put on. All aircraft took off and all returned to England safely. F/Sergeant Higgins returned early due to Navigational trouble. F/O Colquhoun was badly shot up and landed at Oulton. While taxiing on the perimeter track at Oulton he was run into by a Wellington Aircraft and Sgt Millard (the bomb aimer) suffered a strained back - the other crew members were uninjured. F/Lieutenant Hockey successfully completed his first trip as Captain of an Aircraft.

12/6/43 S/Ldr Earthrowl and P/O Crew proceeded to Westcott on an engine handling course and the Wing Commander returned to assume command. Twelve aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on BOCHUM. Sgt Biggs was a non-starter due to mechanical trouble. P/O Perks returned early due to mechanical trouble after crossing the Dutch Coast. The other aircraft all returned to Base with the exception of Pilot Officer Fellner who is listed as missing from this raid. It was a sad lost losing P/O Fellner since he and his crew were original members of the Squadron and were all "gen" men. The original crew were all commissioned in this Squadron as well. F/O Lou Somers single handed attacked ESSEN in error and suffered severe flak damage.

13/6/43 No operations were scheduled for this date and the Squadron had a well earned rest.

14/6/43 Twelve aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on OVERSHAVEN but this operation was cancelled due to unfavourable condition.

16/6/43 No operations scheduled due to this being the moon period. The armoury section of the Squadron had a very successful party in Northallerton.

17/6/43 No operations were scheduled this date and the Officer's mess had a very successful party bidding adieu to Group Captain Carscallen the Station Commander.

18/6/43 No operations were detailed this date due to the Moon period. Everyone had a rather quiet day recuperating from the previous night's party.

19/6/43 Seventeen aircraft were detailed for a special moonlight bombing attack on the Schneider works at LE CREUSOT south east of Paris. Two aircraft were non-starters due to technical trouble. P/O Crew returned early due to gyro trouble. All the other aircraft very successfully bombed the target and all returned safely to England. For the first time in Bomber Command a daylight camera was carried on a night operation. The aircraft was piloted by S/Ldr. Furthrowl and a series of very successful photographs was obtained. F/Lt Durocher was injured in the heel by a tracer bullet after crossing the French Coast on the way home.

20/6/43 Four aircraft were detailed for an operation on OBERSHAVEN, but this operation was cancelled. Hon Vincent Massey visited the Squadron on this date.

21/6/43 Fourteen aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on DREFELD. All aircraft took off successfully. Two returned early due to Technical trouble. The other twelve aircraft successfully bombed the target and returned to Base.

- 22/6/43 Fourteen aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on MULHEIM. W/Cmdr Burnside returned early due to gyro trouble and F/Sgt Higgins returned after crossing the Dutch Coast due to Navigation trouble. Of the other twelve aircraft, only eight aircraft returned safely. The other four aircraft are listed as missing. The aircraft were piloted by F/Lt Webster, P/O Cadmus, Sgt Hamilton and F/O Reid and their loss will be surely missed in this Squadron since they were an integral part of our Squadron's life.
- 23/6/43 No operations were scheduled for this date but two of the Squadron aircraft conducted a sea-search for our missing crews of the previous night. There were no results of these sea searches.
- 24/6/43 F/Lt Taylor was promoted to the rank of S/Ldr and P/O Tubman to the rank of F/Lt. Eleven aircraft were detailed for a raid on WUPPERTAL. F/Lt Ganderton returned early due to both turrets being unserviceable. Of the other ten crews, nine landed safely at Base and Flying Officer Lou Somers did not return from this raid. Lou was very popular with all Squadron members and will be sorely missed.
- 25/6/43 Nine aircraft were detailed for a raid on GELSENKRICHEN. W/Cmdr Burnside crashed on take-off due to lack of brake pressure. F/Sgt Rodwell was a non-starter due to Guns being unserviceable. Of the other seven aircraft five only returned to Base. P/O Gagnon and F/Sgt Higgins D.F.M. are missing from this raid. These two Pilots were original members of the Squadron and will both be missed very much.
- 26/6/43 The Squadron had a stand down today to rest from its strenuous week's attacks on the Ruhr Valley during the past week.
- 27/6/43 The Squadron had another stand down today and it was appreciated by all Squadron members who were still played out by our previous five raids.
- 28/6/43 Nine aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on COLOGNE. P/O Morton returned to Chipping Warden after crossing the Dutch Coast due to his Starboard outer engine failing. P/O Crew and Sgt Henry, Sgt Johnson and F/Lt Tubman landed safely at Chipping Warden. Sgt Schmitt, landed wheels-up at Chipping Warden due to his undercarriage control as having been shot away by flak. F/Lt Ganderton and his crew baled out over England. On crossing the Coast on his way to the Target his aircraft was shot up very badly by an enemy fighter but he nursed it back to England, and not having enough controls left to effect a landing the whole crew baled out. Two members of the crew P/O Soeder and F/S Newcombe were taken to hospital with slight injuries. Sgt Biggs landed at Wing and P/O Arnot landed badly shot up by flak at Dunsdon.
- 29/6/43 No operations were scheduled this date. Crews who landed away from base all returned to base with exception of the two taken to Hospital.

30/6/43

No operations again scheduled for this date. Press men visited the Station to interview Flight Lieutenant Ganderton about his superb feat of airmanship. F/Sgt Edwards of Squadron Maintenance was posted.

3. Honours and Awards: Nil

4. Commissions:

J17501 W/O Crossman, G.T. (Navigator) appointed to Pilot Officer w.e.f. 29/4/43.

J17609 Sgt Tedford J.L. (WOP/AG) appointed to Pilot Officer w.e.f. 29/4/43.

145348 Sgt Perks G.D. (Pilot) appointed to Pilot Officer w.e.f. 9/3/43.

5. Promotions:

121801 A/F/Lt C.A. Taylor promoted to the rank of Acting S/Ldr w.e.f. 16/6/43.

142142 P/O G.P.T. Tubman, promoted to the rank of Acting F/Lt w.e.f. 17/6/43.

128408 P/O A/F/Lt L.D. Izzard promoted to the war subs. Rank of temporary F/O w.e.f. 25/1/43.

127509 P/O J.W. Moore, promoted to the war subs rank of temp F/O w.e.f. 8/2/43.

J15990 P/O W.L. Moyle, promoted to the war subs. rank of temp. F/O w.e.f. 21/3/43.

6. Postings:

J22488 P/O Low posted from 1659 C.U. w.e.f. 28/5/43

J14059 P/O B.A. St Louis posted from 1659 C.U. w.e.f. 28/5/43.

J20168 P/O A.C. Law posted from 1659 C.U. w.e.f. 28/5/43.

C3307 F/L G.F. Burton posted from Topcliffe w.e.f. 18/5/43.

J10353 F/O H.D. Reid posted from 1659 C.U. w.e.f. 10/6/43.

J14193 P/O A.M. Pariseau posted from 1659 C.U. w.e.f. 10/6/43.

- 1/7/43 The Squadron participated in a Dominion Day celebration in Ripen. No operations scheduled for this date. The CO started his leave and S/Ldr Earthrowl assumed Command of the Squadron. Three new Captains and their Crews settled down to their first day of Squadron Life. They are Sgt Olsvik, Sgt Cornelius, F/Sgt Champion. A dominion dinner was held in the Officer's Mess - Squadron Officers being present.
- 2/7/43 No bombing ops detailed for this day, but four kites detailed for gardening. The trip was carried out without incident but the aircraft landed away from base due to weather conditions. P/O Arnet and Crew and Sgt Henry and Crew landed at Benu Lieu. F/Sgt Champion and crew at Eastwood. P/O Williams and crew at Mincham.
- 3/7/43 Ten aircraft detailed for operations on Cologne - again !! P/O Crew, F/Sgt Johnson, Sgt Schmitt, P/O Williams, Sgt Henry, S/L Earthrowl, F/Lt Tubman, P/O Morton, P/O Arnot, F/Sgt Champion. P/O Crew returned early owing to hydraulic trouble. Henry, S/L Earthrowl, and P/O Arnot being non-starters. F/Sgt Champion returned after crossing Dutch Coast owing to trouble in gaining height. We suffered no losses.
- 4/7/43 Five aircraft detailed for an operation which was scrubbed before briefing. Sgt Henry returned from Beaulieu with "Y" after an absence of 4 days.
- 5/7/43 Ten aircraft were detailed for operations but old man weather turned against us again and ops were cancelled. Squadron personnel retreated to their respective Messes and enjoyed another free evening. Messrs. Earthrowl, Ganderton, Greening, Morrison, Chasenoff, etc., enjoyed themselves in the Officer's Mess with an evening of pool - at which they definitely excel.
- 6/7/43 Ten aircraft detailed for operations. This operation was cancelled early. Two new crews arrived from 1659 C.U. and 1654 C.U. They are F/O Baum and F/Sgt Countess. Two of our best Captains were promoted from P/O to F/Lt today. P/O "Dickey" Morton and P/O "Jersey" Crew. F/Lt Izzard left for a signals conference at Pershore - 427 Squadron signals leader being the only one invited from Group. P/O Dormand assumed Signal Leader's duties.
- 7/7/43 No ops detailed for this date. The two new crews settled down to their first day of Sqn life. - S/Ldr now Capt Carl Taylor, U.S.A.A.F. returned from leave in his brilliant new uniform. He resumed command of "B" Flight and carried on with work as though nothing had happened. S/Ldr Gill and F/Lt Armstrong has liaison officers from No 1 Radio School and No 24 O.T.U., arrived as visitors to the Squadron. They were taken under the wing of F/Lt Izzard and P/O Dormand who gave them the gen on how to be good lions. F/Sgt Rodwell and crew returned from leave looking as though they all had a "good time". Resting was the vogue for the day. P/O Pete Greening resumed eating - after a spell of fasting - the result of an "operation in Harrogate.

8/7/43

Ten aircraft were detailed for operations today, but were scrubbed about 18.15 S/Ildr Gill our visitor had a good look around the station and expressed his enthusiasm for our method of working. F/O Soeder (Red) returned from hospital where he has been since he bailed out. He still has a slight limp, but that didn't stop him getting around to the orderly room for a leave pass, etc. He is off to London to join the gang, F/Lt Ganderton and P/O Pete Greening - who went on leave earlier today. F/Sgt Champion and his crew, who are only recent members to the "Lion's" Den also went on leave today. In the evening there was a small party in the Officers Mess, when four Canadian girls went through an initiation ceremony - the "Flare Path". They all passed with flying colours.

9/7/43

S/Ildr Earthrowl went on leave today. 10 aircraft detailed to attack Gelsenkirchen. F/Sgt Rodwell returned early owing to his bomb/airmen being ill. Otherwise the Squadron completed another Rhur raid without losses. This raid, according to all reports, but an end to the Battle of the Rhur - in which we had a very active part.

10/7/43

F/Lt Izzard returned from a conference at Parnhore looking as though things were going well for us in the "Signal-line". We were the only operational Squadron to be represented - One up for 427. No operations were detailed for this date. F/O Vellum, left the Squadron having completed a tour of ops. He is now dishing out gen at 24 Q.T.U. Honeyborne. W/Cmdr Burnside returned from leave and again assumed command of the "Lion's".

11/7/43

No ops today. Squadron had a stand down. F/Sgt Johnson and F/Sgt Hughes were commissioned today. F/Sgt (Lana Turner) Johnson is an old member of the Squadron and one of our best pilots and Hughes is also a member of long standing. Meeting was the vogue for the day. F/Lt Ganderton was awarded the D.F.C. and also promoted to S/Ildr. He is on leave at the moment, but when he returns a party is indicated.

12/7/43

Operations were detailed for this date, but were cancelled later on. A very quiet day with nothing exceptional to report.

13/7/43

12 aircraft detailed to attack Aachen. Captains were W/Cdr Burnside, F/O Arnet, F/L Norton, F/Sgt Rodwell, Sgt Cornelius, (1st trip), Sgt Sobkovics (1st Trip) Capt Taylor, Sgt Olavik, Sgt Schmitt, P/O Williams, W/C Vandekerckhove, and F/Sgt Countess. Our only loss was Sgt Sobkovics - a new skipper. F/Sgt Rodwell returned early owing to engine trouble otherwise, it was a very good mission. Sgt Cornelius had a bad swing on take off and there were signs of relief when he straightened out and got airborne. Our old "Lion" the popular Rocky (Flare Path) Durocher, the Gunnery Leader, returned from hospital in the evening, with his foot still in plaster. He was looking very well and puts his healthy appearance down to the fact he has been on the wagon for a month. Quite a change for Rocky! F/O Soeder returned from leave, having had a quiet time, due to his foot having a "relapse".

- 14/7/43 Stand down today. The SIGNALS SECTION under the direction of F/L Izzard and P/O Dormand "organized" a dinner party with a drinking party to follow, which was held in the evening. The Squadron was well represented - W/Cmdr Burnside and all the Section Leaders being present. Jock's Cafe was the rendezvous and the meal according to the CO was "superb". The dinner was paid for from the proceeds of P/O Dizzy Dormand's "Lion's Den", the Squadron Cafe, which has been doing quite well recently. After dinner the "mob" adjourned to Jock's Dance Hall and proceeded to turn it into a "speak-easy" (427 type). F/Lt Izzard "made music" and various songs and verses were sung amid much beer, etc. F/Lt "Rocky" Durocher had his first "wetting" for a month and after an hour was back "in form". No damage was done and everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves.
- 15/7/43 Another quiet day. One new crew, Sgt Hallands and Crew, arrived from Croft, our old Station, so they will have the makings of good lions. F/L Ganderton, returned from leave and was very amazed to hear of his award. According to "Gandi", P/O Pete Greening (still on leave), couldn't keep the pace in London. Slacking Pete, - slacking!
- 16/7/43 Another stand down today. Weather was fairly good and air test and cross country trips were done by our new crews. The photographs arrived from M.G.M. and were issued to the members of the Squadron.
- 17/7/43 Once more a stand down was ordered. It was decided today to form a committee to organize a Squadron party. F/Lt Izzard was elected chairman, and F/Lt Hensby, treasurer. A meeting was held in the afternoon and a date was decided upon. Other members of the committee include F/O Clark, Capt Taylor, F/Sgt Dane, F/Lt Watkins, F/Lt Morrison, F/Lt Tubman, Sgt Withers. It was definitely established that this party will be held entirely for Squadron personnel and entry will be promulgated in Station Routine Orders. F/Lt Chas' went on leave, F/O Clark took over as Adjt.
- 18/7/43 Another quiet day with glorious weather. A fair amount of local flying was done and planes and their crews were on "top line" form. The Squadron is now in ship shape condition again, after the losses we suffered in the Battle of the Haur. F/Sgt Tony Rodwell, one of our English members, received his commission today. Also Sgt Fernand, another English member.
- 19/7/43 No Ops today, and rather poor weather. No flying. The various sections organized lectures and quite a few useful hours were put in - in this style. Nothing exceptional to report.

- 20/7/43 Again came the order - stand down. P/O Johnson returned from leave looking spruce in his new uniform. In the afternoon the Officers and Sergeants went to Badale cricket ground and had a return match in vain attempt to alter the score of the last game. This time the officers were subjected to a more severe beating, losing by a clear 40 runs. Sgt Withers, Sgt Young, Sgt Thompson, P/O Ross, P/O Williams and F/O Clark, seeming to be the leading lights of the game, although everyone put up a good show. F/Comdr Burnside our CO had a double but before we could see what he really was like, he was caught by Sgt Young. There was a little celebration in the evening in both the Officers and Sgts Mess. P/O Johnson was initiated into the "Leo Club".
- 21/7/43 A quiet day today. No operations scheduled. Everyone getting rather stale owing to long stand downs. Be glad to get operational again.
- 22/7/43 Sixteen aircraft detailed for operations which were cancelled shortly after briefing. Everyone looking relieved to be at work again. A quiet evening was spent by the crews - in their respective Messes.
- 23/7/43 Operations were detailed for this day but again there was an early scrub. Fortunately it was early enough for the chaps to go out and being a glorious day cycling and swimming, ending in the usual "noggin" was the vogue.
- 24/7/43 Today was the first stage of the Battle of Hamburg. 12 a/c were detailed for ops. This was one of the best ops. the Squadron has ever done. There were no "boomerangs" and no losses and according to the crews, Hamburg "had it". Crews participating in the raid were, S/L Northrowl, F/L Norton, F/O Arnott, P/O Rodwell, Sgt Cornelius, Sgt Riggs, Sgt Schmitt, F/O Williams, P/O Vandekerchove, P/O Johnson, Sgt Henry, P/L Crow.
- 25/7/43 Today eleven aircraft detailed to attack Essen. W/Comdr Burnside our CO led the attack in which P/O Rodwell, Sgt Cornelius, F/L Norton, Sgt Biggs, F/L Crew, Capt Taylor, Sgt Schmitt, P/O Williams, P/O Vandekerchove and Sgt Henry took part. There were two early returns. Capt Taylor and F/L Crew owing to engine trouble. The Rhur specialist, Sgt Schmitt pranged on landing, having had his undercarriage shot up. It was a very good prang as prangs go. The only damage was the undercarriage and a smashed prop. The crew escaped unhurt.
- 26/7/43 No bombing ops detailed for today, but two crews F/Sgt Champion and crew and P/O Johnson stood by until the evening for a sea search. They eventually got airborne and returned about six hours later having found nothing. Dingh's were found but in our crews area, there was nothing more than a mine and a German bouy to arouse their excitement. The rest of the Sqn enjoyed a stand down.

27/7/43

Fifteen aircraft today for ops. There were no "Boomerangs" and another 1st class op was accomplished by the "Lions". Crews said that Hamburg was beginning to look like Lorient - (our old favourite) - a night cross country - with the turning point lit up. W/Cmdr Piddington an ex Flight Commander of this Squadron was reported missing. F/Lt Chas' our Adjutant returned from leave looking weary, his usual radiant smile - must have done well at the races (etc).

28/7/43

Stand down today. Crews enjoyed the rest, and glorious weather made swimming and sun-bathing very popular. The "Rocky Mountaineers" operated in Harrogate and a good time was had by all. Groundcrew boys had a chance to get kites serviceable. Credit must be given where it is due and on this Squadron, it is certainly due to them. "Keep 'um Flying boys".

29/7/43

Fifteen aircraft today again attacked Hamburg. This was our 3rd attack and as good as the rest. We didn't lose any kites but the bocke suffered one down and one probable, after having attacked P/O Vandekerchove and crew. Sgt McLean the rear-gunner deserves credit for this feat, as Jerry's night fighter boys are generally not so dumb. On being credited with a probable, Sgt Williamson the Nav declared - "Jonz, they never give you anything in this outfit". McLean replied, - "O.K. Willie, I'll get you another one next time." There were no turn backs and everyone declared - a "gem op".

30/7/43

More work again today when 12 aircraft were scheduled for operations against the Rhur. W/Cmdrs Burnside again let the attack which was a two target affair. Later reduced to one. Also taking part were F/L Morton, P/O Arnott, Sgt Nesfurber, Sgt Cornelius P/Sgt Champion, Sgt Welch, F/S Biggs, Sgt Clevik, F/L Crew, Cpl Taylor and Sgt Walton. Sgt Cornelius non-starter. Our first loss for quite a while occurred tonight when Sgt Westerberg - an Australian Pilot and his crew - failed to return. It was their first trip. F/Lt Izzard, the popular Signal's Leader and organizer of our Squadron party, which we hope to hold shortly, left for London on the scrounge for dresses and "Shekels" to put on a show worthy of the Lions.

31/7/43

Once again came the order for ops. This time only seven aircraft were detailed. This op was scrubbed just before take off, when a violent storm struck the camp. Nothing special to report except crews who were not flying enjoyed a well earned day-off, which was spent in sleeping.

1/8/43

A stand down today came as welcome news to our tired crews. On the other hand the satisfaction of knowing they had flattened Hamburg called for a little celebration and also today was August Bank Holiday, so for the majority, groundcrew and aircrew, took flight and enjoyed a field day spent amid beautiful weather. Sgt Schmitt and his "Happy Valley" crew, set off to bust England "wide open" for seven days. F/Lt Izzard returned from smoke with enough clothes for the Squadron to have a fancy dress ball.

2/8/43

Once again the squadron was a hive of activity and again the target was Hamburg. Thirteen aircraft were detailed for this attack which according to the crews was a definite "prang" but not on the actual spot they were meant to prang. Reason for this was bad weather. P/O Vandekerchove and his crew had a "shaky do" and credit should go to Van for the way he handled his machine. The constant speed unit on his starboard outer went u/s and on top of that he had heavy icing. Owing to the drag on the starboard side the machine became very hard to control and the machine came down to 4,000 ft over the Kiel canal. After having a conference, the crew without any exception decided to stay with the ship and try and get her home, which after a hard struggle they did. Clouds reaching to 20,000 ft made flying very hazardous but none of our aircraft were missing. There were four boomerangs - F/Lt Tubman, Sgt Wolton, F/Sgt Champion and Sgt Holland owing to wing trouble. In the afternoon a dress rehearsal for the Squadron party was held. Under the supervision of F/L Izzard this was an enormous success and the Station Commander, Group Captain Plant, voiced his approval.

3/8/43

In the afternoon two aircraft captained by F/S Milton and P/O Weston departed on a Sea Search. They completed their mission with nothing exceptional to report. In the evening there were two "Bullseyes" - F/O Baum and F/Sgt Countess - being the two skippers. This evening also saw the crowning achievement of our Squadron social life. We held our first real party, which differed from the others in the fact that every member of the Squadron had the opportunity to be present, whereas before the "shows" were purely sectional. Prompt at 7.30 the gang began to arrive at the N.A.A.F.I. which had been "lent" to us for the evening. Airmen and airwomen brought their own drinking utensils and the bar soon began, to look like Stalingrad at the height of the seige.

The "Mountaineers" etc., (unfortunately the famous Rocky couldn't lead them) arrived in force from the Officer's Mess about half an hour later and were soon doing "thug-a-lugs" in grand style. Dancing, singing and thirst quenching went on until 9.00 p.m. when a stand down was called and everyone settled down to enjoy the cabaret. Incidentally, a little panic was caused when the leading lady failed to appear until 8 minutes before the show was due to start. F/L Izzard had visions of a re-write on this show but his fears were abandoned when she "just made it". W.A.A.F.S. taking part were unfortunately S.H.Q. personnel, but they put on a grand show. Sgt Cal - Calcutt of the armoury - L.A.C. Ozad and L.A.C. Watkin were the leading lights and Ozad looked very professional in evening dress, when facing the mob as compere. The music and lyrics were written by F/L Izzard, who was also producer of the show.

Izzy certainly has a talent here which could do with a little exploitation. Who knows, we may have another Noel Coward on our hands. Anyway, the whole effort turned out into a "roaring" success by piece of the good spirit and moral of the Lions. Order was kept and everyone dispersed to their dens about midnight, happy and contented. Thanks are due to F/L Nensby, the treasurer, F/Sgt Dann for his ticket organization and free cigarettes, and to the whole cast of the show who worked hard in their spare time in order to entertain us.

- 4/8/43 Weather was bad today and a stand down was called. Personnel enjoyed a rest, which enabled many of them to recover from their (unusual?) activities of the evening before. There was no local flying and ground crews were able to bring the service-ability up to scratch.
- 5/8/43 Another stand down due to weather. Resting was the vogue. A party of W/Ops under the supervision of P/O Keen, C.G.M., D.F.M. took off for Hull to visit the radio station there. After the official visit was over, the boys split up and enjoyed unofficial visits to various parts of York which seems to be very popular with the Lions.
- 6/8/43 Five planes detailed for a bullseye tonight. Sgt Deegan, F/Sgt Milton, Sgt Brady, Sgt Fletcher and F/Sgt Buxton were the skippers. The rest of the Squadron enjoyed another stand down.
- 7/8/43 Rain poured down all day and everyone kept indoors as much as possible. Our Adjutant, F/L Chasanoff departed for a day off and F/O Clark took over his duties. Lectures on training etc., took place and new members to the Squadron had a busy day getting the gun on how to be good Lions.
- 8/8/43 Fourteen aircraft detailed for operations today against Italy, which unfortunately was scrubbed due to weather conditions. Aircrews were agog with excitement at the opportunity of going on the Squadron's first long stooge, and are certainly looking forward to the next time this chance occurs. Sgt Duncanson, our engineer leader, was commissioned, after a long wait. He certainly deserves it, having worked hard in his section.
- 9/8/43 Nine aircraft for operations tonight against Mannheim. There were three "boomerangs" owing to wing and snags and the rest of the aircraft returned. Sgt Biggs and crew baled out over Reading after bombing their target and being shot up by a night fighter. They all landed more or less safely only bomb aimer, Sgt Richards, sprained his ankle. Today, also saw a farewell party in both the officers' and Sergeants' Messes for our sister squadron, 408 who are leaving this station to do "bigger things".
- 10/8/43 Once again ops were on and this time we mustered 11 a/c. Tonight's attack was on Nurnburg, one of the longest trips we have done.
- All our a/c returned back to the country okay. P/O Williams being the only skipper to bring his kite home to base. This has no reflection on the other boys as they received a definite diversion.

- 11/8/43 Stand down today. Usual infiltrations through the main gate - navigational pointers indicating that Harrogate and Darlington were about to be attacked. Nothing exceptional to report.
- 12/8/43 A great day for the squadron. Today 9 crews were detailed to attack Italy - strangely enough they were 9 of our cub crews but according to all reports, they certainly made the "Italite" think that judgement day had come. Once again 427 was widely dispersed over England on return. One of our aircraft even going as far as landing in North West Africa. This machine was captained by F/Sgt Countess who deserves credit for this feat. One of his engines was put out of action making it impossible to gain enough height to cross the Alps, so instead of baling out they made a rough course for the African coast with which F/Sgt Countess is familiar, having been stationed in the Middle East, a safe landing was made and the return is eagerly awaited by the Squadron when "W" lands "bombed up" with fruit, etc.
- 13/8/43 Moon period - hence the call - "nothing doing". Once more Harrogate and Darlington were severely pranged. Most of the crews spent their time resting and "genning up" on their "indoor sport".
- 14/8/43 Usual Moon period stand down. Today on reading the London Times, S/Ldr Earthrowl discovered that he had been awarded the D.F.C. In the evening there was much rejoicing and hand shaking and the officers mess, to say nothing of the "gong" wetting.
- 15/8/43 No operations today but four aircraft were detailed for a "bullseye". This was carried out successfully, with no boobs, making four new crews ready for the "fray". The rest of the Squadron spent their time having a quiet Sunday.
- 16/8/43 A great day for P/O Davis Ross, P/O Vandekerckhove and P/O Dizzy Dormand. These boys all original members of the "Lions" Squadron received B.F.C.'s. Owing to the fact that "Davis" was away at the time, celebrations were postponed. There were no ops scheduled today and the local hide-out, "the Willow Tree", famous in the Squadron Song, was as usual over-flowing.
- 17/8/43 After a spell of resting, crews were glad to hear that familiar call - "ops on". Thirteen were detailed to attack the radio-experimental station at Peenemunde, a small village on the Baltic coast. We suffered one loss - Sgt Brady - a new skipper. Air Marshal Harris, C.-in-C. Bomber Command, congratulated us on this "prang" and according to all reports our particular wave did the most damage to the lot. This trip saw the end of a tour for Sgt Schmitt and his crew - the first original crew to be screened on this squadron. The rest of our aircraft returned safely, after some of them having tussels with night fighters. Sgt Schmitts parting gift was a Fock Wolfe 190 which was shot down by his rear-gunner, Sgt. Stubby McNamara.

- 18/8/43 Air Ministry saw fit to stand the lads down after their terrific performance the night before, and this was well appreciated by all crews. Judging by their gaiety in both messes.
- 19/8/43 Eleven aircraft were detailed for operations, but were scrubbed earlier on, due to weather conditions being below par - more signs of relief from 77 aviators to say nothing about the ground crews.
- The "Gansters" got together, i.e. (Dizzy, Davy and Van). One would have thought they'd had 'em for months judging by the state of their ribbons. Its marvellous how faded a ribbon can look after two or three pints have been jettioned on them.
- 20/8/43 Weather still not up to scratch so no flying was scheduled. Pool tables in either messes worked overtime.
- 21/8/43 Still more duff weather though not duff enough to stop the boys from visiting the big cities. No aviating for today.
- 22/8/43 Operations detailed for 13 aircraft on a brand new target namely Leverkusen, preliminary report indicate a good pranging. We suffered no losses, just to show no ill feeling we took three "converted" skippers from our new stable companions, i.e. 429, they should be well clued up after flying second string to "Call" Taylor, "Tubby" Tubman and "Indian Schmitt".
- 23/8/43 Seventeen aircraft set off for a raid on Berlin. To reimburse the dwindling numbers of serviceable aircraft, three kites were borrowed for the occasion from No 429, presently non-operational, manned by Lions. F/S Champion and P/O Milton were not destined to share in the glory of this attack, and were forced to abandon their task, due to the conking of port outer engine and the unserviceability of the rear turret guns, respectively. Unfortunately, two of our crews failed to return - F/O Baum and Sgt Cornelius - and although the powers "up high" were satisfied with the devastation left behind by our aircraft - the loss of these two up and coming crews, was a bad blow to the Lions. Apparently the boys are encountering terrific opposition from night-fighters these days and that Jerry is finally pulling his aircraft out of the ice-box. This is no doubt an indication, that this type of defence will be encountered in future, and to expect heavy losses.
- 24/8/43 Good old Yorkshire weather! Featuring a drizzle from early morning until well after bed-time, kept the boys within the confines or within a radius of easy reach of the camp. No flying however, of any description was carried on.
- 25/8/43 Recent arrivals at the Squadron were initiated into their respective aircraft by being detailed for a cross-country. Three crews participated, Sgt Deegan, F/O Pery-Knox-Core, and F/O Cribb.

26/8/43

Notification of immediate award of the D.F.M. to Sgt Biggs, Sgt Elliott and Sgt Moyler was received this date from Air Ministry. These were awarded for the devotion to duty of the airmen concerned, after being attacked by an enemy fighter on August 9th. Vide Form 541. The skipper, F/S Riggs, had been recommended for his actions for the award of the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal, but the powers that be, apparently were not in agreement.

27/8/43

Thirteen aircraft were detailed for a raid on Nurnberg. All crews pranged the target excepting that of "F for Freddie" piloted by Sgt Buxton, whose Flight Engineer had a case of "cold feet" and only after he fell unconscious did the skipper abandon his task. Sgt Hilton has been recommended to be removed from flying duties due to the lack of confidence and moral fibre. This is not entirely a fault to be placed on the individual concerned, but rather upon the "production line" methods with which Flight Engineers who have been employed solely on ground duties for a long period of time, are within a matter of three or four weeks - in some cases, from the time of their first flip in an aircraft - placed on operations.

28/8/43

Again inclement weather conditions prevented any flying training to be carried out by our new crews. No ops were scheduled for this date.

29/8/43

One of the Lions' crack pilots met with an unfortunate accident this date. Assigned to transport three Fitters in the Station Exford to Ford in order that one of our diverted Halifaxes could be repaired, ran into a low ceiling and on reducing altitude to locate his bearing, crashed against the side of a hill 25 miles U.E. of Lancaster killing the pilot and the three passengers - all Canadians. It seems ironic that Sgt Henry, a very capable pilot who has faced the enemy on 18 raids over enemy territory, totalling 111:21 operational hours, should meet this end.

30/8/43

Fourteen aircraft were detailed for a raid on Munchen-Gladbach. F/L Morton and crew were non-starters. Sgt Doegan abandoned his task when his rear gunner reported that all guns in the turret were u/s, and the navigator proved that he could not operate with only a flashlight for a guide, when the light in his compartment went u/s. Sgt Wolton returned early also, after his inter-com became unserviceable. The remaining aircraft reached the target area, and thoroughly pranged "unpronounceable" leaving fires which were visible for over 100 miles on the outward journey. Unfortunately, Sgt Buxton's Halifax failed to return from this operation.

.../39

31/8/43

Twelve aircraft were detailed for raid on Burlin. Sgt Welch returned early due to rear turret unserviceability, and Sgt Holland abandoned task due to inability of WOP/AG to receive oxygen. The remaining aircraft proceeded to the target, and although reports would indicate that this raid was not nearly as concentrated as the last on this target, Berlin was still left a mass of burning fires. A bad blow to the Squadron was the loss of P/O Vandekerckhove who failed to return from this operation. He was one of the best liked members of this squadron, both with officers and men alike. His light-heartedness and cheerful personality was an inspiration to everyone. Only recently did he receive the D.F.C. for "at all times displaying fine airmanship and determination of the very highest order". Had Van been able to complete this sortie, he would have completed his first tour of operations.

3. Honour and Awards: During this month the Distinguished Flying Cross were awarded to S/Ldr C.H. Karthrowl, Pilot Officers P. Dormand, D.B. Ross, G.P. Vandekerckhove and also P/Os E.F. Flanagan and G.T. Crossman received DFCs for duties while on this Squadron. The Distinguished Flying Medals were awarded to Sergeants P. Biggs, J. Elliott and L.E. Moyler.

4. Commissions:

J18175 Sgt G.W. Heselton, (A/B) appointed to Pilot Officer wef 9/5/43  
J18117 Sgt W.P. Suter, (WOP/AC) appointed to Pilot Officer wef 11/7/43  
J18121 Sgt W.H. Schmitt, (Pilot) appointed to Pilot Officer wef 31/3/43  
148833 Sgt Duncanson, RA (F/E) appointed to Pilot Officer wef 5/4/43

- 1/9/43 All aircraft which were diverted to West Malling, Kent, from previous night's Operation returned to base safely. Due to fact that the Squadron had operation on two proceeding night's a "stand down" was ordered, and due to head weather and poor visibility no day flying was possible.
- 2/9/43 A good response was made by Squadron Personnel to the appeal for blood donors made by the blood transfusion team re-visiting Leeming. Six aircraft detailed for MINELAYING Operations. Two aircraft returned early due to U/S Goons. The funerals were carried out for Sergeant Henry, Cpls Holt, Keighan and AC1 Davies, killed in a flying accident at SEDBURGH Westmorland. Internment being made at Holwood cemetery, Haarogate at 1400 hours. Large party of Bearers and personnel from the Squadron attended. Cpt C.A. Taylor and P/O E. Williams and their respective crews were screened from operations upon completion of their first tour. More postings of Groundcrew to the Tactical Air Force effected.
- 3/9/43 No operations activity by Squadron - "Total stand down". Information received that Wing Commander R.S. Turnbull, DFM is coming to take over command of Squadron from "Wing Commander D.H. Burnside, DFC & Bar, on posting to Headquarters Bomber Command. At pay parade all Squadron personnel contributed towards a gift for Wing Commander Burnside. F/Lt Morton & Crew screened from operations today.
- 4/9/43 No operations were scheduled for today and the Squadron had another stand down. In the evening the Officers of the Squadron took Wing Commander Burnside into Ripon for an informal farewell party. Reports indicated that the party was an unqualified success. There were further groundcrew postings out and the situation was becoming critical respecting the manning position of the Squadron. The Adjutant on contacting records at Gloucester was informed that the personnel had to proceed as ordered due to a shortage of surplus of personnel available for postings.
- 5/9/43 Squadron parade was held and the Adjutant F/Lt Chasenoff presented gifts of a silver plate, a wrist watch and a travelling bag to Wing Commander and Mrs. Burnside as a farewell token of the esteem in which Wing Commander Burnside was held by the Squadron.
- 5/9/43 These gifts were paid for by the voluntary subscription by all members of the Squadron. Two new crews captained by Sgts Darlow and Dressler reported to the Squadron. Twelve aircraft were detailed for operations against MANNHEIM. All the aircraft successfully took off but F/S Caldwell returned early due to engine trouble. Ten of the remaining eleven successfully bombed the target and nine returned to base. F/Lt Laird landed at Boscombe Don with one engine badly shot up. Crews reported numerous fighters and a good prang. F/S Fletcher is missing from this operation. Wing Commander Burnside departed on his posting to Bomber Command Headquarters.

6/9/43

Wing Commander R.S. Turnbull arrived and took over command of the Squadron. Ten aircraft were detailed for operations - Target MUNICH. All the aircraft took off successfully. Two aircraft returned early to base due to technical trouble. Two other aircraft returned early to bases in the South also due to technical trouble. The other four aircraft landed at Manston. Two aircraft were missing from this operation. P/O Biggs DFM and Flying Officer Perry-Knox-Gore. The loss of these two Captains will be a serious blow to the Squadron. Biggs being an original member of the Squadron and Perry-Knox-Gore showing enough stuff in the short time he was with us to convince all that he was ace material.

7/9/43

After operation to Mannheim and Munich on successive nights, the Squadron had a stand down today. F/Lt Ganderton DFC, was promoted to the rank of Squadron Leader on taking over command of "B" Flight. A party was accordingly held in North Allerton at the Station hotel to celebrate this promotion and preliminary reports indicate a successful operation.

8/9/43

Eight aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack on BERLIN but this operation was scrubbed due to weather. Italy capitulate and suitable celebrations were held in both the Sergeants and Officer's Messes at which Lion Squadron personnel played a prominent part. Three crews captained by P/O Harrison, P/O Murray and Sgt Mawson, reported to the Squadron. This date the Inspector General of the R.A.F. visited the Station.

9/9/43

Squadron Leader H. Francis of Croft visited the Squadron today for the purpose of interviewing F/Sgt Dan with a view to posting him as Station Warrant Officer at R.C.A.F. Croft. Ten aircraft were scheduled for operations against BERLIN again but at the last minute this operation was also scrubbed.

10/9/43

Rain all day and no operations were scheduled. Wing Commander Turnbull addressed all the aircrew NCO's of the Squadron. Some of the Officers of the Squadron made a low level attack on Leeds with the Aueen's hotel as aiming point.

11/9/43

The weather continued unfavourable and no operations were scheduled for this date. A Squadron sports conference was held which the YMCA supervisor and Station Sports Officer attended with a view to organize Squadron Sports. F/Lt G. Laird and F/L D.M. Arnet were appointed Squadron Sports Officers and it was decided that sports to be concentrated on would be Volleyball and Soft ball.

12/9/43

Weather continued unfavourable and no operations were scheduled for this date. Intimation received of award of DFC's to F/Lt B.G. Crew, P/O G.B. Whyte and P/O E.A. Johnson also award of D.F.M. to F/S Carleton. This occasion was marked by festivities in the respective messes during the evening.

- 13/9/43 Weather continued unfavourable this date and also due to the moon period, no operations were scheduled for this date. Intensive ground training was carried out in all sections to get up the new crews.
- 14/9/43 Weather continued unsuitable and no operations were scheduled. F/Lt J.E. Durocher, Squadron Gunnery Leader, just returned to this Squadron after being away for more than two months. His foot that had been injured on operations by a machine gun bullet was completely healed.
- 15/9/43 Our aircraft that landed in North Africa returned to camp. The members of the crew brought back some fresh fruit which were distributed to all Squadron personnel. Thirteen aircraft were detailed for operations against the rubber factory at MONTLUCON. Three of the aircraft returned early due to various troubles and the other ten aircraft successfully bombed the target. Sgt Chabinoff and crew crashed at West Drayton on the way home and all the personnel were killed. The remaining aircraft all landed successfully at base.
- 16/9/43 Nine aircraft were detailed for operations against MODANE (Italy). One aircraft returned early. The other eight aircraft successfully bombed the target and all landed at Bassingbourne due to adverse weather conditions at Base with exception of one which landed at Coningsby.
- 17/9/43 Weather was very duff this date and aircraft could not return to base. F/Sgt Caldwell and Crew were posted to No 3 Group.
- 18/9/43 Weather cleared and the Aircraft returned from Bassingbourne. No operations were scheduled for this date.
- 19/9/43 No operations were scheduled for this date. Intensive air and ground training was conducted in all sections including practice bombing, fighter affiliation and air to air firing. P/O A. Rodwell was promoted to the rank of Acting Flight Lieutenant.
- 20/9/43 No operations scheduled for this date. Intensive training program was conducted today both ground and air. P/O J. Weston was promoted to the rank of Acting Flight Lieutenant. Sgt Johnie Duval was appointed to commissioned rank. The advance party proceeded to Skipton to arrange for the reception of the main body of personnel who would be proceeding on the 21st subject to operations. Three crews reported in this date - Two from Croft and one from Topcliffe.

21/9/43

Squadron groundcrew moved to Skipton and the aircraft were flown down in the morning of this date. Sgt F.J. Thompson WOP/AG was appointed to a commission this date. No operations were scheduled for this date and this helped materially in causing the more to go off as planned. Funeral of F/O Wells, Sgts Chibanoff & Frost took place this date at Brookwood Cemetery, and Sgt Potts was buried at Knaresborough. S/Ldr Griffiths Station Padre repesented as at the Funeral at Brookwood and P/O R.J. Hayhurst DFC at Knaresborough.

30/9/43

Twelve aircraft detailed for operations this date. Operation scrubbed at 1300 hrs. F/S Countess (Pilot) appointed to commissioned rank this date.

3. Honour and Awards: During the month of September the Distinguish Flying Corss were awarded to F/L B.G. Crew and P/O G.B. Whyte - also the Distinguish Flying Medal to Sergeant Carleton.

4. Commissions:

J18359 P/O J.P. Duval appointed to Pilot Officer wef 14/7/43  
J18387 P/O D.O. Olsvik, appointed to Pilot Officer wef 5/8/43  
J18418 P/O J.L.J. Fontaine (WOP/AG) appointed to Pilot Officer wef 9/5/43  
J18508 P/O R.E. Countess (Pilot) appointed to Pilot Officer wef 11/9/43  
156268 P/O F.J. Thompson (A/B) appointed to Pilot Officer wef 16/7/43  
156386 P/O R.S. Thompson (WOP/AG) appointed to Pilot Officer wef 15/8/43  
155970 P/O F.D. Smith, (A/G) appointed to Pilot Officer wef 11/7/43  
156550 P/O J.A. McClune, F/E) appointed to Pilot Officer wef 9/8/43  
156417 P/O J.T. Rogerson (WOP/AG) appointed to Pilot Officer wef 15/8/43  
160104 P/O J.B. Arl A/B appointed to Pilot Officer wef 14/7/43

5. Promotions.

J10133 F/O A/F/Lt V.F. Ganderton promoted to A/S/Ldr wef 1/9/43  
J21911 P/O M.L. Joyce promoted to War subs rank of F/O wef 25/3/43  
J20079 P/O P.J. Kennedy, promoted to War subs rank of F/O wef 23/4/43  
J22671 P/O W. Weston, promoted to A/F/Lt wef 7/9/43  
139642 P/O D.B. Ross, promoted to War subs rank of F/O wef 30/6/43  
51503 P/O P. Dormand, promoted to War subs rank of F/O wef 14/8/43  
146994 P/O A. Rodwell, promoted to A/F/Lt wef 25/8/43

- 1/10/43 13 Aircraft were detailed for Ops this date but operations were scrubbed during the afternoon.
- 2/10/43 Stand down for Squadron this date and intensive training program both in the air and on ground was carried out.
- 3/10/43 Fifteen aircraft detailed for ops this date. One A/C "W" LK637 piloted by F/L Laird was attacked by enemy aircraft at 2010 hrs while crossing the enemy coast on the outward journey. P/O Rogerson and WOP/AG and P/O Findlay the Rear Gunner, were killed by cannon shell fire and Sgt Cardy the F/Eng was critically wounded. The aircraft was forced to return to base as a result of this attack and under carriage was found to be locked up. The Captain was instructed by R/T to abandon ship. The under-carriage was however downed and a skillful bit of piloting brought the aircraft down without further mishap.
- The remaining fourteen aircraft bombed their objective, KASSEL, and returned safely. P/O Biddiscombe, the Navigator in P/O Cozen's crew, was wounded by a piece of shrapnel after his aircraft was heavily engaged by enemy ground defences over the target area.
- 4/10/43 Twelve aircraft were detailed for operations against Frankfurt. It was only the full cooperation of all the ground crew personnel that enabled the 12 kites to become airborne, and for this effort the ground crews were highly commended by the Wince. Eleven aircraft successfully bombed the target and upon returning to England six of that number, were diverted to various bases in the south. No news has been received of a missing aircraft "J for Johnny", and as a result W/O Champion and crew have been listed as missing. F/Lt Izzard departed to attend a Signals Conference at R.A.F. Moreton-in-the-Marsh.
- 5/10/43 Four aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack against Germany but this operation was scrubbed due to inclement weather conditions. Some of the aircraft returned to base from their diversion bases of the previous evening.
- 6/10/43 Eight aircraft were detailed for operations but this was also scrubbed due to duff weather. This marked the fourth consecutive day the Squadron has been detailed for operations. The remaining aircraft who had been diverted during the raid on Frankfurt, some of which returned yesterday, came back to base.
- 7/10/43 A stand down for the Squadron this date. Two night cross countries were arranged and carried out.
- 8/10/43 Eleven aircraft were detailed for operations against Hanover this date. One aircraft, Sergeant Kelly and crew failed to return and has been listed as missing. Two aircraft returned early due to technical defects, the remaining eight aircraft having bombed their target, landed at diversion dromes in the south. Information received today to the effect that Sergeant Henry who was recently killed in a flying accident, has been posthumously been appointed to commissioned rank.

- 9/10/43 No operations scheduled for this date. Aircraft who had diverted from the raid the previous evening were forced to remain put, as visibility was very limited. The Winco assumed Command of the Station in the absence of Gp Capt Plant.
- 10/10/43 Weather continued to be unfavourable - visibility poor - and as a result the aircraft were again unable to return from diversion bases. No aircraft were scheduled for ops. W/C Turnbull in his capacity as Station Commander proceeded to 6 Group HQ to meet the Canadian High Commissioner for Eire.
- 11/10/43 Ideal flying weather prevailed throughout the day but no kites were scheduled for operations. Personnel removed to Skipton for the past few weeks while the runway was being repaired at Leeming, took advantage of the lull, to return to home base. Notwithstanding, aircrews journeyed to nearby targets and proceeded to thoroughly drench themselves in fragrant English brews, leaving a wide area of devastation at all the objectives that were pranged.
- 12/10/43 Though "old sol" favoured the environs of Leeming with all its splendour, a further day of stand down was declared. Personnel both aircrew and groundcrew alike, found it difficult to concentrate at their respective duties as serenity reigned throughout the entire squadron and it was reported that it was actually possible to be heard once again. It is quite safe to say that even the drop of a pin was easily distinguished from the drop of W/O Oakander's false dentures. This period of calm was occasioned when our self-styled "mad adj.", the dynamic, bellowing, boisterous Chas' departed for London this morning for a few days so called Temporary duty. In his absence, F/O "Knobby" Clark has assumed the duties of Adjutant, and as on other occasions, is doing a masterful job.
- F/L Don Morrison one of the veterans of the Squadron and bombing leader since the formation, was toasted to a farewell party by his mess-mates this evening, who much to the displeasure of all who knew him, has been posted to a Con Unit at Dalton. The highlight of the brawl occurred when Knobby Clark was able to part S/L Earthrowl with a few of his "shekels" towards the purchase of a "down-the-hatch". Knobby reports that when Earthrowl pulled out his bulging wallet in payment of this crowning achievement last year's "cob-webbs" were still to be found amidst the masses of notes.
- 13/10/43 A treasured possession of the Lions was received this date in the form of a letter signed by Winston Churchill, in response to our request to adopt one of the Prime Minister's lions, presently being displayed in the Regent's Park Zoo. It reads as follows: "I was very pleased to hear on my return to this country that the Lion Squadron of the Royal Canadian Air Force had made the suggestion that the Squadron should adopt "Mareth" one of the lion cubs at the zoo. "With every good wish for the success of your squadron".

Yours very faithfully,  
(Sgd) Winston Churchill

Typical "liquified" sunshine prevailed throughout the day and another free day was declared for the Lions. Aircrew who were desirous, were transported to Reipon where they enjoyed bathing in the spacious indoor swimming pool.

14/10/43

The day began with an overcast sky becoming rapidly fair or fine in the forenoon and continuing as such until a slight mist came up in the evening. Notwithstanding, the excellent flying weather, again no aircraft were called for operations. However, aircrews took advantage of this lull to participate in an intensive flying training program which was led by the Winco, consisting of air tests of every description and engaging every available aircraft.

In the afternoon the station was honoured by a visit by the Duchess of Gloucester who inspected our charming array of W.A.A.F. personnel. The noted visitor was later entertained at tea in the Officers' Mess, at which time several prominent members of the Lions were introduced to her. It's surprising to note how well mannered our boys can be when the occasion requires it.

15/10/43

Cloudy weather prevailed throughout the day with a slight amount of fog and rain appearing in the morning. A stand down was again declared. Knobby Clark relinquished his position as adjutant and was relieved by F/O Cruikshanks. Through the medium of the London Times, (four former Lions whose recommendations for awards originated from this unit for their outstanding work with the Squadron over their operational period,) we were advised of the awards of the D.F.C. to P/O Schmitt, P/O Fernand, and F/L Tubman, and the D.F.M. to P/O MacNamara, all the recipients having very recently completed a tour of operations.

Bedlum again returned to the Mess this evening after the past few tranquil days, during which time everyone was in a state of confusion, and things are again running under normal conditions as known only to the Lions. Reason? F/L Chasanoff dragged his bulky frame through the portals of the Officer's Quarters, returning from his two day sojourn in London.

16/10/43

With a fanfare of trumpets and the rumble of drums the whole station was assembled on the parade square to participate in the award of the S.P.M. (a hitherto unheard of decoration) by the Group Captain, to several members of the Squadron. These were the fruits of the splendid achievement of the station softball team and the award in question, the Softball Playing Medal, was a presentation of the Y.M.C.A. Already the members of the team are making plans in an effort to secure a bar to that coveted decoration.

Overcast skies persisted throughout the day turning to fog at first and becoming misty in the forenoon, and as a result no kites were called for.

17/10/43

The periodic "Flarepath", an occasion when all Squadron tenderfeet officers are initiated, came off last night. During the course of the festivities, more uniforms were saturated with the brew, than was actually consumed. In the forefront again came "Chas" the Adjt", who in his own inimitable style showed the sprogs how simple it was to balance a mug of beer on the noggin while at the same time coordinating with mind, body, and battling against inebriation to proceed through a "flarepath" of beer glasses. What a man our adjt.

A great deal of shouting aminating from No. 2 hangar was sufficient to start a steady stream of airmen to the scene of the confusion, only to find a disorganized game of "touch" rugby in progress as only the game can be played by Canucks. The orderly room staff who were somewhat harrassed by the thought of having to compile "self-inflicted injury forms" were fortunately not called upon.

No operations were called for this date, and in keeping with the sentiments of the powers that be, the weatherman complied with a steady drizzle which continued throughout the whole morning and part of the afternoon, becoming fair to cloudy in the evening.

18/10/43

Overcast skies continued throughout the morning accompanied by fog at first and changing to fair with slight mist in the afternoon. Stand down was the order of the day. F/L Arnet as chairman of the Anniversary Party Committee began assembling members of the committee in preparation for the forthcoming event. The party is scheduled for Nov 10th in commemoration of the completion of 1 year's successful operations, and if it proves as successful an affair as is anticipated, it will definitely surpass any "do" the Lions have as yet undertaken.

An intensive training program was carried out throughout the day, featuring air to air, air to sea, and fighter affiliation exercises, which after this period of operational idleness, was a very welcome break.

19/10/43

Favourable weather conditions prevailed throughout the day until about 1700 hrs when a drizzle broke through the clear sky and continued through until morning. Fourteen aircraft were detailed for operations, but were scrubbed in the late afternoon. F/L Chasanoff departed on a goodwill mission to Naburn Military Hospital to visit F/O "Red" Soedar who is speedily recovering from Jaundice.

20/10/43

Weather was somewhat improved today beginning fair to cloudy with slight mist and closing with light showers in the afternoon. It is apparent that winter is rapidly closing in and already a variety of turtle-neck sweaters are the fashion.

In keeping with the rapid rise of the O.C. from the ranks to his present position, information was received to the effect that the Winco had been promoted to the rank of Temporary Wing Commander, ante-dated to 6/11/42.

20/10/43 cont'd A soccer match between the officers and NCO's aircrew took the limelight this afternoon during the operational lull. The NCO's overwhelmed the disorganized officers' team to the tune of 10-2. The biggest laugh of the whole tussle occurred when O.C. "B" Flight, S/Ldr Ganderton appearing in neatly pressed and pleated battledress, began voicing his qualifications and skill at the game. Soon after the soliloquy a few short moments after the kick-off whistle had blown, he tripped and found himself neatly in the centre of a well formed oasis with the aforementioned dress covered from head to foot in mud and gleaming readiness peering through his virtually black countenance.

21/10/43 In keeping with the recent appeal by the Canadian government for the forthcoming Victory Loan drive, the adjutant began in earnest in an effort to put the Lions in the forefront in contributions, by personally interviewing A-F in the alphabet of all aircrew personnel. It is desired to continue the interviews until each individual of the Squadron is personally approached.

F/L B.G. "Jersey" Crew D.F.C. and his crew were screened from operations on completion of the 1st tour.

22/10/43 Sixteen aircraft were detailed for operations against Kassel and as many became airborne at an extremely early hour. "R" returned early due to an oxygen failure in the mid-upper turret as a result of which the M/U gunner passed out. "V" abandoned task after three generators in engines had become unserviceable. "Q" returned early due to an oil pressure drop. "Y"'s port outer constant speed unit became unserviceable and as a result pilot decided to abandon task. "K" crossed the enemy coast off track due to 1/10th heavy cloud up to 20,000 feet which reduced visibility to nil. Soon after crossing the coast enemy defences consisting of accurate intense heavy flak opened up and holed "Kitty" fourteen times. Violent evasive tactics ensued, comprised of corkscrews, dives and turnings off course, until pilot succeeded in evading the defences. This action delayed "K" for approximately 20 minutes and since Navigator was unable to establish position, pilot decided to return to base after safely jettisoning bomb load somewhere over Rhur. "H" soon after crossing enemy coast encountered enemy ack-ack-intense heavy flak - which vibrated the aircraft into a spiral dive and only after the loss of 7,000 feet was the pilot able to pull the aircraft under control at 12,000 feet. In this engagement about 30 minutes were lost and since pilot would not have been able to reach the target with the main force, he returned to base early. "E" piloted by WO D.H. Welch, RAF, returning to base early for some unknown reason, crashed near Marston Moor, Yorks, all the crew being instantly killed. The young pilot, a reserved, unassuming capable pilot had only a week previously becoming a bridegroom.

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22/10/43 cont'd Three crews failed to return from this operation - "B" piloted by F/L Weston, whose Navigator F/O Oakley had also become a bridegroom only a fortnight previously, "L" piloted by F/O Harrison and "Z" piloted by F/Sgt Minter.

Of the remaining aircraft which reached the target "U" piloted by P/O Cozens, was attacked by enemy aircraft three different times on the homeward journey and although there was an exchange of gunfire in each instance, the Halifax escaped unscratched and pilot succeeded in bringing it back to base.

S/L C.H. Earthrowl, "A" Flight Commander, flying aircraft "B" - Beer" completed his 20th trip and also his 2nd tour of operations. In his last trip this evening, he carried a second pilot in the person of the Station Commander Group Capt. Plant, who appeared very much impressed by the sortie. The screening of Earthrowl on top of the aforementioned casualties comes as a bad blow to the Squadron, as he was an inspiring leader and one of the best liked Senior Officers of the Station and who it is safe to say ranks as one of the most efficient and capable pilots in Bomber Command. Weather - fair to cloudy, with slight mist and slight showers.

23/10/43

Stand down this date and it certainly was required in order that the Squadron might recuperate from the heavy blows of last night's raid. The weather was in keeping with our sentiments as overcast skies accompanied by intermittent fog and rain prevailed throughout the day.

Signal received today advising that F/L Laird had been awarded the D.F.C., and his F/Eng Sgt Cardy, the C.G.M. for their gallant actions during the attack on Kassel 3rd Oct. Sgt Cardy who was critically wounded in the right arm and left eye during the attack by enemy aircraft, gave coherent advice to his captain despite severe physical suffering and remained at his post carrying out his normal duties until he finally fell unconscious through loss of blood. On arrival at base he supervised the emergency lowering of the under-carriage which involved the severing of a hydraulic pipe line, thus allowing the aircraft to land safely - by this time he had regained consciousness. For this action he was awarded the C.G.M. It is hoped that this information which was signalled to Sgt Cardy who is still on the critically injured list, will aid in expediting his recovery. In one of the roughest mess whirls that had ever been experienced by any officer, either living or dead, members of the mess met last night to celebrate F/L Laird's award which also coincided with S/L Earthrowl's screening. During the course of the drenching, our Winco was instituted in the Royal Order of Leo's as the "Grand Lion", and was duly initiated under the revised policy in said Order, whereby all potential Lions are required to (in official terms) osculate the rectum of Leo, the M.G.M. presentation. F/L A. Reilly, the station adjutant was permitted into the sacred order after going through the usual channels and has now become an Hon member.

24/10/43

A large Sr. NCO "do" was held in the "Sergeants Mess" last night, during the course of which a certain beverage flowed at about the same rate as the aftermath of the Rhur dam raid. Officers' were rather indignant at the very undiplomatic manner in which they were informed that they were not invited - over the tannoy system.

Another stand down for this date as the climatic conditions continued inclement, featuring fog and thick mist which prevailed throughout the day.

25/10/43

The notoristy of our worthy, colourful adjt, went a step further this date and added a couple more amazing incidents to his unorthodox military career. After paying a visit to F/O Soeter, who is still confined to bed in York, he somewhat overstayed his intended visit and only realized that fact after the train for camp had come and gone, without him. In the meantime the Winco who had no idea of what had occurred and what's more didn't care, was awakened out of a sound sleep in the dark early hours of the morning, to be greeted by the bellowing voice of the "Great Chas'" who informed him of his predicament and that he would not be able to reach camp at the specified hour of duty. The ensuing remarks of the Winco will however, not be recorded.

The calm of the Squadron offices was interrupted at mid-morning by the appearance of Chas' arriving on a 26" wheel, bicycle, complete with shopping basket, the property of Mrs. Beaumont-Smith, wife of the Sr Accountant Officer. It seems that the Adjt arriving at Leeming Bar by train, finding it impossible to secure any type of conveyance to the aerodrome, called at the B.-S. home, and the above was the result. Anyone who has ever seen Chas' can picture his bulky frame on the aforementioned vehicle, plodding the two mile journey from the station, through the congested downtown sector of Leeming. My shattered nerves!

One of our Canadian armourers met with a rather unfortunate end after an escapade to the town local this evening. R136224 AC1 Olson, H.O. was picked up on the Great North Road just beyond the Willow Tree (the local) at Leeming, by the Morris Ambulance Crew of this Station at 23.20 hrs and brought to S.S.Q. where he was examined immediately by the Senior Medical Officer. Examination at the time of admission revealed a stuporous irrational individual. No signs of violence were apparent, and no skull fracture was found. The patient was placed in the crash ward under the supervision of the Nursing Orderly, and after oxygen was administered for a period of ten minutes, the patient was breathing normally. 0300 hrs the report from the Nursing Orderly would indicate that the patient was resting quietly and breathing in a sonexrous manner. At 0600 hrs the duty nursing orderly found the patient dead. The cause of death is unknown; but it is supposed that there must have been a basalar fracture of the skull.

Weather - Fog at first, becoming fine with slight mist about noon, fog forming again in the evening.

26/10/43

Weather again carried on in its typical English form by engulfing the environs of the camp in a "pea-souper" which persisted throughout the day, and which curtailed all flying.

Because the sale of bonds hasn't met with the expectations, a conference of all section "Heads" was held in F/L Dawson's office - Engineer Officer - in an effort to boost up the turnover. It is felt that strong-arm, high pressure methods will have to be adopted in an effort to get Canucks to contribute. As a result of the conference, all Bond Salesmen are being equipped with .38 revolvers and already totals are showing marked gains.

27/10/43

The day began with the usual, fog, which cleared up considerably by midday although the clouds remained. Eleven aircraft were called for and detailed for operations, but as they were taxiing preparatory to take-off, the raid was cancelled. By this time a slight mist had again formed.

28/10/43

The Station was favoured by a visit by one of the foremost English actors - Robert Donat. The cast of the Bernard Shaw fantasy "Heartbreak House" with Mr. Donat as the venerable Capt Shotover, which has currently had a successful run at the Cambridge theatre in London, performed the play as part of an E.N.S.A. show, and brought the house of Canucks down with tremendous rounds of applause. It was something new in the way of an E.N.S.A. contribution, and was very much appreciated. After the performance, Mr. Donat and the cast were entertained in the Officer's Mess, after the performance, and was quite surprised to learn and so were we, that a bomber of the Lion Squadron proudly bears the name of the M.G.M. film star. Donat was induced to return to Leeming tomorrow in order that photographs might be taken of himself alongside the bomber and its crew - S/L Gandorton and mates.

Weather: Cloudy, with fog at first, becoming cloudy with mist later, and fog forming again late at night.

29/10/43

Robert Donat returned to the Squadron as arranged the previous day. The Winco and Groupie, in zoot suits, with sleek pleats, and flat hats, were on hand to add to the festivities. The noted actor appeared to be quite an unassuming type of gentleman, very unaffected by his success and was very humble in his thanks for the tribute of having a kite named after himself.

Weather: Overcast with fog at first, becoming overcast with mist and drizzle in late afternoon.

30/10/43

Fourteen aircraft were detailed for operations this date but ops were scrubbed prior to take off time. The weather was extremely poor beginning with clouds at first with a mist rapidly forming, and which by evening had thickened considerably.

31/10/43

Weather: Cloudy with rain and mist at first, becoming cloudy with mist in afternoon. Cloudy with rain and mist in evening. Stand down this date, as no aircraft were called for.

1/11/43

F/O D.B. Ross, DFC, assumed the duties of adjutant in the absence of F/L J. Chasanoff who proceeded to London to represent the Lion's, at the adoption ceremonies of Churchill's Lion Cub Mareth, to take place at the Regent's Park Zoo.

S/L V.F. Ganderton, DFC, assumed command of the Squadron in the absence of W/C Turnbull, D.F.M., who proceeded on leave.

Stand down declared today. Slight drizzle continued through the day with fog setting in towards sundown.

2/11/43

Cloudy weather with slight mist continuing throughout the day, curtailed operations, and another state of stand down existed.

3/11/43

When the day began the fog was so thick that it seemed almost ironious when thirteen aircraft were detailed for operations. As the day progressed however, the mist lifted and by take-off time, it was perfectly clear. All thirteen aircraft successfully became airborne, and guided by accurately placed P.F.F. flares, easily found their way towards the target, but in the vicinity of the target area, some of the crews somewhat confused the P.F.F. markers leading to the spoof attack which was the destination for the Lancasters. They all managed to reach the target, Dusseldorf, and found it cloudless, with only a slight amount of industrial haze over the city. The crews arrived rather early in the raid, and observed the fires to be scattered and very small, but those who reached the target a little later, report that the fires had taken a good hold, and were very concentrated in the vicinity of the markers.

The enemy defences consisted of moderate heavy flak which was bursting at the height of 18/21,000 feet, with a small amount of light flak. Most of the time the flak was in barrage form but on occasions when aircraft were coned, the flak was concentrated up the cones. S/L's were numerous, and worked in concentrations of 100 to 200, those which operated singly proved enefective due to the haze and smoke.

Aircraft "U", piloted by F/O F.J. Kennedy reported that a JU.88 crossed their track at 19:53 hrs at 21,000 feet, from port to starboard, but did not attack. Aircraft "C", piloted by F/S J.D. Mawson, reports that an unidentified aircraft with a white light on each wing-tip came in on his port beam, at 19,000 feet at 19:40 hrs, and as our aircraft turned in towards the aircraft, he was lost to view.

Soon after "W", piloted by F/L G.J. Laird, D.F.C. had completed their bombing run, the mid-upper gunner, Sgt. L.H. Smith, sighted heavy tracer eminating from the starboard bow up. He immediately gave the combat manoeuvre, which consisted of a corkscrew to starboard, thus bringing the a/c to the view of the rear gunner, as it was passing to port, flyign a reciprocal course. The c/a did not however, attack again and remains unidentified. No damage was claimed to either aircraft.

3/11/43 cont'd

Similarly, "T" piloted by F/L A. Rodwell, soon after his bombs had been released, was attacked by an Me 210, which was sighted by the tail gunner, P/O F.D. Smith, as it was flying on a reciprocal course to the Halifax about 200 feet directly above. The fighter turned astern of the Halifax and attacked from the port quarter at 500 yds, and slightly below. The combat manoeuvre consisted of a cork-screw to port. The Me 210 fired a short burst from 150 to 100 yds and broke off on the starboard quarter down, without attacking again. No damage was claimed to either aircraft.

Aircraft "Q" piloted by P/O GA Weldon, upon return to England landed at Church Fenton, due to unserviceability of constant speed unit.

All aircraft bombed the target and returned to base to find it engulfed by a pea-soup fog, which drastically limited visibility, but they all landed safely.

At the adoption ceremonies in the London Zoo, several movie firms and the BBC were on hand to record the adoption of "Mareth", the Prime Minister's lion cub. All Squadron personnel who were in London on leave at the time were present to lend a hand to the proceedings. They were somewhat disappointed by the fact that no celebrity was on hand to represent the Prime Minister, but this did not deter F/L Chasanoff, the Adjutant, nor W/C Turnbull, from making excellent orotories, much to the delight of the huge gathering of servicemen, and civilians, who had by this time, formed a semi-circle, about the den of the amazed "Mareth". All personnel are now anxiously awaiting the arrival of the newsreels pertaining to this ceremony, which it is hoped will reach the station cinema Germany capitulates.

4/11/43

F/L Chasanoff again resumed his duties as Adjutant, relieving F/O D.B. Ross, DFC, who did a masterful job, in view of the fact that he was a tenderfoot in that new capacity. Ops were not scheduled this date as the misty weather of the past month, persisted throughout the day, with the occasional drop of rain. As the conditions were not favourable towards flying a ground training program was carried out, which consisted of lectures to aircrews of the various sections.

5/11/43

S/L V.F. Ganderton, DFC of Edmonton, Alta, who was OC of "B" Flight, and who has been acting Squadron Commander in the absence of W/C Turnbull, received notification from No 6 Group to the effect that he had been screened from operations on completion of his first tour. He had completed 24 trips with this Squadron, had risen from the rank of F/O to S/L, and had received the immediate award of the DFC, since his arrival to the Lions in January of this year. A tall strapping officer, possessor of a pleasing disposition, and a likeable personality, he was admired by both officers and airmen, alike.

F/L G.J. Laird, DFC, "A" Flight Commander, who is awaiting his added half ring, temporarily took over command of the Squadron, vice, S/L Ganderton, who proceeded on leave.

6/11/43

For the first time in several weeks the sun was actually out, and the day continued clear with a few scattered clouds. No operations however, were scheduled. An intensive training program was carried out both in the air and on the ground. P/O L.J.L. Fontaine, a recently commissioned French Canadian lad, who completed his 28 $\frac{1}{2}$  trip on the 3rd November, was screened from operations on completion of his first tour. F/O D.B. Ross, DFC, an R.A.F. air gunner, who was deputy Gunnery Leader, and a spare air gunner, was also screened, after completion of 19 $\frac{1}{2}$  trips on his second operational tour. A possessor of a broad Scottish brogue, from the hills of Aberdeen, he had on several occasions distinguished himself against the enemy, which won for him the award of the DFC.

7/11/43

At an unusual late hour this morning, orders were received to detail 14 aircraft for a raid on Augsburg. Needless to say, a great deal of confusion followed, particularly with regard to the paper work involved, in an effort to meet the deadline, and in typical Lion tradition, it was accomplished. What burnt everyone up however, was the fact that at 1700 hrs the operations were scrubbed.

Weather conditions were ideal throughout the day with a few scattered clouds, here and there.

8/11/43

The present moon period, again kept our aircraft on the ground during the night, as no operations were scheduled.

An intensive flying training program was carried out, consisting of every phase of operational tactics, in an effort to bring the newly arrived crews up to required operational standards.

Weather: Fair or cloudy, much mist, with some fog.

9/11/43

On the eve of the Squadron party, all last minute details were being attended to by F/L Arnot, and his "hard working" Committee of "Joes". The cast of the Squadron show which will be the featured event of the party, excluding of course the barrelled "stuff" were being rehearsed by their slave driver, Joe Ozad.

The weather was excellent throughout the day, with hardly any cloud to mar the clear sky. An all out flying training program was staged, which included, fighter affiliation, air to air and air to sea, firing.

10/11/43

Another grand day this date, and a further training program was carried out in the morning. By evening however, it had changed to a drizzle.

About 1600 hrs a full dress parade was assembled in a square about a rostrum, quickly arranged in No 2 Hangar, to witness the official presentation of the Squadron crest, to the Lions, by A.V.M.G.E. Brookes, O.B.E., A.O.C. No 6 (RCAF) Group. In his address the Air Vice Marshal outlined the splendid record of the Squadron since its formation, and in a brief by eloquent speech, during which time he was battling against the accoustics, as the loud speaker system had become u/s, he presented the crest accompanied by his best wishes, to the

10/11/43 cont'd present Squadron Commander, W/C R.S. Turnbull, DFM. W/C D.H. Burnside, DFC & Bar, the former Squadron Commander, was also on hand to add to the ceremony, and it was to him, that the major portion of the A.O.C.'s address was directed, stressing his capable leadership throughout his period of command. Following the handing over of the Crest, W/C Turnbull, formally thanked the A.V.M., and in turn introduced W/C Burnside, who after a brief address, ended the proceedings.

After the departure of the distinguished Air Officer, the Crest was viewed by all personnel, and as reputed, it is believed that it is one of the finest in the country. A beautifully coloured piece of art, it has a Lion rampant on a background of a Maple Leaf, bearing the inscription Ferte Manus Certas, "Strike Sure".

Following the parade, the long awaited M.G.M. medalions were presented to each member of the Squadron, and will serve as an excellent memento in days gone by. By this token, each member of the Squadron in possession of it, is entitled to free admission to any M.G.M. theatre in the world.

In the evening an all out effort was gathered at the Lion's Squadron part, which far surpassed anything that the Squadron has ever undertaken. The station N.A.A.F.I. building was fortunate enough to get away from their other duties. An excellent stage show was the crowning feature of the party, after which dancing stole the limelight for the remainder of the evening. It certainly was a busy day for the Lions, and one that will be long remembered by all ranks.

11/11/43 Specialist raid in full moon was scheduled for the longest target the Lions have as yet undertaken, the marshalling yards at Cannes in Southern France. Five aircraft were detailed, all old times of the Squadron with plenty of experience behind them, and which also included the Squadron Commander. All aircraft reached the target to find it cloudless, with only a few haze patches to mar the clear visibility. They released their loads on the red T.I.'s by both visual pinpointing, and the use of the bomb sights, and although rather early on the target, they found several fires already taking a firm hold in the vicinity of the P.F.F.T.I. markers. The enemy opposition was negligible, and consisted of 2-3 heavy flak guns firing spasmodically and inaccurately. P/O Olsvik and F/Lt Arnot, obtained very fine aiming point photos. The raid is believed to be a very successful one. Weather: Cloudy with mist and drizzle early morning and late evening: fair otherwise.

12/11/43 A revised establishment whereby Squadron personnel strength will be comprised of only aircrew and a nucleus of a small amount of ground crew, has somewhat shattered the smooth efficiency of the Squadron offices. Conferences in order to determine the working policy have taken and will occupy most of the time until the change has been effected. Weather: Cloudy, becoming fair or fine. Good visibility.

13/11/43

No operations were scheduled for this date due to the moon period. Weather was ideal for local flying and an intensive air and ground training program was carried out. Weather: Fair or cloudy, good visibility, hail showers in the afternoon.

14/11/43

A conference was held this date in the adjutant's office, which included amongst the attending members, all F/Sgts and the Engineer Officer, who were assembled in order that personnel under their control might be allocated for the various station postings, to the Servicing Echelon, Major Servicing Units. It is hoped that the transfers will be effected with the least possible delay. Weather: Fine, becoming cloudy with showers of rain, hail and snow.

15/11/43

Three new crews were posted in to the Squadron from 1659 Con. Unit at Topcliffe. The Captain of one of the crews was C.823, P/O W.N. Stephen, who relinquished his rank of Squadron Leader in the Equipment Branch, to remuster to aircrew. Ground training was carried out, in order that the new arrivals might be "genned" up.

Two crews captained by P/O Wolton and F/Sgt Smith, were posted to No. 433 Squadron, to form a nucleus of experienced crews for the new squadron forming at Skipton. F/O Cruikshank was also posted to No. 433 to take over the duties of Bombing Leader. Weather: Fair to cloudy with occasional rain and sleet.

16/11/43

Three aircraft were detailed for a dingy search in the afternoon. The area covered was that midway in the North Sea, off Hull. All aircraft took off as scheduled, but due to cloud conditions over Base and sector they parted company, only to be formed again as ordered but spotted nothing excepting two aircraft who were too far distant to be identified but who it is assumed were allied aircraft on the same mission. The area was covered from a height of 300 feet and the weather conditions over the North Sea were ideal. Weather: Fair or cloudy with rain and sleet and showers.

17/11/43

Four aircraft were detailed for a dingy search in the afternoon. They became airborne as ordered, but although they carried out their search for several hours, it proved fruitless.

Eight aircraft were detailed on a cross-country flight in the evening, and all returned after carrying out their mission. Weather: Fair to cloudy with rain and sleet showers. Good visibility.

18/11/43

Fourteen aircraft were detailed for a raid on the Farben Chemical Works at Mannheim, and all accordingly took off. Of these "C" piloted by F/O G.J. Cribb, returned early due to the failure of the starboard outer engine, believed to have been caused by a broken oil line. Aircraft "Q", piloted by F/S W.M. Patrick, also returned without having carried out his mission, after an internal glycol leak had begun in the starboard inner engine. The remaining crews which reached the target found the visibility clear, with only a slight amount of smoke haze to keep the visibility from being perfect, and all bombed on T.I. markers.

On run into target fires were just beginning to take hold and enemy defences consisted of three cones of S/L's in groups of 20, which were working in cooperation with moderate heavy flak with apparent effectiveness.

Aircraft "F", piloted by Sgt Darlow, A.F., soon after the bombing run had been completed, was coned by S/L's, at which point the mid upper gunner, Sgt D. Copeland sighted a stream of tracer, coming from the Port bow above. He then sighted an ME 109 at 400 yds., and immediately opened fire. The fighter broke off the attack on the starboard beam down. Combat manoeuvre was diving turn to port. The pilot had just resumed course when the tail gunner, Sgt T.E. Utton, sighted a DE 217 attacking from the port quarter up at a range of 400 yds., and he gave the combat manoeuvre - a corkscrew to port. The fighter pilot, the mid-upper and the tail gunner, all opened fire simultaneously, from 350 yds, the DO 217, breaking off the attack on the starboard, quarter down at 100 yds. The Halifax sustained no damage from either attack and the air gunners saw their tracer strike the fighters.

P/O W.J. Kennedy, who had completed seven previous sorties with the Lions, failed to return from this operation. He and his crew will be missed, since Pat Kennedy was shaping up to be a top-notch pilot and leader. Weather: Fair to cloudy, occasional showers of hail, rain and sleet.

19/11/43

Twelve aircraft were detailed for a raid on Leverkusen, and as many became airborne. Two however, boomeranged, "S" due to u/s of rear guns and starboard inner failure, and "U" due to the failure of all electrically controlled instruments, and the cutting out of port inner engine.

The remaining ten reached and bombed the target through 10/10th cloud releasing their loads on E.T.A. or on cascading flares. The enemy defences consisted of slight light flak, and moderate 10/10th heavy; searchlights were ineffectively reflecting on cloudsé P.F.F. markers were scattered and it is felt that the majority of their defences were thought to be in action on way to target. Several aircraft returned from the raid, flak riddled, but otherwise unshaken. Weather: Fair becoming cloudy with slight drizzle, mist and fog.

20/11/43

Weather: Fair or cloudy with much mist, some drizzle and fog. No operations were scheduled for this date, and in view of the weather conditions, no flying was carried out. However, ground training was proceeded with, in order that recently arrived crews might be ready for our next commitments.

F/Lt Izzard, one of the old originals of the Squadron in his position of Signals leader, departed this date for greener pastures, to take up a Squadron leader's post at No. 6 (R.C.A.F.) Group. "Izzy" not only was responsible for the high standard of our wireless section, but was also active in welfare and entertainments for the airmen.

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21/11/43

Weather: Cloudy with much fog, mist and drizzle. Two crews captained by Sgt S.G. Dewdell and Sgt R.N. Weir, reported this date from 1659 Con Unit. The newsreels of the adoption of the Lion cub, referred to in the activities of No. 10th, was shown in the camp cinema, and was well received by all the Squadron personnel. Notification of the award of the D.F.C. to F/L J. Morton and F/O D. Mortimer, and of the D.F.M. to F/Sgts R. Skillen and F/Sgt Nelson, former lions who had completed their first tour of operations with this unit, was received from No. 6 (RCAF) Group, H.Q.

22/11/43

Fourteen aircraft were detailed for a bombing attack against Berlin and all our Halifaxes took off accordingly. Enroute to target, encountered a slight amount of icing soon after crossing the enemy coast, and found the target area covered by 9/10th clouds. All crews bombed on red P.F.F. flares, though congestion of our own aircraft over the target was terrific. F/Sgt McQuade, put up a wizard show in "H" - landing with only two engines, after his rear gunner had sustained a slight flak injury.

F/O A.J.F. Clark returned to the unit after obtaining an "A" category at the Bombing Leader's Course at Manby.

A farewell party held in the Officers Mess for G/C J.L. Plant who is taking up another post, and Squadron members played a prominent part in the proceedings. Weather: Cloudy with drizzle and mist at first becoming fair then fine.

23/11/43

No operations were scheduled for this date. The Berlin prang of the previous night was so successful from the Squadron point of view, that W/C R.S. Turnbull, the OC, issued a written Order of the Day, congratulating all ranks of the unit on their effort. It reads as follows, "Last night we sent 14 aircraft from our Squadron to bomb Berlin. 14 aircraft successfully took off, bombed Berlin, and returned safely to this country. My congratulations to all ranks under my command whose combined efforts made this outstanding success possible." Weather: Fair or fine becoming cloudy and with rain and drizzle.

24/11/43

Weather: Cloudy with rain and showers becoming fair in late evening. Due to inclement climatic conditions, no operations were scheduled for the evening. The long awaited Battle of Berlin, has apparently begun, and in a feverish attempt to make all available aircraft serviceable, ground-crews worked all night to successfully complete this fete.

- 25/11/43 Seventeen aircraft were detailed for a raid on Frankfurt, and 16 aircraft accordingly took off. "G" for George, piloted by Sgt. A.J. King, a newly arrived pilot, was the kite which failed to take-off, due to a taxiing accident with "G" of 429 Squadron - the Battle of the "G"'s in which the aircraft of our friendly rivals, came out second best. Aircraft "S", piloted by F/O R.J. Lacerte, returned early when his a/c refused to maintain height, after the pilots escape hatch opened soon after a/c was airborne. Aircraft "A", piloted by Sgt C.H. Coathup, returned early with full bomb load, due to oil pressure failure on port outer engine and also oil temperature on port inner engine. The remaining aircraft proceeded to the target area, to find it covered by 10/10th clouds, with visibility laterally good. Due to the cloud cover the markers were nowhere to be seen, and most crews as a result bombed on E.T.A.'s. The attack would not appear to have been particularly successful in view of the weather.
- Weather: Fine. Good visibility.
- 26/11/43 Ten aircraft were detailed for a raid on Stuttgart, but only nine aircraft became airborne. The kite which failed to take off, "Y" piloted by P/O R.C. Deegan, was grounded due to pilots inability to start port inner engine. The raid was a stooge effort, a raid intended to confuse enemy defences, while the main force of Liberators and Lancasters, went to Berlin. Another aircraft "H", piloted by Sgt A.J. King, also failed to reach the target, as it returned early due to faulty controls. The remaining eight aircraft found the target covered by 8/10th clouds in broken layers, and bombed it on red and green P.F.F.T.I. markers, leaving a wide area of fires in the vicinity of the markers.
- Weather: Fair or fine. Good visibility.
- 27/11/43 Weather: Fair or cloudy with fog and drizzle.
- 28/11/43 Cloudy with fog, drizzle and rain becoming fine.
- 29/11/43 Fine, becoming cloudy with rain and showers.  
Six aircraft were detailed on a cross-country run, in order that new crews might gain experience for operations against the enemy. All returned to base having completed their mission.
- 30/11/43 Weather: Fair or fine with occasional showers.  
Ten aircraft were detailed on a cross country run, and all returned having completed their run, without any unusual incident to report.
- 1/12/43 Weather: Fine becoming cloudy after mid-day. Fog developed after 2100 hours. Fourteen aircraft were detailed for operations, but later in the day the raid was cancelled due to unfavourable weather conditions.

2/12/43

Weather: Cloudy with fog and rain, clearing to fair after 0900 hours. Breaking to fine with fog developing after 2200 hours and becoming overcast.

Fourteen aircraft were again detailed for operations, but as yesterday, the sortie was cancelled due to the weather.

F/Lt J. Chasanoff, returned to the Squadron, after representing an NCO as defending officer at a Court Martial taking place at R.A.F. Station, Faldingsworth.

3/12/43

Weather: Overcast with intermittent slight rain and fog, improving to cloudy after 0800 hours with visibility moderate.

Fourteen aircraft were detailed for operations against Leipzig. Aircraft "Z", piloted by F/O W.A. Cozens, experienced a rather shaky do. After being airborne for a period of 2 hours and 15 mins., a defect developed in the starboard inner engine, and although steps were taken to remedy the situation, they proved unsuccessful and as a result P/O Cozens after being unable to feather the engine, switched it off and left it windmilling. As height was being reduced rapidly, bombs were jettisoned and course was set for base. As soon as enemy coast was crossed on the return, a priority message was despatched, informing those concerned of his difficulty. As the aircraft approached the English coast, the port outer engine began fluctuating badly, and feathering procedure was successfully adopted. More height was being lost, and Cozens ordered his crew to the ditching position, but an M/F was obtained by the WOP/AG approx 5 minutes from the Coast and the ditching order was consequently cancelled and crew were ordered to abandon aircraft as soon as the coast was safely crossed. At this point, the starboard outer engine, to add to the pilots difficulties, showed irregular symptoms and the pilot decided to abandon aircraft, but upon opening the throttle, it seemed to settle the engine down to normal, so crash landing was attempted and safely carried out at Woodbridge, which appeared directly beneath, incurring only slight damages to aircraft, and pilot escaped unscathed. The remainder of the crew successfully parachuted to safety, with Sgt C. Hopper incurring a broken ankle on landing.

The remaining thirteen aircraft reached the target and found it covered by 9/10 tenths clouds, with the reflection of numerous fires already visible. The enemy defences consisted of heavy flak, slight to moderate, in barrage form bursting between 15/22,000 feet, with S/L's ineffective due to the cloud condition. Our aircraft identified the target by the P.F.F.T.I. markers, green, and by sky markers, which at the moment of arrival were seen cascading, and all aircraft bombed on these indicators.

3/12/43 Cont'd....

Columns of black smoke were issuing from the conflagration below and by the time our aircraft had completed their run, the intensity of the glow of fires on the clouds, had increased considerably, and could be seen for a distance of approx 150 miles. In the target area, vapour trails of numerous aircraft were very apparent, but there was no undue congestion to interfere with the mission.

Although over the target, enemy aircraft were no where to be seen, our aircraft encountered considerable e/a activity on the homeward journey, but none were engaged in combat. Aircraft "J", piloted by F/S A.F. Darlow, reported that an unidentified aircraft approached from astern below to 100 yards at 0500 hours, but after corkscrew evasive tactics were taken, the e/a was lost to view. Aircraft "N", piloted by P/O J.R. Milton, reports that an F.W. 190 approached from the port beam above, up to 700 yards, at 0520 hours and again was lost to view, after corkscrewing.

A very effective raid, and it is believed that the target was thoroughly pranged.

- 4/12/43 Weather: Fair to cloudy with mist towards evening.  
As the crews who participated in last evenings raid returned from their mission just in time to have their breakfast, it was impossible to detail them for ops. again this evening. However, those new crews who were not employed at LEIPSIG, were put through an intensive ground training program.
- 5/12/43 Weather: Cloudy with poor visibility all day. Limits 1000-3500 yards. A cross country, in an effort to qualify new crews for ops was carried out this date.
- 6/12/43 Weather: Cloudy with poor visibility all day. Limits 1500 - 2700 yds. Again all flying was curtailed, but an intensive ground training program was carried out, particularly in the gunnery section.  
S/L Brittain, Group Bombing Leader, paid a short informal visit to the Squadron, paying particular attention to the Bombing Section.
- 7/12/43 Weather: Cloudy with poor visibility - deteriorating to less than 200 yards in rain towards midnight.  
Sgt Yaworski and crew reported in from 1659 conversion unit, bringing with them a very high recommendation of their capabilities as a crew. Due to the inclement climatic conditions all flying was curtailed. Notwithstanding, added ground training was carried out.
- 8/12/43 Weather: Overcast with poor visibility at first and rain. Later improved.  
Several aircrew members proceeded on liaison duties to Stockten, to witness the operations of the ack ack units in that district. They returned reporting that the utmost cooperation was afforded them during their tour, and that they derived an immense amount of invaluable information from the lectures and the visit.  
Similarly, other aircrews were despatched on liaison work, with another phase of the Royal Air Force, in which they are very keenly interested, namely, Air/Sea Rescue, and gained a great deal of

information from the authorities at West Hartlepool.

F/L O.R. Martin, reported on attachment, to understudy the adjutant for subsequent filling of that post.

The poor visibility curtailed all flying and again no operations were scheduled.

- 9/12/43 Weather: cloudy with poor to moderate visibility.  
F/L J.E. Durocher proceeded on a liaison visit to R.C.A.F. Station, Wambleton. With the advent of the moon period no operations were scheduled, and weather permitted only local flying training, which was carried out on a somewhat meagre scale.
- 10/12/43 Weather: cloudy with moderate to good visibility - breaking to fair. Slight frost. Twelve aircraft piloted by new crews, were detailed for a night cross country run, which was successfully carried out by all concerned.
- 11/12/43 Weather: Fair but cloudy after 1700 hours. Visibility good. Slight frost. Nine aircraft were detailed for operations against the enemy, but at a rather late hour they were cancelled.

However, seven aircraft were detailed for a cross-country run, and all were successful in completing their mission, and returning to the unit without further incident.

W/C R.S. Turnbull, tested a Mark III Halifax, which the Squadron personnel hope soon to be equipped with, and made favourable comments of its capabilities over the present type.

- 12/12/43 Weather: Cloudy with occasional breaks. Visibility moderate. The weather was unsuitable for operations and accordingly, none were scheduled. However, local conditions were favourable for flying, and consequently eight aircraft carried out day bombing exercises on the Strénall Bombing Range.

R70142 Sgt Cardy W.H. C.G.M. who suffered critical injuries from flak wounds, and whose vision is slightly impaired in one eye, after the raid on 3/4th October, was recommended for repatriation to Canada, and to cease full flying duties. During the interim he is being hospitalized until approval is granted.

- 13/12/43 Weather: Fair to cloudy with misty conditions all day. No operations were scheduled for this date. Through the chill of a crisp winter morning, a station parade was held to introduce the new Station Commander, G/C J.G. Bryans, who recently took over from G/C J.L. Plant. An inspection of the Squadron who were out "en masse" in No 1 blues, found them to be the best on parade, typical of all Lion tradition - "the best in the field".

- 14/12/43 Weather: General fog persisting with calm conditions.  
In one of the thickest fogs which we have yet experienced, the environs of Leeming were engulfed in a "pen-souper" which curtailed all unnecessary walking, let alone, all flying for the day; the fog persisting throughout the day and far into the morning.
- 15/12/43 Weather: General fog with sky obscured all day. Calm.  
With operations not scheduled, and local flying at a standstill due to the fog, the Wing Commander personally led the aircrew personnel of the Squadron, on a route march around the perimeter track, in an effort to keep them in condition physically as well as mentally. Those who had been out the previous evening were easily pin-pointed from the others, after the distance of three miles had been covered. Good idea!
- 16/12/43 Weather: Fog until 1000 hours, visibility improved to 2000 yds and remained the same until midnight.  
  
A ground training program was carried out during the day, as all local flying was curtailed due to poor visibility.
- 17/12/43 Weather: General fog after 0500 hours, persisting rest of day.  
  
Visibility was reduced to almost a standstill and as a result all local flying was curtailed. However, an intensive ground training program was carried out, comprised of lectures and instruction.
- 18/12/43 Weather: General fog persisting with sky obscured most of time.  
Sixteen aircraft were detailed for operations this date, but due to the climatic conditions which have persisted throughout the week, this operation was cancelled later in the day.
- 19/12/43 Weather: Fog dispersed after midnight giving way to occasional showers and visibility improving 15/20 miles. Deteriorating to less than 1500 yds, again after dusk.  
  
Notification received this date of the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross to F/L G.L. Vogan, the Squadron Bombing Leader, one of the veterans of the Squadron.
- 20/12/43 Weather: Fair to cloudy with occasional squally showers.  
  
Sixteen aircraft were detailed for a raid on Frankfurt and as many aircraft became airborne. Of the total, two failed to return from the operation and as a result F/O R.J. Lacerte, flying in aircraft "K", and F/O J.M. Grieve, piloting aircraft "C", and crews, have been posted as missing. The remaining fourteen aircraft reached the target during the opening stages of the raid and found the area although covered by 5/10 thin cloud cover, presenting good visibility of the ground detail below. The aircraft bombed their target on the T.I. green markers, in the face of stiff opposition by enemy flak and S/L defences.

20/12/43  
Cont'd....

While on the inward journey to the target aircraft "A", piloted by F/S Dowdell S.G. encountered an enemy twin engine aircraft, first seen at 1915 hours while flying at 18,000 feet. Visibility was hazy below and illuminated by flares marking the turning point. No cloud and no moon. The E/A was first sighted by rear gunner Sgt J.L. Lozo at 400 yds on the starboard quarter slightly up. The rear gunner gave combat manoeuvre, corkscrew, and both gunners opened fire and closed in breaking away to port down. The E/A was not seen again, and no damages on either aircraft is claimed.

On the bombing run, F/O G.A. Weldon in aircraft "N" encountered an E/A which was identified by the rear gunner Sgt J. Hewitt, as a ME 109, at 1940 hrs from 20,000 feet, flying below and astern at 400 yds. Rear gunner immediately opened fire and enemy aircraft returned fire closing in and breaking away to port quarter up where rear and mid upper gunners fired at E/A. Strikes were seen on it and flames developed on the E/A. This caused the E/A to dive and the flames were extinguished and it was not seen again. This aircraft is claimed as damaged. The pilot showed great courage and determination, because rather than take evasive action, he continued on his bombing run, until the mission was completed.

En route to the target at 1925 hrs at 19,000, aircraft "B", piloted by F/S C.H. Fisher, encountered an unidentified E/A; the first indication of its whereabouts was from tracers seen to pass ahead of the nose to port. Mid upper gunner gave combat manoeuvre "corkscrew port" and the E/A then attacked from dead astern and opened fire. Both gunners opened fire simultaneously with aircraft's tracer. During the whole attack no visual of the E/A, was taken and the E/A was not seen again. No claim is made on the E/A, however, our Halifax sustained slight damage near nose, and the Navigator F/S A.B. Johnson was wounded in the leg by cannon splinters.

21/12/43

Weather: Fair at first, becoming cloudy with occasional showers after mid-day, persisting well into the night. Visibility good. Standown for aircrew personnel.

22/12/43

Weather: Showery until 0700 hrs breaking fair to fine. Visibility good. No operations were called for this date, however, an intense flying training program was carried out, during the day.

In the evening, three aircraft were detailed for a bullseye operations, with aircraft "Y" piloted by F/S A.R. Clibbery, experiencing a rather nerve shaking experience on landing. On the return from the exercise, he forgot to lower the undercarriage, and what was intended to be a three point landing, turned out to be a four point prang. The results of the belly landing, was the breakage of four propellers and slight damage to the airframe. Fortunately, however, none of the crew were injured.

23/12/43

Weather: Mainly fair to fine. Good visibility. Sixteen aircraft were detailed for operations. The raid however, was scrubbed early in the day.

.../67

- 24/12/43 Weather: Fair to fine with good visibility.  
Operations were not scheduled for this evening, and Squadron personnel diverted to many centres in the locality, to bring in Christmas, each to their own choosing.
- 25/12/43 Weather: Cloudy with moderate to good visibility.  
Immediately that the news was received this morning that no operations were scheduled for the evening, the Squadron was granted a standown.  
  
In the afternoon, the traditional Christmas dinner was served to the Airmen by the Officers, and a great tribute should be extended to the kitchen staff, who by their untiring efforts, produced a turkey dinner, which would have rivalled anything that the Savoy in London could have prepared.
- 26/12/43 Weather: Mainly fine with good visibility.  
With most members of the Squadron recuperating from Xmas festivities, the information that no operations were scheduled for this date was very welcome.
- 27/12/43 Weather: Fair to cloudy. Good visibility.  
Although no operations were scheduled the Squadron began in earnest for post Xmas eventualities, and partook in an intensive training program, as weather conditions were most ideal and clear for local flying. Eight aircraft were detailed for a bombing practise and carried out their missions satisfactorily.  
  
In the evening eleven aircraft participated in a Cross country run. All returned having successfully completed their tasks without having any undue incidents to report.
- 28/12/43 Weather: Fair to cloudy. Visibility moderate to good.  
  
As the weather conditions continued to be ideal for local flying more flying training was carried out, along with an intense ground training program.
- 29/12/43 Weather: Fair to cloudy. Light shower in evening. Good visibility.  
  
Sixteen aircraft took off this date, destined for a raid on BERLIN. The Wing Commander, who personally was leading the operation, flying in "B" for Beer, returned early after a technical failure in the port outer engine rendered it unserviceable. Aircraft "F" piloted by P/O H.W. Holland, also returned early due to the failure of the port inner engine. Aircraft "L" piloted by F/S A.F. Darlow, also failed to reach the target, because of the inability of his aircraft to gain sufficient height, and landed on the CO's orders. P/O R.C. Deegan flying "W", making his 15th operational trip, by his exceptional skill and untiring efforts, was responsible for bringing back a badly crippled bomber, and perhaps saving the life of all the crew. His aircraft was a little better than halfway to the target and flying at about 18,000 feet when the port outer engine failed and went completely u/s, and difficulty was encountered in maintaining height. Consequently the bomb load was jettisoned safely, and course was set for base. Ten minutes later, the war gunner F/S P.A. Dubois warned the pilot

that night fighters were dropping flares in an attempt to vector the aircraft, and continued to do so for the best part of an hour, until the Zaider Zee was reached at which point a night fighter finally succeeded in picking up the Halifax and attacked from starboard and below. The rear gunner gave evasive action as soon as e/a closed to within a 1,000 yds, and after the manoeuvre, it was lost to view. Soon after the starboard inner engine went completely unserviceable and the pilot was faced with the task of reaching home on two engines. This further reduced height, and as a result all bomb containers and loose equipment were jettisoned over the Dutch Coast. During the confusion which followed, the trailing serial was cut off by the bomb doors, which made it impossible for the Wireless Operator F/S J.A. Smith, to obtain fixes and send out messages, and in an attempt to repair the set, he did a masterful job in erecting a spare aerial for the purpose of despatching the necessary S.O.S.'s. Shortly after leaving the Dutch Coast, the port inner was on the verge of packing up, and all the way across the North Sea at 5,000 feet, the pilot nursed two engines along, while the aircraft laboured and crawled through the air at 110 miles per hour, at almost stalling speed. But the pilot's perseverance and perspiration were rewarded when an aerodrome appeared below soon after crossing the English Coast, on which P/O Deagan immediately dove straight in for the runway, and just as he touched down the port engine faded completely, necessitating a one engine landing, which was as smooth as if he had all four engines available. P/O Deagan, in expressing his appreciation to the remainder of the crew, lauding the work and the cooperation of everyone concerned including the Co-Pilot, particularly praised the work of the Wireless Operator and the Flight Engineer, Sgt J.C. Corbiell.

The remaining twelve aircraft proceeded to the target on P.F.F. track, encountering little opposition from enemy defences en route. F/S R.E. Cook, the pilot of "S", received a Monica warning at 19:58 hours. The rear gunner then sighted an enemy aircraft on the starboard quarter down 400 yards and immediately gave the combat manoeuvre "Corkscrew Starboard". The fighter and both Gunners opened fire at the same time, the E/A crossing over to port beam down and was lost to sight, until it reappeared again two minutes later on the port quarter up 300 yards. Another corkcrew followed, while the fighter closed in and crossed to starboard beam up. However, neither the fighter, nor our Halifax opened fire, and enemy aircraft left the scene. No damage was sustained by the Halifax, and no visual damage was observed on the fighter.

The target was found covered by 10/10th clouds to a height of 8,000 feet, with lateral visibility very good. Although at the time of arrival the raid was rapidly growing in intensity, the area was entirely obscured by the cloud cover, and our crews bombed on the red flares with green stars, seen cascading on the fires, reflecting on the clouds. Little or negligible enemy defences were in operation, and our crews had a free run to the target.

On the homeward journey the only incident encountered was the experience of F/L F.N. Murray, a native of Trinidad in the R.C.A.F., who by a wizard show, brought his badly damaged aircraft back to Britain, under the most adverse circumstances.

The crew of "P" for Peter had just dropped their bomb load on the target, when a Halifax above them about 1,000 feet began to release its bombs, incendiaries from which, crashed through the tail plane, the starboard wing and bent the aileron. The weight of the incendiaries sent the aircraft into an uncontrollable spiral dive, and only after 2,000 feet were lost, was the pilot able to regain control. The aircraft however, refused to stay on track and on the homeward journey continually kept listing to starboard. To add to the pilot's difficulties, a heavy flak barrage was encountered over Emden, shrapnel penetrating the aircraft in several places, one piece coming through the starboard window up to the co-pilot's seat. With the condition of the aircraft precarious, evasive action was attempted, but proved impossible owing to the condition of the aircraft. Strong head winds made it uncertain whether "P" would have sufficient petrol to reach the English Coast, but it eventually loomed up ahead, and the aircraft was landed perfectly, on the first aerodrome sighted. Examination of the aircraft found a gaping hole in the tail plane, caused by the incendiaries of the friendly Halifax, and the starboard aileron and a portion of the wing tip torn away. The operation is considered to have left a wide area of devastation in the already battered and tattered Berlin.

30/12/43

Weather: Fine becoming fair.

No Operations were scheduled for this date, and those crews had not participated in the raid on Berlin in the previous evening, were put through a strenuous training program, which touched every phase of operational training.

31/12/43

Weather: Fair to cloudy. Slight drizzle and rain in the afternoon.

The twelve crews who were detailed for an operation this evening, were, to say the least, very glad when they later received the information that the operation had been cancelled, and the Squadron as a whole, diverted to various localities to bring in the New Year which threatens to be the most active, from this theatre of war, since the war began. For the second time since his arrival on this station, the Station Commander, G/C J.H. Bryans' attempt to participate in an operational sortie was frustrated; he was scheduled to go with W/C Turnbull, as second pilot.

1/1/44 Weather: Cloudy with strong westerly wind. Visibility good.

As the New Year opened, this unit was notified, through the medium of the London Times of the award of the Air Force Cross to Wing Commander R.S. Turnbull, DFM. No citation accompanied the award, and neither has scrutiny failed to locate under what meritorious service the award was granted. Therefore the Wing Commander is the proud possessor of an added ribbon for what he knows not.

It would appear that the London Times serves as an official publication in that confirmation of an award in the London Gazette and Group Routine Orders reaches units, a considerable period of time after it has appeared in the press.

No operations were scheduled for this date and in order to permit personnel to recuperate from the New Year's Eve festivities, an official standown was declared.

2/1/44 Weather: Cloudy with strong westerly wind which turned gusty at times. Visibility good.

Operations remained at a standstill today, but after the rather hectic festive season, aircrews again buckled down to work, participating in an intensive training program both in the air and on the ground.

3/1/44 Weather: Cloudy with light north westerly winds. Visibility good.

A further operational lull, as our aircraft were not called upon to operate on any bombing missions. However, the post holiday training program inaugurated yesterday, continued where it was left off, as local flying conditions continued favourable.

4/1/44 Weather: Fine with moderate north westerly winds. Visibility very good.

Again no operations were scheduled. Notwithstanding, thirteen aircraft were detailed on a cross country run, and all returned safe and sound, having successfully completed their mission.

Five aircraft were detailed for a Practise Bombing exercise on the range nearby, thereby preparing inexperienced crews for oncoming operational work which appears imminent.

5/1/44 Weather: Mainly cloudy with light southerly winds becoming very misty and foggy.

Flying training was continued as weather permitted in the forenoon, with operations again not called for.

The Lion's adoption by the Metro Goldwyn Mayer Co., is finally bearing fruits, when today a bill of lading was received from the Canadian Red Cross Society, informing the Squadron that 6 cases containing 60,000 cigarettes for Squadron personnel use, has gone forward in bond by steamer, as despatched by the M.G.M. studios in Toronto.

- 6/1/44 Weather: Moderate, gusty westerly winds accompanied by occasional rain, rendering visibility as moderate.
- Again operations were at a standstill. However, four crews were detailed for air to air firing exercises and additional flying training, in an effort to get new crews up to standard. W/C R.S. Turnbull, AFC, DFM, proceeded on leave, and S/L G.J. Laird, DFC, assumed command of the squadron in his absence.
- 7/1/44 Weather: Cloudy. Visibility good becoming moderate. Moderate westerly winds becoming calm.
- No operations were called for this date, and as weather conditions did not permit, no flying training was carried out. However, an intensive ground training program which consisted of lectures and instruction in the gunnery section, occupied the time of the idle aircrews.
- 8/1/44 Weather Mainly cloudy. Visibility poor becoming moderate. Moderate westerly winds.
- An experienced effort was called for this date, and consequently six of the Squadron's veteran crews were detailed for a bombing raid, which was to take place in full moon. The raid however, was cancelled later in the day.
- 9/1/44 Weather: Slight rain. Visibility good becoming poor. Wind calm becoming light westerly.
- For the purpose of bolstering the morale of the station, and also to fill a gap in the Squadron's inactivity from an operational standpoint, a service information film called "The Nazis' Strike" was shown at the Station cinema for all ranks, which left them with a good intimation of why this war is being fought, and for the necessity of continued efforts in order that the Hun's regime may be blasted from the face of the earth. A worthwhile film and good entertainment.
- 10/1/44 Weather: Variable skies. Visibility mainly moderate. Wind light north westerly.
- Since no operations were called for, a flying training program which was comprised of seven aircraft detailed for a cross country run. All returned safely having successfully completed their tasks.
- 11/1/44 Weather: Cloudy with some slight snow in afternoon. Fog developed by 1900 hours.
- First snow of the year in this region fell today, leaving a thin blanket of snow over the whole drome. No operations were scheduled and all local flying was curtailed.
- 12/1/44 Weather: Overcast with poor visibility.
- Again local flying was at a standstill due to the above climate conditions as well as not being called for to operate against the enemy.

- 13/1/44 Weather: Cloudy with rain and fog. Visibility improved after mid-day to moderate limits.  
The fog as set forth above, did not permit any local flying training. The Squadron was not called upon for operations.
- 14/1/44 Weather: The sky was fair to cloudy with good visibility.  
For the fourth consecutive day, all flying was at a standstill due to the fog which has clung close to the ground in this district. Group headquarters did not detail the Squadron for Ops.
- 15/1/44 Weather: Cloudy with poor visibility.  
The fog persisted throughout the day, thereby prohibiting all local flying training. Operations were not scheduled.
- 16/1/44 Weather: Cloudy with poor visibility.  
Again fog did not permit local flying and visibility remained at zero feet. No operations were scheduled.
- 17/1/44 Weather: Sky obscured, and thick persisting on surface.  
Fog is proving more of a handicap in the prosecution of the war from the air, than all the enemy opposition that the Nazi minds could contrive. At any rate, all flying as has been the case for the past few days, has been curtailed completely today, giving the Jerries another day's reprieve before the apparent storm.
- 18/1/44 Weather: Cloudy with poor visibility.  
The fog finally lifted and as a result the whole Squadron was cut in an effort to prepare themselves for renewed operational activities.  
Information received from No. 6 Group, to the effect that S/L Donald MacKenzie Arnot, has been awarded a non-immediate Distinguished Flying Cross, for his devotion to duty over an extended period of time while with this Squadron.  
Two former members of this Squadron also were awarded non-immediate D.F.C.'s in the persons of 146448 F/O C.L. Hughes, RAF, and 146994 F/O A/F/L A. Rodwell, RAF, the latter being a very skillful pilot and former deputy flight commander. Both these aircrew members had completed a tour of operations while with the Lions.
- 19/1/44 Weather: Cloudy to overcast with continuous rain and poor visibility.  
As no operations were scheduled, eight aircraft were this date detailed on a Cross Country exercise while the weather was particularly unfavourable. Consequently, shortly after lunch time the run was cancelled.  
Further honours were conferred upon present and former personnel of the Lions. Our former colourful and well-liked adjutant F/L J. Chasanoff, who had been recommended for the M.B.E. with the recommendation reading in part "There is no doubt that his cheerful confidence and outstanding personality have inspired a high standard of morale over a long period to aircrew and ground crew alike", was honoured by a Mention of Despatches.

Four section leaders who were under the Command of W/C D.H. Burnside, DFC & BAR, RAF, were also honoured by Mentions in Despatches for ability and enthusiasm in carrying out their normal duties since the formation date of the Squadron. These honours were bestowed upon F/L L.D. Izzard, 128408, RAF, the former Signals' Leader, F/L N.W. Morrison, the former bombing leader, 118658 F/L S.A. Hansby, RAF, the Navigation Officer and F/L J.E. "Rocky" Durocher, our erstwhile gunnery leader.

354146 W/O M. Derbyshire, RAF, -ARMOURER - was Mentioned in Despatches for "his enthusiasm and ability have been an inspiration to those under his control".

20/1/44 Weather: Fair becoming cloudy with poor to moderate visibility.

At long last the Squadron became operational again after an extended period during which it appeared that the Lion Squadron would take on the form of an CTU. This date the news of the detail was very welcomed, when sixteen aircraft were called for a raid on BERLIN. Of that total however, in view of last minute cancellations, only fourteen became airborne and Hun bound. S/L G.J. Lair, DFC, failed to reach the target after his aircraft "V", developed a starboard inner engine failure. He therefore returned early after jettisoning his bomb load safely. F/O G.A. Weldon and crew in aircraft "T" also returned early, due to the unserviceability of "G", after the bomb load had been jettisoned. The remaining twelve aircraft proceeded to enemy territory encountering cloud cover on the inward journey, which entirely obscured ground detail, but otherwise encountering no enemy opposition. The target was completely covered by 10/10ths clouds but was identified by red flares with green stars seen cascading, and it was on these indicators that the bomb loads were released. The results of the bombing however, remained unobserved due to the condition of the clouds.

On the return journey F/O W.A. Cozens, RAF, due to lack of fuel decided to land at Coltishall, but after three attempts to land, he over-skidded the airdrome, crashing into tree tops and finally ending up in a nearby field, completely wrecking the aircraft and instantly killing F/O L.G. Biddiscombe, RAF, the Navigator and critically injuring the pilot, Sgt H.P. Whittaker, RAF, the WOP/AG, Sgt, W.L. Stockford, RAF, the Bomb Aimér and Sgt J. McGowan, RAF, the Flight Engineer, while the other two members of the crew the gunners, Sgt R.B. Nairn and F/S C.L. Bernier, escaped uninjured. The Coltishall report of this crash is as follows:-

"The aircraft crashed on its third attempt to land at this airfield, the pilot having previously requested permission to land because of fuel shortage.

The only members of the crew available to give evidence (Mid-upper and Rear Gunners) stated that the pilot went round again after his first attempt to land because the undercarriage was not completely locked down. They also stated that no engine trouble was apparent and that immediately before the crash, the pilot had said that he could not see the funnel lights.

It would appear that the aircraft was flying dangerously low when approaching to land and at a distance of two miles from the airfield. It first struck H.T. cables and, without losing height, flew on some 200 yards, striking the tops of trees in a small wood, finally crashing in a field approximately 100 yards from the wood. The aircraft was completely wrecked on impact. Fire occurred on the port side but this was localized and extinguished.

An examination of the wreckage was made but it was not possible to determine the amount of fuel owing to crash and fire damage. All propeller blades were broken off at their hubs and it is thought that all engines were running at power when the crash occurred. Propeller C/S levers were at 'course' and throttles closed, but these may have been disturbed on impact. All magneto switches were ON - elevator trim 'neutral' - altimeter registering 3'. The aircraft crashed with wheels and flaps down. Visibility was not ideal at the time of the crash and this may have some bearing on the accident".

P/O N.E. Cook and crew failed to return from the operation and has been posted as missing. "Cookie" as he was known to the Squadron, had recently been commissioned, and was well liked by all who came in contact with him. He was the possessor of a much admired "handle-bar" moustache, which accentuated his otherwise simplicity of conduct. A sad loss to the Squadron as a pilot and a gentleman.

21/1/44

Weather: Fair, becoming cloudy with frequent showers towards late evening. Visibility good.

In the forenoon information received from R.A.F. Station Coltishall, the scene of the crash the previous evening, that F/O Cozens, Sgt Stockford and Sgt J. McGowan had passed away, as a result of injuries incurred from the crash. Sgt Whittaker remains on the dangerously injured list. F/O Cozens, a bridegroom of a month, will be greatly missed by the Squadron, as he was becoming one of the most proficient pilots on the Squadron.

Twelve aircraft were detailed for an operation against Magdenburg, which turned out to be one of the most unfortunate efforts of the Lions in quite some time. Of the twelve aircraft which became airborne, aircraft "C" piloted by F/S King, returned early because flexible tube to Navigators oxygen mask was missing and could not be found in the aircraft, thereby not permitting him to draw the necessary oxygen. Aircraft "Y" piloted by P/O T.W. Cooper returned early after the starboard inner engine became unserviceable due to a technical failure. Four aircraft failed to return from the operation including "D" piloted by the "A" Flight Commander, S/L Don M. Arnot, DFC, who had only a few days previous been awarded his gong. Flying as second pilot with S/L Arnot was the new Officer Commanding of No 424 Squadron, W/C Martin, who had recently returned to England after very intensive and meritorious service in the Middle East. The remaining three crews which failed to return were captained by inexperienced pilots whose operational records range from 2 to 5 trips; they were as follows: F/S R.N. Wier, Sgt G.W.C. Toal, and F/O J.E. Dickinson.

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The remaining aircraft arrived at the target area to find it covered by 5/10ths clouds, and each bombed as indicated in the individual sortie records on the Form 541. Aircraft "U" piloted by F/S C.H. Coathup, immediately after the Bomb Aimer had ordered bomb doors closed, encountered a stream of tracer, and an ME 109 was sighted on the port bow down, about 500 yards away. The pilot then executed combat manoeuvre which consisted of a diving turn to port. At this point the fighter was diving onto the Halifax and let loose with a short burst of cannon and machine gun fire, which missed the target. His second burst however, fared better, and damaged both starboard engines. The fighter then broke off the attack on the port beam down and flew away astern. Neither gunners were able to return fire as the Hun was out of range by the time they could bring their guns to bear.

The action of "Z" under the capable captaining of F/S A.R. Clibbery, can best be extold by quoting an extract from the Wing Commander's recommendation for the Distinguished Flying Medal, which was dispatched the following day.

"While over the target area coned in searchlights and surrounded by fighter flares, his aircraft was raked by cannon and machine gun fire from an enemy fighter, destroying the inner communication system, the supply of oxygen, shooting away all flying instruments and - setting the aircraft on fire in the Flight Engineer's position. Despite this attack, this captain completed his bombing run, and under very difficult weather conditions flew his aircraft home, and made a safe landing.

F/S CLIBBERY has shown great fortitude throughout the operation and by his skillful airmanship, successfully completed his duties."

In this action, the enemy fighter in question was destroyed by Sgt. R.E. QUALE, the mid-upper gunner, under very trying conditions. The fighter had shot away one of his guns, and had penetrated the turret perspex by machine gun fire. Even though Sgt. QUALE was dazed by searchlights, and cut by flying perspex, he brought his guns to bear, and downed the Hun. For this skilful handling of his guns, he too, was recommended for the award of the D.F.M.

22/1/44

Weather: Cloudy with squally showers of rain. Visibility good.

It was hoped although seeming very hopeless, that one of the missing kites of last night's raid, might have possibly been shot down into the sea and had taken to dinghys. Consequently when volunteers were called for sea search duties all available crews offered their services. The three crews who were finally selected, were very disappointed when the search was cancelled later in the day.

F/Sgt. CLIBBERY returned to base after the masterful job the previous evening. The O.C. felt his skilful piloting warranted an honour and recommended CLIBBERY as well as QUALE, the mid upper gunner for the award of the D.F.M.

No operations were called for the evening which afforded an opportunity to the ground crews to get all aircraft serviceable, after the past couple of nights shaking up.

23/1/44

Weather: Occasional showers. Good visibility. Strong westerly winds in the middle of the day.

The weather did not permit local flying and neither was there any call for operations.

The Adjutant proceeded by Station aircraft to Coltishall in order to make funeral arrangements for the burial of F/O COZENS and BIDDISCOMBE and Sergeants McGOWAN and STOCKFORD.

In order to provide a short cut to the new Sergeants aircrew Mess, personnel not previously detailed for other duties were utilized in aiding in the construction of a pathway.

24/1/44

Weather: Occasional slight rain. Visibility good becoming poor. Wind becoming S.S.E., moderate.

As no flying was scheduled both by day or night, flying personnel continued on the "read gang", while others were lectured to during the afternoon. Otherwise a very uneventful day.

25/1/44

Weather: Showery becoming cloudy. Westerly winds up to gale force at times. Visibility moderate becoming good.

Ten aircraft were detailed for an operation on enemy territory, but later in the day it was cancelled in view of the inclement weather conditions, which persisted in the latter part of the day. Notwithstanding, aircrews were absorbed in ground instruction.

26/1/44

Weather: Cloudy. Visibility good. Moderate variable winds.

The bad weather persisted and consequently operations were not called for. Funeral services with full Air Force honours, were held for Sft. McGOWAN who was buried at Ferryhill in Durham, and Sft. STOCKFORD and F/O BIDDISCOMBE who were buried at Cambridge.

27/1/44

Weather: Cloudy. Vis. good. Wind westerly gale force, about 1100 hours moderating. Ten aircraft were detailed for an operation but the raid was scrubbed later in the day. Information received from the International Red Cross to the effect that F/O R.J. Lacerte and crew who was reported missing on the 20.12.43, and reclassified Prisoners of War. Being a P.O.W. is not unusual for F/O LACERTE who was shot down over the Bay of Biscay on his 19th operation and succeeded escaping to friendly territory. If he makes a second attempt at freedom let us hope that it is as successful as the first.

28/1/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy. Visibility moderate to good. Wind westerly moderate. F/O COZENS funeral was held today in Surrey at which the Squadron was well represented by his many friends and acquaintances on the squadron.

Nine aircraft proceeded in the evening on another **BERLIN** bashing raid but of this total only six succeeded in reaching the target area. F/L J.R. "Taffy" MILTON, RAF, pilot of aircraft "R", returned early bringing back all bombs, due to fact that daylight artificial horizon had been inadvertently fitted to this aircraft, and pilot claimed that while flying through haze and cloud, he found difficulty in controlling the aircraft. F/L G.J. CRIBB, RAF, pilot of aircraft "U", returned early with all bombs due to starboard outer not going into "S" gear which reduced height and made it difficult to control aircraft. On landing at base a tyre burst but pilot landed aircraft without mishap. F/O J.M. MATHERLY, pilot of aircraft "A", returned early with all bomb load, after his W/T equipment went entirely u/s and it was impossible to receive group and command net. reports. There were no winds to aid navigator and pilot experienced difficulty in climbing.

These few remaining aircraft which succeeded in reaching the target found it well aglow and to these fires they added their downpour of bombs, leaving the target a blazing inferno with conflagration gaining in momentum. The raid was otherwise uneventful as little enemy opposition was encountered either on the inward or homeward journeys.

29/1/44 Weather: Mainly cloudy. Visibility good. Moderate light westerly winds. No flying this date as operations not called for. Aircrews volunteered to contribute one shilling bimonthly towards the Red Cross Prisoner of War fund, which is a generous gesture on their part.

30/1/44 Weather: Cloudy. Visibility good. Wind westerly light to moderate. **Squadron** aircraft were re-equipped with Halifax III's and those who have already been fortunate enough to test the new type are profuse in their admiration of its far superior performance and manoeuvrability in comparison to the old Halifax V.

No operations scheduled and very little flying carried out.

31/1/44 Weather: Fine becoming cloudy. Visibility moderate except for smoke haze about 1100 hours. Wind southerly becoming south westerly light.

Operations uncalled for this date. However, considerable flying carried out in testing the new type of aircraft.

Signal received from A.O.C.-in-C., informing this unit of the immediate award of the DPM to F/S CLIBBRY and SGT QUALL.

1/2/44 Weather: Cloudy with slight intermittent rain. Visibility good.

Ten aircraft were detailed for a cross country run which marked the first all out effort on the new Mark III Halifax aircraft.

F/O J.M. MATHERLY, who hails from Florida, after all his crew had successfully bailed out, was killed when his aircraft crashed. An investigation is being held in order to ascertain the cause of the accident.

The weather was extremely good for flying but no operations were scheduled as the moon period approaches.

2/2/44

Weather: Cloudy with good visibility. Wind force rather strong.

Although weather permitted full local flying, little or none was carried out. W/C TURNBULL proceeded to GRAFTON UNDERWOOD by aircraft to the scene of F/O MATHERLY's crash to investigate the cause and interview the remaining six survivors of the crew who had taken to their parachutes.

Air Ministry Orders contained the information re distribution and entitlement of the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal, which was well received by all ranks. It is felt however, that the minimum period of 60 days overseas service will make the clasp rather too common, thereby reducing the distinction between those men who have spent years in this country, and recent arrivals. At any rate groundcrew and aircrew alike are looking forward with anxious anticipation towards the issue of the ribbon and clasp.

3/2/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy with squally showers and strong gusty winds.

The moon is increasing in capacity and as a result operations were not called for, although climatic conditions were ideal.

Eight aircraft were detailed on a Bulls Eye exercise in the evening, and all returned safely having successfully completed their mission.

4/2/44

Weather: Fair to fine with good visibility and strong winds. Weather was excellent this date with the sun trying to peep through the slightly overcast skies, but this wind was dangerously gusty.

A terrific explosion about six miles away, which vibrated even the most solid of walls, caused quite a bit of confusion on the camp as the "quake" could only be attributed to either a crashed aircraft or exploded bombs. As investigation later revealed, an ammunition train exploded near R.A.F. Station, Catterick, a distance of 6 miles from Leeming and did not originate on this Station as was feared.

If one explosion creates as much havoc as was experienced around here, it gives us a very good indication of the agony and devastation that the Berliners are experiencing when we hurl masses of blockbusters on their city, in the space of an hour.

5/2/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy with some occasional rain towards evening. Good vis. and moderate winds. In the morning fourteen aircraft were detailed for a "X" Country run, in an effort to accustom crews to the new Mark III Halifax. However, in the early part of the afternoon the exercise was cancelled, and instead an all out fighter affiliation exercise was carried out. It is quite a sight whenever a training program of this nature is in progress, with numerous fighter zooming about the aerodrome, forming quite a varied contrast to the monotonous drone of heavy bombers.

6/2/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy with only moderate visibility. Operations were not called for this date and aircrews enjoyed a standown as all flying was curtailed owing to ground haze and fog.

The popular concensus of opinion amongst the pilots who were engaged on fighter affiliation yesterday, is that the new Hercules powered

Halifax III's are now on a par with the Lancasters insofar as ceiling is concerned. Whereas the former Halifax V could climb to 20/21,000 feet, the new type can reach an altitude of 24/25,000 feet, which will undoubtedly be instrumental in reducing casualties when used on operations.

The increased power and speed in climb will also cut down on the time on long distance raids. Consequently, heavy bomber raids on long trips, will be able to be undertaken in the shorter dark hours of the early and late Spring. Further the radial engines make it less vulnerable towards fire resulting from enemy bullets, which should further cut down on casualties.

Although it has proven far superior in almost every respect in training, its ultimate performance on operations against the enemy remains to be seen, and aircrews are anxiously awaiting their next trip, in order that its performance over the target can be gauged.

7/2/44

Weather: Cloudy to fair with some slight rain in early morning. Visibility good.

Under most ideal weather conditions including clear, sunshiny weather, an intensive flying training program was carried out in the forenoon, after information was received from Group that no operations were scheduled for the evening.

Sixteen aircraft were detailed for a "W" Country run, for the evening. One of the crews piloted by F/S A.W. NICOL, who were flying on a further familiarization flight in the early afternoon, although scheduled to participate in the "W" Country, were all killed, after a rather unfortunate incident. After F/S NICOL had completed his flight and was coming in to land, it appears from all reports, that one wheel remained retracted which as he neared the ground with flaps down, caused the aircraft to dip into the ground, and immediately was enveloped in flames, with ammunition exploding all around. The crashed aircraft immediately on impact, broke into two pieces, the badly mutilated wing, housing the four motors, was found a distance of approximately 20 yards from the mid-upper turret and remainder of fuselage. F/S Nicol was not entirely unfamiliar with this new type of Halifax, having already flown several hours on them in training exercises.

As they were just coming in to land as the crash occurred, all occupants of the aircraft other than the pilot were in the rest position, and were in this position all found dead, either instantly killed as the result of the impact, or burned alive in the inferno which followed.

The aircraft "E EDDIE", was crewed with following members, the pilot, F/S V.R. POLOWY Air Bomber; SGT. J.D. ROBERTSON, RAF, the WOP;

F/S J.N.H. VIDAL, the Mid upper gunner; SGT. D.M. HOWARD the rear air gunner; and SGT. S.H. SHORT the Flight Engineer. The latter, SGT. SHORT was quite a versatile and popular member of the squadron. In civilian life he had been a talented variety artist on the London stage, and when he came to the Lions he promoted the welfare of the airmen by producing a splendid Christmas Review, and his untimely death came as he had another show in production.

The only member of the full crew who is still alive is 083611116 Lieutenant F.S. SHOVE of the U.S.A.A.F. Since the crew were only engaged on local flying and the presence of a Navigator was not necessarily required, Lieut. SHOVE, was not flying.

The fifteen aircraft which proceeded in the evening on the Cross Country Exercise, all returned safely having successfully completed their duties.

8/2/44

Weather: Fair to fine with good visibility.

No operations were scheduled this date.

As a cross country exercise was detailed for the evening, only two crews participated in daylight flying training, one engaged on a local familiarization flight and the other on air to sea firing, both using the new Halifax III.

The Cross Country scheduled for the evening, was cancelled later in the afternoon.

9/2/44

Weather: Cloudy with some occasional rain at mid-day. Visibility good. One of the most interesting items of human appreciation ever to be recorded in the Squadron history, came to light this date in the form of a one pound money order received from the mother of one of the Lion's former members. It seems that 1586257 F/S ALFRED RICHARDS, RAF, the bomb aimer in P/O BIGGS' crew, RAF, which failed to return from an operation on the night of 6/7th SEPTEMBER 1943, bailed out of his aircraft and was taken prisoner in Germany. In grateful appreciation, he wrote to his mother from a Stalag in Germany, requesting her to forward a one pound note, to the parachute packers of this squadron, who were indirectly instrumental in saving his life. The note has already been turned over to the proper persons.

Squadron personnel are somewhat elated by the fact that yards of the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal and Maple Leaf clasps arrived to all those authorized to wear it, which includes almost the total strength. At any rate ground crews who have gone for so long without any recognition, will now have a "gong" to sway the hearts of the local female populace. It seems pointless to mention, that they have been doing quite well, without this additional inducement.

The moon period again kept operations at a standstill but nevertheless, the intensive training program was continued, by detailing twelve aircraft on a Bulls Eye Exercise scheduled to take off approx. 1800 hours. However, this was not meant to be, as weather interfered by becoming hazy, with wind developing to gale velocity, and consequently, it was cancelled shortly after dinner time. As a result no flying training was carried out during the day.

10/2/44

Weather: Fair generally but some occasional showers most of day, with snow showers before mid day. Visibility good. Strong squally winds.

An isolated case, diverting from the co-operation usually received from the R.A.F., presented itself in the form of a strong protest which went forward today to No. 6 Group, with regard to the casual manner in which the circumstances surrounding the funeral of the late F/O J.M. MATHERLY who was killed in a flying accident on 1st Feb., was handled. The comprehensive report of F/O A.J.F. CLARK, and R.A.F. bomb Aimer of this Squadron is herewith quoted in full.

"At 12:30 pm on 4.2.44, I was detained in company with F/O Fogg, to journey to Oxford and attend the funeral of F/O Matherly who had been killed in a flying accident. The funeral was scheduled to take place at 11.30 am on 5th Feb., 1944.

F/O Fogg and myself left Northallerton on the next available train at 3.45 p.m., and arrived in London at 11 p.m. At King's Cross Station we reported to the R.T. Office and were advised to catch the midnight train from Paddington Station to Oxford. In view of the lack of accommodation in London we decided to proceed to Oxford and also notify R.A.F. Station Bicester - who were in charge of the funeral arrangements - of our intention and time of arrival. The ICO in charge of the R.T. Office phoned Bicester in my presence and requested from the M.T. Section that transport be provided to meet two officers, who were proceeding on duty, at Oxford Station at 2:15 am. The Orderly Officer was not available and the message was left with the M.T. Section.

F/O Fogg and myself proceeded to Paddington, caught the midnight train and arrived at Oxford at 02:15 hours. Enquiry at the R.T. Office, Oxford, revealed that no transportation had so far reported. In view of this I phoned the M.T. Section at Bicester and was informed that the S.D.O. refused to sign Form 658 for our transport and we were instructed to wait in Oxford and catch the 6:35 am train to Bicester. I enquired of the R.T. Officer the prospect of getting accommodation in Oxford and was told it was next to impossible. I then asked Bicester to permit me to speak to the S.D.O. The duty batmen returned to the telephone and stated that "if I was enquiring about transport there was nothing doing". I asked who was the S.D.O. and was informed it was Squadron Leader Davey. I requested to be

allowed to speak to him, and mentioned the difficulty of accommodation in Oxford. The batman left the telephone and eventually returned with the message that "Squadron Leader Davey flatly refuses to come to the telephone and says his original order still stands.

F/O Fogg and myself then started on a tour of Oxford in an effort to find accommodation. Many unsuccessful enquiries were made, but at 5.15 am, an American N.C.O. offered us accommodation at the American Red Cross Club. This we were only too pleased to accept.

At 09:00 hrs. on Feb. 5th, I phoned the Station Adjutant at Bicester and notified him of our arrival and what had taken place and requested his instructions re the funeral arrangements. He was very apologetic about our early morning experience and advised us now to report at the cemetery at 11.00 hrs.

We made our own way to Borley Regional Cemetery and met the Rev. W. Batty, Squadron Leader attached to R.C.A.F. HQ, who was conducting the service.

A party of six bearers was provided by Bicester and the whole funeral party consisted of the Padre, F/O Fogg and myself and the six bearers. A photographer was present and took several photographs of the cortege and of the party alongside the grave. After a short service two of the bearers played "Last Post" and Reveille" on bugles. The salute was given and the party left the graveside.

No firing party was present at the cemetery, although I was given to understand a firing party would be in attendance for the ceremony.

Although, from necessity under war conditions, a simple ceremony must prevail I do feel that man who has made the supreme sacrifice whilst serving his country should be given a better funeral and the photographs sent overseas to next-of-kin should show that the honour due has been paid."

(Sgd) 127281 F/O A.J.F. Clark.

What F/O Clark neglected to mention was that the late F/O Matherly not only deserved a fitting honour as a member of his Majesty's Forces, but his sacrifice is considerably enhanced, by the fact that as a citizen of the United States, he offered his life in defence of a cause before his own country became involved in the present conflict.

Although snow came down in the forenoon, thirteen aircraft were provisionally detailed for a Cross Country run, to take place in the evening, providing the weather cleared up. However, the snow later turned to rain which continued throughout the best part of the afternoon, and as a consequence, the exercise was cancelled.

11.2.44

Weather: Fair to cloudy becoming fine towards midnight.  
Visibility good with moderate wind force.

Operations were not called for this date, but as excellent flying weather conditions prevailed in this vicinity, a Cross Country training flight consisting of 15 aircraft, was detailed for the evening. In order that the crews detailed might be rested for the evenings' effort, a standown on all daylight flying was declared.

At the request of W/C TURNBULL, The Royal Air Force Club in London, has accepted to receive the Lion's Squadron crest for display in their club rooms. It has been a practice since formation of the R.A.F. in 1918, to display unit badges in the R.A.F. club, as presented by interested members of the units represented and to the many already adorning the walls of that club is added the Lion's badge.

The Cross Country was carried out without any undue incidents to report, and all crews returned safely.

12.2.44

Weather: Fair becoming cloudy with moderate visibility. No operations were scheduled this date. As weather conditions continued ideal for local flying training, an air firing exercise consisting of four aircraft, was carried out in the afternoon. Other than this, the date was very uneventful.

13.2.44

Weather: Cloudy becoming overcast with fog developing in the late afternoon. It was welcome news, to learn that the Lions were again to become operational, and the twelve crews which were detailed for a night raid on enemy territory, enjoyed a standown. Consequently, no flying was carried out throughout the morning, although the weather was clear and permitted.

However, in the late hours of the afternoon, haze set in which turned to fog and the hopes of the squadron to estimate the performance of the Mark III, under operational conditions, were frustrated another evening, as operations were scrubbed as take-off time approached.

14.2.44

Weather: Overcast with slight rain and drizzle. Visibility poor. Even though fog and most were setting in fast, ten aircraft were detailed for a Cross Country training exercise, with the hope that by evening and take-off time, the weather would clear up. However, as the inclement weather persisted, the flight was cancelled. Operations were not scheduled for this date.

F/L J.H. BISSETT, DFM, who has just completed his post operational rest and who waived his operational leave to Canada, was posted to this unit to fill a Squadron Leader Post. He did a complete tour as an

an U.C.O. with 73 Squadron, where he also received the award of his non-immediate gong. With him, came five of his former crew, all of which have completed their first tour, and four of which hold the D.F.M.

15.2.44

Weather: Overcast. Visibility poor. At long last the Squadron became operational after the rather extended lull, with fourteen experienced crews being detailed for a raid on BERLIN. This was to mark the first venture on operations with the Mark III Halifax, the performance of which everyone on the squadron, is hoping will be as satisfactory as training flights have proven. One aircraft of those detailed, failed to take off, when "Y" became u/s at the last moment with a gill motor. The pilot, F/O R.H. LAUT, who immediately transferred his complete crew to "A", one of the standbys, was not destined to take part in this raid, as this latter aircraft also proved defective, having faulty plugs, and he remained grounded. For a time it was felt that of the fourteen aircraft detailed, only twelve would take off, because "R" piloted by F/O WELDON, also developed plug trouble and could not be taken out on ops. However, he and crew scrambled out of their aircraft, and made a mad dash towards "C" dispersal, and at the last possible moment became airborne in that aircraft.

From all reports the target was well pranged. Enemy opposition over the target was very weak, with very few fighters seen, and the negligible flak did not interfere with the bombing. Weather was as briefed, with 10/10 clouds encountered over the target and throughout the route. This weather probably accounted for the absence of fighters. P.F.F. markers were considered by most crews as well concentrated, possibly spreading a bit during the latter part of the attack.

All crews which became airborne, reached and pranged the target, and the most astonishing thing of all, was that on return all aircraft were reported as serviceable and ready to take-off, just as soon as weather permitted, in order that they might return to base from their various diversion points.

It was a very good show, and an excellent start on the Mark III aircraft, which equalled the standards set on training programs. The target was well pranged.

16.2.44

Weather: Cloudy with rain and poor visibility all morning, improving to fair with good visibility later.

Yesterdays mist had entirely cleared up, and again the squadron was called on for operations. In addition to all the crews who had participated in the BERLIN raid, including those who had been diverted, and as yet had not returned, four other crews were scheduled to go out this evening, which included the Wing Commander. This made a total of 13 aircraft to be detailed and after the shellacking BERLIN took as a result of last night's raid the operation scheduled for this evening would prove even more devastating. However, the operation was cancelled in the early afternoon.

F/S T.H. COATHUP was the only pilot to do any flying, when in the late evening he and crew went out on a cross-country run, in order to break in recently received "J", a Hally III.

17.2.44

Weather: Mainly fair with occasional showers of rain and sleet. Visibility moderate. Only seven aircraft were detailed for operations this date, as a great many still remain diverted after the raid on BERLIN, and adverse weather conditions are curtailing their return. All day the weather has been spasmodically drizzly with skies overcast, and as a result it came as no surprise when the information was received at 1600 hours, cancelling operations.

18.2.44

Weather: Cloudy with some slight occasional sleet. Visibility moderate. Aircraft began dribbling in from diversion bases in the morning, and consequently when Group called for a big effort, it seemed likely that we could send out quite an offering. Sixteen aircraft were detailed for a raid on enemy territory, but as the day progressed the weather deteriorated, becoming overcast with occasional rain, which resulted in the scrubbing of the raid. Several of the Lion alumni paid a short visit to the squadron between their instructional duties. P/O "Indian" Schmitt, DFC, whose carefree and reckless antics of the days he spent with the Lions, will long be remembered, flew in from 1666 Con. Unit, where he is presently an instructor. F/L "Moe" Morrison and F/O "Ban" Plaster, attended an Air Bomber's briefing to revive memories of the past, when they were a part of our bombing section. F/O M.H. "Buck" ALBERS returned from No. 303 Station Hospital, Mr. Grafton Underwood, an American Hospital down south, where he has been recuperating from the consequences of a mishap incurred while on the fateful cross country flight of F/O J.M. MATHERLY, on 1st February. On reaching "terra firma", after being forced to take to his parachute, he sprained his ankle and has been bed-ridden ever since.

19.2.44

Weather: Cloudy with some sleet or snow. Visibility moderate. Sixteen aircraft were this date detailed for a raid on LEIPZIG. Slightly after midnight, with the night very dark, and clouds low in the vicinity of base, our aircraft began taking off. Unfortunately, three of our aircraft failed to leave the ground. On the run up, two engines in aircraft "S", piloted by F/L J.R.G. MILTON, RAF, proved u/s, and investigation later disclosed that plugs and three of the cylinders were faulty. P/O H.K. HOLLAND in aircraft "L" found difficulty in building up brake pressure while taxiing, and under the circumstances, failed to take-off. Another aircraft through faulty plugs, rendered an engine u/s; this aircraft "R", was piloted by F/S J. KING.

Of the thirteen aircraft which became airborne, four returned early without reaching the target. Aircraft "A", captained by F/S C.H.

FISCHER, developed hydraulic motor trouble which rendered the tail turret unserviceable, when it was 50 miles inside enemy territory. F/L F.N. MURRAY, in "P", developed a u/s starboard inner engine, when the block tube control broke and caused the butterfly valves to close. F/O R.H. LAUT in "Y", found difficulty in climbing. Captain F/S C.H. COATHUP in aircraft "U" encountered icing which reduced climb to about 16,000 feet, and any attempt he made to exceed that height, caused the aircraft to stagger and become sluggish, and consequently he returned early.

The remaining nine aircraft proceeded to the target in 10/10ths clouds with continued haze all the way on the inward journey reaching to a height of 20,000 feet. In an effort to confuse the enemy defences, our aircraft headed direct for BERLIN, and when reaching a point about 40 miles west of the capital, turned their main force due south in the direction of LEIPZIG, while a small force of aircraft continued on to BERLIN. But as results later showed, the enemy were not baffled by this strategy, and over the target which was completely obscured by cloud cover, many combats were seen with enemy aircraft. Our crews dropped their loads on P.F.F., and although results could not be seen, it was felt that those who reached the target, bombed it, dead on.

As the result of this raid one of our aircraft failed to return. F/O D.O. OLSVIK was flying "B", and carrying as second pilot the captain of a recently acquired crew, F/S C.G. BURNED. The loss of OLSVIK, was a sad blow to the Squadron, who during the twenty-five sorties he had already completed with the Lions, had proven himself to be one of the most capable pilots on the Squadron with the attribute of possessing a grim determination to reach the target at all costs. He loved his work, and had an urgent desire to transfer to the P.F.F., where he felt he would be able to continue on operations until he had a total of 45 trips, instead of the usual 30 on bombing squadrons. There is no doubt that he was an inspiration to all crews, and his quiet demeanor and simplicity of conduct, certainly will be missed by his fellow aircrew members.

This raid proved very unsuccessful insofar as the Lion's were concerned. Of the total number of aircraft which were detailed, only seven bombed the target and returned, and this definitely is not in keeping with the motto of the Squadron to "Strike Sure". After the excellent beginning on the Mark III aircraft, this is rather a let down, and here's hoping that a similar performance does not recur.

F/O W.E.P. "Red" SOEDER, a navigator in S/L G.J. LAIRD's crew, celebrated his 26th birthday over LEITZIG. On the same date a year ago, in celebrating his 25th birthday, he was guiding his Wellington

aircraft on a raid to WILHEIMSHAVEN. Now "Red" wonders whether he will ever be able to celebrate a birthday in the Mess, or at least on the ground, during the course of this war.

Fourteen aircraft were detailed on an operation to STUTTGART, but of this number only thirteen became airborne, as F/S C.H. COATHUP, remained grounded in aircraft "R". Two aircraft failed to reach the target due to early returns when "C" piloted by F/S C.H. FISHER, developed a u/s starboard inner generator with the port outer generator working spasmodically and registering variable voltage. Aircraft "Q" piloted by F/S W.M. PATRICK after approximately two hours on the inward journey, was unable to restart his cut starboard inner engine, and he too, returned early.

This night suddenly ended the promising career of F/O R.K. LAUT and crew who were flying in aircraft "W". Approximately nine minutes after disappearing into the clouds after take-off, the aircraft was seen diving straight for the ground, where it was seen to crash in a cultivated field 1 mile N.W. of Northailerton, instantly killing the entire crew. Investigation has revealed no clue as to the cause of the accident, because on impact the plane immediately broke into flames, as it was carrying only incendiaries, and was scattered over a wide area. It is surmised, that only two reasons could have accounted for the accident. Either the late take off accompanied by the strain of early briefing, might have resulted in fatigue or nervousness, which caused the pilot to lose control of his aircraft, or the take off in the rain might have caused the A.S.I to fail and if at the same time, if the gyro horizon was unserviceable unknown to the pilot, this might have accounted for the fact that the pilot made no attempt to pull his aircraft out of the dive. F/O R.K. Laut was an above average pilot, who had the full confidence of his crew, and although he had not been with the Lions very long, he showed great promise of becoming a first class operational captain. Another bad blow to the squadron.

The remaining ten aircraft proceeded to the target through a cloud covered route, finding that in the vicinity of the target the clouds began letting up until finally directly over the target, vertical visibility was perfect, permitting ground detail to be easily depicted. The attack was very well concentrated, and our aircraft left leaving intense fires burning in the vicinity of the markers, which could be seen for a hundred miles from the target. Only moderate ground opposition was experienced, with fighters completely absent from the scene, no doubt due to other diversionary raids, which drew the fighter opposition towards the Heligoland.

Bomb Aimer F/O C.V. BIDDULPH, RAF, in F/L G.J. CRIBB'S, RAF, crew, from his position in the aircraft, followed the path of an 4,000

pounder dropped from a neighbouring aircraft, and saw it completely demolish several buildings, and particularly uprooting a full wall of a well sized building, and hurling it through mid-air.

P/O A.G. McAULEY in aircraft "N" after just having bombed the target, was hit by incendiaries from a Lancaster above and ahead, which tore three gaping holes in the port wing, and began a fire on the starboard wing. He had only time to shout "Look out boys" between the time he first saw the falling incendiaries and the impact, which caused the aircraft to go into a steep dive. After a loss of 3,000 feet the fire extinguished itself. A Lancaster flying behind P/O McAULEY was also struck by the falling incendiaries and in the same manner set alight, but it didn't fare as well, and a few moments later the crew of "Y" saw it explode and disintegrate in mid-air, apparently carrying its bomb load. No damage was caused to the controls of "Y", and McAULEY, did a good job in bringing back his badly banged up aircraft.

21/2/44

Weather: It somewhat deteriorated today, with cold wintry showers coming down intermittently throughout the day.

In view of the weather no operations were scheduled and as a result aircrews spent the day resting after the previous two evenings work, and the early morning return from operations.

Only a meagre amount of flying training was carried out, and consisted of one air test and one cross-country flight.

22/2/44

Weather: Showers were frequent throughout the day, accompanied by thick heavy clouds, which reduced visibility to moderate.

Eleven of the Lion's aircraft were detailed for a raid on enemy territory which was to take place in the late evening, but as the weather failed to clear up, the operation was later cancelled.

In view of the weather, no flying of any type was carried out this date.

23/2/44

Weather: The spasmodic drizzles persisted, accompanied by cloudy skies.

Between dull spots in the weather a minimum amount of flying was attempted. Out newly acquired "A" Flight Commander, S/L BISSETT, practised several circuits and landings, with another two aircraft engaged on cross country and local familiarization flights, respectively.

Otherwise it was a very uneventful day.

24/2/44

Weather: Cloudy with rain and drizzle. Visibility moderate.

Twelve aircraft were detailed for a raid on SCHWEINFURT and aircraft took off accordingly between 1821 and 1840 hours. Four aircraft failed to reach the target due to early returns. Approximately an hour after take-off aircraft "L", piloted by F/S J. KING, while making an attempt to climb from 9,000 feet on reaching the enemy coast, found the port inner engine rapidly overheating. The pilot then flew the aircraft level, but it began to vibrate and stagger through the air and consequently, he decided to return to base, recrossing the coast at BOURNEMOUTH. F/S C.H. COATHUP in aircraft "R" returned early due to electrical defects throughout the aircraft. F/S A.P. CLIBBERY, DFM, encountered engine trouble after he was well on his way to the target, when both port engines began to vibrate violently and he too, decided to return. The other early return was F/L J.R.G. MILTON, RAF, in aircraft "U", who returned before crossing the English coast, because the rear gunner was not getting any oxygen in the turret.

On the inward journey to the target the remaining eight aircraft encountered severe head winds, which did not permit them to reach the target at the briefed time. In spite of the delay, they found the target still alight with flares, with visibility clear and unlimited. The enemy defences in the area were plentiful, with numerous fighter flares, S/L's and heavy flak lighting up the sky. One pilot went as far as to say that "the sky was lit up like the 4th of July, and target area was as bright as daylight."

The target was heavily pranged on the markers, and the last aircraft which entered the target area reported huge and concentrated flares, which could be seen as far as FRANKFURT on the homeward journey.

A very good prang, and all our aircraft returned safely, none the worse for the evening's social call on SCHWEINFURT.

25/2/44

Weather: Cloudy with rain during morning. Visibility moderate to good. The U.S.A.A.F. had during the day carried out a devastating daylight raid on specific targets in AUGSBURG, in an attempt to destroy the FESSERSCHMITT works in that area, leaving that city a mass of flames and debris. To ensure the success of the allied intention, a similar raid of heavy bombers were detailed for the evening, and Lions sent out ten experienced crews.

One of the ten which became airborne returned early, soon after take-off, when the oil pressure in the starboard outer engine seriously dropped and caused a dangerous overheating. This aircraft was "R", piloted by F/S C.H. COATHUP.

The remaining aircraft proceeded to the target and found it clear, with no cloud and visibility good. To find the target was an easy matter, because fires were still burning after the daylight offensive, which could be seen from a distance of 100 miles on the inward journey. Crews had been briefed not to be misled by previous fires, and were exceedingly careful that their loads of incendiaries were dropped on the P.F.F. markers.

Fires were to be seen everywhere, which soon became welded into a solid mass from which the pall of smoke lay like a cloud over the city, rising from 8,000 to a height of 15,000 feet, with almost daylight visibility below. It was excellent evening for taking photographs and the amount of film exposed exceeded all previous records.

Unfortunately, the "B" Flight deputy Flight Commander, F/L J.R.G. "Taffy", MILTON, RAF, failed to return from the operation. It was one year ago that a "sprog" crew, captained by SGT. MILTON, (as he was then), arrived to the LIONS from 22 O.T.U., bringing with him excellent recommendations relating to his capabilities as a pilot and a captain. He did very well with the squadron during that time, but of late was experiencing difficulty in completing the few remaining sorties in his tour, due in most cases to faulty aircraft, and in the others to flying strain. The sombre-Welshman, was very methodical and precise in all he undertook, and prior to each operation he would inspect his whole aircraft with a fine tooth comb, to ensure that every instrument and electrical device was functioning in perfect order. He will be missed.

25/2/44

Weather: Cloudy with rain turning to snow later. Visibility moderate but poor in snow. No operations were scheduled for this date and aircrews enjoyed a standown, in order that they might rest up after the work of the last two nights. Weather was poor for any local flying, and consequently no flying of any type and description was carried out.

Canada could not have sent better "AMBASSADORS of Moral Fibre Rebuilders" than those comprising the cast of the all-Canadian revue "Blackouts", which ran for several performances on this station. It was a snappy show filled with fast flowing wit, gorgeous costumes and lively dances which captivated the enthusiastic interest of all Canadians on the Squadron. More than just another good show, it carried with it a message of what Canadian shows, and Canuck humour, used to be like before its sons were scattered over the length and breadth of the universe. As the months turn into years away from Canadian shores, the memories of the olden days are hidden in obscurity, while realities of the present are met and faced, and "Blackouts" certainly helped to revive all those memories. What Canadians need in England, are more Canadian travelling entertainment units, of a similar quality.

.../90

27/2/44

Weather: Cloudy with snow and later snow showers. Visibility moderate and very poor in snow. The snow curtailed all local flying and no operations were scheduled for this date. This weather is the closest we have come to a Canadian winter for some time, when a solid blanket of snow covered the whole camp and runways.

28/2/44

Weather: Clear and sunshine, with a few scattered clouds and slight wind.

Fourteen aircraft were this date detailed for an operation on enemy territory, which included amongst the crews W/C R.S. TURNBULL, AFC, DPM, who was to take with him the Station Commander, G/C J.G. BRYANS, as second pilot. By night fall the weather began closing in and prior to take-off time the operation was cancelled.

29/2/44

Weather: Continued clear with sunshine. Visibility excellent.

Again operations were not called for, but crews were out as an intensive flying training program, consisting of H2S tests, air test, local practice and familiarization flights, cross country and a variety of other requisites in the training line. They certainly took advantage of the ideal flying conditions.

1/3/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy with a few occasional snow showers towards evening. Visibility good. Things started off with a bang this month as the Squadron was called upon for operations. We were not caught napping by any means and had sixteen crews detailed and raring to go. Everybody concerned was disappointed when operations were scrubbed, especially the men behind the wrench - the ARMOURERS.

2/3/44

Weather: Mainly fine with good visibility. Three degrees of frost. With a nice tinge of frost in the air it was uncomfortable to stand around so it is not surprising that a great deal of flying was done this date. There were three cross-countries during the day in order to familiarize the crews with the new H.2.S equipment. One aircraft was employed on Fighter Affiliation practice and one on air firing. This with a few air tests kept all personnel busy and warm.

3/3/44

Weather: Fair to fine with good visibility. 4 degrees of frost. As we were not called upon for operations this date, everyone seemed to get down to an intense training programme resulting in five aircraft taking off after dinner and cross-countries, two aircraft on air to air firing, one aircraft on practice bombing and a number of air tests. There is no doubt, that full advantage was taken of the good weather conditions this date.

4/ /44

Weather: Fine becoming cloudy with some slight snow after dusk. Visibility good. Six degrees of frost.

The weather man is definitely doing his best to prove us Canucks that we can still have a winter in England today. For the third day in a row the Squadron has been free of operations. Nevertheless, this definitely didn't stop us from becoming airborne and today five aircraft were detailed for cross-countries, six for air-to-air firing, and a number of air test and local flying practice.

5/3/44

Weather: Cloudy with good visibility. One degree of frost. The boys of the Squadron are beginning to wonder whether the Squadron is still operational or whether we are changing over to an O.T.U. because today again, no word of operations, so the opportunity of giving the crews that had not been on an H.2.S. training exercise was taken and five aircraft were detailed for cross-countries. Three aircraft carried out practice bombing exercises and one air to air firing. Flight Lieutenant R.C. DEEGAN an ex-LION paid a hurried visit to the Squadron in the late afternoon and it was noticed that he was still flying a "Y" Yorker as he did with us. DEEGAN looked and admitted that he was a little homesick for the boys, which is a very good sign of the Squadron spirit.

6/3/44

Weather: Visibility poor. Wind very light. Although this is the "moon period" the Squadron happily received the news this morning that we were called upon for operations. We provided fourteen aircraft with ease. The target was TRAPPES and its marshalling yards. Only thirteen aircraft took off because "J" Johnny piloted by F/SGT KING was a non-starter due to engine trouble. First aircraft attacking report 2/10th cloud which quickly dispersed and all other crews reported no cloud with good visibility. P.F.F. markers were on time and appeared to be accurately placed, several crews being able to see the yards and so bombed the actual target in the absence of T.I. markers. Several crews stated that they saw sticks of bombs straddling the target. Attack was well concentrated and very good results are expected. CAN.J19588 P/O B.C. Scobine and Can.R136520 F/S Foster DF, and their crews reported to the Squadron from 1659 CU.

7/3/44

Weather: Cloudy without rain, becoming fine. Visibility becoming very good, light northerly wind. The Squadron was detailed for operations again today and we provided 14 aircraft. Target for bombing was LE MANS. All our aircraft became airborne but "J" Johnny piloted by F/S KING returned early due to engine trouble. Of the remainder 10 attacked the target, 3 reaching it and being unable to see target markers, jettisoned their bombs and abandoned the task in accordance with briefing instructions. Weather conditions over the target were 9/10ths cloud with tops from 7/1000 ft. P.F.F. markers were late and some difficulty was experienced

in locating them when they finally did go down, due to the unexpected cloud cover. Several small fires were seen and one large explosion at 2134 hours was reported by one of the crews. Most of the crews consider this as a very scattered attack. There was no apparent concentration of fighters reported in any particular area.

8/3/44

Weather: Cloudy becoming fine. Visibility poor. Wind calm or very light. The Squadron was detailed for operations again today and only five aircraft were requested. This number was easily met and preparations were well in hand when everything was scrubbed. Owing to this false-alarm, it was hard to carry out other flying so only two aircraft were employed on cross-countries.

9/3/44

Weather: Cloudy with fog becoming fine. Visibility foggy becoming poor. Wind calm. The Squadron was called upon for five aircraft for operations again today but they were cancelled in the afternoon much to everyone's sorrow. The bad weather during the day did not permit any aircraft to become airborne.

10/3/44

Weather Fine becoming cloudy. Visibility moderate becoming good. Light northeast wind. No operations this date so the Squadron buckled down to some more intensive training. Seven aircraft were detailed for cross-countries and all successfully completed their mission. A number of aircraft did local flying and this enabled some of the newer crews to get the feel of their aircraft. Early in the morning the Squadron was detailed for operations but this was scrubbed soon after.

11/3/44

Weather: Cloudy. Visibility good. Wind 15 m.p.h. North-westerly. No operations this date so taking advantage of the good weather again, the Squadron carried out one its most intensive training programmes. Nine cross countries were scheduled and successfully carried out. Three aircraft were employed on fighter affiliation exercises and one was employed on practice bombing. Judging by the enthusiasm and amount of flying during the last week, we figure the squadron is prepared for an all out effort on operations any day now. Can. F155071 SGT BLEDD and crew reported to the squadron from 1659 Con. Unit today.

12/3/44

Weather: Cloudy. Visibility moderate becoming good. Wind north-westerly. Personnel of the Squadron were disappointed because we were not called upon to provide any aircraft for operations. Instead eight aircraft were detailed for cross-countries and all successfully completed their mission. Four aircraft carried out air to air firing and others did local flying. CANJ19952 P/O Devereaux and CANJ19593 P/O H. PURVIS and crews reported to the Squadron from 1659 Con Unit today.

13/3/44

Weather: Cloudy becoming fair to fine. Visibility 20-30 miles. We were called upon for operations this date and easily supplied the eight aircraft asked for. The target was LE MANS, and was considered an easy "do" for the crews. The target was identified by the T.I. markers and visibly by the river. There were no night fighters seen and only one heavy gun and a couple of light guns were used to defend the target. All aircraft bombed the target and returned to base. The attack was considered well concentrated and a number of fires were observed on the target. Besides operations this date, two aircraft successfully completed bombing practice and one practiced circuits and landing.

14/3/44

Weather: Fine at first becoming fair. Visibility twenty-thirty miles deteriorating after dusk to five miles. The Squadron was not called upon for operations this date so an intensive training program was prepared and carried out. Six aircraft were employed on local flying, three aircraft practiced fighter affiliation and these aircraft successfully completed X-Countries.

15/3/44

Weather: Fine at first becoming fair to cloudy after noon. Visibility 10-20 miles. The Squadron was called upon for operations this date and sixteen aircraft were detailed the target for the night being STUTT-GART. All the aircraft took off successfully but one returned early piloted by R.144492 W/O KING, J. due to the Port Outer engine packing up. Two aircraft failed to return from this operation, the Captains being J.22145 F/O J.E. MILTON and J.25442 F/O H.B. STEVENS. From the thirteen aircraft that successfully bombed the target it was learned that the Route Markers were very poor and due to heavy cloud cover over the target it was impossible to estimate the damage caused although a number of large fires and explosions were observed. "L" LONDON piloted by P/O HOLLAND received flak bursts on the Port Wing and incendiaries from a friendly aircraft hit the starboard wing at approximately the same time. On return to base a 4 lb. incendiary was taken out the wing. "J" JOHNNY piloted by P/O WELDON received a flak burst over the target that shot off the astrodrome and holed the mid-upper turret. No injuries to personnel were sustained luckily. Three aircraft landed away from base.

16/3/44

Weather: Cloudy. Visibility ten miles at first. Three to five miles during the morning improving to 15-20 miles during the afternoon. The Squadron was not called upon for operating this date and due to bad weather little flying was carried out. Two of the aircraft that landed away last night returned to base, and one aircraft took part in local flying.

17/3/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy. Visibility three to six miles at first improving to 8-10 miles. As no operations were scheduled this date eight aircraft successfully completed X-Countries and one H.2.S practice bombing, two were employed on local flying and one aircraft returned to base from operation on the night of the 15th.

18/3/44

Weather: Cloudy with intermittent rain at noon and dusk. Visibility 3-6 miles at first improving to 10-15 miles during morning. Operations were scheduled for this date and fourteen aircraft were provided by the Squadron, the target being FRANKFURT. All aircraft took off and twelve successfully bombed the target and returned to this country. Two aircraft failed to return from this operation, they were piloted by F/O T.W. COOPER (G - GEORGE) and "Z" ZEBRA, piloted by CAN.R.156049 Sgt MILLER, W.C. Crews reported the target to be covered with haze thus making visibility poor. P.F.F. was good although route markers were very poor. Searchlights were ineffective through due to the haze. Large explosions were seen and although there were a few scattered fires the raid was well concentrated. All aircraft landed away from base. "V" VICTOR piloted by RL41414 F/S COATHUP saw a little real action while making the bombing run the Rear Gunner sighted an ME.109 on the port quarter, down at 400 yards. Enemy aircraft came in climbing towards the aircraft. Combat evasion was "Corkscrew port" and the rear gunner fired a short burst while in the corkscrew as the fighter broke away at 200 yards to starboard up and was not seen again. Resume course was given after fighter broke away. Enemy aircraft did not open fire.

19/3/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy becoming fine late in day. As all aircraft landed away yesterday and the weather was not very good, not much training was carried out this date. All aircraft returned to base during the day. Squadron groundcrew were issued with Battle Dress this date and it is believed that this was met with great enthusiasm by all ranks. CAN-J-12340 F/O McPHEE, W.N. and crew reported from 1659 Con. Unit and CAN.R.186063 Sgt Smith H.S. reported from 61 (ROAF) Base as spare Gunner.

20/3/44

Weather: Fine at first, cloudy with rain in morning. Fair to fine later. Good visibility. Due to rain only one aircraft became airborne from this Squadron and this was employed on a weather test. Advantage was taken of the bad weather thought to bring the aircraft serviceability up ready for the next operations.

21/3/44

Weather: Cloudy with rain and drizzle. Visibility moderate to good. No operations scheduled for this date and due to the bad weather little flying was carried out except for a few air tests and local circuits and bumps. A good day to put the house in order of anticipation to coming operations. CAN.R.107233 F/S Stevens, and crew reported in from No. 1666 Con. Unit. Word was received from H.Q. No. 6 (ROAF) Group that P/O HOLLAND, P/O MATCHETT and P/O PRICE were screened and would be leaving the squadron in the near future.

22/3/44

Weather: Cloudy with occasional slight rain. Moderate to good visibility. Although it looked as though the Squadron would be free from operations this date due to the weather, all personnel were surprised to learn that the Squadron was called upon for fifteen aircraft. After being stood down for the last three days this figure was easily met and so all the aircraft took off to bomb FRANKFURT. All aircraft successfully bombed the target and returned to base. P.F.F. was reported to be on time and well concentrated. There was a cloud cover of approx. 5/10ths but large fires could be seen and a number of big explosions were reported by the crews. Fighter flares were used by the enemy although no fighter resistance was reported. It was considered that the target was heavily hit and the results were very good. Besides providing the fifteen aircraft for operations this date two aircraft were employed on air firing, two on practice bombing, one on X-Country and a number of local tests were carried out.

23/3/44

Weather: Cloudy. Visibility moderate to good. With the large operations the previous night and as the Squadron was not called upon again today, full advantage was taken by the ground crews to make the aircraft serviceable for coming, operations. Only two air tests were carried out this date.

24/3/44

Weather: Cloudy. Fair to fine later. Visibility moderate to good. The Squadron was called upon to provide fifteen aircraft this date, the target being BERLIN. This was like home week for the more experienced crews of the Squadron. Three aircraft failed to return from this operation, they were "J" JOHNNY piloted by CAN.R128270 W/O Yaworski, A.R., "K" KITTY piloted by CAN.R69918 F/S Dowdell, S.G. and "V" VIC piloted by W/O Magdalinski, W.F. The remaining twelve aircraft successfully bombed the target and all returned to base except one aircraft that landed down south. Crews complained of the lack of track markers. Lots of searchlights were seen over the target and although P.F.F. was scattered it was well within the target area. Large fires were reported and occasional explosions. No fighter attacks were experienced by returning aircraft. Besides operations, two aircraft were employed on cross-countries and three on air to air firing and two on practice bombing.

25/3/44

Weather: Fine at first, becoming cloudy then fine later. Visibility moderate to good. Only two aircraft were detailed for operations this date, the target being AULNOY. One aircraft was employed on cross country and three on local flying. A very quiet day indeed. Both of the aircraft on operations bombed the target and returned to base. Visibility over the target was good and P.F.F. was accurate. This was considered to be a very good attack and the target well pranged for the size of the raid. No enemy resistance was experienced either to or from the target.

26/3/44

Weather: fair to fine. Good visibility. A lovely day today and when we learned that operations were scheduled for the night, it was not surprising. Fourteen aircraft were detailed to attack ESSETI. As our aircraft were early in the attack, little can be said to the results. Defences were very mediocre and the searchlights were ineffective due to the intensity of the cloud. Route was reported good and P.F.F. accurate. All aircraft bombed the target and returned to this country. Besides operations, one aircraft was employed on fighter affiliation and one on a night J.2.S X-Country. A very busy day indeed.

27/3/44

Weather: Cloudy at first becoming fair. Visibility 3 to 6 miles. Wind light variable. Very little doing today after operations last night but three aircraft were employed on cross-countries, and one on circuits and landing. CAN.R144198 F/S Shoener R.F. and crew and CAN.R158530 F/S Stainton, A.J. and crew reported in today from N. 1659 C.U. for operational duties. Not much activity to report this date.

28/3/44

Weather: Fog at first lifting during the afternoon and becoming foggy again after dusk. Visibility poor. Wind light northerly. A grand day for aircrew personnel to have a well earned rest. No flying at all was carried out nothing of interest to report.

29/3/44

Weather: Cloudy becoming fair. Light drizzle during the morning. Visibility one to six miles. Wind light northerly. Sixteen aircraft were detailed for operations but this was cancelled during the afternoon and only one aircraft was detailed to bomb VAIRES. This aircraft bombed the target and returned safely to base. There was very little enemy defence and considered a very easy trip. P.F.F. was good. There was no cloud but some haze.

30/3/44

Weather: Fair. Visibility five to ten miles. Wind light northerly. Operations detailed for this date and sixteen aircraft took off to bomb NUREMBROUG. Twelve aircraft successfully bombed the target and returned to this country. The squadron suffered a heavy loss this night as three aircraft were reported missing. Both our "A" and "B" Flight Commanders failed to return. "W" Willie piloted by A/S/L G.J. LAIRD DFC and "D" Donald piloted by A/S/L J.M. BISSETT, DFM. One of the newer crews CAN.J12340 F/O W.N. MCPHEE piloting "E" EASY also failed to return. Returning crews reported numerous night fighters that were aided by the bright moon. "H" Nuts piloted by CAN.J15301 F/O W.J. WICKER was attacked by a fighter. The mid-upper gunner first sighted exchange of tracers from two unidentified aircraft on the

30/3/44

port beam. The enemy aircraft apparently saw this aircraft when he broke away from the other bomber and therefore, opened fire from 600 yards or more. The Mid-upper gunner saw this trace coming from the port quarter down and instructed his Pilot to corkscrew to port. This was done and the enemy aircraft was not seen after resume course was given. Neither gunners opened fire and no damage was sustained to the aircraft.

A number of the pilots acutally saw the night fighters shooting down our aircraft and tracers filled the air. P.F.F. was late at first but later in the raid were well concentrated. Target was well pranged but believed a costly "do". F/L McAULEY a veteran of 24 trips made his first turnback due to engine trouble. Four aircraft were also employed on practices bombing during the day.

31/3/44

Weather: Fair. Visibility five to ten miles. Wind light northerly. Flying activities were at a minimum this date due to the operations last night and to the great loss of our Flight Commanders. One of the newer crews went on a X-Country to make our full effort for the day. Looking back over the month though, this is considered to have been a month of great progress and activity.

Honours and Awards - NIL

Commissions - NIL

Promotions:

J18167 P/O R.A. Shannon promoted to the rank of T/Flying Officer w.e.f. 1.1.44.  
J27584 P/O N.G. Nahu promoted to the rank of T/Flying Officer w.e.f. 25.12.43  
J28204 P/O J.J.W. MacLeod promoted to the rank of T/Flying Officer w.e.f. 9.1.44  
J27225 P/O R.D. Ford promoted to the rank of T/Flying Officer w.e.f. 11.12.44  
J18888 P/O A.G. McAuley appointed to Acting Flight Lieutenant w.e.f. 26.2.44  
J19057 P/O J.D. Mawson appointed to Acting Flight Lieutenant w.e.f. 26.2.44  
156550 P/O J.A. McClune promoted to the rank of T/Flying Officer w.e.f. 9.2.44.

Postings to and from Unit:

J19844 P/O C.A. Fisher posted to No. 405 Squadron w.e.f. 1.3.44  
J23966 F/O H.B. Calhoun posted No. 405 Squadron w.e.f. 1.3.44  
J14201 F/O A.W. Shirley posted to RCAF U/K N/E Unit w.e.f. 26.2.44

J14727 F/O A.G. Smith posted from 61 (RCAF) Base w.e.f. 6.3.44  
J27584 P/O N.G. Nahu posted from 61 (RCAF) Base w.e.f. 6.3.44  
J24620 F/O G.M. Waddell posted from 61 (RCAF) Base w.e.f. 6.3.44  
J26297 F/O G.W. Farr posted from 61 (RCAF) Base w.e.f. 6.3.44  
-J19588 P/O B.C. Scobie posted from 61 (RCAF) Base w.e.f. 6.3.44  
J24588 F/O N. Dubeski posted from 61 (RCAF) Base w.e.f. 11.3.44

1/4/44

Weather: Fair. Visibility 5-10 miles. Wind light easterly. No operations were scheduled for this date so a number of training exercises were successfully carried out. Four aircraft were employed on H.2.S Cross-countries, two on airtests, one on practice bombing and eight on special training exercises. This was the extent of the Squadron activities for this date with nothing particularly outstanding taking place.

2/4/44

Weather: Cloudy at first - fair during morning and afternoon. Wind south-easterly. 5/10ths cloud. Fog after dusk.

An extensive training program was scheduled but had to be scrubbed on account of changing weather conditions. Our Commanding Officer, W/C R.S. Turnbull, A.F.C., D.F.M., went to R.C.A.F. Headquarters this date.

3/4/44

Weather: Cloudy with rain and fog. Poor visibility. No flying at all this date due to weather conditions, so training was confined to lectures and ground instruction. Two new crews arrived at the Squadron today, namely, J24486 F/O Penrose and CAN.R166264 Sgt Kicak, J.H. and Crews.

4/4/44

Weather: Cloudy with much rain. Poor visibility. The weather was even worse today than yesterday so all kites stayed on the deck. Our Commanding Officer, W/C R.S. TURNBULL, A.F.C., D.F.M. returned to the Squadron after a two day stay at R.C.A.F. Headquarters. Our Adjutant, F/Lt. O.R. MARTIN, proceeded on leave today. Two new crews reported in to the Squadron from Conversion Unit today. They were, CAN.J14908 P/O HEPBURN and crew and CAN.J20191 P/O MURPHY and crew.

5/4/44

Weather: Cloudy with much rain and drizzle. Poor visibility. The weather managed to clean up a bit in the afternoon and four aircraft took off on H.2.S Cross-countries, three aircraft did local flying and one was employed on air to air firing. A/S/O D.G. Whiting assumed the duties of Adjutant in the absence of F/L O.R. MARTIN.

6/4/44

Weather: Cloudy with rain at first. Poor visibility. The weather really closed down on us today so no flying could be carried out. After being "stood down" for so long, it is quite evident that all personnel will be welcoming better weather and most of all "OPERATIONS".

7/4/44

Weather: Cloudy. Visibility moderate to poor. Operations were scheduled for today and eight aircraft were detailed, however, due to weather conditions they were scrubbed, much to the disappointment of all concerned. Local conditions were not too bad so an intensive training programme was carried out with three aircraft being detailed for "BULLSEYE" exercises, four

on Circuits and Landings, two on H.2.S Cross-country, one on air to air firing and another on Fighter Affiliation. A grand change from the last week's inactivity.

8/4/44

Weather: Cloudy becoming fine. Visibility moderate. No operations were detailed for this date but opportunity was taken of the nice weather by getting a number of the aircraft airborne. Two aircraft were employed on H.2.S Cross-country, two on local flying, one on air to air firing. At night, two of the new crews carried out a BULLSEYE exercise successfully, giving them a chance to get the feel of their new aircraft.

9/4/44

Weather: Cloudy with some haze and rain, becoming fine. Visibility poor becoming good. At long last, we were finally detailed for operations much to the approval of all. Fourteen aircraft were detailed to bomb VILLENEUVE ST. GEORGES. All aircraft became airborne. Soon after take off, one of our aircraft piloted by F/S STEVENS collided in mid-air with another aircraft from 424 Squadron. The ailerons were so badly damaged that the Pilot couldn't control the aircraft, so ordered the crew to bail out. The remaining thirteen aircraft bombed a visible and easy target. A few explosions were noticed and fires were taking a good hold. Defences at the target were very weak and only one aircraft reported a night fighter that didn't open fire on them. In general this attack was considered very successful.

10/4/44

Weather: Fine becoming cloudy. Visibility excellent. The Squadron was called upon again today to supply fourteen aircraft for operations. This figure was easily met and fourteen aircraft took off to bomb GHENT. It was believed that the attack was well concentrated and GHENT and its marshalling yards being well pranged. Aircraft "IF" Mother, piloted by W/Cmdr. BURGESS (attached from 433 Squadron) was hit by heavy flak which shot away the Port Aileron and damaged the Port outer engine. By skillful airmanship, he brought his aircraft back to England and being unable to land, ordered the crew to abandon aircraft. Besides operations one aircraft took off on an H.2.S. cross-country during the day but returned early due to the H.2.S. being unserviceable. One aircraft carried out circuits and landings.

11/4/44

Weather: Cloudy with occasional showers and moderate visibility. The Squadron had a well-earned rest this date as no operations were scheduled. Some local flying was carried out though, and three aircraft took part in a cross-country exercise, familiarizing the new crews with the H.2.S equipment.

- 12/4/44 Weather: Fog early, clearing, becoming cloudy. Occasional showers and moderate visibility. No operations on account of weather conditions. Nine aircraft took part in an H.2.S cross-country. One returned early due to D.R. Compass being unserviceable. Two other aircraft were employed on local flying. F/L J. CHASANOFF, our former Adjutant, paid a hurried visit to the Squadron between trains on his leave.
- 13/4/44 Weather: Cloudy. Intermittent showers. Visibility moderate. The weather man seems to have it in for us so far this month and we are getting plenty of inclement days. Despite the weather though, seven aircraft took part in H.2.S cross-countries, one on fighter affiliation, and two on air to air firing.
- 14/4/44 Weather: Cloudy. Visibility moderate to good. Eight aircraft were detailed for operations this date but were scrubbed due to weather conditions. All flying training programmes were scrubbed too so the opportunity of getting the aircraft in tip-top shape for coming operations was taken.
- 15/4/44 Weather: Cloudy with continuous rain at first becoming fair. Visibility moderate to good. No operations were scheduled for this date so a number of aircraft were employed on training exercises. Two aircraft did circuits and landings and three did local flying. One aircraft went on an H.2.S cross-country. F/O WHICKERS'S crew took P/O DEVEREAUX'S crew down to Horeham to pick up our aircraft Y Yorker which is now serviceable.
- 16/4/44 Weather: Mainly cloudy with slight drizzle. North-easterly wind. Five-tenths cloud. Visibility poor. As no operations were scheduled for this date an intensive training program was prepared. All the aircraft participating were made ready but unfortunately the program had to be scrubbed at the last minute due to weather conditions. The Section Leaders took the opportunity of giving their men lectures and ground instruction in order to keep them up to date with the latest information on their equipment.
- 17/4/44 Weather: Fair to cloudy with drizzle at first. Wind northerly 5-10 m.p.h. Visibility moderate to good. Although the day started out pretty dreary, by noon the sky had cleared up a bit allowing the Squadron to become airborne for a change. Ten aircraft took part in H.2.S. cross-countries and two on practice bombing. Four aircraft were finished inspections yesterday and were airtested.
- 18/4/44 Weather: Fair. Wind south-easterly at 5-10 m.p.h. Visibility good at first becoming poor in afternoon. The Squadron was called upon for operations this date, much to the approval of

all concerned. Fifteen aircraft were detailed, the target being LE BOURGET. All aircraft became airborne. One aircraft piloted by RL4L4L4 W/O COATHUP, C.H. failed to return. The remaining fourteen aircraft found clear visibility over the target and bombed on P.F.F. which appeared to be well concentrated. Due to the congestion of aircraft over the target, two of this Squadron's aircraft collided together cutting off about 6 feet of the Starboard wing of "D". No injuries were sustained by the personnel and both aircraft landed back at base. This raid was considered a good concentrated attack.

19/4/44

Weather: Fair at first becoming cloudy. Continuous rain during afternoon and evening. Wind south-easterly at 10-15 m.p.h. Visibility moderate to poor. There was little doing in the Squadron this date as the aircrews on last night's operation slept in till noon. In the afternoon lectures were given and a picture was shown at the Station Cinema for the information of operational aircrew. It is found that this form of instruction is popular and considered well worth the effort.

20/4/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy with occasional showers during afternoon. Wind S.W.ly. 10-20 m.p.h. Visibility good. The Squadron was called upon for operations again this date but this did not curtail the training of new crews. One was employed on practice bombing, three on bombing and fighter affiliation combined, 2 on fighter affiliation and two on local flying. Sixteen aircraft were detailed for operations, the target being LENS. All aircraft became airborne and proceeded to bomb a well illuminated target. Few explosions were observed by members of this Squadron. All aircraft returned to base and the pilots reported the target was well pranged.

21/4/44

Weather: Fair at first. Continuous rain during morning becoming fair later. Wind westerly light at first increasing to 20-25 m.p.h. Visibility good. A real drizzly day with lots of wind, providing little incentive for work. The crews on operations last night slept in till noon and attended lectures in the afternoon. No aircraft became airborne this date.

22/4/44

Weather: Fine at first becoming fair. Wind westerly at 10-15 m.p.h. Visibility good. The Squadron was detailed for operations today and sixteen aircraft were provided, the target being DUSSELDORF. All aircraft became airborne. One aircraft "N" returned to base early bringing back his full bomb load due to Port Outer Engine being unserviceable. The remaining fifteen aircraft bombed the target from 19,000 to 20,000 ft. Few explosions were observed lasting about four to five seconds and numerous fires of medium size could be seen and appeared to be taking good hold. Considered a good trip and looked like a really successful prang. Besides operations a number of training sorties were carried out. Three aircraft were employed on practice bombing, one on fighter affiliation and one taking pictures. A very busy day indeed.

23/4/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy, wind south-westerly at 10-15 m.p.h. Visibility good. No operations scheduled for today and after the big "do" last night, most of the aircraft were receiving a good check-over. The Squadron managed to put four aircraft on H.2.S cross-country though, thus giving the new crews a little experience with the new equipment.

24/4/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy. Wind westerly at 20-25 m.p.h. Visibility good.

The Squadron was detailed for operations this date the target being KARLSRUHE. All aircraft became airborne. One aircraft "U" returned to base early due to late take off and being unable to get on track on time as briefed. One aircraft "L" is missing from this operation, it was piloted by J.19593 P/O H.F. PURVIS. The remaining aircraft proceeded in very bad weather to the target area and due to icing and clouds above target no results were observed and all pilots complained about the poor weather and the disappointed meteorological report. Attack considered unsuccessful.

Besides operations one bombing practice, two bombing and fighter affiliation, and two local flying sorties were carried out.

25/4/44

Weather: Fine at first becoming fair later. Wind north-westerly at fifteen to twenty miles per hour. Visibility good.

Fourteen aircraft were detailed for operations but were scrubbed later in the day. Only four aircraft became airborne and they were employed on local flying. J26708 F/L D.H. PERRY and J8773 F/L W.R. MOSELEY WILLIAMS reported in with their crews for operational duties.

26/4/44

Weather: Cloudy at first becoming fine. Wind light at first becoming westerly. 5-10 m.p.h. Visibility good.

After fourteen aircraft were put out last night, the Squadron turned around and put sixteen again tonight, the target being VILLENEUVE ST. GEORGES. All aircraft became airborne and proceeded to the target where the weather was found clear although there were some haze and smoke. The sixteen aircraft pranged the target which was well lit up. Several bomb bursts were seen adjacent to the T.I. markers. A violent explosion was observed at 0044 hours and it is believed it was an ammunition train. Considered an easy target which was well pranged.

Training consisted of some local flying this date.

27/4/44

Weather: Fine to fair. Wind north-westerly at 10-20 m.p.h. Visibility good. Again today word was received that we were scheduled to carry out a bombing mission against AULNOYE. Sixteen aircraft were detailed and all became airborne and proceeded to the target. One aircraft "F" Freddie found impossible to release his bomb load over the target due to electrical circuit and bomb load was brought back to base. The remaining fifteen crews reported the target well pranged and results were observed from their height at the time of releasing their bomb load which was only 4,000 ft.

28/4/44

Weather: Mainly fine. Wind northerly. 5-10 m.p.h. Visibility good. A stand down was given to the Squadron this date, a suitable reward for the wonderful job done in the last two nights. Only three aircraft became airborne today and they were just employed on local flying.

29/4/44

Weather: Mainly fair to cloudy. Wind north-westerly at 5 to 10 m.p.h. Visibility good.

The Squadron was back in there raring to go today after a good rest yesterday but was not called upon for operations. As usual, the next best thing was done, which is flying training. Three aircraft carried out Fighter affiliation exercises and three were employed on practice bombing. Another three aircraft did the rounds with their H.2.S. equipment, familiarizing themselves with it for future reference on operations.

30/4/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy. Wind north-westerly at 5-10 m.p.h. Visibility good.

The Squadron was called upon for operations today, a suitable ending to a very busy month. Sixteen aircraft were detailed to bomb SOMAIN. All the aircraft took off. One aircraft after reaching the target was unable to release its bombs due to electrical failure. Bomb load was jettisoned on the return journey. The remaining fifteen aircraft bombed on the T.I. markers and numerous fires were observed. All crews complained that the Pathfinder force was late releasing their markers. Raid was considered quite successful.

#### Honours and Awards - NIL

#### Commissions

J85561 P/O W.B. Patrick appointed to a commission w.e.f. 11.3.44  
J85514 P/O H.A. Larivee appointed to a commission w.e.f. 11.3.44  
174000 P/O E. Wightman appointed to a commission w.e.f. 20.3.44  
173861 P/O J. Quinn appointed to a commission w.e.f. 18.1.44  
173857 P/O E.D. Cast appointed to a commission w.e.f. 11.3.44

1.5.44

Weather: Mainly cloudy with visibility ten to twenty miles. Wind westerly at ten to fifteen miles per hour.

The Squadron started out the month with fourteen aircraft scheduled for operations. Serviceability being at its high standard again, allowed for two other aircraft to participate in cross-country exercises during the day. On their return from cross-country the aircraft carried out practice bombing exercises.

Of the fourteen aircraft detailed for bombing ST. GHISLAIN, all took off. Two aircraft returned early, both due to engine trouble. The remaining twelve aircraft successfully bombed the target and claimed the attack was an excellent show. "U" Uncle piloted by F/O PEARSON landed at Skipton-on-Swale due to petrol shortage.

2/5/44

Weather: Cloudy with light rain during morning. Showery after dusk. Visibility ten to twenty miles. Wind south westerly at twenty to thirty m.p.h.

The day started out dark and drizzly and due to the rain it was impossible for the aircraft to become airborne. In the afternoon the aircrews were given lectures and ground instruction while the ground staff made the best of the stand-down by giving the aircraft a good servicing.

As the weather did not let up, no night flying was scheduled.

3/5/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy. Visibility twenty to thirty miles. per hour falling to ten to fifteen miles per hour after dusk. Although there was no rain this morning, the weather did not look much better than yesterday. F/O PEARSON returned from Skipton-on-Swale after being diverted there on the first. By afternoon the sky had cleared a bit and an intensive training programme was scheduled.

Two aircraft carried out practice bombing and five were detailed for local flying. At night ten aircraft were detailed for a night cross country. Nine aircraft took off and successfully the mission.

4/5/44

Weather: Fine at first with rain during late morning and early afternoon, becoming fair later. Visibility good at first, deteriorating to 2000 to 4000 yards during rain period, improving to good later. Wind light at first becoming southerly at five to ten miles veering south-westerly at ten to fifteen m.p.h. after rain.

Although it looked like a good day for flying the weather soon set in and the practice flying that was scheduled was scrubbed. No operations were scheduled for this date, much to the disappointment of all concerned.

5/5/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy becoming showery after dusk. Visibility good at first deteriorating to two to four miles after dawn. Improving during afternoon to five to ten miles. Wind south-easterly at first five to ten miles per hour backing to northerly at fifteen to twenty m.p.h.

Taking opportunity of better weather, the Squadron managed to carry out training programs this date. Three aircraft were employed on practice bombing, one on bombing and fighter affiliation combined, one on local flying. F/O PEARSON took P/O PATRICK and crew to R.C.A.F. Station CROFT to pick up aircraft "O" ORANGE.

6/6/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy with occasional showers before dawn. Visibility ten to twenty miles. Wind northerly at ten to 15 m.p.h.

The Squadron was called upon for operations this date but they were scrubbed later on in the day due to weather conditions.

This did not prevent a number of aircraft from becoming airborne though and one participated in practice bombing, two on air to air firing, two on fighter/affiliation and practice bombing combined, and two on local flying.

7/6/44

Weather: Fair to fine. Visibility good at first becoming moderate. Wind light south-easterly. The Squadron was called upon for operations this date and eight aircraft took off as scheduled to bomb ST. VALERY-EN-CAUX. All aircraft reached the target and bombed, returning to base.

Bombing appeared to be well concentrated on the markers but some markers were noticed on the water. Visibility was very good and no cloud was experienced. A few fires were seen but none of any great size. If the markers were accurate it is thought that the attack was successful.

9/5/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy. Wind light southerly veering westerly at ten to fifteen m.p.h. Visibility moderate at first becoming good. The Squadron was called upon for operations today the target being ST. VALERY-EN-CAUX. Eleven aircraft were detailed and they all took off and bombed the target successfully. The returning crews reported that the bombing was well concentrated and the attack should have been very successful if the P.F.F. was accurate. Defences were weak so little difficulty was experienced by the crews.

Besides the aircraft participating in operations, eight aircraft were employed on flying training, this consisted

of: one cross-country, three air to air firing and bombing combined, three fighter affiliation and bombing combined and one on straight bombing. A very full day indeed.

8/5/44

Weather: Cloudy becoming fair. Wind northerly ten to fifteen m.p.h. Visibility moderate at first becoming good.

No operations this date so a number of aircraft were employed on flying training exercises. Two aircraft took off for fighter affiliation but one returned as the fighter did not turn up. Six aircraft took off on H.2.S. cross-country and all successfully completed their mission. Four other aircraft were employed on flying training, one on bombing, two on fighter affiliation and bombing, and one on air to air firing. This completed the Squadron's activities for this date.

10/5/44

Weather: Cloudy with light rain during morning. Wind light at first becoming westerly at ten to fifteen m.p.h. Visibility good. Although the weather did not look too promising the Squadron was called upon for operations again today, the target being GHENT. Fourteen aircraft were called upon for operations and fourteen aircraft took off and successfully bombed their objectives. The returning crews reported considerable smoke over the target and numerous bomb bursts. A great deal of credit was given to the Master of Ceremonies for the accuracy of the bombing as he kept the crew well concentrated. F/S STEVENS was attacked by a fighter and the flap and aileron were shot away. W/O CLIBBERY was also attacked by a night fighter and due to damage sustained was forced to land away at WOODBRIDGE. All the remaining aircraft returned to base.

Little local flying was carried out this date except for a few air tests. A very busy day indeed.

11/5/44

Weather: Fair to fine. Visibility good. Wind westerly at ten to fifteen m.p.h.

For the third day in succession the Squadron was called upon for operations. Although this entails a lot of added work, everyone appears to relish the idea of getting the war won and fourteen aircraft were supplied with ease. The target for tonight was BOULOGNE.

Fourteen aircraft took off O.K. and the crews again praised the work the Master of Ceremonies who seemed to be very confident in his instructions and instilled the same feeling of confidence in the bombing crews. No fighters and very little defence was reported. It was difficult to see the target due to smoke although the weather was quite good. All aircraft returned safely to base except "S" Sugar piloted by J.6708 F/L PERRY which failed to return from this operation.

12/5/44

Weather: Fair becoming cloudy. Wind light at first becoming westerly at five to ten m.p.h. Visibility moderate to good.

For the fourth day in succession the Squadron was called upon for operations. Fourteen aircraft were supplied with ease to bombing the night's objective which was LOUVAIN. All aircraft successfully took off and completed their mission. There was no cloud over the target but a great deal of ground haze was experienced. All crews reported an explosion on the target that seemed larger than any seen before. The attack was considered to be a very good effort.

Very little flying training done this date.

13/5/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy with light rain during evening. Wind north-westerly veering north-easterly at five to ten m.p.h. Visibility good at first becoming moderate. For the fifth day in succession the Squadron was called upon for operations. Fourteen aircraft were made ready but due to weather conditions the effort was scrubbed. No flying training was carried out today except for a few airtests, the local weather being too poor for long trips. A well deserved rest was taken by all concerned today, especially the aircrew personnel.

14/5/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy. Wind northerly veering north-easterly. Visibility good. As the Squadron was not called upon for operations today, an intensive training program was instituted in order to have the newer crews ready for another long period of operations. In the course of the day eight aircraft took part in training exercises, these being: fighter affiliation, air-to-air firing and bombing combined, air to air firing alone, one on straight bombing and two on bombing and fighter affiliation combined.

At night nine aircraft were detailed for night practice bombing. Nine aircraft took off and successfully completed their mission. This was considered to be a very helpful exercise for new and old crews.

15/5/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy. Visibility good. Wind northerly at ten to 15 m.p.h.

After two days free of operations, the Squadron was called upon for sixteen aircraft for operations this date. Everything was well under way for a grand effort but the detail was scrubbed much to the sorrow of all concerned. Getting ready for the big effort left few aircraft available for training purposes so only four flights were chalked up for today and they consisted of local flying.

16/5/44

Weather: Showery at first with continuous light rain and drizzle during afternoon. Cloudy later. Visibility good. Wind northerly at ten to fifteen m.p.h.

A poor day for flying today but a good day to put the house in order. Section Leaders took the advantage of giving their men ground instruction and lectures were arranged accordingly.

Not one aircraft left the deck today giving the ground staff a golden opportunity to give them a thorough checking after the continuous work they had been doing on operations.

Nothing of any importance to report today.

17/5/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy with occasional showers during afternoon. Visibility mainly good. Wind north-easterly at fifteen to twenty miles per hour. Another bad day for flying but nevertheless four aircraft took part in local flying, one on bombing and fighter affiliation and one on straight fighter affiliation. Not a very active day considering the amount of operating done so far this month.

18/5/44

Weather: Showery at first with continuous rain during afternoon, becoming cloudy later. Visibility moderate. Wind northerly at five to ten m.p.h. The weather stepped in again today to keep the Squadron from operating or carrying out training to any extent. Four aircraft managed to participate in practice bombing during the late afternoon when things cleared up a bit. At night two aircraft were scheduled for night practice bombing but this was scrubbed. No other flying was carried on.

19/5/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy with light rain during afternoon. Wind light northerly. Visibility moderate at first becoming good. At last we were called upon for operations this date. A very welcome request after the last few days of inactivity. Fifteen aircraft were detailed to bomb LEOLIPON and this figure was easily met. Fifteen aircraft took off and fifteen returned, all landing away at NEWMARKET due to the weather conditions in these parts. The returning crews reported the attack to be well concentrated and the bomb bursts all in or near the target indicators. Visibility was good although a little haze was experienced. Considered a successful attack.

20/5/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy with light drizzle during afternoon. Wind northerly at ten to twenty m.p.h. Visibility moderate at first becoming good during evening. As most of the serviceable aircraft were at NEWMARKET and did not return till late afternoon, very little activity was noticed in the Squadron. The aircraft returned too late to carry out any training flying so the day dragged out pretty slowly.

21/5/44

Weather: Cloudy at first becoming fair to fine in early evening. Visibility good. Wind northerly, 15 - 20 m.p.h. As no aircraft were flying yesterday and as the Squadron was not called upon for operations today, most of the time was spent in practice flying. Two aircraft were employed on practice bombing and nine aircraft took off for an H2S Cross-country. Of the nine aircraft participating in the H.2.S. Cross-country, eight completed the detail and one returned early due to H.2.S. being unserviceable. The gunners were given a little practice in air to air firing and fighter affiliation, a good idea as the enemy fighter situation seems to have become a little more active.

22/5/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy with slight rain in evening. Good visibility. News that the Squadron was detailed for operations was happily received and preparations were made to have fourteen aircraft ready. Besides operations the flying training was also active as the serviceability was on top line as usual. Three fighter affiliation exercises were carried out, two air to air firing, two H.2.S bombing and a few local flying. Fourteen of the Squadron's aircraft took off to bomb LE MANS. Visibility was fair with nil cloud, but considerable haze. F/O PENROSE'S crew sighted an ME-109 over the target area. P.F.F. appeared meagre and late thus making it hard for the Master of Ceremonies to give good instructions to attacking aircraft who were congested around area. If P.F.F. accurate, attack considered successful.

23/5/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy with visibility moderate to good. No operations scheduled for today so back the Squadron went to Flying Training as a number of new crews have been posted to us. As these new crews were trained on a different Mark of Halifax aircraft, great care is taken to familiarize them with their new aircraft, hence the large number of training exercises. During the afternoon seven aircraft took off on Cross-country exercises. All completed their missions except one which returned early due to aircraft being unserviceable. A night practice bombing exercise was also arranged for two aircraft but this was scrubbed due to bad weather.

24/5/44

Weather: Fine becoming cloudy with slight rain late in day. Good visibility. Fifteen aircraft were detailed for operations today, the target being AACHEN. The crews reported the visibility fair with some cloud and haze. P.F.F. was on time and appeared bang on, a great difference from the previous raid on LE MANS. Large explosions were sighted but not many fires. Numerous bomb bursts were seen right on the Target Indicators and it is believed that the attack was highly successful if the P.F.F. was accurate as it was numerous. F/L STEPHEN was attacked by a night fighter on the way in over enemy territory. He received numerous hits from a

rocket fired by the fighter but despite the fact that his aircraft was almost unmanageable and he was easy meat for further attacks, this Captain carried on in the face of heavy odds and bombed his target. He made a successful crash landing at WOODBRIDGE. A very good show on this Captain's part and a good example of the type of work this Squadron does.

Besides operations, one aircraft did an H.2.S bombing practice in the afternoon and one was detailed for night flying but was scrubbed due to operations taking place.

25/5/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy with occasional slight rain during morning and afternoon. Good visibility.

The Squadron was called upon for operations again today and an all-out effort of eighteen aircraft was scheduled. The operations were scrubbed though later in the day, much to the disappointment of the Squadron.

F/L STEPHEN returned from WOODBRIDGE leaving his Mid-upper Gunner in hospital suffering from wounds received during the attack last night.

The Squadron experienced a heavy loss today in the death of J.28242 F/O H. RATHIER who died as a result of motorcycle accident in the vicinity of NORTHALLERTON. His skipper, F/O HEPBURN was driving the motorcycle when the accident occurred and received injuries to his left arm.

26/5/44

Weather: Cloudy with moderate rain in early morning. Visibility moderate at first becoming good later.

Today was free from operations, so flying training and ground instruction were predominant. The flying training consisted of nine aircraft participating in a day Cross-country exercise. All the aircraft completed the assignment except one, returning early due to engine trouble. The ground instruction consisted of dinghy drill and lectures.

A busy day although there were no operations.

27/5/44

Weather: Cloudy, very occasional slight rain. Good visibility.

The happy news of operations was received this morning and all sections swung into the task of putting out the record number of eighteen aircraft. It was wondered whether such a large number could be given, but as the day rolled on, it was

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discovered that this was "duck soup" for a "bang on" Squadron like this. Everyone pulled their weight and it was wonderful to see the great enthusiasm shown in making this record which was a tribute to both ground and aircrews of the Squadron.

At take-off, although fingers were crossed, eighteen aircraft soared into the air to deliver their respective bundles of joy to the enemy and it was indeed an impressive sight. The target for the night was BOURG-LEOPOLD and it is felt that the name would be all that remained of the place when our boys got finished.

The returning crews were just as enthusiastic about the operation's success and reported the bombing was very concentrated and P.F.F. good. Although the visibility was only moderate, all crews praised the work of the Master of Ceremonies who did a marvellous job of directing the aircraft and pointing out the target. Ground defences were negligible but numerous fighter actions were seen and believed to be very intense. The only thing that detracted from the complete success of this operation was in our losing two good crews, namely, J.19588 P/O B.C. SCOBIE who had carried out nine raids with us, and J.19592 P/O F.G. DEVERAUX who had 10 raids to his credit. The remaining sixteen aircraft returned safely to this country and landed away from base.

A record day indeed in the life of the "LION" Squadron.

28/5/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy with fog in early morning, becoming fine late in day. Visibility poor at first, moderate to good later.

Due to the aircraft being away today, it was rather disappointing that no operations were scheduled, as everyone was in the spirit of, and desired to keep up last night's effort. Had operations been detailed and the aircraft at base, it is felt that this would have been another record day. Instead, the day was spent waiting for the returning aircraft and looking forward to the next operations.

29/5/44

Weather: Fine becoming cloudy during evening and fine again late in day. Visibility moderate.

No operations today, but the next best thing, flying training, was carried out. It is felt that the wonderful job of training crews on non-operational days accounts for the huge success of our operations.

Nineteen sorties were made today, ten being on practice bombing, three on fighter affiliation and bombing combined, two on local

flying and four on H.2.S. Cross country.

Night flying was even scheduled after all this work, but due to weather conditions in the area it had to be scrubbed.

30/5/44

Weather: Fine with much fog during morning and evening.  
Visibility poor.

Although the weather did not very promising for operations today, the Squadron was called upon for tonight and fourteen aircraft were prepared. As the weather did not let up, it was not surprising to see the detail scrubbed in the afternoon.

No aircraft became airborne today, so there is little to report in the way of flying. Ground instruction was negligible as most of the day was spent preparing for the operation. A very disappointing day indeed, especially for the "winchers" in the Squadron Armament Section.

31/5/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy with slight rain during the afternoon.  
Visibility moderate, but poor at first.

The Squadron got the "GO" signal and sixteen aircraft were detailed for to-night's operation. The news was well received by all sections who immediately began preparations for this effort. A general feeling of satisfaction, and a feeling of "doing their bit" prevailed amongst ground crews, evinced by the way they hustled at their duties.

All sixteen aircraft became airborne, reached their objective, and returned safely to base. Weather over the target, which was AU FEVRE, was clear with thin cloud. P.F.F. markers were clearly visible and well concentrated. Bombing generally appeared to be accurate and was reported by crews as falling in and around markers. A few scattered sticks were also observed. Defences of target were negligible with a few ineffective searchlights in the CHERBOURG area. Fighter activity was non-existent. It is considered that if P.F.F. markers were accurate this was a successful attack.

HONOURS-AND AWARDS - Awarded the DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS vide the London Gazette No. 36525 dated 19.5.44. A/S/L.  
J.G. Cribb - 120431.

1/6/44

Weather: Cloudy with slight rain during morning. Wind light south-easterly. Visibility good generally but moderate in rain.

The month started out with a bang, sixteen aircraft being detailed for operations. It looked as though it were going to be a big day but operations were scrubbed in late afternoon,

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much to the disappointment of all. Little time was left for other flying to take place and any way the weather was not what it might have been. The Squadron took advantage of the free night and it is believed that everyone enjoyed themselves.

2/6/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy, with westerly wind at ten to twenty miles per hour. Visibility good.

As the Squadron was not called upon for operations today and the weather was not too bad for local flying, a number of aircraft became airborne during the day and carried out an extensive flying training program consisting of: seven aircraft on H.2.S Bombing of which one failed to complete the exercise due to D.R. Compass becoming u/s; five aircraft on local flying, including acceptances and air tests.

At night, six aircraft were to take off on a night bombing exercise at the local bombing range but this was scrubbed on account of bad weather.

3/6/44

Weather: Cloudy with showers. Wind westerly at five to ten m.p.h. Visibility good.

Once again we received a false alarm in that we expected to send off fourteen aircraft on operations but these were scrubbed in late afternoon. We trust this will not happen again, not to mention what the armourers were thinking.

On the training side of our activities the following sorties were completed: one aircraft on cross-country, one on air-to-air firing, two on fighter affiliation, and three on local flying. A fairly good day considering that fourteen aircraft were tied up on expected operations.

4/6/44

Weather: Cloudy with rain during morning and early evening. Wind south to south-westerly at fifteen to twenty m.p.h. Visibility generally good.

The Squadron was called upon for operations tonight and much to the approval of all concerned, they all became airborne. The target for tonight was CALAIS and fourteen aircraft were detailed and successfully took off.

The returning crews reported the weather over the target varying from 3/10th to 10/10th cloud below and above the aircraft. Thick haze with rain was also reported. Visibility ranged from poor to good. P.F.F. marking was scattered but red target indicators were well concentrated. A large column

of black smoke was seen rising at 0256 hours and a big explosion was reported at 0258 hours. Most crews reported ground defences as negligible, but some reported heavy flak. No searchlights or enemy fighters were seen. All crews attempted photographs. Taking into account the bad weather conditions, it was considered a successful attack as the bombing was well concentrated around the red Target Indicators.

5/6/44

Weather: Cloudy with south-westerly wind at twenty to thirty m.p.h. Visibility over 20 miles.

After putting up a good show last night the Squadron was right in there punching again today and when called upon for operations, came to the front with seventeen aircraft. This not only reflects on the efficiency of the aircrews but also on the wonderful job of work being done by the ground crews in maintaining a high serviceability.

The target for tonight was MERVILLE/FRANCEVILLE. Seventeen aircraft took off at approximately ten o'clock and seventeen aircraft returned safely.

The returning crews reported the weather over the target as 10/10th cloud with tops from 5000 to 9,000 ft. Visibility good. First markers seen cascading were Red Target Indicators at 0025 hrs. Due to the cloud cover all crews bombed on the glow of the T.Is. that were reflected through the cloud. Four crews reported that they were unable to see any marking on the target and brought back their bombs as briefed. Results of bombing could not be assessed because of cloud cover although a number of crews reported reflections of bomb bursts through the cloud. Four crews reported that they were unable to see any marking on the target and brought back their bombs as briefed.

Results of bombing could not be assessed because of cloud cover although a number of crews reported reflection of bomb bursts through the cloud. Defences on target were negligible and no searchlights reported. A few ineffective searchlights were reported in the CHERBOURG area. No fighters seen. All crews attempted photographs. Very busy day indeed.

6/6/44

Weather: Fair at first becoming cloudy. Wind north-westerly at fifteen to twenty-five m.p.h. Visibility over twenty miles. For the third day in a row we were detailed for operations. The glad news was received that the long awaited SECOND FRONT had started this morning and it is little wonder that an all-out effort was made and eighteen aircraft were scheduled and took off on operations. This is the second time that this Squadron has put out a record number of aircraft like this.

The target for tonight was CONDE SUR NOIREAU. The returning crews reported the weather over the target as clear of cloud below 5,000 ft. with 6 to 10/10ths cloud above that height. Horizontal visibility fair to good. Red Target Indicators appeared to be well placed but greens were some distance off. Master Bomber reported as somewhat indecisive in his instructions at beginning of attack but improved as attack developed and bombing generally seemed to be breaking on and around the markers indicated by him. Numerous fires reported in target area and considerable smoke and dust developed in later stages of attack. Ground defences on target reported as negligible and no searchlights or enemy fighters seen. All crews attempted photographs.

7/6/44

Weather: Cloudy with wind northerly at ten to fifteen m.p.h. Visibility moderate at first improving to fifteen to twenty miles. For the fourth night in succession the Squadron was called upon for operations, the target being ACHERES. The Squadron was called upon for eleven aircraft and this number was easily met. Eleven aircraft took off and all returned safely after successfully bombing the target with the exception of our aircraft "K" (LV.987) piloted by CAN.R.144492 W/O FOSTER, D.F. This captain had successfully completed 24 operational trips prior to being reported missing and showed great possibilities of becoming an exceptionally good pilot.

The ten returning crews reported the weather over the target clear of cloud with some haze below 5,000 ft. and visibility as fair to good. Above 5,000 ft. there was 10/10ths cloud. Markers were well concentrated and bombing generally was on and around them. Master bomber proved very helpful and directed bombing skilfully. Flak over target was negligible but much light flak was being hose piped in a loose barrage on the north-western tip of PARIS. Fighter activity was seen on route both to and from the target but most aircraft seen going down were shot down by light flak. All aircraft attempted photography.

Besides operations this date, flying training was carried out in the form of three cross-countries by newer crews on the Squadron.

8/6/44

Weather: Rain at first becoming cloudy. Wind light a first becoming westerly at five to ten m.p.h. Visibility ten to 15 miles.

For the fifth night in succession the Squadron was called upon for operations, the target for tonight being MAYENNES. We were called upon for ten aircraft and this number was supplied with ease. Ten aircraft took off and successfully completed their mission and returned to this country.

The returning crews reported the weather over the target clear with some haze. 10/10 cloud above with base at 7500 to 8,000 ft. All crews reported the target Indicators and illuminating flares making the village and marshalling yards visible to the eye. Most crews reported hearing the Master Bomber very clearly and were complimentary about his handling of the bombing. A good concentration of bomb bursts was seen among the Target Indicators, numerous fires were seen in the marked out area and one very large explosion was reported at about 0147 hours which gave off a huge sheet of orange red flame and a good volume of dense black smoke. All aircraft attempted photographs, which show ground route in and in the target area was ineffective.

No other flying was carried out by the Squadron this date due to most of the crews having operated a number of nights in a row and were taking full advantage of the opportunity to catch up on their rest.

9/6/44

Weather: Rain at first becoming cloudy. Wind light at first becoming westerly. Visibility poor becoming ten to fifteen miles.

A very bad day for flying today and a very good day for putting the house in order after the continuous operations carried out during the last week. A little time was given to ground instruction and only one aircraft became airborne during the day.

Three aircraft that bombed last night landed at Middleton St. George and returned to base in order for the crews to become prepared for the forthcoming operations.

Everyone is keyed up these days and putting all their efforts into doing the best job possible to make the new front a huge success and be able to return home sooner.

10/6/44

Weather: Cloudy with rain during morning. Wind westerly at five to ten m.p.h. Visibility good generally but poor in rain.

Although the weather left much to be desired, the Squadron put out four aircraft on H.2.S. Cross-Countries, giving the newer crews an opportunity to become familiar with this equipment for use on future operations.

Besides the flying training, the Squadron was called upon for operations today, the target being VERSAILLES-MATELOTS. Ten aircraft were detailed and ten took off and successfully completed their mission. The returning crews reported the weather over the target clear with fair to good visibility.

.../117

P.F.F. were punctual and target was visually seen to be well marked. Master of Ceremonies was heard by the majority of the crews who reported clear and decisive directions. Bombing generally was very accurate, the designated markers being well covered. Explosions in target area reported at 0042, 0043, 0045 and 0056 hours. As the attack developed smoke and dust obscured ground detail and enveloped markers. Ground defences were spasmodic, heavy flak slight to moderate to 8,000 ft. and light flak meagre. No searchlights were seen in target area. Fighter activity was greatest in PARIS Area. All crews attempted photographs.

A message of goodwill and good luck from the General Commanding the invasion of enemy-occupied territory which opened on June 6th, 1944 was distributed to all Squadron personnel.

CAN.R189708 SFT. Vallieres, S.K. received injuries due to a motorcycle accident and will be laid up for a few days.

11/6/44

Weather: Mainly fair with slight rain during morning. Wind south-easterly veering westerly at five to ten mph. Visibility good generally but moderate in rain. It looked as though the Squadron would be again on operations today as fourteen aircraft were detailed and prepared, but work came through in the late afternoon that the effort was scrubbed.

Only two aircraft became airborne and these were employed on air-to-air firing. With the possibility of day operations this form of training is highly practicable and we hope, beneficial to the air gunners.

A large number of A.T.C. boys visited the Squadron today and were handed over to the Gunnery Section who gave them the "ins" and "outs" of the turrets and their manipulation.

A dance was held in the Sergeants' Mess and was well attended.

W/O Clibbery, captain of "V" Victor is very depressed at the thought of the previous night. On returning to base, he made several attempts to land but overshot due to bad weather conditions. A pilot of "429" Squadron asked him to make way for a pilot that could land an aircraft. Clibbery did and the result was: One 429 aircraft carried out a ditching exercise in the local creek at the end of the runway.

The pilots were employed on a real fatiguing job this morning instead of their usual Physical Training. The job consisted of removing small stones, ammunition, links and a few rounds of .303 from the runway.

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12/6/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy with good visibility. Strong westerly winds in middle of the day.

The Squadron was called upon for operations today and fifteen aircraft were detailed. The target for the night was ARRAS. All aircraft became airborne and twelve successfully reached the target and returned, the remaining three have not been heard of since and have been presumed missing. They were "Y" Yorker piloted by J.16190 F/O J.D.L. FULTON, a newcomer to the Squadron who was doing his second tour and J.27626 F/O W.W. PROUDFOOT who had successfully completed 4 previous sorties, and F/O PEARSON.

The returning crews reported the weather conditions over the target as quite good with slight haze. P.F.F. was fairly scattered and a few crews who bombed the red T.I.s in the early stages of a tack were instructed to overshoot by two seconds. The remainder bombed concentration of either yellow or green T.I.s. Interference caused about half of the crews to miss instructions by the Master Bomber. Small fires were noted in target area and a large building in the centre of town was seen burning. Six explosions, all reddish and orange in colour were seen in the target area between 0141 and 0149 hours. Flak was slight over the target and no searchlights were reported. Fighter activity was very intense before and at the target, fighter interception continued to the coast on the route out. All crews attempted photographs.

13/6/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy with slight rain in morning. Visibility good but moderate to poor in rain.

No operations were scheduled for this date so an intensive training program was carried out. Three aircraft took off on air-to-air firing, one on local flying, four on H.2.S. cross-countries and three took part in a night bombing practice.

It was learned today that J.24504 F/O M.S. STRANGE landed at WOODBRIDGE last night after being badly shot up. His rear gunner Sgt. SULLIVAN was badly wounded in an encounter with an enemy aircraft but in spite of this he remained at his post after the engagement until the aircraft had safely crossed the coast of France.

J.22042 F/O G.A. WELDON and his crew were screened today as they had completed 35 sorties including last night's operations. This crew has set an example to all members of the Squadron that will not be easy to match.

Night fighter affiliation was carried out today and proved very successful. The gunners enjoyed the practice and believe it will

be very beneficial on coming operations. This is the first time this has been tried on this Squadron but we expect more of it in the future.

RL48367 W/O HERRING, C.G.M., Navigator in F/L SHANNON'S crew took himself a wife today in the local village of BEDALE. The lucky bride was a member of the W.A.A.Fs. being employed in our Station Sick Quarters.

14/6/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy with showers of rain. Good visibility. Moderate to strong West to North-Westerly winds.

Today marked a great turning point in the life of the Squadron. At nine o'clock in the morning the whole Squadron was out on parade to bid adieu to our Commanding Officer, W/C R.S. Turnbull, DFC, AFC, DFM, who on completion of his second tour, is returning to Canada for a spot of leave. W/C TURNBULL came to us in October, 1943 from 1659 Con. Unit where he was Commanding Officer. Under his guidance the Squadron has always held a high place in Group activities, and he will be missed by all ranks. W/C G.J. Cribb replaced W/C Turnbull.

After the short parade, everyone got down to business and local flying consisted of air-to-air firing practice, two aircraft being employed. One aircraft took part in an H.2.S. bombing exercise and six on local flying consisting of acceptances, air tests and circuits and landings.

The main activity for the day was operations. The Squadron was called upon for fourteen aircraft to bomb CAMBRAI. All aircraft took off and successfully bombed the target and returned to this country. The weather over the target varied from clear to 10/10 cloud, bases from 7,000 to 9,000 ft. and tops up to 11,000 ft. Visibility varied from poor to very good. P.F.F. marking at opening of attack was very good, but backers up were scattered, especially yellow Target Indicators. Master Bomber was heard by most crews and was good at first but as attack developed seemed to become confused and indecisive, changing his instructions repeatedly from his comments. Bombing was scattered although crews arriving at opening of attack report accurate bombing. Explosions were seen at 0057 hours and believed to be a petrol dump. Ground defences were slight, no searchlights. Few fighters that were seen, were in and around the target area. All crews attempted photographs.

15/6/44

Weather: Fine to fair becoming cloudy with occasional slight showers. Good visibility. No Physical Training this morning as most personnel were working late on last night's operations.

The call went out at noon for the operational types to be ready for operations again today, and aircrews reported to their sections after lunch.

Thirteen aircraft were detailed to bomb BOULOGNE. All aircraft took off and successfully completed their missions. Weather over the target was 4 to 9/10ths cloud, tops at 4 to 12,000 ft. Visibility good. P.F.F. marking was accurate although several crews had to orbit as cloud obscured the markers when they first reached the target. Majority of bombing was accurately placed on and around the markers, but numerous sticks were seen to burst as far as three miles away. A particularly large explosion was seen at 2251 hours with a red flash and other smaller ones reported with red flashes. Heavy flak was slight to intense up to 18,000 ft. and light flak slight up to 12,000 ft. No searchlights or enemy aircraft reported. All crews attempted photographs.

This operation marked a new era in the life of the Squadron as our bombers took off in daylight returning at dusk. A fighter escort was provided our bombers and seemed to be quite effective as all crews returned safely, reporting very little activity.

No flying training carried out this date, but a great deal of ground instruction was given to new gunners and Flight Engineers.

16/6/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy with very occasional slight showers. Good visibility. For the third night in a row, the Squadron was called upon to provide seventeen aircraft for operations. This figure was met easily and everyone did their utmost to show SAUTRECOURT what the "LION" Squadron could really do. Weather over the target was 6 to 10/10ths cloud with tops at 5,000 to 10,000 ft. Visibility was generally good above cloud but poor vertically through cloud was not very thick. Target Indicators were somewhat late going down though fairly well concentrated, some crews however described them as being rather scattered. Results generally were not observed due to prevailing weather conditions but the flash of bursting bombs could be seen dimly reflected through cloud close to the markers. Ground defences were virtually nil with a few searchlights which were ineffective. No enemy aircraft were seen in the target area.

Very little other flying took place due to operations, however, four nonOperational sorties consisting of acceptance checks, air tests, etc., were completed.

134991 F/L CORY, W.A. of the R.A.F., a captain in the Squadron, completed his 33rd sortie on today's operation and was screened with all his crew, having completed his tour without an early return.

Gunners not employed on operations were given instruction on harmonization and the "ins" and "outs" of the oxygen system.

17/6/44

Weather: Fair. Good visibility.

Things looked pretty busy this morning as aircraft were being warmed up and air tested after having been through inspections and acceptances.

One crew was detailed for an H.2.S. Cross-country which was successfully completed.

The Squadron was called upon for operations again tonight, the target being OISEMONTE/NEUVILLE AU BOIS. Eleven aircraft were scheduled and eleven took off and ten successfully completed their mission. There was 10/10ths cloud over the target, tops at 5 to 8,000 ft. and good visibility. All crews bombed on glow of red or yellow T.Is. seen through cloud. Master Bomber was jammed, but most crews received instructions for aiming. Results of bombing not generally observed due to clouds, but explosions reported in target area. Heavy and light flak was slight, to negligible over the target. Fighter opposition was slight, one aircraft reporting two combats, one over target, one en route out, 8 minutes after bombing. Searchlights were seen but proved ineffective. All crews attempted photographs.

18/6/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy.

The Squadron was called upon to operate again tonight and a maximum effort of eighteen aircraft was prepared. Everything was in tip-top shape and everyone raring to go but work was received at 21:40 hours that ops were scrubbed due to weather conditions.

Flying training consisted of one aircraft being employed on air-to-air firing. A larger amount of flying would have taken place but for the aircraft being bombed up. The newer crews had to be content with ground instruction this date. All sections reported a great deal of this form of training.

19/6/44

Weather: Cloudy at first becoming fine. Wind northerly at ten to fifteen m.p.h. Visibility moderate, becoming good.

Disappointment reigned supreme again today for we were called on to supply eighteen aircraft for operations which were scrubbed

immediately briefing. It is hoped that the next time we are detailed the operation will not be scrubbed as it is rumoured that the mess stewards are breaking down under the strain of last minute rushes.

During the afternoon four cross-countries were completed with the remaining aircraft, thus giving the new boys a chance to become operational. By the way the new crews are pouring in these days it looks more like an O.T.U. than an operational Squadron.

The Bomb Aimers had a little practice on the V.G.O. today, a good idea seeing as Day Operations seem to be a coming reality rather than a "pipe dream". We expect to see a few F.Ws. biting the dust in the near future due to the mean eye of one of our noble Bombardiers.

20/6/44

Weather: Fine at first becoming cloudy. Wind northerly at ten to fifteen m.p.h. Visibility moderate.

The Squadron was not called upon for operations so the armourers got busy and de-bombed the kites in order for an intensive training program to take place. The operational types were given a well earned rest while the newer chaps who have been looking on for the last week earned their next pay.

The training program consisted of a few aircraft on H.2.S. Cross-country and Fighter affiliation combined, one aircraft on straight H.2.S Cross-country and two other aircraft on fighter affiliation. A few circuits and bumps were also carried out while the servicing crews kept their fingers crossed after working so hard to get the aircraft serviceable for operations.

Word was received today that the raid on ARRAS on June 14th, was a big success although at the time it was not considered much a good "DO". The bombers accomplished their mission by holding up enemy tank units and inflicting heavy losses.

21/6/44

Weather: Drizzle at first becoming fair. Wind northerly at ten to fifteen m.p.h. Visibility moderate.

Today both seemed and was the longest day in the year. At one o'clock in the morning all operational types were herded from their beds, only to be pushed back an hour later, the operation not taking place. Then at 1300 hours, operations came through for a daylight take off at three. The boys finally got off the ground at five o'clock, the target being OISEMONTE/NEUVILLE AU BOIS for the second time in a row. Seventeen aircraft took part in the operation and they all reached the target and returned to base safely. Ten aircraft returned without attacking primary because the crew either saw no marking or Master Bomber ordered them to return without attacking. The cloud over the target was nine to 10/10ths with tops from 3000 to 7,000 ft. No markers were seen and majority of crews heard the Master Bomber who ordered an orbit at approximately zero hour but a few seconds afterwards instructed crews to cease bombing. Ground defences were

negligible and no enemy fighters were seen. This raid was considered a wasted effort by most crews.

22/6/44

Weather: Fair at first, becoming cloudy. Wind north-easterly at ten to fifteen m.p.h. Visibility mainly good.

For awhile today it looked as though we would be sending another seventeen aircraft out on operations but as this was scrubbed, attention was diverted to a bit of flying training.

The gunners had a little practice fighter affiliation, two aircraft were employed on H.2.S Cross-country, doing fighter affiliation on their return. Other aircraft did local flying consisting of circuits and landings, air tests, and acceptances.

Nothing much to report today.

23/6/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy with north easterly wind at 10 to 15 m.p.h. Visibility moderate to good.

Seventeen aircraft detailed for operations today but were scrubbed in the early afternoon due to weather conditions therefore Pay Parade was the main interest of the day. Many moans and groans were heard as the boys felt the first results of buying a War Bond.

P/O "Tiny" Merritt returned from hospital and it is learned that he will be homeward bound in a few days as he will be unfit for flying duties for some time yet.

Despite weather conditions, two aircraft took off on local Cross-Countries in the early afternoon.

Very little flying activity today.

24/6/44

Weather: Mainly fine with wind light south easterly, becoming westerly at 10 to 15 m.p.h. Visibility good.

Today marked a big day for flying carried out. To begin with, two aircraft took part in an H.2.S. Cross-Country exercise and dropped bombs on their return. Four aircraft were employed on practice bombing and fighter affiliation, one on straight practice bombing, and two on air-to-air firing.

Besides this, the Squadron was detailed for operations this date and easily supplied another record number of eighteen aircraft, the target being BONNETOT. The weather over the target was clear of cloud and visibility was very good. Red T.Is. appeared accurately placed but as attack developed these were obscured by dust and smoke. Yellow T.Is. dropped to Starboard of target attracted some bombing but Master Bomber instructed crews to ignore these and main weight of bombs fell

in target area with a tendency to undershoot. Master Bomber was very clear and complimented Main Force on accuracy of bombing. Defences in target area were negligible and no enemy aircraft were seen. One of our bombers returned early, the other 17 successfully completing their mission and returned early, the other 17 successfully completing their mission and returning to this country. Seeing a few friendly fighters in the background has its moral effects as well as its superb defensive qualities.

This was another daylight "do" but although, we were amazed at being called upon for this type of operation at first, it is rapidly becoming popular with the boys.

25/6/44

Weather: Mainly fair with South Westerly wind at 5 to 10 m.p.h. Visibility good.

After yesterday afternoon's operations, things were humming again in the wee hours of the morning as we were called upon for immediate operations against GORENFLOS. Crews were wakened from their well deserved sleep at the horrible hour of three o'clock in the morning. Operational meals were served at 3:30 hours and briefing was at 4:00 hours. Although the aircraft did not leave the deck till 06:25 hours, this marked two operations in twelve hours, a wonderful show on the part of all. The Squadron came through again with flying colours and eighteen aircraft soared into the sky. It was disappointing to see one of the boys return early but it was unavoidable due to a technical failure, the Constant Speed Unit on the Outer Starboard Engine being unserviceable and the aircraft could not gain height. However, the other seventeen made the grade and after successfully pranging their objective, returned to base. The weather over the target was clear with good visibility. First crews received orders from the Master Bomber to prepare for instrument bombing, but by the time they were ready to make bombing run, red T.I.'s were accurately placed in the target area. Visual observations and comments from Master Bomber indicated that bombing was well concentrated within the Target Area, which became obscured by smoke and dust as attack developed. All crews were of the opinion that the attack was successful, this was also borne out by the Master Bomber's comments. Heavy flak over target reported as nil to slight and bursting 11/13,000 ft. Ground defences over ABBEYVILLE OISEMONT area were active. No enemy fighters seen. All aircraft attempted photographs.

26/6/44

Weather: Fair at first. Rain during morning becoming fair later. Visibility good at first becoming moderate to good. Wind south easterly and light.

Today eighteen crews were scheduled for operations and an operational meal was served at 0900 hrs. in the morning. From then on during the day operations were scrubbed for an hour or two until finally cancelled, but crews had to stand-by.

No aircraft became airborne today but everyone was working hard nevertheless just in case. This could definitely not be called a rest.

27/6/44

Weather: Rain at first becoming fine to fair. Visibility good. Wind south westerly at 5 to 15 m.p.h.

The Squadron was again called for operations first thing today. Briefing was at 0930 hours and the crews got as far as to their aircraft before the "do" was put off and a Stand-by declared. Stand-by it was because midnight struck ending the day with no operations.

At noon we had a real "Canadian" hail storm, bags of lightning and thunder accompanied by intense rain and hail as large as marbles. This cleared up as fast as it came though and the sun was shining before dusk. "What a country", say the "Canucks".

The aircrew went to bed expecting an early call at any moment.

28/6/44

Weather: Showery at first becoming fine to fair. Visibility good. Wind south westerly at 15 to 20 m.p.h.

At long last we got off the ground at thirty minutes past midnight. Eighteen aircraft were detailed and took off to bomb WIZERNES. Seventeen aircraft completed the mission and returned to base safely, the eighteenth returning due to a technical failure, the starboard outer throttle lever being unserviceable, rendering the engine uncontrollable. Weather over the target was good. Visibility good and P.F.F was four minutes late. Three red T.I. markers were concentrated, apparently in target area, and green T.I. backers up fell in this concentration late in the attack. Bombing appeared to be fairly accurate. Ground defences of target varied from nil to slight, inaccurate heavy flak bursting from 12/14,000 ft. and slight light flak later in the attack. CALAIS defences were inactive. No enemy fighters seen. All crews attempted photographs.

Today really was a day for record breaking on the Squadron. For the first time in our history the crews took off twice during the same day. To really top things off, twenty aircraft were detailed and became airborne to attack METZ. Bad luck reigned supreme though, and besides losing one of our best

operational crews, name, R11111192 W/O II KING A.J. who had completed 31 trips with us, three aircraft returned early, two due to technical failures. The sixteen aircraft attacking the target reported no cloud, visibility good. P.F.F. was good with the red T.Is. well concentrated. The Master Bomber was heard clearly and most crews bombed on his instructions. Enemy fighters were on the job and three aircraft reported attacks while others reported numerous fighter flares along the track. Considered a successful attack, but a little too long for such a bright moonlight night. WHAT A DAY!!!

29/6/44

Weather: Fine at first. Thundery showers during late evening. Visibility moderate. Wind light and southerly.

As the aircraft from last night's operation returned in the early morning and the ones that landed away were still coming in by noon, everyone was happy that we were not going to operate today. Most of the crews took the chance to catch up on a badly needed and well-deserved rest. One of the newer crews was employed on circuits and bumps during the afternoon and this was our total flying effort for the day.

A number of the newer gunners were taken to the local firing range and given instruction on ground firing.

In the late evening, news was received that we were scheduled for operations next morning so Section Leaders and Flight Commanders were busy putting the boys to bed early and preparing the necessary "Gen" for an early effort. The armourers were also busy winching the bombs up as they have been doing so frequently of late.

30/6/44

Weather: Fog morning and night, occasional thundery showers during afternoon. Visibility poor at first becoming good. Wind calm becoming light, northerly.

Although we were scheduled for an early do this morning, nothing came of it and work kept coming through to stand by for immediate call. This continued all through the day despite poor weather conditions and it was not until about 1915 hours that definite "Gen" came through cancelling all operations for today. Needless to say, the bar stewards at both Messes earned their pay tonight and the boys were given a chance to spend some of the money received a week last Friday.

Flying training has badly suffered the last few weeks due to the Squadron being on stand-by all the time, but it is hoped that we shall not be tied up on Stand-bys to such a great extent in order that all our flying may be devoted wholly to operational

or training flying. The past month has set new standards of achievement and has been the greatest in the Squadron's history. Unsurpassed co-operation, enthusiasm and keenness from all members have made it so. In short, this clearly demonstrates what a Democracy can do in a knockdown and drag-out fight, and the "LIONS" are proud of the part they have played.

#### HONOURS AND AWARDS

J.21443 A/S/L F.N. Murray - Awarded the DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS vide the London Gazette No. 36525 dated 19.5.44  
J.22042 F/O G.A. Weldon - Awarded the DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS vide the London Gazette No. 36550 dated 2.6.44.

#### COMMISSIONS

176363 P/O S. Welch. Appointed to a commission w.e.f. 17.4.44  
176677 P/O W.J. Brett. Appointed to a commission w.e.f. 5.4.44

#### POSTINGS

15880 F/O R.J. Hannaford posted from No. 61 Base w.e.f. 6.6.44  
173861 P/O J. Quinn posted to No. 82 O.T.U. w.e.f. 17.6.44  
J.14908 F/O D.T. Hepburn posted to No. 63 Base w.e.f. 26.5.44  
J.19532 P/O L.W. Webb posted from No. 63 Base w.e.f. 30.5.44  
J.7992 F/L J.E. Durocher posted to No. 1666 C.U. w.e.f. 8.6.44  
C.175 W/C E.M. Mitchell posted from No. 61 Base w.e.f. 6.6.44  
J.19691 P/O A.W. Morris posted from No. 61 Base w.e.f. 6.6.44  
J.17930 F/O R. Dorland posted from No. 61 Base w.e.f. 6.6.44  
J.28603 F/O C.A. Moss posted from No. 61 Base w.e.f. 6.6.44  
J.28796 F/O J.D. Siddall posted from No. 61 Base w.e.f. 12.6.44  
J.35747 F/O J.F. Bester posted from No. 61 Base w.e.f. 6.6.44

1/7/44

Weather: Rain at first becoming cloudy with occasional showers. Wind south-easterly light becoming westerly light. Visibility poor at first improving during evening to 15 - 20 m.p.h.

No flying took place today but the Squadron was called upon for operations despite the heavy downpour of rain that prevailed during the day. Sixteen aircraft were detailed but word was received around 1800 hours that the operation was scrubbed due to Met.

Entertainments for the Squadron consisted of a dance at the Y.M.C.A. in the evening. Most of the crews had to stay on the station due to a "Standby" being called immediately the operation was scrubbed.

Training consisted of a lecture in the Crew Room by F/L Willgress, the Flight Engineer Leader, to the Flight Engineers, Bomb Aimers, Navigators and Pilots.

2/7/44

Weather: Cloudy with rain during late evening. Wind light at first becoming Southerly at 5 - 20 m.p.h. Visibility good at first becoming moderate.

The day started with the Squadron still standing by for operations. Everyone is beginning to doubt that old proverb about "They also serve who stand and wait". In the morning sixteen aircraft were detailed but as usual it took until about 1830 hours for the word to come through that the detail was scrubbed.

One aircraft managed to become airborne for a local check completing the full effort for today's flying.

Training consisted to aircraft recognition instruction for the Gunners and a lecture for other aircrew by F/L Willgress on the Hydraulic Circuit of Halifax III aircraft.

A very lazy day indeed.

3/7/44

Weather: Mainly continuous light rain. Wind light southerly veering north-westerly. Visibility moderate to poor.

Still waiting for the word "go" but as usual a big panic with sixteen aircraft raring to go resulted in another scrub just after briefing. What a life!

The weather was definitely against flying again today so no one was surprised when only one aircraft took off and this was employed on local circuits and bumps.

The Gunners had some aircraft recognition instruction and some Clay shooting with night vision glasses on. The Bomb Aimers sat spell-bound through an instructional film on Mk. XIV Bombsight. Little other activity prevailed during the day.

4/7/44

Weather: Rain and fog at first becoming fair to fine. Wind westerly at five to ten m.p.h. Visibility poor at first becoming good.

As usual sixteen aircraft were detailed for operations this morning. The unusual part about it though was that they all became airborne at 2205 hours. Everyone stood watching take-off with open mouths and incredulous looks on their faces. The target for the night was VILLENUEVE-ST.-GEORGES. Returning crews reported considerable fighter activity on the way into and at target. Markers appeared scattered and Master Bomber was apparently jammed or at least suffered enough interference to prevent some crews from getting his instructions, which

accounts for great variations in bombing height from 6800 ft. to 13000 ft. after he ordered to bomb below cloud. Some overshooting reported and bombing appeared scattered. Explosions reported at 0115, 0118, and 0121 hours together with heavy black smoke near the southerly red T.Is. A number of illuminating flares seen ten to twenty miles south of Target. Cloud was 9 to 10/10ths en route but there was a clear break over target with cloud above 9000 ft. Some crews made visual identification. All crews attempted photographs.

Our aircraft "S" Sugar piloted by CAN.J.28603 F/O MOSS, C.A. failed to return from this operation. All others successfully reached and bombed their objective.

A lecture was given by S/Idr. G.J. Cribb, D.F.C. our Commanding Officer, to all aircrew in the aircrew centre. The Camp Cinema was open to aircrew during the afternoon after an arrangement made by the C.O. was put into effect. It is felt that this is a grand idea as most of the personnel have to stay on camp in readiness for operations and there is very little entertainment during the long hours of the day.

Due to the seriousness of the increase in Venereal Disease it was decided to bring into effect the practice of inspecting personnel before and after leave at the Station Sick Quarters.

5/7/44

Weather: Cloudy with occasional showers. Wind light, southerly. Visibility good.

A great deal of flying took place today, starting with flying training that consisted of 2 aircraft on Bombing and Fighter Affiliation practice, 4 on H.2.S. Cross-countries and 2 on ordinary Cross-countries.

The Squadron was called upon for fifteen aircraft for operations but after briefing the effort was scrubbed with a warning to the crews to be "good" boys and retire early as early morning operations were in the offing. Few believed this but retired early, nevertheless, leaving the camp very dull all night.

Photographs from last night's "do" on VILLENEUVE-ST.-GEORGES looked quite good and this was confirmed by the fact that four points were credited for the trip.

6/7/44

Weather: Cloudy. Wind southerly light at first becoming ten to fifteen m.p.h. Visibility poor at first becoming good.

Panic usually sets in on the normal day around eleven o'clock but today was extraordinary with personnel running hither and thither at 0300 hours in the morning waking one another up and scrambling for the respective messes for breakfast. Despite the "heathen hour", fifteen aircraft took off at approximately 0530 hours winging their way to SIRACOURT. It was a lovely "Prang" and the aircraft returned around 1030 hours. Crews reported weather over the target clear and visibility excellent. Master Bomber was clear and received by most crews, stated broadcasting a trifle late though. Crews over target at 0759 hours reported seeing red T.I. markers directly on the trench-like excavations on the site. Smoke and dust soon obscured ground detail. Second group of T.Is. were placed slightly north of Aiming Point according to the Master Bomber, but third group of Yellow T.Is. were again right on the Aiming Point. Very few sticks of bombs were seen to burst outside the perimeter of the Target Area, and all crews reported a very good concentration of bombs on the Aiming Point. All crews bombed visually, with instructions from the Master Bomber, and T.I. markers were used as additional guides. Flak over the target was moderate, mostly coming from the 12 H.F. gun emplacements to the north-east of the target bursting at 12/13,000 ft., accurate both in predicted and barrage form. No enemy fighters seen over the target. All aircraft carried day cameras.

As the aircraft returned in time for a flying training programme to be carried out the newer crews chalked up four H.2.S Cross-countries and one ordinary Cross-country. Crews were ordered to stand by during the afternoon and to be sure to be in at 2359 hours. The girls back home need not have any fears of their fellers straying these days if they are in Bomber Command.

7/7/44

Weather: Cloudy with rain during afternoon. Wind light, variable. Visibility moderate to poor.

Another morning "do" with fifteen aircraft detailed. After briefing came the announcement of a seven hour postponement. After seven hours came the briefing for a new route and after that, quite normally and naturally a "scrub".

No flying training carried out today, in fact, no flying today.

Ground training consisted of Aircraft Recognition, Turret Manipulation, Clay shooting and D.I. instruction for the Gunners. The new Night Vision and Aircraft Recognition Room is progressing favourably once more.

Little also to report today.

8/7/44

Weather: Fair to fine. Wind light, southerly. Visibility moderate at first becoming good. Fourteen aircraft were scheduled for operations tonight, but as the day lingered on no "Gen" came through and the expected "scrub" was welcomed. All crews were warned that they may be called for early operations in the morning so everyone tried to retire early without cursing too much.

Total flying for the day consisted of one acceptance check of some odd minutes. Even ground training was side-stepped today.

Nothing of importance to report.

9/7/44

Weather: Mainly fair to cloudy. Wind southerly at first veering to south-westerly. Visibility poor at first becoming good.

Bright and early wasn't the word for it this morning as the messes were going full blast at 0215 hours dishing out grub to the crews who were to be briefed at 0315 hours. Word came through before briefing that a five hour postponement was called so everyone tried to control themselves and grab a few more winks. Ten-thirty hours found fifteen of our aircraft on their way to ARDOUVAL for another day operation. Weather over target was very poor. Bombing did not seem to be very well concentrated and some crews reported overshooting of bombs. Too much cloud made the "prang" difficult for a day operation. All our aircraft returned safely to this country, eleven landing away from base and reurning during the late afternoon.

Due to most of the aircraft being away during the day it was impossible to carry out any flying training.

The Squadron was visited by future R.A.F. personnel in the form of A.T.C. lads. The Gunnery Section took them under their wings and gave them a lecture on guns, turret manipulation and aircraft recognition.

Entertainment on the camp tonight was superb and supplied by Canadian W.Ds. who put on an A.I Stage Show for the boys. Everyone welcomed the sight of some real honest to goodness Canadian women.

10/7/44

Weather: Cloudy with rain in morning and showers in evening. Good visibility. Seventeen aircraft were detailed for operations today but were scrubbed later. Efforts were then

converted to flying training as it has been suffering of late due to the considerable time spent on Standbys.

Four aircraft were employed on H.2.S. Cross-country, two aircraft on Fighter Affiliation and Air-to-Air Firing combined, and four aircraft took part in local flying exercises.

A general standby was declared for tonight.

14/7/44

Operations were the real highlight of the day and we were called upon to supply thirteen aircraft to prang ANDERBELOK. All aircraft took off and proceeded to the target. Weather over the target was clear of cloud with visibility moderate to good. The first part of the attack was somewhat scattered with a tendency to undershoot. This was quickly corrected on instructions from the Master Bomber. No ground detail was visible to crews but reports indicate the T.Is. red and green were well concentrated and the weight of the attack was centred among them. One explosion was reported at 0113 hours. This is considered a very successful raid. Actual results dependent upon accuracy of T.I. Markers. Defences consisted of very slight H.F. with some negligible L.F., both in target area. Two enemy fighter aircraft sighted over Target Area. Long range combat in each case - no claims. All crews returned safely to base.

15/7/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy with slight local rain at first. Good visibility.

Thirteen aircraft were detailed for operations today but this was scrubbed due to weather conditions.

An intensive training program took the place of operations. Training consisted of two aircraft on H.2.S. Cross-country, and H.2.S. Bombing; one aircraft on Air-to-Air Firing, five aircraft on Fighter Affiliation combined.

A very busy day indeed.

16/7/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy, visibility moderate to good.

Fifteen aircraft were called upon today but weather did not permit their take-off for operations.

Flying training consisted of five H.2.S. Cross-countries with Fighter Affiliation and Practice Bombing combined. Five aircraft were employed on Air-to-Air Firing combined with H.2.S. Bombing. Night flying was carried out with 4 aircraft on night H.2.S. Cross-country. All this training tended to make the day a very full one.

17/7/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy, with visibility moderate to good. Wind south-easterly. Around two o'clock in the afternoon we were called upon for operations and seventeen aircraft were scheduled. Midnight passed on though without the kites becoming airborne. As the aircraft were bombed up ready to go, very little flying training could be carried out and only one aircraft participated with a little bombing on the local range. All crews were hustled to bed in the early evening with a warning that they would be called out in the wee hours of the morning.

18/7/44

Weather: Cloudy. Wind light south-easterly. Visibility moderate to good.

Little did the crews realize at 0130 hours when they were hauled from their beds that they would be on two operations within the space of 24 hours. At approximately 0315 hours seventeen aircraft became airborne and attacked MONDEVILLE. Weather over the target was good, no cloud with good horizontal visibility but a slight haze impeded downward visibility. The Master Bomber was heard by most crews and was reported to have handled the attack excellently. The T.Is. were seen by all crews and were frequently obscured by smoke. Bombing was very concentrated and only one stick was reported outside the target area, half a mile South. A big building was hit causing a large explosion at 0612 hours and other explosions were seen. Ground defences were slight over target but moderate H.F. bursts observed at 6/10,000 ft. at turning point after target. Three enemy aircraft were seen in Target Area but did not attack. All crews attempted photographs. One of our aircraft piloted by CAN.J.19921 P/O T.R. KELLY was hit by flak over the target and failed to return from this operation.

The aircraft returned home before nine o'clock and the ground crews immediately set to work to have them serviceable and ready for operations tonight. At 2200 hours, fourteen aircraft set off to attack WESSELING. Weather over the target was clear of cloud but some haze experienced and visibility was fair to good. Target was clearly marked by illuminating flares and well concentrated red and green T.Is. Master Bomber was clearly heard by about one half of the crews, the remainder either did not hear him at all or his comments were indistinguishable. Numerous explosions were reported. Flak was intense over target. S/Is. were very numerous but appeared to be stationary and quite ineffective. A smoke screen was reported operating in Target Area. Some Fighter Flares were seen but otherwise route was fairly clear of evidence of fighters. Bombing was accurately placed on or around the Markers. All crews attempted photographs.

19/7/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy with light and variable wind.  
Visibility moderate to good.

The aircraft did not return from last night's take-off until around four o'clock so this morning was very quiet. It looked as though the Squadron would be on tonight again but word came through that we would not be required before midnight. A great deal of talk was spent on yesterday's activities and it is believed that the raid on MONDEVILLE really helped out the army to advance through a strongly fortified steel-works. The attack on WESSELING was a huge success too, and judging by the explosions reported the oil plant that was the objective was badly battered.

This was more or less a day spent resting on our laurels.

20/7/44

Weather: Cloudy with north-easterly wind at ten to fifteen m.p.h. Visibility moderate.

After a night-long standby and much confusion, thirteen aircraft got cracking at 1300 hours today and became airborne for FERME-DU-GRANDES-BOIS, a flying bomb site. Weather over the target was clear with slight haze on the ground. Most crews carried out the instructions of the Master Bomber. Crews could not accurately assess the bombing because of the smoke pall, which lay over the target area and only the Master Bomber's remarks indicated that the attack was a success. Negligible heavy flak was encountered over the target but LE TOUQUET was reported as active on the coast on the outward route. No enemy fighters were seen. All crews attempted photographs. CAN.J.25299 F/O H.P. GORDON in "P" experienced a great deal of difficulty when he lost an engine on the way to the target and had to bomb on three engines. CAN.J.21292 F/L "PHIL" SHANNON in "Y" stood by him on the return journey until four Spitfires came into the picture and took over the escorting job. Before GORDON landed, another engine packed up and he had to land away from base. A very good show indeed.

Second target for the day was ANDERBELCK and only four bombers from this Squadron were sent. This was another flying bomb site near the-PAS DE CALAIS area. Weather over the target was clear with good visibility. Landmarkers were easily recognized in the Target Area. T.Is. were accurately placed and visual bombing was carried out. Heavy flak was slight to moderate. No fighter aircraft were sighted. All crews attempted photographs.

21/7/44

Weather: Cloudy. Wind northerly at 10 to 15 m.p.h. Visibility moderate to good.

Due to bad weather conditions no flying was carried out today, although as usual, seventeen aircraft were detailed and made

ready for any news that may be forthcoming. From approximately four a.m. until midnight, operations were off and continually on a succession of standbys, "wait a whiles", etc.

The Commanding Officer called a meeting in the Crew Room to listed and try to remedy any reasonable "binds" that were put forth. The "binds" ranged from duff met to the lack of crockery in the Sergeants' Mess. This form of "entertainment" was met with enthusiasm as it is rarely possible to air one's views under official auspices. More of these sessions are expected.

22/7/44

Weather: Cloudy with occasional drizzle. Wind northerly at 10 to 15 m.p.h. Visibility moderate to good.

Thirteen aircraft laid on for tonight but judging by the weather conditions in these parts it looked like a certain scrub and turned out to be just that later on in the day.

A lecture was given by the Flying Control Officer at 1130 hours and judging by the remarks passed, it was a real "gen" half-hour well spent.

In the afternoon, an extra showing of "Mutiny on the Bounty" was arranged for all aircrew members that could afford 6d., this helped pass the afternoon away and time didn't hang too heavily on our hands.

Absolutely no aircraft became airborne today. A very dull day.

23/7/44

Weather: Cloudy. Wind light northerly. Visibility moderate to good.

Everyone was down bright and early today to start the week out right with an early flying training program but this did not materialize until late morning when three aircraft took off on H.2.S. Cross-countires and practice bombing combined. One aircraft carried out local flying.

Fifteen aircraft were detailed for operations and fifteen took-off between 2130 and 2200 hours to bomb DONGES. There was no cloud over the target. Visibility was good with slight haze. P.F.F was punctual and well concentrated. Attack opened up at 0049 hours with a stick which caused a large explosion followed by black smoke. Other explosions occurred later. Bombing was apparently well concentrated and smoke obscured the target soon after the attack started. Master of Ceremonies was concise although not generally clearly heard due to interference. Both H.F. and L.F. over the target was slight, the former bursting at 12/14000 ft. No searchlights active. All crews attempted photographs.

24/7/44

Weather: Cloudy. Visibility good. Calm or light south westerly wind.

The day started out pretty cloudy and little was doing except for three aircraft being employed on H.2.S Cross-countries with Practice Bombing thrown in on the return trip.

Word was received around noon that we were on tonight so thirteen aircraft were made ready and although briefing was postponed a few hours the thirteen aircraft took off around 2140 hours wending their way to L'HEY in the PAS DE CALAIS area to attack a Flying Bomb Site.

Weather over target was 10/10 cloud with an occasional break. Tops 7500 ft. and visibility good. P.F.F. was on time and majority of crews reported Master Bomber clearly heard. Glow of T.Is. through the clouds appeared concentrated and bomb flashes seemed to indicate bombing was accurately placed on the markers. A violent explosion with a white flash seen. On the target H.F. and L.F. reported as slight up to 8/1300 ft. A few fighter flares seen in Target Area. All crews attempted photographs.

25/7/44

Weather: Cloudy, rain later. Visibility moderate. Wind calm to light south-easterly.

Judging by the weather this morning it looked like another day of rest but still the word came through that we were needed to supply sixteen aircraft for operations.

Cloud over target was 8/10 above 1800 ft. and those aircraft detailed to bomb on STUTTGART from above this height had to bomb through cloud. Crews bombing from a height of 18000 ft. or less reported thin stratus at about 9/10,000 ft. but markers could easily be seen, and some crews reported seeing ground detail. Slight haze generally hampered visibility. First red markers were dropped on time and these were scattered. Green T.Is. backing up the reds appeared as a better concentration. All markers were reported by crews as being in the city area and bombing was scattered throughout the built-up area. Crews leaving target towards the completion of attack report that fires and glow could be seen as far as 100 to 150 miles from the target. H.F. over target was moderate, barrage form, and bursting at from 16000 to 2000 ft. Over the French Coast, north of CAEN, L.F. co-operating with S/Ls was reported. ORLEANS was also active. There was fighter activity both into and away from target. Effective mainly on the route in, our tactics after leaving the target seemed to be effective against fighter interception. All crews attempted photographs, and all aircraft landed away.

Our aircraft "J" piloted by CAN.J.85133 P/O H.D. EGLI was hit by flak over the target and the undercarriage cropped. The crew managed to steer the badly damaged plane as far as the Normandy Beachhead but had to abandon the aircraft due to petrol shortage. At the present time all occupants are accounted for except the Captain but word is expected from him. The Bomb Aimer is in hospital near BAYEUK suffering from back injuries.

26/7/44

Weather: Rain early, then mainly fair. Thunderstorms later. Visibility moderate. Wind southerly and light.

A terrible day today for flying but the aircraft that landed away on last night's operations managed to get back to base. Sleep was the main topic as they hurriedly made for their beds as soon as they were interrogated.

Activity was nil on the Squadron and the weather man let loose with a wonderful lightning and thunderstorm in the late afternoon.

In the terms of an S.H.A.E.P. Communique, "There was nothing to report from the Sections."

27/7/44

Weather: Occasional showers. Visibility moderate to good. Wind South-Westerly light to moderate.

Bad weather still reigned supreme and the net flying for the day was four aircraft on circuits and bumps.

Fifteen aircraft were detailed for operations but it wasn't surprising when word came through that the effort was scrubbed.

Collections were made from the various Sections today for the Red Cross Prisoner of War Fund and proved highly profitable. For the prisoners we mean. The Flight Engineers and Bomb Aimers seem to be leading the way with donations. This practice was inaugurated only recently on the Squadron but the enthusiasm that it has been met with has made it a big success.

Later in the day another none aircraft were added to the original detail and crews were warned to stand by for an early morning "do".

28/7/44

Weather: Fair and visibility excellent. Wind westerly, light to moderate.

The warning to stand by last night was not in vain because a total of forty-one crews from the station were tumbled out of their beds for operational breakfast at 0230 hours and Main Briefing at 0330 hours. All seemed to go well till take-off time when the red flares went up cancelling the "do" for a few hours. The crews waited around till lunch time and then went to bed. Finally, word came through that the effort was really abandoned and a new target was set.

Eighteen aircraft were detailed for night operations tonight and around ten o'clock the aircraft took off, the target being HAMBRUG. The target was obscured by 8 to 10/10 cloud. Tops at 12/15000 ft. It was a fairly thin layer, as ground markers could be distinguished by the crews. Visibility above cloud was good. Green Wanganui markers by which target was identified were laid at approximately 0107 hours, and red T.Is. were marking the target when first crews arrived at 0111 hours. Marking generally by red and green T.I.'s was reported as fairly scattered, and such bombing as was seen through breaks in the cloud was dispersed throughout the marked area. Many explosions were seen in the target area between 0108 and 0116 hours, with two very large ones reported by practically all crews. Many fires were burning in the target area. Heavy Flak was moderate over target, bursting in barrage for 17/22000 ft. and numerous searchlights illuminated the cloud base. Fighter activity by single-engine and twin-engined fighters was fairly intense between target and HELIGOLAND on the return journey. All crews attempted photographs.

One of our aircraft, "Y" piloted by CAN.J.24299 F/O H.P. GORDON failed to return from this operation, the other seventeen aircraft landed safely at base.

Our aircraft "Y", piloted by CAN.J.26145 F/O G.E. PLYLEY claimed one enemy fighter destroyed. An M.E. 109 was seen astern above at 600 yds and it came in diving. Both Gunners, R.256542 SGT. KEARNS, R.G. and R.202608 SGT. SHAW, A.N. opened fire at 500 yds. and by the time the enemy aircraft had closed to 100 yds., each Gunner had got in a 4 second burst. Strikes raked the enemy aircraft and it burst into flames immediately. It fell away and the whole aircraft was aflame when it entered the cloud where it appeared to break up and a large flash was seen either just before or when he hit the deck.

29/7/44

Weather: Occasional rain. Visibility moderate to good. Wind southerly, light.

The weather today accounted for no flying taking place. A maximum effort was awaited but this did not materialize. Great use was taken of the spare time to bring the serviceability up

after last night's operations.

Ground training was carried out as usual during the afternoon, the morning being very dull as crews were sleeping late after the operations last night.

Word came through late in the afternoon that we may be called early for morning operations. This tended to increase the Squadron's activities.

30/7/44

Weather: Foggy becoming fair, then cloudy. Visibility moderate, then poor. Wind, light, northerly.

The warning last night of early morning operations really came true and operational types were roused at 2 a.m. for breakfast at 0215 hrs. and main briefing at 0300 hrs. Take-off commenced at 0530 hrs., the target being ~~AMAYE-SUR-SEULLES~~ on the battlefield. Fifteen aircraft became airborne and fourteen attacked, the other aircraft, "D" returning early due to engine trouble. Cloud base over the target was at 2000 ft., tops 5/6000 with 9/10ths cloud above. Visibility below cloud was very good. The crews were instructed to descend below cloud to attack but most crews received the Master Bomber's instructions rather late with the result that bombing was done at a higher Airspeed than briefed. Dense brown smoke obscured ground detail and most crews received instructions to bomb the S.W. corner of smoke and dust. Most crews believed that this was a very successful attack.

During the afternoon the returning crews had some well earned rest while newer crews carried out a few local sorties and one H.2.S. Cross-country.

31/7/44

Weather: Partly cloudy with slight mist becoming cloudy with fog. Only one aircraft took part in a Fighter Affiliation Exercise and H.2.S. Cross-country and one on local flying.

120431 W/C G.J. CRIBB, D.F.C., our Commanding Officer, spent a few hours taking A.T.C. personnel up on short flips. The boys seemed to enjoy this form of instruction, or should we say entertainment.

Tonight thirteen aircraft were detailed for operations, the target being COQUEREAU. All aircraft became airborne and reported weather over the target as clear with slight ground haze. P.F.F. was punctual and red T.Is. extremely well concentrated. The Master Bomber was only faintly heard by earlier crews but reception improved as the attack progressed. Crews report that directions were not given until zero hour which was too late for those early on the target. Few bombs were seen to burst owing to the type of fusing and it is not possible to assess

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results. Ground defences were negligible and no search—lights lit. No fighters seen. All crews attempted photographs.

HONOURS AND AWARDS - Nil

COMMISSIONS

J.86674 P/O N.R. McCaffrey - Appointed to a commission wef. 17.4.44  
J.86859 P/O J.N. Heaton - Appointed to a commission wef. 17.4.44  
J.87069 P/O J.A. Kicak - Appointed to a commission wef. 9.6.44  
J.87000 P/O C.G.M. Herring - Appointed to a commission wef. 14.5.44  
J.87239 P/O G.R. Pearce - Appointed to a commission wef. 17.5.44  
J.87247 P/O J.M.P.E. Lebel - Appointed to a commission wef. 9.6.44  
J.87491 P/O E. Bleich - Appointed to a commission wef. 2.6.44

PROMOTIONS

120431 F/L A/S/L G.J. Cribb, D.F.C. Granted the Acting Rank of Wing Commander wef 14.6.44.

J.11068 F/O M.G. Marshall promoted to the rank of T/F/Lt. wef 10.4.44  
J.19057 F/L J.D. Mawson promoted to the rank of F/O wef. 26.2.44  
J.36532 P/O F.M. Slota promoted to the rank of F/O wef 14.4.44  
J.37151 P/O A.E. Hall promoted to the rank of F/O wef 15.4.44  
J.37149 P/O P. Koleda promoted to the rank of F/O wef 17.4.44

1/8/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy. Wind light southerly. Visibility moderate.

This morning was very quiet for the first day in the month and it was not until nearly five o'clock that the first aircraft became airborne. This was employed on a Radar cross-country. The lack of flying training today was due to the fact that operations were scheduled to take place and take off was early in the evening.

Twelve aircraft became airborne as scheduled and proceeded to the target which was L'HEY in Normandy. The crews reported that as far inland as turning back point the cloud was 10/10ths at three to eight thousand feet, completely obscuring the enemy territory. Dunkirk was active with Heavy flak put up in barrage form from between 11,000 to 15,000 ft. No enemy fighters were seen. No photographs were taken. No BOMBS were dropped as per instructions from the Master Bomber.

Gremlins, in the form of A.T.C. personnel, took over the Bombing Section of the Squadron and were seen to swarm over the equipment and ask some awkward questions much to the embarrassment of their guides, our erstwhile Bomb Aimers.

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2/8/44

Weather: Cloudy, becoming fine during evening. Wind light variable. Visibility moderate. A little training was done today than yesterday. This was in the form of H.2.S. cross-countries with four aircraft taking part. Fighters were to provide fighter-affiliation practice but only one turned up. Other aircraft took part in local flying practice.

Operations were scheduled but these were scrubbed at briefing much to the disappointment of all concerned as everyone had been standing by since last night.

W/C C.J. CRIBB DFC, our Commanding Officer, held what is known to only us, a 'BLIND SESSION'. This get-together is for the purpose of ironing out the little difficulties that tend to come in the way at times and from recent sessions the talks have proved well worth while.

The Gunnery Section carried out a skeet shooting practice in the morning, coupled with a little turret manipulation exercises.

A good day for training.

3/8/44

Weather: Cloudy, becoming fine during evening. Wind light variable. Visibility moderate.

No flying training was carried out today as the Squadron was called upon to supply twenty-one aircraft for operations.

The A.T.C. personnel visiting the Station were entertained by the Gunnery Section today and were given the "ins" and "outs" on turret manipulation, aircraft recce etc. It was surprising to see how well versed a large percentage of these boys were on the different types of aircraft.

After three briefings, the Squadron finally became airborne and proceeded to attack the target which was FORDET-DE-NIEPHE and enemy supply dump. The attack opened up with yellow markers in position on the aiming point before the first crews were in position to bomb. These markers were visually identified as being very accurate. Visibility was moderate to good although patchy five to eight tenths cloud was found over the target. All crews managed to bomb through the breaks. In the early stages of the attack some undershooting was reported but the Master Bomber's comments seemed to remedy this as the attack developed. Crews reported that a good bombing concentration was achieved in the target area and comments from the Master Bomber indicated his satisfaction. The dense cover of smoke and dust made assessment of bombing impossible once the attack was in full swing. Heavy flak was slight to negligible from the target defences and no enemy fighters were seen. All crews attempted day photographs.

4/8/44

Weather: Cloudy, becoming fine during morning. Wind light. Visibility moderate to good but poor after dusk.

No flying training carried out today. Operations were scheduled late last night and fifteen aircraft became airborne just after ten o'clock this morning. The target was BOIS-DE-CASSON and was situated in the woods. Crews reported two to seven tenths cloud at 6000 to 9000 ft. around target but a clear patch over target. The attack progressed well and bombing generally was concentrated with a bit of undershooting early which was corrected by the Master Bomber. Large explosions occurred to one of which the Master Bomber temporarily directed bombing. Flak was slight to moderate heavy both on way in and out of target, the two most active points being CORMEILLES and FORGES. No figures were seen and any casualties are attributed to flak. All crews attempted photographs.

Very little else doing during the day as the crews did not get back until after three o'clock.

5/8/44

Weather: Fog at first, becoming fine. Wind light variable.

Last night found us again detailed to operate in early morning today but take-off was not until around ten-thirty. Nineteen aircraft participated in the attack on the target which was ST. LEAU D'ESSERENT, another supply dump. The run-up and target area were covered by four to seven tenths patchy cloud with tops around 10,000 ft. Visibility was quite good. Many crews had difficulty in making a good bombing run due to cloud interference, the rest bombed through breaks. The first red T.Is. and yellow T.Is. were identified as being very near the Aiming Point, and scattering of bombing was estimated to have to have fallen to starboard of the aiming point, and dense smoke which began to rise as the attack progressed made assessment of the attack in the later stages impossible. The Master Bomber was clear and was received by all crews. His instructions varied a great deal and crews received instruction to bomb with correction on the T.Is. in nearly every case. Heavy flak opposition over the target and approach were moderate to heavy in intensity, put up in box barrage form 14/17000 ft. There were no sightings of enemy fighters. All crews attempted day photographs.

No flying training carried out today.

6/8/44

Weather: Fog at first becoming fine. Wind light variable. Visibility poor at first, becoming moderate to good.

No operations scheduled today so the Squadron had a well earned rest. Although there were no operations six aircraft took part in a bombing, fighter affiliation and air to air

firing exercise. Another aircraft participated in local flying.

Cleanliness is the word of the day with all Sections putting forth a grand effort to have the place in A.I. shape for coming visitors. Numerous suggestions are being put forth at this time as to who the visitors will be but nothing definite is established.

7/8/44

Weather: Fog at first, becoming fair to cloudy. Wind southerly and light. Visibility poor at first, becoming moderate.

Operations were scheduled for today and twenty-one aircraft took off at 2030 hrs. to bomb L'HOGIE.

8/8/44

Weather: Cloudy, becoming fine during afternoon. Wind light south-westerly. Visibility moderate, becoming good.

The crews landed from last night's operations around one o'clock in the morning, the target being L'HOGIE. They reported weather over target clear of cloud with some haze and visibility fair to good. Target was clearly marked with two groups of red T.Is. but Master Bomber ordered the main forces to bomb on the northern group which were exceptionally well concentrated and bombing was accurately placed on these. Large explosions reported with yellow flashes. All crews reported that the whole target area was quickly covered with thick clouds of smoke and dust. Flak on target was nil except for a few bursts of light flak. No fighters actually seen but some fighter flares were noted on the route back from the target to the enemy coast. All crews attempted photographs. All aircraft landed away at PEPIOW.

During the day no flying training was carried out but the aircraft managed to return from diversion base. They were made ready for operations again tonight.

Fifteen aircraft took off at approximately 1830 hours to bomb CHANTILLY and returned around 2330 hours. All aircraft landed at base safely. The returning crews reported that there was nil cloud over the target. Visibility was good with a slight haze. O.F.F. was punctual and target was accurately marked with both red and yellow T.Is. The Master Bomber was heard by the majority of crews and his instructions were clear and easily followed. Bombing was apparently very good and many explosions and fires were soon seen in the target area, these were followed by huge quantities of black oily smoke which ascended to about 10,000 ft. No enemy fighters were seen but ground defences comprised moderate to intense heavy flak. All crews attempted photographs.

9/8/44

Weather: Fair to fine with westerly wind. Visibility good. Light rain during early evening.

Three aircraft were employed on local flying this morning. No intensive training was done due to the big effort on the Squadron's part yesterday. All aircraft were being checked and serviced in preparation for operations tonight. Word came through around noon hour that we would be called upon for seventeen aircraft.

Seventeen aircraft took off to bomb LA NEUVILLIE around 1900 hours and all returned safely except CAN.J.10397 F/L WYSE, G.P. and crew in "Y" Yorker MZ.363. The returning crews reported no cloud over target and visibility very good. Red T.Is. appeared to be slightly overshoot but yellow T.Is. were bang on. The Master Bomber was heard clearly by only a few crews. The remainder reporting interference. A number of crews bombed visually. Some sticks were seen to fall in target area but considerable undershooting was apparent. What appeared to be one battery of 6/8 heavy guns was firing very accurate predicted flak over the target between 15/17000 ft. No enemy fighters seen. All crews attempted photographs. The target was a storage dump for flying bombs.

10/8/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy. Wind south-westerly at ten to fifteen m.p.h. Visibility good.

Flying today consisted of two cross-countries and two aircraft on local flying. Very few aircraft are serviceable after yesterday's attack so there are no operations but bags of preparation for the imminent visit of the "distinguished visitor(s)". The crew room and surrounding were clean as a whistle by evening after many hours of sweat and toil on the part of the aircrew, mainly the Flight Engineers. Crews were allotted to their various positions and jobs and everything was locked up at night so no damage could be done to the crew centre.

The Blood Clinic was on camp today and 609 pints were given unselfishly by this Station's personnel, as this blood was badly needed for army casualties in NORMANDY. Some volunteers were turned away because the blood clinic could cope with no more.

11/8/44

Weather: Mainly fair with westerly wind at five to ten m.p.h. Visibility good.

The Squadron was honoured by the visit of the various Sections and chatted with crews in the briefing room. From the crew centre the party visited "U" Uncle where F/O MURPHY accompanied the King and explained to him how he received the bomb holes in the aircraft. The Queen spoke to the other members of the crew while this was taking place. This ended their visit and included in the party were Air Marshal Breadner, Lady Peel and two army Aide-de-Camps.

A.T.C. types were included in the Parade and also a number of Canadian W.D.'s from Group. The W.D.'s should be presented with a bouquet of "thorns for not helping the evening along by staying for the dance in the Airmen's Mess".

12/8/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy with westerly wind at ten to fifteen m.p.h. Visibility good.

Operations laid on for the morning but scrubbed at starting up time. Flying training was not very intense as two operations were laid on for the night. One aircraft being on local flying and one aircraft on air to air firing and practice bombing.

The boys were briefed twice and the two targets were scrubbed. Briefing was finally held at seven o'clock. More gen tomorrow.

13/8/44

Weather: Fair to fine. Wind westerly at five to ten m.p.h. Visibility good.

In the small hours of this morning between one and three o'clock the surrounding countryside vibrated to the noise of our crews returning from operations last night. Eleven aircraft carried out a bombing attack on BRUNSWICK and all returned with the exception of "W" NAN piloted by C.24436 F/L CRONIN, P.H. The returning crews reported 8 to 10/10ths cloud over the target, tops at 6/10,000 ft. with good visibility. Due to the cloud, little ground detail could be seen, but one very good concentration of fires is reported with smaller ones scattered over a wide area. Over the target heavy flak was slight to moderate to 15/17000 ft. in barrage form and searchlights nil or ineffective. Fighters falres were laid approaching the target and for a long distance on the route home. Several combats were seen, mostly with twin engine aircraft.

Eight aircraft took off to bomb LA BRETEQUE a flying bomb dump near ROUEN. Seven aircraft attacked the target and returned safely, one aircraft returned early due to engine trouble. The returning crews reported weather over target clear of cloud with some haze. Visibility fair to good. Red T.Is. were in three groups in line from west to east at considerable distance apart. Bombing was scattered between the three groups. Flak was negligible and only two fighters were seen, one on way in to target and the other on the way out. Both were single engine aircraft. All crews attempted photographs.

Ten of our aircraft took off on a mine laying schedule around 2030 hours this evening.

14/8/44

Weather: Fair, moderate to good visibility.

Flying training was held up today due to the aircraft being unserviceable after yesterday's big operations. Only one

aircraft became airborne on training and this was employed on a cross-country exercise.

Ten of our aircraft came back from mining operations at LA ROCHELLE which is south of the BREST Peninsula in the Bay of Biscay. This was the first mining trip carried out by the Squadron in over a year. The all up weight of the aircraft was maximum - bomb doors had to be left partially opened and the take-offs were a little shaky. All aircraft dropped their mines in the allotted areas in conditions of no cloud and excellent visibility. No opposition of any kind was encountered and no difficulties were experienced. All crews attempted photographs either P.P.I. or photo flahs.

Panic was predominant as we were called upon for eleven aircraft for take-off at 1230 hours this morning. Although this was a bit of a push it was just another chance for us to show the wonderful organization that is contained in our Squadron.

The eleven aircraft took off for AISY and returned safely. There was no cloud over the target. Horizontal visibility was fair to good, but vertical visibility was poor due to dust and smoke from earlier attacks. Master Bomber was heard clearly by the majority of crews. His first instruction was to bomb yellow T.Is. and a few crews saw these on the run up but they were obscured by smoke with a one second overshoot. He also ordered crews not to bomb a quarry, the result was that most crews bombed a smoke concentration as ordered without seeing any T.Is. The majority of crews were able to see the highway from CAEN and most used the D.R. timed run as a check. Two crews report seeing a quarry bombed some distance before the target was reached and another crew report a stick falling 1000 yds. to starboard of the Aiming Point. Apart from these instances a good concentration of bombs appeared to have been achieved on the smoke column. There was no flak on the target but slight heavy flak from 7/9000 ft. approximately two miles south of the target. No enemy fighters seen. All crews attempted photographs.

15/8/44

Weather: Fine with early morning fog becoming fair to cloudy later.

No flying training today as we were called upon for fifteen aircraft for take-off at approximately 1000 hours. The target was SOESTERBURG an enemy night fighter drome in HOLLAND. The total force on the target was over 100 aircraft. Cloud over the target was nil and visibility excellent. P.F.F. was bang on, the first T.Is. going down in the centre of the airfield. Master Bomber instructions were clearly heard also his time click. Bombing was particularly well concentrated, very few hits being seen outside the perimeter track and all runways were well cratered. Heavy flak at opening of attack was slight, increasing

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to intense in barrage form as the attack progressed, bursting 15/17000 ft. as the attack dwindled. No light flak reported. No enemy fighters seen. All crews attempted photographs.

16/8/44

Weather: Fine, becoming fair to cloudy with occasional shower late in evening. Good visibility.

The Squadron was called upon for operations for tonight so most of the day was taken up in preparations. A flying training programme was managed though, and four aircraft carried out a practice bombing and fighter affiliation exercise.

A short thunderstorm was experienced in the late afternoon and made things look a little grim for the pending operations, but they were not scrubbed and fifteen aircraft became airborne to attack KIEL at approximately 2100 hours.

17/8/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy, occasional showers, good visibility.

The fifteen aircraft returned safely around 0300 hours this morning from KIEL and reported varying cloud conditions over target. The attack opened up with a cluster of red and green T.I. to the North-East of Aiming Point, and another group of beds estimated to be around the Aiming Point, later marking was scattered throughout the built-up area, and small fires throughout the city indicated dispersed bombing. The Master Bomber was of little value as his channel was being jammed and only a few crews received instructions to bomb the southerly set of red T.I. Markers. A smoke screen seemed to be active, and no ground detail was seen, but crews estimate that the attack was effective. Heavy flak was slight to moderate over target and in the canal area. Fighter activity was slight. All crews attempted photographs.

During the day three aircraft were employed on local flying.

18/8/44

Weather: Cloudy with slight rain in evening. Good visibility.

Very little flying carried out today due to bad weather and the necessity for getting the aircraft serviceable for operations tonight. We were called upon to bomb CONNANTRES with ten aircraft and lay mines with eight aircraft. Everything progressed lovely except on take off and "A" APPLE piloted by J.24486 F/O PENROSE, R.C. blew a tire and was a non-starter.

Nothing else to report for today.

19/8/44

Weather: Cloudy with rain. Good visibility but fog forming in evening.

The seven aircraft employed on mining duties in the LE ROCHELLE district in the Bay of Biscay returned safely to diversion base. They dropped their mines in the allotted area in conditions of nil to 2/10 thin cloud with tops 2/3000 ft. with slight haze. No fighters were seen and heavy flak was five or six guns predictor

unseen and fairly accurate. Slight light flak and two or three searchlights were exposed. All crews attempted either P.P.I. or Photo flash photographs.

The ten aircraft employed on bombing CONNANTRES, a marshalling yard sixty miles east of Paris successfully attacked their objective and returned to diversion base. These marshalling replace those in the East Paris area which were previously rendered U/S by Bomber Command. P.F.F. was quite good although a little late. A couple of enemy night fighters were seen but there were not any attacks. Mosquitoes were numerous in the district.

Two aircraft were employed on training today, one on local practice and one on corss-country and Bombing practice.

20/8/44

Weather: Cloudy with much rain and drizzle. Moderate visibility.

Weather was foul to say the least, today. Everyone spent most of their time trying to keep warm without a fire. A lecture was given to the aircrew personnel by an Air Ministry Intelligence Officer on the subject of "Escape". His talk was very interesting and amusing.

Operations were expected for the night but the weather remained poor and nothing materialized.

21/8/44

Weather: Variable cloud with moderate northerly wind. Visibility good.

Weather over this country fair today but still duff on the continent - so, no operations scheduled. An extensive flying training programs was laid on with six aircraft on fighter affiliation, and one on cross-country, four on local flying, one on practice bombing, air to air firing and fighter affiliation. At night ten aircraft took part in a night flying training programme.

A.T.C. boys were given a little practical experience in the Oxford aircraft.

Life has been very dull on the station these past two days and the weather is getting the blame for it. It looks as though the fellows are getting restless already for some more operations.

22/8/44

Weather: Cloudy, occasional rain. Visibility good. Much cloud at two to three thousand ft. Wind northerly, light to moderate.

Same as yesterday - no operations and more training - time drags.

23/8/44

Weather: Drizzle at first, fair later. Visibility moderate. Much cloud at one to two thousand feet. Wind northerly light becoming south-south-easterly light. Weather still fair to poor - no operations but training still going on as usual. Four aircraft practiced bombing on the local range at SNAPE, one aircraft was employed on a cross-country exercise, two aircraft carried out fighter affiliation practice and one aircraft did local flying.

There is word of early morning operations - here's hoping because everyone is really "cheesed" after four days of inactivity.

24/8/44

Weather: Rain early and late. Visibility - fog at first, becoming moderate, then foggy in evening. Variable cloud at two to three thousand feet. Wind south-easterly light. A small operational schedule was laid on for today but was scrubbed due to weather conditions, much to the sorrow of all concerned.

Flying training today consisted of two cross-countires and two air to air firing and fighter affiliation combined. Lectures and ground instruction also took part. It looks as though the boys would rather operate though, so will be looking forward to better news tomorrow.

25/8/44

Weather: Foggy, becoming fair. Visibility - fog at first, moderate later. Large amounts at two to three thousand feet. Wind, mainly calm.

Everyone in a much happier mood today as it was learned that we were to supply eighteen aircraft for operations tonight. This appeared to be a very simple task after the "breather" we have had.

Although most of the time was taken in arranging for the operations, a good deal of training was also carried out. Five aircraft took part in a fighter affiliation exercise, one on air to air firing and practice bombing combined and one on air to air firing and fighter affiliation combined.

On the ground the gunners were given aircraft recognition exercises and turret manipulation. The Squadron Gunnery Leader F/L W.P. ADAMS was visited by two Royal Observer Corps Officers who are putting on the aircraft recognition contest between the A.T.C. and air gunners of various Squadrons.

At night eighteen aircraft soared into the air on operations, the target being ST. MATHIEU.

26/8/44

Weather: Foggy becoming fair. Visibility - fog at first, moderate later. Large amounts at two to three thousand feet. Wind light northerly becoming light southerly.

The crews all landed away last night and returned during the day. The target was ST. MATHIEU, Nr. Brest, an enemy gun-site. The

crews reported visibility over the target good, with a thin patch layer of cloud, indicated by Master Bomber as being four to five thousand feet which obscured ground detail for most crews. The approach was identified visually in most cases. Master Bomber instructed to bomb on red T.I.'s two concentrated clusters appearing close together and judged to be in the approximate aiming-point vicinity. Crews seemed highly satisfied with the effort generally. No fighters were seen and there was no flak opposition. All crews attempted photographs.

As the aircraft needed servicing upon return, it was impossible to carry out any flying training programme.

27/8/44

Weather: Cloudy becoming rainy. Visibility moderate at first, becoming excellent. Large amounts of cloud at one to two thousand feet. Wind light westerly becoming light southerly..

No time for training today as the Squadron was called upon to supply fifteen aircraft for operations, the target being MIMOYEQUES. Take off was after five o'clock in the afternoon and the target was pranged in daylight. The crews reported nil cloud over target, with fair amounts of haze, but visibility was good. Early crews saw stick of bombs fall across the tunnel entrance. Red T.I.'s and later green T.I.'s were identified as being very concentrated around the aiming point. The Master Bomber was heard by nearly all crews, and his orders were to bomb the concentration of T.I.'s. There was some light undershooting, but most crews report a good concentration of bomb-bursts and smoke around the estimated aiming point. Flak opposition appeared as a loose layer barrage over target at 16 to 18000 ft., fluctuating between slight and moderate in intensity and reported as being most heavily concentrated at 17,500 ft. No enemy fighters were sighted and all crews attempted photographs.

Skeet shooting carried out by the Air Gunners during the afternoon.

28/8/44

Weather: Rain at first becoming cloudy. Wind southerly at five to ten m.p.h. veering westerly at fifteen to twenty m.p.h. Visibility moderate becoming good.

More like old times now, as the Squadron was again called upon for operations today. Two aircraft participated in training exercises, these being practice bombing and air to air firing. An Air-Sea rescue lecture was given to aircrew members during the later morning.

Shortly after six o'clock in the afternoon, ten aircraft took off to bomb FERME-DE-FORESTEL a flying-bomb site in the Pas de Calais area. The aircraft returned just after ten o'clock and reported weather over the target good with nil to 3/10th cloud. Visibility

was moderate to good. On run-up to target all crews saw OEUF EN TERNIS being marked and this aided in identification of their own target. No details were seen within the site, but those who bombed saw the target area and surrounding landmarks. Crews differed in opinion as to the success of the attack, some considered it successful while others termed it a failure. Sticks were seen falling across the target area also wide and short. Flak opposition over the target was slight to intense, accurate and predicted and a fair amount was encountered just after leaving the target area. No enemy aircraft were sighted and all crews attempted photographs.

29/8/44

Weather: Cloudy with fair to fine periods. Visibility good. Wind light westerly. No operations today but bags of flying training was carried out. Five aircraft took part in a practice bombing and air to air firing exercise. One aircraft was employed on straight practice bombing. Even the A.T.C. became airborne today as they were given short flips in the Oxford.

At night we were far from relaxing as a night flying training programme was carried out. It is quite a while since we have had one and it seemed queer that the aircraft should be taking off at night on anything else besides operations. One aircraft carried out an H.2.S. exercise while three others completed a "Bullseye" exercise and two others were engaged on practice bombing.

A very busy day although it was spent in training.

30/8/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy with thunder during afternoon. Visibility generally good. Wind light at first becoming westerly at five to ten m.p.h.

Operations were laid on for today but it was not surprising when they were scrubbed as the weather today has been really miserable. Despite the weather four aircraft carried out practice bombing on the local range and did a bit of air to air firing.

Lectures were given in the individual sections and everyone seemed to be quite busy. The Gunners had some more aircraft recognition and turret manipulation exercises. We are beginning to think that we should have about the best gunners in Group but training can never be too intense.

The ground crew of "A" Flight seem to be in pretty good shape today despite the Flight Party they had last night. From reports it is believed to have been a big success and was even sanctioned by the officers of the Squadron who were well represented.

31/8/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy with showers. Wind westerly at fifteen to twenty m.p.h. Visibility good but poor in showers.

The Squadron was up bright and early this morning preparing for operations that were scheduled for ten o'clock. At ten o'clock fifteen aircraft took off to bomb CEZEMBRE, and island near St. Malo. The weather over the target was ideal as cloud base was about 3000 ft., all bombing took place below that height. Results of the bombing appeared good. Our aircraft "L" orbited twice about the target and reported an estimated 70% of the bombs fell within the target area. A number of explosions were observed which appeared to be other than bomb bursts and black smoke was seen in one instance to rise to a height estimated at 300 ft. All crews attempted photographs.

All aircraft returned to base and from all reports it was a good prang easily carried out. A good way to end a month of such great activity.

HONOURS AND AWARDS - NIL

COMMISSIONING

J.87759 P/O H.R. Collver, - Appointed to a commission wef	7.7.44
J.87796 P/O T.P. Mitchell	" " " " 7.7.44
J.88074 P/O J.S.R.M. Bourdon	" " " " 7.7.44
J.87787 P/O J.R. Melnick	" " " " 7.7.44

1/9/44

Weather: Showery at first, becoming fair. Wind westerly 10 to 15 m.p.h. Visibility good. Fifteen aircraft were laid on for operations early today but the effort was finally scrubbed around 1430 hours.

Flying training consisted of four cross-countries, one practice bombing, one fighter affiliation and one aircraft on fighter affiliation, air-to-air, and bombing combined.

Crews were required to sign a statement to the effect that they would be in camp by 2359 hours nightly except those on standby, who would naturally be confined to camp.

In the evening, a chicken dinner was given in the Airman's Mess and was thoroughly enjoyed. After having the big feast, a dance was held, A.T.S., W.E.E.N.S. and W.A.A.F.'s being invited.

An early morning standby list was published around 2000 hours today.

2/9/44

Weather: Cloudy with continuous rain. Wind northerly at fifteen to twenty m.p.h. Visibility moderate.

Absolutely no flying was carried out today and it only took one look out of the window to see why, although despite the weather, crews were briefed at 0915 hours and the operation was postponed from then to 1330 hours when it was finally scrubbed.

A parade was held in the hangar at 1330 hours and the Squadron was presented with a silver model Halifax aircraft by the Base Commander. The aircraft was given for two months without an accident as another feather in our well-plumed hat.

3/9/77

Weather: Fine at first, becoming cloudy with rain during afternoon and evening. Wind northerly at ten to fifteen m.p.h. Visibility good.

Today marked the Fifth Anniversary of the war and it was only fitting that we should operate. Fifteen aircraft took off around 1530 hours to bomb VOLKE, an enemy airfield in Holland. Aircraft attacked between 1730 and 1739 hours, dropping 41 x 1000 American G.P., 138 x 500 G.P. fused tail instantaneous with good results from 14000 to 15000 ft. Main concentration was around T.I.'s at runway intersection, with some scattered bombing to North. Master Bomber's comments very good. All aircraft identified target visually. Weather on target three to four/tenths broken cloud. No flak or fighter opposition on target. No fighters on route. No flak. Just after take-off the weather closed in here so all the aircraft landed away from base, aircraft "Y" to North Creek and remainder to Swannington.

It was learned today that two of our gunners J.87864 P/O J.S. Williamson and J.88209 P/O D.E. Porter found the aircraft recognition contest between the Squadrons of the Group an easy mark as they came through with flying colours. However, we are sorry to say that they came second place in the grand final, beaten only by a small margin by the A.T.C. boys.

4/9/44

Weather: Rain at first, becoming cloudy. Wind light at first, becoming westerly at ten to fifteen m.p.h. Visibility moderate.

Dismal weather this morning but it turned out fairly good around noon. The aircraft that were diverted from yesterday's operations started to return to base around 1330 hours.

Flying training for the day consisted of three aircraft on practice bombing, one on practice bombing and H.2.S. cross-country.

The Gunners of the Squadron were given aircraft recognition by the Base Gunnery Instructor.

A stand-by list for eighteen crews was issued at 1400 hours this afternoon, presumably for early morning operations.

5/9/44

Weather: Cloudy with showers during afternoon. Wind light at first, becoming south-westerly at five to ten m.p.h. Visibility moderate.

In the morning all available aircrew went to the Station Cinema to see a picture on the prevention of Venereal Disease.

Flying training was carried out today in the form of cross-countires with five aircraft participating.

The immediate award of the Distinguished Flying Cross was made to J.24486 F/O C. Penrose, J.85133 F/O H.D. Eglin and J.97910 P/O

H.S. Smith today, a party in the mess is anticipated in the near future.

Word came through around 1700 hours that we would be called upon for operations tomorrow morning.

6/9/44

Weather: Cloudy with rain. Wind northerly at five to ten m.p.h. Visibility moderate.

Crews were briefed for today's operations in the morning but briefing was postponed till 1330 hours. The target being EMDEN, with fifteen aircraft taking off around 1600 hours. A fighter escort was provided and returning crews reported it as bang on. Weather over the target was 10/10 cloud with bases at 16500 to 18000 ft. - visibility good. One or two crews reported thin wispy cloud tops at 6000 ft. Some earlier crews saw T.I.'s. but majority were unable to see them for smoke and bombed visually. Master Bomber heard by most crews, but his instructions were difficult to follow owing to dearth of T.I.'s. The bombing appeared to be well concentrated in built up area and a large column of smoke rose to 10000 ft. One large fire was seen at the head of the docks, but smoke obscured further ground detail. Smoke generators to N.W. were observed starting to operate, but as this was at zero hour they were ineffective. Heavy flak was moderate. One sighting of four twin-engined enemy aircraft was made in the target area, but no combats are reported. All crews attempted photographs.

7/9/44

Weather: Cloudy with rain. Wind calm at first becoming northerly at five to ten m.p.h. Visibility moderate.

Optimistic elements laid on a "Bullseye" for tonight but it needed more than optimism to compete with the downpour we experienced all day long so the training was scrubbed. Ground lectures and instruction was carried on in the various sections.

No flying was carried out today and there was nothing to report on the Squadron.

8/9/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy with rain. Wind westerly at ten to fifteen m.p.h. Visibility good.

Although weather conditions did not look so promising, a large and intensive training programme was carried out, twelve aircraft taking part. The exercises consisted of air to air firing, cross-country, practice bombing, fighter affiliation and local flying.

A night flying training programme was scheduled for tonight and preparations were well under way before it was scrubbed.

The Squadron was favoured with a new Signals Leader in the form of J.15430 F/L J.D. JOHNSTON DFC, who has completed one tour and is now on his second.

9/9/44

Weather: Fair to fine with northerly wind at ten to fifteen m.p.h. Visibility good.

The Squadron was not called upon for operations today so training was the main event of the day again. Fourteen aircraft became airborne, these being employed on air to air firing, cross-country, practice bombing, fighter affiliation and local flying.

Night training programme was arranged but scrubbed again today due to weather conditions, much to the pleasure of everyone concerned.

A standby list was issued in the evening in preparation for operations in the morning.

10/9/44

Weather: Fair to fine with a light wind at first becoming north-westerly at five to ten m.p.h. Visibility good.

No operations this morning as anticipated but numerous training schedules laid on consisting of fighter affiliation, air to air firing, practice bombing, cross-countries and circuits and bumps. In all, eleven aircraft participated in the exercises.

Everyone was envious of our neighbours the "BISONS" who had a crack at operations tonight - must have been an easy "do".

11/9/44

Weather: Fair to fine. Good visibility.

At last we became airborne for operations. The target being IE HAV-E and the aircrew gave vent to their pent-up feelings on the gun emplacements there. Nineteen aircraft took off, eleven not attacking the target due to instructions from the Master Bomber to abandon the effort. Weather over the target was clear, visibility excellent and most crews were able to identify the aiming point. At 0742 the Master Bomber was heard to give the cease bombing call sign "CHATTERBOX" as a result of which the eleven brought back their bombs. Some of the remaining crews orbited the target and later saw red and green T.I.'s descending on the target area and then heard the Master Bomber's instructions to bomb the T.I.'s which they proceeded to do. The target was clearly marked with T.I.'s and the bombing carried out appeared to be well concentrated on the markers. The ground defences were nil and no enemy fighters were encountered. The crews that bombed attempted photographs.

Although the aircraft were back to base by 1000 hours, most of the crews went back to bed and things were pretty quiet during the rest of the day. No flying training took place and very little ground instruction was given.

12/9/44

Weather: Fair to fine, cloudy in afternoon, good visibility.

Operations were scheduled for this afternoon, take-off being around 1530 hours. The target being the HOESCH-BENZIN Synthetic

Oil Plant at DORTMUND. Fourteen of our aircraft became airborne and thirteen attacked the primary target, "K" King returning early due to engine trouble. Weather over the target was clear of cloud with some haze, visibility generally fair. Crews attacking early identified visually and report that markers were bang on. Master Bomber was clearly heard. Bombing in the early stages of the attack appeared to be well concentrated on the aiming point. A large explosion and numerous fires were seen developing accompanied by billows of black smoke. The opinion of all crews is that this is a very successful operation. Heavy flak was moderate to intense barrage 17000 to 20000 ft. No enemy aircraft sighted. All crews attempted photographs.

Just after 1930 hours five more of our aircraft took off on a MINING operation.

13/9/44

Weather: Fine becoming cloudy with visibility moderate to good, becoming poor late in evening.

The five aircraft that took off in MINING last night returned to base around 0230 hours this morning. All aircraft brought back their mines. Crews were briefed not to go below 10000 ft. Ten-tenths cloud existed over the garden area although the route in and out was comparatively cloud free with good visibility. Flak from OLSO was moderate to intense in loose barrage form. Other flak was experienced from island in OSLO FLOOD and at flak position 5840N 0720E. No encounters took place. No photographs were attempted.

Training today consisted of air to air firing, practice bombing, H.2.S. cross-country and night practice bombing.

The weather was duff so no operations were scheduled for tonight.

14/9/44

Weather: Cloudy with drizzle and rain. Visibility moderate to poor.

A typical cold misty Yorkshire morning but fortunately clearing up around noon and becoming a warmish September day.

Thirteen aircraft were detailed to attack WILHEIMSHAVEN and took off around 1600 hours. All aircraft returned early on orders from group and no difficulties were encountered. Eleven jettisoned their 2000 lb. bomb and brought the rest of the load back, two aircraft returned with their full bomb load.

15/9/44

Weather: Cloudy with rain and fog. Fair in evening.

A great deal of activity this morning when we discovered that the Squadron was called upon for operations tonight on two different targets. The first being KIEL and the second a mining effort. Little time was available for flying training but the Gunners managed to spend a few hours at the SUTTON BANK firing range.

Take-off for the bombing of KIEL was around 2145 hours and the mining take-off was at approximately 1915 hours. None of the aircraft returned before midnight from either of the operations.

16/9/44

Weather: Cloudy with rain and fog. Fair in evening. Good visibility.

One aircraft employed on the mining sortie last night returned around 0300 hours and one aircraft brought back its mines due to the H.2.S. being U/S and visual identification was impossible due to cloud. The other four aircraft dropped their mines. There was 9/10ths low cloud on the target with tops at 5 to 6000 ft. and heavy rain for most of the return journey. There was slight to moderate heavy flak, mainly predicted but some barrage, all around the port area. No searchlights were experienced and the route was flak free. No fighters seen and all crews attempted photographs.

Of the eleven aircraft detailed to attack KIEL, all aircraft bombed their objective and returned around 0400 hours. There was nil to slight thin transparent cloud on the target with good visibility. The markers appeared to be well placed and backers-up were very accurate achieving a good concentration of red T.I. Bombing at the start of the attack appeared to be accurate, with a slight tendency to undershoot. As the attack progressed a good many fires were starting in a well defined area surrounding T.I.'s. Known decoys were operating and dummy T.I. green were dropped on track in to target, starting at Danish coast. Heavy flak over target was moderate but mainly below our height band. Light flak was slight in target area and on the canal to 18000 ft. Searchlights were exposed in small cones exposed on canal. Fighter activity was slight, mainly in target area and all crews attempted photographs.

17/9/44

Weather: Fair to fine. Visibility good.

Things started early this morning with sixteen aircraft winging their way to BOULOGNE around seven o'clock. All aircraft attacked the primary and returned to base safely. Weather over the target was clear with good visibility. Early T.I.'s were evidently short as the Master Bomber was heard scrubbing them as our aircraft made landfall. Most crews heard the Master Bomber clearly. Crews bombing early report a red T.I. on Aiming Point but there appeared to be a tendency to bomb slightly short and to starboard of this but with no serious over or undershooting. As the attack developed accuracy of the marking was obscured by dust and smoke, but a good bombing concentration was maintained. Majority of crews identified visually but crews bombed T.I.'s on Master Bomber instructions. About two batteries were firing heavy flak from CAP GRIS NEZ inaccurate at 7/10000 ft. and there was slight heavy flak over the target area to 7/8000 ft. All crews attempted photographs.

There was nothing doing during the afternoon as most of the returning crews went to bed after interrogation.

At night a "Bullseye" diversion effort was laid on, six aircraft participating and returning safely.

18/9/44

Weather: Fine but fog at dawn. Visibility becoming good.

No operations scheduled for today so training programme was laid on, with twelve aircraft carrying out the following exercises - fighter affiliation, air to air firing practice bombing and circuits and landings.

At night another training exercise on the local bombing range was scheduled and completed, four aircraft participating.

A standby list was put out tonight for tomorrow's operations.

19/9/44

Weather: Fog early, becoming cloudy, with moderate visibility.

A lazy day spent in standing by. Weather was duff as the aerodrome was shrouded in fog most of the day. Only five aircraft became airborne, four of them on H.2.S. cross-countries. The Dart and Cribbage boards took an awful beating in the various sections.

At evening, an ENSA show was held in the N.A.A.F.I. building but as usual it turned out to be very "corny".

The only exciting incident of the day was a Lancaster from Middleton-St.-George that overshot the runway on landing and ended up with its nose over the Great North Road. Apparently Middleton was fog-bound even worse than we were.

20/9/44

Weather: Fog, becoming cloudy with rain, then fog again at evening.

Although it looked really bad out for operations, we received news in the morning that thirteen aircraft were needed to prang CALAIS. Despite weather conditions the aircraft took off around 1600 hours and all successfully reached the target and bombed, landing away from base. The returning crews reported that the effort was an easy one although there was some flak. Apparently this operation was in aid of the Army who are trying to smash their way into CALAIS and silence the guns that are still hurling shells at DOVER.

Oranges were distributed to the various sections today, much to the delight of all aircrew personnel. All aircraft were diverted to Odiham.

The Squadron Bomb Aimers received a visit from the Group Bombing Leader today and no comments were forthcoming.

21/9/44

Weather: Fog at first, becoming fine with moderate visibility, then cloudy in evening.

Nil flying today as the weather is still "duff". Aircraft that landed away at ODIHAM yesterday returned to base this afternoon.

In the evening a big party was held in the Officer's Mess - other ranks are curious to know why so many lights were needed to indicate where the paths and roads were situated. outside of the Mess.

22/9/44

Weather: Fog and drizzle, becoming cloudy with rain.

Absolutely nothing to report today except that everyone is becoming a little bored with the inactivity and the rain experienced in the last two days.

A lovely break for the personnel that are under the weather after last night's party.

23/9/44

Weather: Fine with good visibility, becoming rainy in evening.

Although we were not called upon to supply anything for operations it was good to see a few aircraft become airborne on training flights and the weather lifting for awhile.

Twelve aircraft took part in Fighter affiliation, practice bombing, air to air firing, H.2.S. cross-countries and local flying exercises.

In the early evening an operation order was issued for an early morning "do".

24/9/44

Weather: Rain and moderate visibility, becoming showery in evening.

After such confusion the aircraft finally became airborne around 1700 hours and not in the morning as anticipated. The target again today was CALAIS to soften up the enemy defences. Fourteen of the fifteen aircraft detailed dropped their bombs on the primary target between 1849 and 1855 hours. One aircraft jettisoned its load in the channel. Weather over target was fairly clear under 2000 ft. Visibility was good below cloud with some haze. Most crews report hearing the Master Bomber. Crews bombed visually aided by the Master Bomber who was heard correcting misplaced T.I.'s. Crews report red T.I.'s as being to port of aiming point and north of the canal. Master Bomber instructed most crews to bomb to starboard of red T.I.'s and overshoot one second which may have assisted bombing accuracy. Fair-sized explosion seen in target area. Three or four puffs of heavy flak were seen and crews believe machine guns were being used. All aircraft carried cameras and attempted photographs.

25/9/44

Weather: Fair with excellent visibility. Moderate south-westerly wind.

Crews were roused from their beds early this morning for take-off around 1830 hours. For the third time in a row the target was

CALAIS ground defences. Fifteen aircraft took off and fifteen attacked the primary target. Weather over the target was 4 to 6/10ths broken cloud from 3/5000 ft. Visibility was good through gape. Master Bomber gave basement at 5000 ft. well before aircraft reached the target area but did not repeat his instructions often enough and some crews heard the order once only and others not at all. Several orbits were necessary as a result. Early T.I. appeared to have fallen on the beach. A second cluster short and to port of aiming point but later clusters were more accurate. Master Bomber directed bombing accordingly, but considerable weight fell on the beach and short and to port of the aiming point. No overshooting was reported. Defences apparently consisted of about two heavy flak batteries on either side of the aiming point, firing fairly accurate predicted flak. Also there was spasmodic slight inaccurate light flak. All crews attempted photographs.

In the afternoon there was very little doing as most of the crews retired again in case of early operations tomorrow.

26/9/44

Weather: Fair with excellent visibility. Moderate westerly wind.

No operations today so training was carried out. Fighter affiliation, practice bombing, air to air firing, formation flying and local flying took up the time of fourteen aircraft. A night flying programme was laid on too, but this was scrubbed in the late afternoon.

An operational order came out at 1800 hours for early morning operations so crews were advised to retire good and early tonight.

27/9/44

Weather: Slight occasional showers. Visibility excellent. Wind moderate westerly.

Last night's warning of an early "do" today was only too true and by eight o'clock twenty-one aircraft were winging their way to STERKRADE. A really big effort but it was met with ease by the Squadron. Crews returned around noon and reported there was 9 - 10/10ths cloud over the North Sea and continent. Over target area there was the odd small break and tops were 8/12000 ft. Visibility above cloud was unlimited. At about 11 hours Master Bomber ordered attack on alternative target as T.I. red cloud not be seen. Most crews altered course for DUISBURG, but two minutes later Master Bomber said that T.I.'s were now visible through a gap and ordered crews to return to primary but only two crews definitely saw the T.I.'s. Although several saw and bombed what they thought was the glow from T.I.'s, other crews returned to the alternative and bombed that area. Several crews report bombing large plants which are unidentified but in the STERKRADE area, with some success as a large explosion was

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was reported. Heavy flak was moderate in loose barrage in vicinity of targets with intense spots south of primary between 16000 and 20000 ft. No enemy fighters. All crews attempted photographs.

A standby list was put out in the afternoon for early morning operations, and the returning crews gladly went back to bed.

At night one aircraft took part in a night practice bombing exercise at the local bombing range.

28/9/44

Weather: Fine, visibility excellent. Wind light to moderate westerly.

Although we were ready to operate early this morning, take-off was not until around 1630 hours when nineteen aircraft took off to bomb CAP-GRIS-NEZ and enemy troop position area. All aircraft reached the target area but returned without attacking on instructions of Master Bomber. Weather over the target area was 9/10ths cloud with bases from 2500 to 3000 ft. Considerable haze and poor visibility. No fighters were seen.

The only other flying chalked up for today was a local air-test. All bombs were brought back from this operation.

29/9/44

Weather: Fine to fair with excellent visibility. Wind moderate south-westerly.

No flying today at all so the time hung heavily. Ground instruction was given and proved very beneficial.

Flight Lieutenant, H. Fogg, DFC DFM, our Navigation Leader gave the pilots of the Squadron a lecture on navigational procedure, an excellent way to keep the boys on their toes during the slack period.

A standby list was put out for tomorrow.

30/9/44

Weather: Fine with excellent visibility. Wind light to moderate south-westerly.

CAN.J5166 A/W/C E.M. BRYSON, our Commanding Officer was screened today and was succeeded by CAN.J10133 A/W/C V.F. GANDERTON, DFC, an ex-member of the Squadron. A/W/C GANDERTON completed his first operational tour with us, having been posted from 14 O.T.U. on the twenty-first of January, 1943 and staying with us till the 6th of December, 1943 when he was posted to H.Q. 6 (RCAF) Group for staff duties.

No flying was carried out today, a very disappointing way to round off the month after the large number of operations that we have completed lately.

1/10/44

Weather: Fine. Excellent visibility with brisk north-westerly wind.

Although the Squadron was on standby today, a training programme was scheduled and carried out. Four aircraft took part in an air-to-air firing and practice bombing exercise. Six aircraft participated in an H.2.S. cross-country and did practice bombing on their return. At night, eight more aircraft took off on H.2.S. cross-countries and practice bombing combined.

CAN.J.8167 F/L W.P. SCOTT and crew left today for No. 426 (R.C.A.F. Squadron, having completed nearly thirty operational sorties with us. Here's hoping he brings up the LINTON boys to 427 Squadron standards.

Little else to report for today except that the day and night flying kept everyone on their toes and it was not unusual to hear crews praying for operations again.

2/10/44

Weather: Fine to fair. Excellent visibility with brisk south-westerly wind.

All day long the sky around the aerodrome was filled with cork-screwing Halifaxes, fighters, and various forms of formation flying. Yes indeed, training ruled the day. Five aircraft carried out a practice bombing, fighter affiliation and air to air firing exercise. In the afternoon nine aircraft participated in Formation Flying. At night, six more aircraft reaped revenge on the sheep around SNAPE bombing range. No casualties were reported though. Fearfully, the rest of the boys awaited their turn and in the meantime prayed sincerely for an operation.

3/10/44

Weather: Occasional showers with moderate north-westerly wind. Excellent visibility.

It is known for a fact that there is such a thing as being "flak-happy" but we are beginning to wonder if there is another called "training-happy", as again today the Squadron was out in full force on practice exercises.

During the day, fighter affiliation, practice bombing, air to air and cross-countries were carried out, at night, while other Squadrons were confined to German and Dutch targets, nine of our aircraft blasted BRISTOL with the new top secret weapon. All returned safely but very aggravated with the numerous searchlights experienced.

In the evening, our Hangar was turned into a Roller Skating rink by the Y.M.C.A. and personnel with enough courage enjoyed a chilly time whirling around the cement floor to the music supplied by a wurlitzer.

4/10/44

Weather: Occasional showers, becoming fair. Good visibility with fresh northerly wind.

The day started out with six aircraft on stand-by for possible gardening operations. This operation did not prevent the scheduled flying training programme from taking place though, and during the morning and afternoon nine aircraft carried out cross-country exercises.

At approximately 1830 hrs., six aircraft took off on a mining operation, our first operational flying for the month.

Besides the mining "do" tonight, three of the newer crews were employed on night cross-countries, piling up an impressive flying training figure for the day.

5/10/44

Weather: Fine during day, foggy at night. Visibility good becoming poor.

Crews from last night's mining operation returned around two o'clock in the morning. They reported weather over target was excellent with very good visibility and no cloud. Winds were light and variable. Visual identification of mining area was made in all cases. Light to intense heavy flak, both predicted and in barrage form was encountered over the target area bursting from 11000 to 12,500 ft. Also some light flak was experienced. Batteries of four to six heavy flak guns were observed at 5843N 0730E. No opposition from flak was encountered on route. No enemy fighters were seen. No combats. All crews attempted photos. One of our aircraft "E" MZ.756 piloted by J.8773 S/L W.R. Moseley-Williams failed to return from this operation, the other five aircraft dropped their mines and returned to base.

Early in the morning aircraft were warming up to carry out a sea-search to look for "E" and although twenty-two aircraft were used, no trace was found of the crew. Very little activity during the day.

6/10/44

Weather: Foggy becoming fair with poor visibility becoming good. Wind light and variable.

Five aircraft employed on local flying including circuits and bumps and test flights.

Training programme was scrubbed for operations - a maximum effort. Everyone hurried to complete their inspections on time and before five o'clock twenty-two aircraft were on their way to DORTMUND. One aircraft returned early due to the Starboard-outer engine being unserviceable. No weather difficulties were encountered on the way to the target. Over the target area it was clear with unlimited visibility and no clouds. Some early crews report a slight ground

haze which partially obscured the red T.I.'s at the commencement of the attack. P.F.F. was one to three minutes late. Some fair sized explosions were seen with oily and greyish black smoke commencing to rise. Large explosions with yellowish-red flames were also observed. Heavy and light flak encountered. A few searchlights were active over the target area but proved to be quite ineffective. Fighters were numerous. Tactics appeared effective but most crews found briefed speeds excessive. All crews attempted photographs. All aircraft returned safely. The one early return MZ291 landed at Base, remaining 21 aircraft were diverted to Bury St. Edmonds.

7/10/44

Weather: Cloudy with drizzle at midday and at night. Visibility moderate to poor. Wind moderate north-easterly.

Nothing doing today as aircraft returned from diversion. No flying training programme carried out.

Everyone concerned was full of talk about their diversion to the Yankee Aerodrome. The motto there seemed to be "a jeep for every crew". Captains had a hard time dragging their crew members away from the Mess Hall as the coffee was superb and the meals unbelievable.

Our aircraft "N" NAN piloted by F/Lt G. SLOCOMBE gave our allies a wonderful demonstration on the abilities of a Halifax in a power-dive and shoot-up.

8/10/44

Weather: Cloudy with drizzle becoming fair in evening. Visibility poor in drizzle, becoming good.

Today was really a "duff" one so sections buckled down to a spot of ground training. Two conferences were held but nothing materialized, not even a possible flying training programme.

The Padres on the station reported a highly successful day as most personnel turned out to church services - something very unusual.

9/10/44

Weather: Cloud with visibility moderate to good.

The weather lifted over night so an early morning training programme was carried out which consisted of cross-countries and practice bombing.

The afternoon training schedule was cancelled for operations and by 1730 hrs., fifteen aircraft were on route to BOCHUM. All returned between 2300 and 2400 hours., and reported visibility

over target fair to good. Most aircraft identified by skymarkers but a majority were able to bomb on the Red T.I.'s. These are reported to have been fairly well concentrated but their relation to the Aiming Point is not clear. Skymarking was good, although at time the flares were meagre and scattered. A few searchlights exposed ineffectively. Numerous fighter flares were seen and both twin-engined and single-engine enemy aircraft were sighted over target and on route home. All crews attempted photographs.

10/10/44

Weather: Cloudy with drizzle. Visibility moderate but fog late in day.

No flying today so amid the groans of the "operational types" the Section leaders passed the time pointing more "gen" into crews. Afternoon was very inactive except for a vigorous post mortem on the trip yesterday.

Bags of disguises coming to light as the representative starting canvassing for the Seventh Canadian Victory Loan.

11/10/44

Weather: Cloudy with fog followed by rain and drizzle. Visibility poor becoming moderate.

Grounded again today by fog, rain and what-have-you. A golden opportunity for the high-pressured bonds salesmen.

Fourteen crews on stand-by - everyone wondering what they are standing by for.

Nothing else to report for today except that a warning was given out that there may be an early morning effort.

12/10/44

Weather: Cloudy with general rain and showers. Visibility good.

#### OPERATIONS AT LAST!!!

Fourteen crews were dragged out of bed for an early morning visit to the oil plants at WANNE EICKEL. Take-off was around 0730 hrs. Crews experienced light scattered cloud over target which was obscured by smoke very early in attack and the majority bombed in relation to Pickwick on instructions of the Master Bomber. Others were able to identify T.I.'s and bombed them also on Master Bomber's instructions. Bombing was fairly well concentrated although some scattered sticks were noted. Flak over target was moderate to intense. Only a few enemy fighters were sighted.

Another operation looked evident around late afternoon but the weather man or somebody took pity on us.

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13/10/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy at first continuous rain later.  
Visibility moderate.

Friday the thirteenth today!! It is surprising to note how many people are acutally influenced by superstitions. Only one person, F/L DU VERNET a navigator, seemed anxious to operate today and he explained this by the fact that he was born on Friday 13th.

No operations, developed, however, as the weather fronts chased each other around the country.

The sale of Victory Bonds still continued.

Twenty crews on standby for early morning operations.

14/10/44

Weather: Cloudy with rain, becoming fair to cloudy with showers. Visibility good.

Yesterday's stand by list came to life in the small hours of this morning when twenty crews were called and fed for briefing at 3:15 A.M. The crews took off between 0545 and 0630 hrs., the target being DUISBURG. The kites returning around noon reported that on arrival at target, DUISBURG was covered with 10/10ths cloud. The Master Bomber was clearly heard by all crews and first directed them to bomb markers followed almost immediately by instructions to bomb any built up area. Intense heavy flak mainly on the northern aiming points was seen and at DUISBURG proper moderate heavy flak was reported. There was no enemy fighter activity and any losses are attributed to heavy flak. All crews attempted photographs.

Fresh as daisies after five hours' sleep the crews were called out again for operations. Briefing at 1830 hours and take-off was around 2230 hrs. to give DUISBURG another going over, eighteen aircraft participating.

15/10/44

Weather: Cloudy at first becoming fine late in day. Some slight rain at first. Visibility moderate becoming poor late in day.

Crews returned from the attack on DUISBURG around 10400 hrs. this morning and reported that the weather over the target was good with thin patchy cloud or haze ranging from five to ten thousand feet. Visibility was good. Fires were seen for as far as 120 miles away on the homeward route. Flak defences were slight to moderate. Searchlights were active but ineffective. Several single engine enemy fighters were seen but no action resulted. All crews attempted photographs.

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Everyone got into bed as soon as possible and slept till noon when the call came through again for aircraft to bomb Germany. Ten were detailed and briefing was held at 1430 hours. Take-off was at 1700 hrs. and the target - WILHEIMSHAVEN. All the aircraft returned to this country landing at HORSHAM ST. FAITH, an American aerodrome. Cloud was 10/10ths over the target although it was thin enough to permit identification of the T.I.'s which were scattered over the town. The scattered T.Is. caused some scattered bombing but it is thought that concentration improved late in the attack. Cloud conditions brought most of the crews down from their briefed bombing heights some breaking cloud at 13,000 to 15,000 ft. but at such speed as to preclude accuracy in bombing. Defences were slight to moderate inaccurate flak with no searchlights. Results generally were not clearly observed. All crews attempted photographs.

16/10/44

Weather: Fine at first becoming fair. Rain during morning and afternoon. Visibility poor. Wind south-easterly veering northerly.

The weather man let loose with all he had today with the result that the station looked like a morgue and the diverted aircraft had to stay put. After the way operations have been flowing in the last few days a rest like this is more than welcome.

We trust our boys are holding their own at HORSHAM ST. FAITH in so far as tall tales are concerned as they more than likely will be listening to quite a few from our friends the YANKS.

A wonderful day to dust off the writing pad and get caught up on one's correspondence.

17/10/44

Weather: Cloudy with slight rain at noon. Fair to fine later. Visibility good becoming moderate. Wind south-westerly at ten to fifteen m.p.h.

The morning was spent in awaiting diverted aircraft to return to base, eight returned. In the afternoon a lecture was held by the Station Air Sea Rescue Officer for some crews.

The Group Bombing Leader paid the Bombing Section a visit today.

"J" JOHNNY piloted by our Commanding Officer, W/C V.F. GANDERTON DFC was unable to return from diversion due to engine failure.

Rumours are rampant that some crews are going to lose their points for WANNE EICKEL on 12.10/44 due to not having accurate photographs. This suggestion is met with great disapproval as the target was heavily defended by heavy flak.

Squadron was stood down all day. Six aircraft laid on for training at 0930 hrs. tomorrow.

18/10/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy. Visibility good. Wind north-westerly at fifteen to twenty m.p.h. at first, becoming south-easterly light.

Training in the morning as detailed last night. More training for afternoon although the Squadron has been called upon for operations. Eighteen aircraft detailed but effort was later scrubbed due to weather conditions.

W/C V.F. GANDERTON, DFC, our Commanding Officer, returned from WOODBRIDGE in the Oxford flown by F/O W.J. BROWN & F/O E.C. MAYO.

Standby list issued for early morning operations, maybe!

19/10/44

Weather: Manily cloudy. Visibility good. Wind north-westerly at 15 to 20 m.p.h. at first becoming south-easterly light.

At 0230 hrs this morning, sleepy-headed aircrew could be seen groping their way out into the bush for and operational breakfast. After getting their beans and egg well tucked in, crews wended their way back to bed.

An idle day ensured and the only activity noticeable was the Roller Skating held in the Hangar in the evening.

20/10/44

Weather: Cloudy with continuous rain during morning. Visibility good at first becoming moderate. Wind south-easterly at five to twenty m.p.h.

It rained hard enough all day to forestall even briefing for an operation. Intelligence used the afternoon to put the aircrew up to date on how to do a war-time tour of the Reich. Lectures of this type are always welcome.

Even flying training was forgotten today due to the weather.

21/10/44

Weather: Cloudy with fog at first becoming cloudy with occasional drizzle. Visibility poor at first becoming moderate. Wind northerly at five to ten m.p.h.

The day started out with a big panic as two operations were laid on. One a bombing effort and other mining. Briefing was held at 1445 hrs and no sooner was it over than the big "scrub" came through cancelling both trips.

Oranges were distributed to the Sections again today.

A big dance was held at the station tonight and tje A.T.S. and W.Ds. were "imported" for the affair. A good time was had by all and the disappointment of the scrub this afternoon was soon forgotten in the merry activities of the evening.

22/10/44

Weather: Cloudy with moderate to poor visibility. Wind light northerly backing to light south-easterly.

Having had no operations for exactly a week, even a mining do was welcomed today. As usual the bombing efforts were scrubbed and the armourers got out their liniment before debombing and re-mining. Everyone agrees that the armourers should be given some special mention for the wonderful job of work they have been doing.

Take-off was around 1600 hours and the "miners" successfully completed their mission and diverted to LOSSIEMOUTH, where they landed around 2200 hours. Weather over the target ranged from seven to ten-tenths strata cumulus cloud with tops from 4 to 10,000 ft. Visibility was fair. Flak activity was very slight with a few bursts noted from ANHOLT ISLAND and the vicinity of AALBORG. Searchlight activity around AALBORG was negligible. No enemy fighters were seen. No combats. Crews equipped with cameras attempted photographs. All 10 aircraft diverted to LOSSIEMOUTH.

23/10/44

Weather: Rain at first becoming fine with poor visibility at first becoming excellent. Wind moderate easterly.

Aircraft returning from diversion were greeted with the news that briefing for a night op was due to start, however, many of them had time for a quick meal. As usual the armourers were holding the bag and deserve great credit for getting the aircraft from diversion bombed up in time for take off which was around 1630 hrs. Nineteen aircraft took off to bomb ESSEN. All crews report 10/10th layered cloud at target with tops of lower layer from 6 to 10,000 ft. Most crews bombed green sky markers. No assessment of results is possible. Bombing headings varied very slightly and several crews reported good concentration of aircraft at bombing times. Flak was slight to moderate and ineffective to bombing heights. Searchlights could not pierce cloud. All crews attempted photographs.

24/10/44

Weather: Intermittent rain. Cloudy with moderate visibility. Wind moderate northerly.

This morning was a very dull one and the last thing one would expect was operations but sure enough seventeen aircraft were detailed with briefing at 1400 hrs. The operation was scrubbed though due to fog.

Nothing else to report as personnel had a well earned rest in the afternoon. Good business was reported at the "locals" in the evening.

25/10/44

Weather: Fair with fog at dawn and dusk. Visibility moderate during day with light variable wind.

Operations laid on and after various changes in time and route we managed to get off after dinner - which consisted of sandwiches and coffee. The target was the synthetic oil plants at HOMBERG in the RHUR. Take off being around 1300 hrs, and nineteen aircraft took part. All the aircraft bombed and returned safely. Weather over target was 10/10ths cloud with tops ranging from 5 to 8000 ft. Visibility was clear above. Aircraft appeared fairly well concentrated over the area but due to cloud conditions bombing would seem to have been scattered. Slight to moderate heavy flak bursting from 15 to 19000 ft. was encountered in the target area. P.F.F. marking was meagre in the earlier stages of the attack and appeared late in starting. As the attack progressed the sky marking became more plentiful but crews report great difficulty in seeing green flashes by day against a background of cloud. No enemy fighters were encountered. All crews attempted photographs.

26/10/44

Weather: Fair with rain after dusk. Visibility poor becoming moderate. Wind south-easterly moderate.

In the morning a detail of gunners was sent to SUTTON BANK for practice firing.

Today marked the last day of the Victory Loan Drive and Sections put forth a splendid last minute effort that put the sales away beyond our target.

A false alarm for operations caused a small short-lived panic but at least provided some way to keep the boys on their toes.

An extra good ENSA show was put on at the NAAFI tonight. Dancing and Roller Skating also helped to soothe frayed operational nerves.

27/10/44

Weather: Fine with excellent visibility. Wind moderate south-westerly.

Training flights carried out this morning. Operations were laid on for nineteen aircraft but the effort was later scrubbed. The weather was exceptionally good and it is believed that it is just as well we didn't go as it looked like a long stooge and there is a lovely moon out these nights.

Several of the pilots were called out to drop Wanganui flares over the channel tonight, thus breaking the monotony of no operations.

28/10/44

Weather: Showery with poor visibility at dawn improving to good. Wind moderate southerly.

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Things started to happen fast this morning as the Squadron was called upon for operations. We supplied fifteen aircraft and these took off after 1230 hours till 1330 hrs., the target being COLOGNE. One aircraft "J" Johnny piloted by J.26757 F/O G.M. TEGERDINE returned early due to starboard inner engine being u/s and inability to maintain height. The remaining fourteen attacked the primary and returned safely. Weather over target was from nil to 3/10ths cloud and excellent visibility. Moderate to intense flak being predicted accurate and in barrage form. The target was visually identified and some crews bombed on the T.Is. and others on the smoke and bomb bursts as instructed by the Master Bomber. Numerous fires seen well under way. Large explosions seen. No enemy fighters were sighted.

29/10/44

Weather: Fine with good visibility. Wind northerly and light. Fair to cloudy.

Everyone is talking about our aircraft "K" that caught fire last night. When the armourers were carrying out their inspection some incendiaries that were hung up fell to the ground and ignited. The kite was enveloped in flames and to add to the incident the petrol bowser was alongside filling No. 2 tank on the Port Side. Only through great presence of mind shown by CPL CHAPMAN, a rigger and CPL HALL, the bowser driver, was the bowser saved. Both these N.C.Os. acted immediately with complete disregard to their own safety.

A fairly large flying training programme was carried out during the day and consisting of aim. bombing, fighter affiliation and air firing.

30/10/44

Weather: Mainly fair with fog at dawn. Visibility mainly moderate. Wind light to moderate northerly.

Today started early with breakfast at 0530 hrs. and main briefing at 0700 hrs. The effort was postponed though owing to poor visibility on the deck and main briefing was held again at 1530 hrs. Eighteen aircraft took off to bomb COLOGNE. The target was obscured by 10/10ths cloud with tops at 10/12,000 ft. and visibility above the cloud was good. Most crews checked position by gee on the run-up and estimated that the Wanganui flares were well positioned. A good concentration of red green and white skymarkers were in position for the duration of the wave. A steady glow developed which could be seen through the cloud by later crews. No assessment of results is possible. All crews attempted photographs. Aircraft "T" NP94Y was a non-starter on this operation.

31/10/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy with occasional showers. Visibility moderate to good. Wind light northerly.

Very little activity this morning as aircraft came in from yesterday's diversion. No word of operations as yet.

At noon a few aircraft took off on practice exercises which made up our total flying effort for today.

There were rumours tonight of an early morning do but everyone is hoping that it is not too early.

1/11/44

Weather! Cloudy with good visibility. Wind northerly at ten to fifteen m.p.h.

Operations today - word came through in the morning and sixteen aircraft were detailed. Briefing was held at 1500 hours and around 1600 hours sixteen aircraft took off to bomb OBERHAUSEN. Thin stratus cloud over target varied from 3/10ths to 10/10ths with tops from five to ten thousand ft. with good to excellent visibility. Red and yellow Wanganui flares were estimated visually and by H.2.S. to be accurately placed whilst green markers appeared about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile to starboard. All crews bombed skymarkers except one which bombed visually on fires. A fair concentration of incendiaries and many fires in the target area were reported by crews. Orange explosions were seen. Slight to intense heavy flak over the target area. Searchlights were ineffective due to cloud. Fighter reaction occurred mainly in an area between 0500 and 0600 Degrees East on the homeward route. Photographs attempted.

2/11/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy with moderate visibility. Wind light northerly.

Operations again scheduled today for sixteen aircraft. Briefing at 1330 hours. Target - DESSELDORF. Fifteen aircraft attacked the objective, one returned early due to engine trouble. All others landed at base except "V" piloted by F/O WAGAR which landed at Swinderby.

Returning crews reported weather over the target was nil to 5/10ths cloud with tops at 3000 to 8000 ft. Visibility was fair to excellent, sky and ground marking appeared to be well concentrated and as attack progressed moved from south to east and west of the target area, appearing to be directing bombing from area already burning well. Three large explosions were reported. Defences approaching and over the target area consisted of moderate to intense flak in barrage form bursting at own heights and below. Many searchlights were exposed and were slightly effective. Some coning was observed but of short duration. Enemy fighters were moderately active from the target area to 5025N 0400E on homeward route. All aircraft attempted photographs.

Oranges were distributed to the various aircrew sections today.

3/11/44

Weather: Rain at first becoming cloudy with good visibility. Wind light south-easterly at first becoming north-westerly at ten to fifteen m.p.h.

Flying training consisted of four cross-countries plus fighter affiliation, air to air firing and practice bombing. Ten aircraft participated on these exercises.

No operations were scheduled today although the weather looked O.K.

There was little else doing on the Squadron today.

4/11/44

Weather<sup>f</sup>: Fine becoming cloudy with rain during early afternoon. Visibility good. Wind south-westerly at ten to fifteen m.p.h.

Word came through this morning for operations. Briefing was at 1430 hours and sixteen aircraft took off around 1700 hours to bomb BOCHUM. All aircraft returned to base except "C" piloted by F/O ROBERTS which landed at WOODBRIDGE.

Returning crews reported cloud at target nil to 4/10ths with tops about 3000 to 4000 feet with visibility hazy to good. Little visual ground identification was possible but red and green T.Is. were clearly visible and apparently well placed. Spoof sky markers were seen by nearly all crews and are reported to have attracted some flak. Bombing generally appeared excellent and was concentrated in the well marked area. Large explosions seen in the target area. Defences were moderate with heavy flak co-operating in some instances with searchlights which were unable to hold coned aircraft, otherwise flak was in barrage form. Fighter flares were seen but only two or three sightings were reported. All crews attempted photographs.

5/11/44

Weather: Fair becoming fine with good visibility. Wind south-westerly at twenty to twenty-five m.p.h.

No operations scheduled for today, crews participating in last night's "do" sleeping in late this morning.

A little flying training with one H.2.S. Cross-country and two local flying exercises. No other flying today.

A stand-by list was put up but not used. A very good chance for a rest.

6/11/77

Weather: Fair to cloudy with rain during evening. Visibility good. Wind south-westerly at twenty to thirty m.p.h.

Briefing was at 0915 hours for operations. Take-off was around 1200 hours with sixteen aircraft to attack GELSENKIRCHEN in daylight.

Returning crews reported that the target was obscured by from 5/10ths to 10/10ths cloud with tops about 10,000 ft. with fair to good visibility. One or two crews reported seeing red and green T.Is. but as they were on the near edge of a cloud shelf could not be bombed. Master Bomber gave the code word to all crews to bomb any built up area. Three or four crews bombed the primary on Gee

but the majority bombed targets of opportunity in the vicinity of GELSENKIRCHEN where cloud was nil to 5/10ths. Aircraft concentration into target was considered very good but was of course spoiled when bombing became scattered. Fighter opposition was nil and flak was generally slight to moderate, inaccurate and scattered. No assessment of results is possible. All crews attempted photographs. "A" - piloted by F/O J. HARDY returned early on three engines. "O" - piloted by P/O THOMSON landed at LINTON.

Flying training for today consisted of one aircraft carrying out H.2.S. cross-country.

7/11/44

Weather: Fair. Occasional showers. Visibility good. Wind westerly at twenty to thirty m.p.h.

No operations scheduled for today so five aircraft carried out a map-reading exercise successfully.

Standby list was issued but scrubbed later in the day due to weather conditions.

8/11/44

Weather: Cloudy with good visibility. Wind westerly at five to ten m.p.h.

Six aircraft were detailed for mining but the effort was scrubbed around four o'clock after briefing was held. No flying training today.

The "Black Out" show put on by the R.C.A.F. has made a hit on the Station. It is great to have a little first class entertainment for a change.

Word came through about six o'clock for nineteen aircraft for an early morning operation but was scrubbed around nine o'clock.

9/11/44

Weather: Fine with good visibility. Wind north-westerly at ten to fifteen m.p.h.

A flying training programme scheduled today so six aircraft carried out a sim. bombing exercise, while six others took part in a night Cross-country and Fighter Affiliation combined.

Operations were scheduled but scrubbed later on.

Squadron Leader N.S. STRANGE, DSO, our "B" Flight Commander was screened today. S/L STRANGE won the confidence of all Squadron members by his fine qualities of leadership and his great personal interest in the welfare and work of his crews. We are indeed sorry to see him go and know that the Squadron has lost a very valuable member in "MAXIE".

10/11/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy with good visibility. Wind north-westerly at ten to fifteen m.p.h.

Activity began on camp this morning at 0700 hours when the "Tannoy" blared forth with the Pay Parade announcement. At 0930 hours a lecture was held at the Station Cinema for the aircrew of both Squadrons on "Security".

Only one aircraft became airborne during the morning, this carrying out local flying.

In the afternoon, four practiced bombing at the local range.

A battle order was issued during the afternoon indicating an early morning detail.

A poppy sale was held on the Station today.

11/11/44

Weather: Cloudy with slight rain early. Visibility moderate to good. Wind light and variable.

Operations today!! Six aircraft employed on mine laying duties with take-off around 1500 hours. All returned safely to base.

Returning crews reported good weather with broken cloud and some sea haze. Visibility was fair. All crews claim to have laid their mines in the allotted areas. Very slight heavy flak barrage was reported over target area. Light flak was negligible on route. No searchlights. The city itself was reported as brilliantly lighted. No enemy fighters were seen. All crews attempted photographs.

12/11/44

Weather: Cloudy with rain during afternoon and evening. Visibility moderate with light variable wind.

No operations today so flying training programme consisting of ten aircraft took place instead. Exercises consisted of fighter affiliation, air to air firing, practice bombing and local flying. No night flying although a detail was scheduled. At least the rain has some good points. A really miserable day.

13/11/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy with moderate rain during evening. Visibility moderate with light wind, becoming north-westerly at 12 to 18 m.p.h.

No operations again today and more training with nine aircraft participating. A morning schedule was scrubbed due to weather conditions.

Two crews went to RIPON on wet dinghy drill exercises.

The Group Bombing Leader paid a visit to the Squadron in the afternoon.

14/11/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy with intermittent rain and showers. Visibility moderate with northerly north-west to easterly north-east wind at ten to fifteen m.p.h. falling to five to ten m.p.h.

No operations. Two aircraft on map-reading exercise consisted of the day's flying.

Navigators and Bomb Aimers were lectured on mine laying by Flight Lieutenant A.J.F. CLARK, DFC our Squadron Bombing Leader. Apparently we will be doing a little more mining in the future.

The most appropriate way to describe today is "RAIN, RAIN, RAIN."

15/11/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy with showers of sleet and rain. Visibility moderate with a northerly north-west wind at five to ten m.p.h.

Although the Squadron was not called upon for operations we were far from being inactive. Instead all sections worked earnestly to chalk up nineteen flying training sorties for the day consisting mostly of map reading.

16/11/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy with local showers to 1800, then fine to fair. Visibility moderate with wind mainly northerly at five to ten m.p.h., falling light.

Everyone thankful today as word came through for operations. Fourteen aircraft took off to bomb JULICH. All returned safely, with "D" piloted by F/O Bell landing away at WOODBRIDGE. Cloud in the target area ranged from 3 to 7/10ths with tops from 5 to 8000 ft. but the immediate Aiming Point was clear. Visibility was reported from poor to good with some haze. All crews who attacked the primary bombed either on visual identification or by the aid of T.Is. There was much smoke over the Aiming Point with one column rising to 10,000 ft. Markers appeared to be accurately placed but were quickly obscured by smoke. The majority of crews report that the Master Bomber was not heard clearly and it would appear that the enemy was attempting to jam our transmission. Slight to moderate heavy flak in barrage form was encountered over the target. Crews who orbited reported slight predicted heavy flak on second run over the Aiming Point. Slight predicted heavy flak was also present at 5057N. 1625E. One aircraft was damaged by heavy flak. No enemy fighters seen. All crews attempted photographs.

17/11/44

Weather: Cloudy to overcast with rain and drizzle during morning and fog during the evening. Visibility moderate to poor. Wind south south-easterly at five to ten m.p.h.

An operation list was put out early this morning for sixteen crews. Early call was at 0440 hours. Briefing was at 0615 hours. At 0700 hours the operation was scrubbed. Everyone returned to their beds till noon.

The weather really closed in for the rest of the day and even the local birds failed to become airborne.

.../177

18/11/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy with rain and drizzle from 1800 and fog forming at 2130 hrs. Visibility moderate to good during day, becoming poor at dusk. Wind mainly south-westerly at ten to eighteen m.p.h. becoming five to ten m.p.h.

Operations today. Fourteen aircraft took off around 1200 hours to attack MUNSTER. All returned safely. Returning crews reported 10/10ths cloud with tops around 10,000 ft., although it had been clear to within 10 miles of the target. Visibility above the cloud was good. Master Bomber gave a time check at H.15 and then Code work, following which he instructed that skymarkers be bombed. Most crews heard him clearly, others reported jamming. Marking generally appeared to be split with green skymarkers to starboard and reds to port a half mile apart. Bombing followed the marking and two concentrations of aircraft ensured. Green skymarkers are reported to have dropped before reds. It was impossible to assess results but it is considered that they would not be better than moderate. Defences were nil and no enemy aircraft were seen. All crews attempted photographs.

19/11/44

Weather: Cloudy to overcast with rain and drizzle during the morning and late evening.

Visibility poor in the early morning becoming moderate with wind mainly south-south-easterly at five to ten m.p.h.

Operations scheduled today but scrubbed at 1445 hours. It looked like a long effort as the overload tanks were being used. Weather lousy again so the day dragged on. Nothing else to report.

20/11/44

Weather: Overcast with continuous rain till early afternoon, becoming cloud. Visibility moderate. Wind mainly northerly at ten to twenty-five m.p.h.

Operations today for nineteen aircraft. Everyone keyed up after a lecture given by the Commanding Officer regarding hang-ups and the consequences of bringing them back. Believe it or not the crews were actually glad the operations was scrubbed.

At night, a boxing tournament was held in No. 2 hangar. Seven bouts were held resulting in two knock-outs.

21/11/44

Weather: Fine becoming cloudy. Vis. good becoming moderate. Wind variable at five to fifteen m.p.h.

Briefing was at 1300 hours for an operation. Nineteen aircraft took off to bomb CASTROP RAUXEL. Two aircraft returned early, "L" and

"P". Both were due to engine trouble. Cloud over target ranged from nil to 4/10ths with tops at two to seven thousand feet. Visibility good. The majority of crews report P.F.F. marking was well concentrated and plentiful. One group of green markers were reported as being short of and to the right of the T.Is. Numerous large explosions were reported as occurring from 1901.5 to 1906 hours. Some fires were seen developing as the attack progressed. Slight to moderate heavy flak in barrage form bursting from 15 to 19000 ft. was encountered in the target area.

Some slight to moderate light flak. Searchlights over the target were active but ineffective. Some enemy fighters were active in the target area and two combats were reported.

No claims. All crews attempted photographs.

22/11/44

Weather: Cloudy to overcast with continuous rain or sleet in the early morning, becoming mainly cloudy. Visibility poor to moderate. Wind variable, ten to twenty m.p.h.

Another quiet day after operations. A group W/T exercise carried out in the afternoon. Nothing else to report.

23/11/44

Weather: Cloudy to overcast with continuous rain or sleet in the early morning, becoming mainly cloudy. Visibility poor to moderate. Wind variable five to fifteen m.p.h.

The Squadron was tied up most of the day waiting on briefing times for fardening operations. Nothing unusual occurred. Everything scrubbed at 16000 hours.

Roller skating tonight in No. 2 Hangar also an E.N.S.A. show at the N.A.A.F.I.

24/11/44

Weather: Cloudy with continuous rain and drizzle. Visibility moderate to poor. Wind mainly northerly at five to fifteen m.p.h. falling light in the evening.

One aircraft employed on local Map-reading Exercise consisted of the Squadron's total flying done today. Other training was scrubbed due to bad weather.

An operation was scheduled, but scrubbed later. Five aircraft were detailed to stand by for early morning mining operation.

25/11/44

Weather: Cloudy with periods of rain and sleet during morning becoming fine. Visibility moderate. Wind mainly northerly at five to ten m.p.h.

The five aircraft detailed for mine laying last night took off early this morning, to mine waters in the YENTREE area. One aircraft "H" piloted by J.13731 F/L J.T. HARDY crashed into the sea upon return, the other aircraft were diverted to northern SCOTLAND. Two aircraft successfully dropped their mines, and two brought them back. Weather was 10/10ths cloud with bases at 800/1000 ft. with good visibility below cloud. Crews report that their approach was evidently undetected as when the first aircraft arrived, the town and harbour were lit up and the airfield obligingly turned on its lights for them to land. Ten minutes later light flak opened up on island. Considerable shipping lights were seen in harbour and vicinity. No fighters seen. All crews attempted photographs.

In the afternoon a training programme was carried out with eleven aircraft participating in H.2.S. Cross-countries, Fighter Affiliation, Map Reading and local flying.

26/11/44

Weather: Fine becoming cloudy with continuous rain and sleet after midday. Visibility good deteriorating after midday and becoming poor. Wind light, variable.

Nine aircraft took off this morning on a practice mining exercise and were recalled an hour later due to bad weather, some landing away due to bad visibility.

Snow and sleet made the afternoon impossible for further flying, and other exercises arranged were scrubbed.

27/11/44

Weather: 7 to 10/10ths thin cloud with tops ranging from three to eight thousand feet.

Fair becoming cloudy. Visibility moderate to poor. Wind light variable, becoming south-easterly at ten to fifteen m.p.h.

In the morning three aircraft did practice bombing and H.2.S cross-country combined.

Operations scheduled for today with fourteen aircraft detailed. Briefing at 1430 hours. Target NEUSS. The majority of crews bombed late due to unexpected adverse winds. Most crews bombed on ground markers seen through breaks in the cloud while others bombed on sky markers or the glow of fires in the area. Marking appeared quite accurate and well concentrated. Fires were seen burning by some crews. Others reported a heavy glow on the clouds. A very large explosion is reported at approximately 2030 hours and two crews report seeing another huge reddish orange explosion at about 2045 hours after leaving the target. Over the target heavy flak was slight to moderate in barrage form bursting 16/20,000 ft. with some predicted flak. A few searchlights were exposed at DUSSELDORD but were ineffective. Known decoys were in operation. No enemy fighters were seen. Two aircraft were damaged by flak over the target.

.../180

28/11/44

Weather: Rain at first becoming fair to fine. Visibility poor becoming good. Wind south westerly at ten to fifteen m.p.h.

Aircraft returned from diversion on yesterday's operation. No other flying for today. A security film was shown in the Station Cinema.

Nothing else to report.

29/11/44

Weather: Fair becoming cloudy with occasional showers. Visibility good. Wind southwesterly at ten to fifteen m.p.h.

Nine aircraft on practice flying consisting of bombing and local flying.

Crews were standing by for an early morning call.

30/11/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy with occasional showers early. Visibility good. Wind westerly at ten to fifteen m.p.h.

Fourteen crews were on hand for a briefing at 0700 hours. The operation, however, was scrubbed by 0730 hours. Most of the personnel went back to bed.

Later in the day at 1400 hours, the same crews were back at briefing. Target DUISBURG. All crews found 10/10ths cloud, tops about 6/8,000 ft. with visibility above cloud very good. Results of bombing which was done by wanganui sky markers red with yellow stars could not be seen although it was considered that bombing was reasonably well concentrated. Flak was mainly bursting below and at flares. Searchlights few and ineffective. Aircraft "R" returned early due to Port Outer Engine being unserviceable. All aircraft attempted photos.

#### HONOURS AND AWARDS

P/O W.K. HAMMOND CAN.J.88664 Awarded the D.F.C. Non Immediate

P/O P.E. REGIMBAL CAN.J.87673 Awarded the D.F.C. Non Immediate.

1/12/44

Weather: No operations scheduled for today due to adverse weather conditions. Three crews went to Ripon for Dinghy Drill during the afternoon. An Officers Mess meeting was held. Its evident that a shortage of cash prevails. There were some suggestions of mortgaging the farm. Two aircraft were detailed for Sim. Bombing. One a/c landed after 45 minutes due to bad weather.

2/12/44

Weather: Operations were laid down this morning for 10 aircraft. Briefing at 13:30 hours and take off around 17:15 hours. The aircraft were not back at Base by midnight. Several aircraft carried out Air to Air practice and Sim. Bombing exercises.

3/12/44

Weather:

All crews returned around 00:30 hours this morning from bombing HAGEN. Crews reported 10/10ths cumulus cloud prevailed over the target area with tops ranging from 14,000 to 18,500 feet. All crews bombed by Navigational aids. An assessment of the results was impossible due to cloud conditions but some crews consider that the attack was fairly successful in view of the heavy concentration of bombing and the numerous flashes seen reflected on the cloud. Flak was negligible at target. Other Ruhr defences were in action at Dusseldorf, Cologne, and Duisburg. Charlebroi defences were active for unknown reasons. Enemy aircraft were sighted but no combats or claims resulted. No aircraft were damaged by flak. All A/C attempted photographs but cloud conditions will no doubt obscure ground details.

In the afternoon an operation order was put out detailing twelve aircraft for an early morning operation.

4/12/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy with frequent showers. Visibility good. Wind westerly at 10 to 20 m.p.h.

Crews were not called this morning as expected. Word came through for another briefing at 14:00 hours. All aircraft (12) took off and proceeded to the target KARISRUHE. Visibility was good. All crews bombed visually and on T.Is. The concentration of aircraft was good and incendiaries were all over the dock area to the centre of the city. This is a very good prang as fires were seen from 100 miles from the target area. At least twenty aircraft were burning Navigation lights over France on way to target. All aircraft returned safely to base. One aircraft dropped photo flash in Channel due to accidental release.

Several Air Bombers and Navigators are putting in some time at photography in the Radar Section. A very good constructive part of their training.

5/12/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy with wintry showers during morning. Visibility good. Wind westerly from 10 to 15 m.p.h.

Operations were scheduled for today. Fourteen aircraft were detailed to take off around 17:45 hours. "P" was a non-starter due to engine trouble on take-off. Y-York was an early return due to oxygen failure. TARGET - SOEST. 4/10 to 10/10ths cloud over target but visibility was good. There was a good concentration of bombing and about six good sized explosions were seen in target area. Flak was slight to moderate with also some heavy predicted flak. No searchlights in target area. The attack is considered good. Also a training programme was issued. Three aircraft were detailed for H2S Cross-Country for new crews. They took-off around 17:30 hours.

.../182

6/12/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy with occasional showers. Periods of continuous rain at mid-day. Visibility good except in rain. Wind south westerly from 5 to 15 m.p.h. Operations again scheduled for tonight with twelve aircraft detailed to take off around 16:00 hours. Target - OSNABRUCK. All aircraft took off and proceeded to the target. Cloud obscured the target and it was difficult to assess. Some aircraft reported three distinct areas of fire in target area. Slight to moderate flak was experienced. Fighter are reported over target area and homeward trip. This was a good attack although the weather was poor.

In the afternoon there was some Radar training for crews not detailed for operations.

7/12/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy with wintry showers. Visibility good, deteriorating towards mid-day and becoming poor. Wind mainly south 5-10 m.p.h.

Nothing much doing today but operation order issued for tomorrow detailing fourteen aircraft and a spare crew. The Canadians of all Sections had a lecture on Rehabilitation given by the Education Officer F/L Spears.

8/12/44

Weather: Cloudy with wintry showers during morning, becoming fair. Wind N.W. 5-10 m.p.h. backing during evening to w.n.w. 12-18 m.p.h.

Operations scrubbed early this morning. Very quiet day. Stand down all day. Two aircraft carried out H2S Cross country, night training flights.

9/12/44

Weather: Fair to fine. Visibility good. Wind WNW 10-20 m.p.h.

Training programme was issued this morning detailing ten crews for Gaggle. Briefing scheduled for 11:30 hours. Late in the evening an operation order was issued but it was cancelled shortly after. Several crews were on H2S Cross-Country training.

10/12/44

Weather: Fair to cloudy with continuous snow during afternoon and early evening. Visibility good becoming poor during late morning and for rest of day. Wind easterly 10-15 m.p.h. backing SE'ly 5 m.p.h. and becoming light variable.

The day started out quietly but Battle Order was issued at noon. The operation was cancelled however. Some training took place during the morning and early afternoon. All flying was scrubbed for the day when it started snowing. All aircrew attended a lecture by Intelligence at 15:00 hours, where much good "gen" was expounded by S/L Staggs S.I.O.

11/12/44

Weather: Mainly cloudy with slight rain late in evening.  
Visibility poor. Wind light and variable.

Operations came through during the morning for fourteen kites. All crews were briefed at 13:20 hours. No time could be wasted as take-off was due to start at 15:00 hours. Once again, however, the inevitable scrub came through five minutes before take-off. It was not entirely unexpected. Everybody was just waiting for the scrub as the weather was very poor, being overcast all day.

12/12/44

Weather: Cloudy with slight rain in early morning. Visibility poor becoming moderate. Wind light becoming NW'ly 5-10 m.p.h.

A training order was issued this morning for another "Gaggle" exercise. Thirteen aircraft detailed. Briefing at 12:00 hours. Another training order was issued in the afternoon detailing 9 aircraft on H2S X-Country. This latter exercise was cancelled, however, because of oncoming operations. Twelve aircraft took part in the Cross-Country exercises.

13/12/44

Weather: Fine becoming overcast with fog after dusk. Visibility poor. Wind light and variable. Operations scheduled for today. Briefing at 07:00 hours. Seventeen crews detailed and 2 spares. Operation was again cancelled just prior to take-off. Seven aircraft took part in Cross-Country, Sim. Bombing and S.B.A. exercises. F/O Stelfox (Back) is left wondering about some of the limitations of the bomb circuit, (1 x 500 lb S.A.F.) dropped off in dispersal as they were taxiing out. Tough luck "Back". Its nice to have you with us. Better luck next time.

14/12/44

Weather: Overcast, with fog to midday. Continuous rain from 20:00 hours. Visibility poor. Wind southerly 5-20 m.p.h.

Weather right down on the deck this morning. Even the birds are walking. Seventeen crews were detailed for operations late this morning. Briefing scheduled for 14:00 hours. However the scrub came through once again. No flying today. The crews were given a lecture by W/C V.F. Ganderton, our commanding officer. Subject: SECURITY. After the lecture the C.O. suggested that the aircrew throw a party for the groundcrew. This idea was unanimously accepted.

15/12/44

Weather: Overcast with rain early. Fog during morning. Visibility poor. Wind southerly 5-20 m.p.h.

Very dull looking today but Battle Order has been issued this morning for 17 crews. Briefing 13:30 hours. Operations were scrubbed during briefing owing to bad weather. No flying today.

16/12/44

Weather: Cloudy to overcast with rain and fog. Visibility poor. Wind SE'ly 5-20 m.p.h. Training programme issued today for Sim. Bombing, Air to Sea Firing exercises. This program was not carried out due to duff weather.

17/12/44

Weather: Overcast with moderate rain at first, becoming fair with slight showers. Visibility poor. Wind SE'ly 5-30 m.p.h.

The weather is a little better today. Battle Order issued detailing twenty aircraft. Briefing was held at 23:59 hours. The weather cleared up during the evening and was perfect for take-off.

18/12/44

Weather: Fine and hazy during darkness; cloudy with rain during daylight.

The kites did not take off till 02:00 hours this morning. Target - Duisburg. One aircraft was a non starter ("C" LV 922) due to sudden sickness of a member of the crew. 10/10th cloud over the target and visibility was nil. No assessment is possible due to the cloud condition. Slight heavy flak in loose barrage from bursting from 18000 to 2000 feet was encountered over the target. Searchlights from our own line from Brussels on towards the target picked up our stream and passed us on from one to the other definitely marking our position and approach for the benefit of the Hun. Aircraft "J" NP956 was attacked by a Me 210 but returned fire and the enemy broke away and was not seen again. No claims. "W" MZ 422 was late returning and was almost presumed missing.

Operation order was received in the afternoon detailing three crews. It was cancelled later, however, although the three crews detailed flew on a night cross-country, the duration of which was three hours.

19/12/44

Weather: FOG.

The day started off with a heavy fog, but evidently it was expected to disperse as a Battle Order was issued around noon. Seventeen crews were detailed. Briefing at 12:45 hours. In the afternoon the fog has become even heavier. Operations were scrubbed.

20/12/44

Weather: FOG. Slight rain during early evening. No flying today due to intense fog. A Squadron party was put on today for all ranks. F/Lt. J. Chasanoff (C.8455) ex-adjutant 427 Sqdn. was in attendance. A good time was had by all.

- 21/12/44 Weather: Cloudy with some rain. Visibility poor at first, improving to moderate to good later. Improvement in weather today and operation order was issued this morning. Three crews detailed. Briefing 12:30 hours. Operation set back late in afternoon and briefing was held at 21:00 hours. Take-off commenced around 23:25 hours. All aircraft got away to a good start.
- 22/12/44 Weather: Cloudy, slight rain at first. Visibility moderate becoming poor late in day. All aircraft returned around 07:00 hours this morning from GARDENING-ONIONS. All crews claimed successful mining in their allotted areas. 10/10ths strata cumulus cloud prevailed over the mining area with tops ranging from 5000 to 9000 feet. Visibility was clear above cloud. No visual assessment is possible due to cloud condition.
- Late in the afternoon a Training Programme was issued. This was later scrubbed in favour of a Battle Order detailing 16 crews. But this morning 16 kites took part in Sim. Mining and bombing exercises.
- 23/12/44 Weather: Cloudy, some drizzle. Visibility moderate to poor.
- Operations cancelled early this morning and as the weather was not good there was no flying. Aircrew in Sections took advantage of this standdown for a good cleaning and tidying.
- 24/12/44 Weather: Cloudy with fog in last half of period. Visibility moderate to poor becoming poor to bad.
- Battle Order issued today detailing three aircraft for mining operation. Onions area. They took off around 17:15 hours. Over the target the visibility was good and no cloud. All claimed having released their mines by H2S as instructed. Due to adverse weather over base they were diverted and landed at Peterhead.
- 25/12/44 Weather: Overcast with thick fog. Visibility poor. Wind calm. Very bad flying weather with a heavy fog. No station activity except at the Messes. Christmas "spirits" were in evidence. Our aircraft from gardening effort not yet returned.
- 26/12/44 Weather: Overcast to cloudy with fog. Visibility poor. Wind calm to light S'ly.
- The morning started off with a heavy fog but towards noon it began to disperse. Battle Order was then issued detailing 16 kites. Briefing was scheduled for 11:00 hours. They took off around 12:30 hours. Target: ST. VITH. One aircraft was a non-starter due to engine trouble. ("U" LH30). Visibility was good with no cloud in the target area. Most of the bombing was done visually

until late in the attack when smoke and dust obscured the target. The Master Bomber was clearly heard and appeared well pleased with results. Flak defences in target area were heavier than expected. Good prang. On return all aircraft were diverted due to adverse weather. They landed at Tain, Kalstain and Kinloss. The three kites at Peterhead returned in the afternoon. (This was 427's contribution to the Battle of the Bulge).

27/12/44

Weather: Overcast to cloudy with fog early. Visibility poor becoming moderate. Wind SE'ly 5-10 mph veering W'ly 5-15 mph.

The weather today is not bad. The kites which were diverted yesterday at Tain, Kalstain and Kinloss are returning. A Battle Order was issued early this morning detailing 3 crews. This was a Skipton effort and our 3 crews were to go in Skipton aircraft. Operation was however scrubbed. Late in the afternoon another Battle Order was issued detailing 14 kites. Briefing was scheduled for 23:45 hours.

28/12/44

Weather: Fair to fine. Visibility good. Wind NW'ly 5-15 m.p.h., falling calm.

Take off around 03:00 hours. "O" MZ291 blew a tire on take-off and swung off the runway. Before the pilot could again control the aircraft it crashed into an empty house and set on fire. The crew got out safely just before the bombs went off. All other kites took off safely. Target - OPLADEN. 10/10ths low cloud in target area but visibility was good above. Bombing appeared to be well concentrated and accurate on the markers. Slight to moderate flak. Enemy aircraft were sighted but no claims are made. All our aircraft returned safely to base around 0930 hours.

Another Battle Order was issued at noon detailing four crews for mining effort. Briefing scheduled for 13:15 hours. The crews took off around 15:56 hours. Target - Polyanthus area. Perfectly clear and visibility unlimited. Crews reported no difficulty whatever in visually identifying the gardening areas. One aircraft "Z" MRL48 dropped his mines on the land due to hung up before release. Flak was confined to one or two light guns in known coastal areas. All crews returned safely to base around 22:30 hours.

29/12/44

Weather: Fine becoming cloudy. Visibility good becoming moderate. Wind light variable becoming SW/ly 5-15 m.p.h.

Weather today cold but clear. Battle Order came through around 1100 hours. Fourteen A/C were detailed. Briefing was scheduled for 1330 hours. Take off around 15:30 hours. Target - OBERLIN.

10/10ths cloud over the target but visibility was good above. The majority of the crews bombed on the reflected glow of the T.Is. Results were impossible to assess due to cloud but the crews feel that bombing was fairly well concentrated and appeared accurate. Slight flak was encountered in the target area. One jet propelled aircraft was sighted on route outward. All crews returned by 22:45 hours. "K" LV996 was diverted at Tholthorpe on 3 engines.

30/12/44

Weather: Cloudy becoming fair; slight drizzle early.  
Visibility good. Wind mainly NW'ly 5-20 m.p.h.

Battle Order came out about 1100 hours detailing 13 aircraft. Briefing scheduled for 1300 hours. Take off around 17:45 hours. Target - COLOGNE. 10/10ths cloud with tops at 5000 to 10000 feet at the target area. Markers were clearly visible but somewhat scattered. Several crews report both dummy sky and ground markers. Assessment of the raid was impossible due to cloud condition. Slight to moderate flak bursting mostly below bombing levels was encountered. Aircraft "L" NP957 and aircraft "J" NP956 had combats with enemy aircraft but no claims are made. "J" took effective evasive action although on three engines. The pilot was W/C V.F. Ganderton (J.10133). All aircraft returned safely to base.

31/12/44

Weather: Fine to cloudy. Visibility excellent. Wind NW'ly 5-10 m.p.h. Operation order issued this morning detailing 4 crews. Briefing scheduled for 14:00 hours. Take off around 1600 hours. Target Polyanthus area. No cloud and good visibility but slight sea haze. All crews mined visually. One aircraft "Y" NR257 (Captain F/O Britton W.B.) (J.25816) encountered a JU 88 over target area. The enemy aircraft attacked three times. Strikes were seen on wing and fuselage of E/A which dived straight down towards sea. A large splash followed. Claimed as destroyed. All aircraft returned safely to base by 23:10 hours.

#### HONOURS AND AWARDS

Flying Officer V.C. Sunstrum (J.28038) was awarded the Distinguished flying Cross. 17.12.44.

#### COMMISSIONS: NIL

#### POSTINGS:

J.85133 F/O H.D. Egli posted to 24 O.T.U. 5.12.44  
J.87633 F/O P.D. Regimbald posted to 22 O.T.U. 5.12.44  
J.20385 F/L W.E.E. Towne posted from 76 Base 7.12.44

C.11152 F/O T.K. Creighton posted from 76 Base 7.12.44  
 J.40363 F/O W.N. Duff posted from 76 Base 7.12.44  
 J.5819 F/L C.C. Collins posted from 76 Base 7.12.44  
 J.40892 F/O C.G.T. Hoare posted from 76 Base 7.12.44  
 J.40078 F/O H.M. Read posted from 76 Base 7.12.44  
 J.17009 F/L E.C. Stewart posted from 76 Base 5.12.44  
 J.17445 F/L W.A. Gardiner posted from 76 Base 5.12.44  
 J.17009 F/O E.E. Morgan posted from 76 Base 5.12.44  
 J.18016 F/O E.F. Schmidt, posted from 76 Base 5.12.44  
 J.17898 F/O H.H. McDaniel posted from 76 Base 5.12.44  
 C.19120 F/O H.E. Thornicroft posted from 76 Base 5.12.44  
 J.14799 F/L H.E. Bronson posted to 63 Base (Sick) 29.11.44  
 Posted to R Depot Warrington w.e.f. 11.12.44  
 J.15488 F/L A.A. Sherlock J.88664 P/O W.K. Hammond  
 J.15489 F/L E.T. Sherlock C.88796 P/O J.A. DeGrace  
 J.8133 F/L J.D.V. Lariviere C.88756 P/O A. Zerebusky  
 J.18053 F/O H.S. Hunt C.88792 P/O B.J. Trainor  
 J.11866 F/L R.S. Bue J.88950 P/O I.A. Olson  
 J.18046 F/O R.W. McBurney J.88951 P/O O.F. Linington  
 J.17589 F/O F.L. Ray J.90211 P/O W.H. Bell  
 J.18974 F/O H.J. Boucher J.90552 P/O J.C. Logan  
 J.18935 F/O C.E.N. Monty J.91180 P/O R.G. Kearns  
 J.91185 P/O D.J. McCoy J.90379 P/O A.N. Shaw  
 J.29578 F/O V.L. Farlow

J.26423 F/O H.H. Hammond posted to 63 Base 13.12.44  
 J.26538 F/O A. Bennie posted to 1666 C.U. 13.12.44  
 J.25745 L.G. Spears (F/O) posted to 1666 C.U. 13.12.44  
 J.90329 P/O H.J. Davidson posted to 1659 C.U. 15.12.44  
 J.25796 F/O L.G. Ayers posted to 63 Base (Sick) 6.12.44  
 J.25544 F/O P. Slipec posted to Dalton A.S. 13.12.44  
 J.12461 F/L C.C. Gorman posted to 63 Base (Sick) 14.12.44  
 J.89239 P/O B. Kelly posted to "R" Depot 23.12.44

1/1/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy with short periods of continuous drizzle  
 Visibility moderate. Wind light variable becoming W'ly 10-15  
 mph.

Very quiet day. Stand down all day.

2/1/45

Weather:- Mainly cloudy. Visibility moderate. Wind NW'ly  
 20-35 mph, gusty at times.

The New Year was started off with a Battle Order. Fifteen  
 aircraft were detailed and briefing scheduled for 12:30 hours.  
 Take off around 14:50 hours. Target: BUNNICKSHAVEN. All  
 aircraft took off and proceeded to the target. Nil cloud in  
 target area but only a fair amount of haze. Several good  
 sized explosions were seen and so far as visual and other  
 identification could establish some were obviously of an oil  
 category. Flak was moderate but searchlights activity was

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experienced over target area. Our aircraft "S" LM133 encountered an ME210 and the rear gunner opened fire with 200 rds and enemy aircraft broke away. Shortly after a twin engine enemy aircraft attacked the same A/C and the rear gunner fired a short burst as evasive action was taken. Nil claims. All aircraft returned safely to base.

3/1/45

Weather: Cloudy with periods of rain and slight snow. Visibility good. Wind W-NW 30-35 mph, gusty at first, falling to 5-10 mph at midday.

Operations called for this morning detailing fifteen aircraft. Briefing scheduled for 12:30 hours. However it was scrubbed after main briefing. C/C J.B. Millward, DFC & BAR had everyone together for a half hour during the afternoon for a lecture. Title "Review of recent Ops".

4/1/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy with wintry showers during. Visibility good, but poor in showers. Wind N.W. 10-20 mph.

Cold today but clear. Ten aircraft were detailed for training exercises (F/A, Sim. Bombing, Air to Sea) in the morning but this was scrubbed later. In the afternoon nine aircraft were detailed for Sim. mining, H2S X-Country, Gee and APT homings and these exercises were carried out. Aircraft "W" ME 355 (Captain F/O Millard) landed at Hemswell while on H2S X-Country.

5/1/45

Weather: Cloudy becoming fine. Visibility good. Wind NW-W 5-10 mph.

Operation Order issued during morning detailing fifteen aircraft. Briefing scheduled for 12:30. Take-off at 16:20 hours. Target: HANOVER. All aircraft took off and proceeded to the target. 8/10th cloud over the target and assessment of the raid is impossible. Master Bomber was heard by most of the crew. Several large explosions were reported. Flak was slight to moderate in barrage form aimed at skymarkers. Searchlights were ineffective. One aircraft "Y" NR 257 Captain S/L S.G. Crew, DFC (second tour) "B" Flight Commander, did not come back. All other aircraft returned safely to base.

Five crews carried out training exercises during the afternoon. (F/A, Sim. and Range Bombing and Air to Sea). A/C "W" returned from Hemswell.

6/1/45

Weather: Cloudy with fair periods. Visibility good. Wind light variable.

Operation Order came through this morning detailing fifteen aircraft. Briefing at 12:45 hrs., take-off at approx. 15:50 hours. Target -

HANAU. All aircraft took off and proceeded to the target. 10/10th cloud over the target. Most of the crews bombed on sky markers as instructed by the Master Bomber. Result of the bombing is impossible to assess but there was a good concentration of aircraft over the target. A very large glow on the cloud was visible for forty miles after leaving the target. Slight to moderate flak mostly in barrage form. One aircraft "U" LM130 was attacked by an identified aircraft - believed to be a Halifax. Mid Upper replied with a short burst, as he felt sure that the attacking aircraft was a Halifax he ceased firing. F/O Gerald, V.J.P. (J.26347) Bomb Aimer was hit by a bullet as he moved forward to take over the V.G.O. He had his nose removed. This aircraft landed at Woodbridge. Bullets extracted from the wings were mk. 303. All other aircraft landed at Base.

7/1/45

Weather: Fair to fine with occasional slight rain early. Visibility good. Wind W-NW 10-30 mph.

Very cold morning. Training programme was issued detailing three aircraft at 12:30 hrs. and 10 at 14:00 hours. Another training list detailed six crews for night flying. All but two got away o.k. and landed before 23.59 hours as weather was expected to close in. F/O Bell in "U" LM130 returned from Woodbridge at 15:20 hours.

8/1/45

Weather: Fair to overcast with frequent snow showers. Visibility good, becoming moderate poor in showers. Wind NW'ly 15-40 mph, gusty at times.

Very quiet today. Snowing and heavy wind. No flying due to adverse weather.

9/1/45

Weather: Mainly cloudy with frequent snow showers. Visibility moderate to poor. Wind N'ly 5-20 mph.

Weather is bad for flying today. There is a heavy snowfall and wind. Aircrew personnel were detailed to shovel the snow from the runways. No flying.

10/1/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy with wintry showers during evening. Visibility moderate to poor. Wind NW'ly 10-20 mph.

No flying today as snow is still bad. The pelting snow is freezing over and more aircrew are being sent to clean it away.

F/O Gerald V.J.P. (J.26347) has been sent to R.A.F. Hospital East Grinstead, where plastic surgery is remodelling his nose.

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11/1/45

Weather: Cloudy with wintry showers. Visibility moderate. Wind mainly N'ly 10-25 mph. Weather still bad for flying. Ice, snow and slush everywhere. Several Lancs have come in lately and are beginning to crowd the Hangars. The latest news has it that these Lancs will all be going to Skipton and then the Squadrons on this Station will be converting.

In the afternoon there was a lecture on P.F.F. given by Group Captain Hanish. The lecture lasted for just over an hour. Good "gen".

12/1/45

Weather: Cloudy with rain and drizzle. Visibility moderate. Wind NE'ly 10-20 mph. Operation came through this morning detailing 13 aircraft on a bombing "do" and three aircraft on a mining ops. The bombing was scrubbed however. The aircraft detailed for mining took off around 7:45 hours. Target - Young Wallflower. One aircraft "Z" NR148 was u/s and 429/V MZ865 replaced it. 10/10ths cloud prevented visual identification of the mining area but operation is considered to be successful. Heavy flak slight to moderate was encountered en route and in the target area. Numerous fighter flares, orangish in colour were noted on track outward and homeward. All aircraft landed safely at base before 23:45 hours.

13/1/45

Weather: Cloudy with slight rain and drizzle during morning. Visibility moderate. Wind NE'ly less than 10 mph.

Battle Order came through this morning. Four aircraft were detailed for mining and fourteen for bombing. Main Briefing for mining scheduled for 13:30 hrs. and bombing 1430 hrs. The mining was scrubbed prior to take-off. The aircraft detailed for bombing took off around 15:35 hrs. Target - SAARBRUCKEN. Nil to 2/10th cloud and slight ground haze is reported at the target. The bombing was concentrated on the marshalling yard and two large explosions were seen on the northern edge of the target area. It is considered to be a very successful attack. Slight heavy flak and a few fighter flares are reported in the area. All crews attempted photographs. Two aircraft "U" LW130 and "X" NP.941 returned on three engines and all landed at base.

Watching the take-off and landing were Air Vice Marshal C.M. McEwen MC DFC A.O.C. of No. 6 (RCAF) Group, Mr. P. Bracken, the premier of Manitoba, Canada, and several other unnamed notables.

14/1/45

Weather: Cloudy, visibility moderate, wind light and variable.

Two operation orders through this morning again. Four aircraft detailed for Gardening and ten aircraft detailed for bombing. Main briefing for bombing was scheduled for 13:00 hours. Take off around 15:55 hours. Target - GLADBACH. One aircraft "J"

NP956 was replaced by 429/E MZ318 and all aircraft took off. Nil cloud, slight haze but visibility was good and clear. Very good marking and bombing looked equally good. Concentration of aircraft was very heavy over the target and many fires were seen to start. As our aircraft were on the first wave the crews find that it is too early for an assessment but believe that this must be a good "do". All aircraft returned safely to base.

The aircraft detailed for mining operation took off around 1935 hrs. "P" LV.988 was a non starter due to a mechanical failure. The mining area was Oalo Fjord. 8/10th to 10/10th cloud in mining area but visibility was good above. All crews claimed to have released their mines by aid of H2S. Met winds were not as briefed and the three aircraft were late to make concentration point on time. All aircraft returned safely to base.

15/1/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy. Slight rain and drizzle during evening. Visibility moderate. Wind N.W. 5-10 mph, becoming light variable.

Two of our repatriated pilots were awarded a Bar to their D.F.C. These are the Twin Sherlock Brothers. These boys enlisted together in 1940, gained their commission the same day in 1942. They completed their second tour of operations with our Squadron and Training exercises were held in the morning. Nine aircraft were on Bombing, Air to Sea, Fighter Affiliation and S.B.A.

Six aircraft were detailed for night flying but this was cancelled at 1700 hrs.

16/1/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy with slight rain early. Visibility mainly moderate. Wind light variable becoming W'ly 10-25 mph.

Operation Order came through this morning for mining and Bombing efforts again. Three A/C were detailed for mining and fifteen for bombing. Main briefing for mining was scheduled for 1230 hrs. Take off around 1825 hrs. Main briefing for Bombing was scheduled for 1400 hrs. and take off for 1905 hrs. Prior to take off "C" LV922 was by "J" NP956.

17/1/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy with slight rain during evening. Visibility good. Wind W'ly 15-25 mph, gusty.

All aircraft returned from yesterday operations by approximately 0155 hrs. The Gardening area was (ONIONS) (Oslo). The three aircraft took off and proceeded to their allotted areas. Nil to 2/10th cloud with visibility excellent over mining area. Winds were much higher than briefed. One aircraft "L" NP957 did not drop his mines according to instructions received at briefing. Winds were 50 miles per hour too fast. Defences were slight in the gardening area. All aircraft returned safely to base.

Fifteen aircraft detailed for bombing MACDEBURG returned at approximately the same time as the mining do. Clear weather with slight haze but visibility was very good. Markers

clearly visible and well concentrated over target. Fires were reported to be seen at a distance of 100 miles from target area. Flak was slight to moderate in loose barrage form. Searchlights were active in target area with some attempt at coning but ineffective. Fighter flares were in evidence en route, at the target and particularly all along the track homeward. All crews attempted photos. None of our aircraft were damaged by flak and all landed safely at base.

A new arrival to this squadron, F/O F.D. Kaye and his crew had a check out flight today. Five aircraft carried out some training namely H2S X Country and S.B.A.

18/1/45

Weather: Mainly cloudy with wintry showers. Continuous rain during morning. Visibility moderate. Wind mainly W'ly 20-30 mph, max. 35.

Very quiet day. The Engineers' section sent one man for link training and also six men to No. 1 Hangar for practical repairs of aircraft under the supervision of M.A.P.

19/1/45

Weather: Wintry showers. Visibility good. Wind N'ly 30-40 mph.

Operations came through this morning detailing 18 A/C. Briefing was scheduled for 1400 hrs however, the operation was scrubbed later on.

Three crews took part in night flying exercises.

20/1/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy with wintry showers. Visibility moderate. Wind calm becoming NW'ly 15-20 mph.

A training order was issued this morning detailing nine A/C for take off at 1130 hrs. All crews got out to their A/C and a few got airborne. But a snowstorm promised by for 1200 hrs surprised all by arriving at 1158 hrs. Thus the training was scrubbed.

All aircrew reported to the Station Cinema at 1445 hrs where Major Nicholson, the flak and fighter expert from Group, kept us all happy as he gave us the latest information on Jerry's defences; flak, radar and fighters.

News is going around today that F/O Gerald, the "Plastic Nose Kid" is on his way back to the squadron soon.

21/1/45

Weather: Fine to Fair. Visibility good. Wind NW'ly 10-20 mph.

A training programme issued for this morning was cancelled as Battle Order came through detailing 17 aircraft. Briefing

scheduled for 1700 hours. However operations were scrubbed when Nav. Briefing was well under way. In the evening there was some night flying. Two crews could not get off the deck due to mechanical failure of the aircraft.

22/1/45

Weather: Fine, visibility good, deteriorating during evening. Wind NW'ly 10-20 mph at first becoming light variable.

Operation called for this morning. Battle Order detailed twenty aircraft. Briefing was scheduled for 16:30 hrs but at 1400 hrs the usual scrub came through. Ten aircraft carried out Sim. Bombing and H2S X-Country exercises during the day. The Engineer Section sent a man to Link Training during the morning and afternoon.

23/1/45

Weather: Mainly overcast with fog. Visibility poor. Wind calm. Foggy this morning. According to yesterday paper, Leeming was the coldest spot in England. No flying today.

Ten pilots and navigators held a Navigation Lecture for two hours in the morning and again in the afternoon another lecture for three hours with twelve pilots and navigators attending. In the Bombing Section F/L Head J.T. DFC (J.14508) kept our Bomb Aimers very interested with a lecture on Operational Navigation.

24/1/45

Weather: Fine with fog and mist. Visibility poor. Wind calm.

A Gardening Order came through this morning detailing five crews. This was scrubbed however, during lunch.

F/L Willgress F.J. (52006), the Squadron Flight Engineer leader returned today, from a course which he had been attending at Wombleton. This course was to "gen" him up on Lance, because we will soon be converting to this A/C.

25/1/45

Weather: Mainly cloudy with fog. Visibility poor. Wind calm. No flying today.

Engineer Section was lectured today on the fuel system and on what makes a Lanc tick. It was given by their Leader F/L F.J. Willgress.

W/C Canderton, our C.O., F/O A.L. D'Eon, acting Signals Leader and F/L J.G. Williams, Bombing Leader, went on leave today.

The Signals section held a party at "Jocks". It was soon discovered, however, that it was not too warm in "Jocks".

The beer was frozen in the bottles. There was quite a debate as to whether they should suck the beer, or chew it. Dinner was due to start at 18:30 hrs., but like Met. man at briefing, it was late. The party terminated at Jocks at 22:00 hours but was continued at the Officers' Mess for quite a while.

26/1/45

Weather: Cloudy with snow showers during morning, becoming fine. Visibility poor early and late; moderate late morning and early afternoon. Wind NW'ly 5-10 mph falling calm in evening.

Five aircraft carried out Fighter affiliation, Bombing and Sim. Bombing and S.B.A. exercises during the day. No night training was put on because the weather forecast was duff.

Pilots and Engineers of "A" Flight had a lecture on Hydraulics delivered by F/L Willgress our Engineer Leader. Lancs "gen" coming up.

Two engineers took instruction on the Link Trainer.

27/1/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy with snow showers. Visibility poor to moderate. Wind NW'ly 10-20 mph. Operation called this morning detailing 16 A/C. Briefing scheduled for 13:00 hrs and take off around 16:00 hrs. All A/C were marshalled for take off when the scrub came through.

A heavy blizzard was the cause of this.

"B" Flight pilots and engineers were today lectured on Hydraulics by F/L Willgress, F/E Ldn.

28/1/45

Weather: Mainly cloudy with frequent snow showers. Visibility moderate becoming poor late in evening. Wind N'ly 10-20 mph falling calm late in evening.

Operation came through this morning with the same detail as yesterday. Sixteen aircraft. Briefing scheduled for 16:30 hours and take-off around 19:30 hours. All aircraft got away to a good start.

29/1/45

Weather: Cloudy with snow in the evening. Visibility moderate to poor.

Our aircraft did not return this morning because they were diverted to Blackbush. One aircraft "B" NR 171 was an early return and landed at Linton-on-Ouse (62 Base). Engine failure. The target was a suburb of Stuttgart called ZUFFENHAUSEN. Crews reported 10/10ths cloud in the target area. The target

marking appeared somewhat late. Even the backers up were late. A concentrated glow of fires was reflected on the cloud as well as the glow of the T.Is. A good stream of A/C was maintained both into and out of the target area. In view of the cloud cover, an assessment of the raid is impossible. Flak was slight to moderate mostly in barrage forms. All aircraft landed at Blackbush around 03:25 hours.

Late in the morning a Battle Order came through for Gardening. Four crews were detailed and it was scrubbed a few minutes prior to briefing.

At 23:59 hours our aircraft were not back from Blackbush but "B" NR171 was back to base.

30/1/45

Weather: Cloudy with snow, fog, drizzle rain, becoming fair to fine.

This morning the aerodrome is covered with snow. No flying. Our aircraft are still away at Blackbush.

31/1/45

Weather: Fair becoming cloudy with continuous rain and fog.

Ten of our aircraft returned from Blackbush around noon. At the same time a large number of U.S.A. Liberators landed at this base on diversion. A training programme issued for the afternoon was scrubbed as the weather closed in very early.

#### HONOURS AND AWARDS. NIL

COMMISSION. P/O A.W.J. Chapman (188680) F/E joined for duty 4.1.45 on appt. to a commission w.e.f. 29.10.44.

CASUALTIES. (Missing on HANOVER in A/C "Y" NR 257 w.e.f. 5.1.45)

CAN.J.17170 S/L B.C. Crew, DFC "B" Flight Commander. (2nd tour)

CAN.J.13117 F/L S.H. Dodge

CAN.J.19138 F/O A.W. Campbell

CAN.J.15430 F/L J.D. Johnston, DFC Signals Leader.

CAN.J.85137 F/O C. Kelway

RAF. 146614 F/O T. Osler

RAF 2208335 Sgt Smith, J.C.

1/2/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy with some rain and fog.

Operation Order came through this morning detailing fourteen aircraft. Briefing was scheduled for 13:00 hours. Take off around 15:35 hours. Target - MAINZ. Crews report 6-10/10ths

cloud over target. The attack appeared quite scattered with fires burning well over a wide area. Two large explosions were noted. Flak was slight to moderate and inaccurate. A/C "H" MZ517 encountered a JU 88 but evasive action was taken and E/A disappeared. A/O "E" MZ452 and "N" MZ422 returned early. All aircraft returned safely to base by 23:20 hours. Five of our aircraft diverted to Blackbush on 28 Jan. returned this afternoon.

2/2/45

Weather: Cloudy with rain and fog. Visibility becoming good.

Operations called for today. Seventeen aircraft were detailed. Briefing scheduled for 17:00 hours. Fifteen aircraft only were able to take off as "B" NRL71 swung on the runway and rendered it u/s. A/C "Q" LV942 was an early return. The aircraft did not return by midnight. F/O E.E. Morgan (J.17009) attended an Investiture at Buckingham Palace today, where he received his D.F.C.

3/2/45

Weather: Fine becoming fair then cloudy with rain at night. Visibility good becoming moderate.

All aircraft on operations last night returned safely to base by 02.36 hours. The target was WANNE-Eickel. Crews report 10/10ths cloud in the target area. The raid appeared to be well concentrated and should prove quite successful. Three large explosions were seen in the target area. Flak was slight to moderate. No searchlights.

Late in the afternoon another Battle Order was issued detailing ten aircraft for early tomorrow morning. Meals were set for 06.00 hours and Briefing for 07.30 hours.

Eleven aircraft carried out training exercises today, mainly S.B.A., X-Country, Bombing and Air to Sea Firing.

4/2/45

Weather: Cloudy with rain at first becoming fair later. Visibility poor becoming good. Operations were scrubbed before briefing this morning. Later on two Battle Orders were issued detailing six aircraft for mining and twelve for bombing. Briefing for Bombing was at 13:15 and for Mining 14:45 hours. Take off for Bombing started at 17:11 hours immediately followed by the Mining effort.

Mining area was YOUNG YAMS. Crews report 10/10ths cloud in the Gardening area. All crews mined in the briefed areas on H2S and report no difficulties. A/C "X" NP941 encountered a FW190 which passed quickly overhead and disappeared.

The target for bombing was OSTERFELD. 10/10ths cloud obscured the target. Several large explosions were seen. Owing to cloud condition it is difficult to assess the success of the raid. Flak was slight to moderate and searchlights ineffective through cloud. All aircraft returned safely to base by 23:44 hours.

5/2/45

Weather: Cloudy with rain during early morning becoming fair. Visibility moderate at first becoming good. Wind S'E'ly 5-10 mph veering W'ly.

Operation Order issued this morning detailing sixteen aircraft. Briefing was scheduled for 17:00 hours. The aircraft were marshalled for takeoff around 19:30 hours when scrub came through.

Word came through that all crews will have to complete 36 trips for a first tour of operations. (Moans and groans). Never mind, Joe Stalin is only 35 miles from Berlin, and not stopped yet.

6/2/45

Weather: Fair at first with rain during afternoon. Visibility good at first becoming poor. Wind S/E'ly 5-10 mph.

Windy and raining today. There was no operations scheduled for today, so several aircrew chappies were called up for interview with a view to commissioning.

F/L G.J. Williams (J.12969) held a lecture for all Bomb Aimers on points of interest in connection with the Lancaster Bomber.

7/2/45

Weather: Cloudy at first becoming fair to fine. Visibility moderate becoming good. Wind W'ly 15-30 mph.

Operations came through this morning detailing seventeen aircraft. Briefing was scheduled for 14:00 hours. Take off around 18:40 hours. At 23:59 hours our aircraft were not back at base.

8/2/45

Weather: Cloudy at first with rain and drizzle during afternoon. Visibility good at first becoming poor. Wind W'ly becoming S/E'ly 5-10 mph.

Our aircraft on operations last night returned to base by 02:00 hours. The target was GOCH. Five crews only bombed their objective. The others were called off by the Master Bomber who was not clearly heard. A/C "A" MZ823 encountered a JU 88. Both aircraft exchanged fire but enemy aircraft disappeared as evasive action was taken. A/C "M" MZ423

encountered a FW190 which crossed 50 feet over the Halifax. The MU/AG opened fire and the Rear/AG followed. The fighter went out of control burst into flames and crashed to the ground and exploded. Claim as destroyed. A/C "J" NP956 encountered a jet propelled aircraft. Evasive action was taken but E/A/C followed in corkscrew. Both gunners opened fire and the E/A was seen to burst into flames and dropped away, exploding when it hit the ground. Claimed as destroyed. A/C "X" NP941 encountered what was identified as a flying wing. Both gunners opened fire and it was seen to burst into flames and exploded on hitting the ground. Flak was slight to moderate in target area.

Operation Order was issued again this morning detailing ten aircraft. But it was cancelled later on.

9/2/45

Weather: Occasional showers at first becoming fair to cloudy with rain during late afternoon. Visibility good at first becoming moderate during evening. Wind W'ly backing during afternoon to S'ly 15-25 mph.

Fairly day today although rather windy.

S/L R.J. Lawlor (J.5102) "A" Flight Commander was awarded the D.F.C. today.

Operations came through this morning with two Battle Orders. Ten crews were detailed for Mining and seven for Bombing. Both operations were cancelled late in the afternoon.

10/2/45

Weather: Rain at first becoming fair to cloudy. Occasional showers during early evening, becoming fair to fine. Visibility moderate at first becoming good. Wind S'ly 10-15 veering S/W'ly 15-20, decreasing during evening, to 5-10 mph. Operations through this morning for a bombing effort with seven crews. Briefing scheduled for 13.30 hours. Ops was scrubbed after briefing. Several crews carried out night flying training.

W/C V.F. Ganderton DFC (J.10133) assumes command of R.C.A.F. Station Leeming during the temporary absence of Group Captain J.B. Millward, D.F.C.

11/2/45

Weather: Fine at first with snow and fog during afternoon and evening. Visibility good at first becoming poor. Wind S/W'ly 5-10 mph falling light. Cloudy today but fair weather for flying. Operation order issued this morning detailing seven aircraft. In the afternoon the weather deteriorated and it started to rain and snow steadily. Ops. were scrubbed.

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12/2/45

Weather: Cloudy with fog early. Rain during afternoon and evening. Visibility poor at first becoming moderate. Wind W/S'yly becoming W'ly 20-30 mph. Cloudy today with wind and rain. No flying being carried out.

F/L F.J. Willgress gave a lecture in the Educational Hut to the Pilots, Engineers and Bomb Aimers on Lancaster Aircraft and Merlin Engine.

13/2/45

Weather: Rain at first. Fair to fine. Visibility moderate at first becoming good after. Wind W'ly 20-30 mph.

Battle Order issued this morning detailing fourteen aircraft. Briefing was held at 14:00 hours. Take off around 17:54 hours. All aircraft got away to a good start but were not back at base by midnight.

14/2/45

Weather: Fair to fine. Fine to cloudy. Visibility good. Wind W'ly 15-25 mph.

Thirteen of our aircraft on operations last night landed at EYE. A/C "A" MZ823 was first reported missing when report failed to come through that he had landed at Juvincourt, France. He landed at Base at 21:00 hours today. Target was BOHLEN. Crews report 9-10/10ths at the target. The markers were spread over a wide area. Several explosions and a few fires were seen through break in cloud. Moderate to intense flak (heavy) in barrage form. No aircraft damaged by flak.

Two operations orders were issued this morning detailing three crews for Bombing and six crews for mining. Gardening crews took off at approx. 16:40 hours and the bombing at 18:50 hours. They were not back at midnight.

Early in the afternoon our aircraft from EYE returned to base.

15/2/45

Weather: Fair to fine. Visibility good at first becoming poor during afternoon and evening. Wind NW'ly becoming light SE'ly.

Crews returned to base this morning around 01:25 hours. Gardening area was WILLOW ONE. Crews reported 9-10/10ths cloud in gardening areas. All crews mined on H2S and experienced no difficulties. No flak in mining area but defences at Copenhagen were active. One A/C "P" LV988 was an early return and "O" MZ814 was a non starter. Aircraft "W" MZ355 Captain S/L W.B. Brittain "B" Flight Commander did not come back from this operation.

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Bombing target was CHEMNITZ. Crews report 7-10/10ths cloud in target area. The marking was punctual but appeared scattered. Many fires were seen to take hold. Heavy flak was negligible to slight. Enemy fighter were sighted but no combat were reported. One aircraft "N" MZ422 Captain F/O V.S. Roy did not come back from operation.

A/C "M" MZ423 which was on mining "do" and landed at Halesworth returned this afternoon.

Operation order was issued this morning detailing three crews for mining operations. The mining area was OSLO. 10/10ths cloud in garden area. All crews mined on H2S without difficulties. All crews attempted photographs. Some moderate heavy flak was encountered in the target area. Due to adverse weather over base they landed at Charter Hall.

16/2/45 Weather: Cloudy and fog. Visibility poor. Wind SW'ly 5-10 mph. Quiet most of the day but very late in the afternoon a "Chop List" came through detailing thirteen aircraft. However the briefing was postponed for an early morning operation.

17/2/45 Weather: Cloudy with fog at first with poor visibility during the remaining of the day. Wind S/E'ly 5-10 mph.

Main briefing was held at 09:00 hours this morning. Take off around 11:30 hours. The target was WESSEL. This raid was abortive over enemy territory due to 10/10ths cloud over the target. The Master Bomber called the raid off. Due to adverse weather over base our A/C landed at Middleton St. George.

Three of our aircraft which were at diversion base at Charter Hall returned at 16:09 hours.

18/2/45 Weather: Cloudy becoming fair during evening. Visibility moderate becoming good during evening. Wind N/W'ly.

Our aircraft diverted at Middleton St. George returned early this morning. Battle Order was issued this morning detailing two crews for mining operations. Crews took off at 15:51 hours. The target was KATTEGAT. 10/10ths cloud with nil visibility at the mining area. The crews mined as briefed and experienced no difficulties. Nil to slight inaccurate flak was encountered. Nil fighter activity but Fredrikshaven aerodrome was lit up.

The kites returned at base at 22:00 hours.

19/2/45 Weather: Cloudy. Visibility moderate to poor. Wind S'ly 5-10 mph.

Quiet day. The Sergeants Mess held a dance at 20:00 hours. There were bebies of beautiful girls imported for the occasion. Much fun was had by all.

20/2/45

Weather: Cloudy with slight rain before dawn, becoming fair. Visibility moderate becoming good. Wind W'ly 10-20 mph.

F/L H.O. Holroyde (C.9960) our adjutant, went on leave starting after duty today. Operation order issued at noon detailing fourteen crews. Briefing scheduled for 19:00 hours. Take off around 21:45 hours. The aircraft were not back by 23:59 hours.

21/2/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy. Visibility moderate. Wind S'ly 5-15 mph.

Crews returned to base around 05:00 hours. The target was Monheim. Crews report 10/10ths cloud over target. Marking was sufficient and concentrated. There was an extremely large explosion and several other reddish orange ones. The target was obscured but reports indicate that the raid was fairly successful. Slight to moderate heavy flak in loose barrage form. A/C "Z" NR148 was damaged by flak en route homeward. A/C "X" NP941 encountered an U/I T/E enemy aircraft. MU/AG opened fire and the starboard engine of the enemy aircraft burst into flames. Its wing was seen to fall off. The A/C went straight down and exploded upon contact. Claim "A". One aircraft "Y" NP942 Captain F/L J.M. Murphy did not return from this operation.

Another battle order was issued at noon detailing eleven aircraft. Briefing was scheduled for 15:00 hours and take off around 16:50 hours. Crews were back at base by 23:59 hours. The target was WORMS. Crews report that the target was clear of cloud with slight ground haze. Marking was well concentrated and sufficient. The town was burning brightly over a two mile square area. Fires were visible 80 miles on the homeward route. Several large explosions were reported. Flak varied from moderate to intense. A/C "C" RG347 encountered and destroyed an unidentified enemy aircraft. As fighter attacked the rear gunner opened fire with 400 rds. Enemy fighter dove to the ground trailing sparks. Two large explosions were seen on the ground. Claim "A". A/C "R" MZ755 encountered an unidentified single engine enemy fighter. MU/AG and R/AG opened fire and lots of hits were claimed. The enemy aircraft burst into flames and broke into two pieces and fell to the ground. Claim "B". One aircraft "F" NR288 P/O W.R. Wilson is missing from this operation.

22/2/45

Weather: Cloudy. Periods of slight drizzle during morning. Slight rain from 20:45. Visibility moderate to good. Wind light variable.

Many of our pilots had a check out on the Lancaster Aircraft today. As many of these kites are now available for our Squadron all the aircrews are anxious to start air training. Crews rested today but were standby for an early call tomorrow morning.

23/2/45

Weather: Cloudy to overcast, becoming fine in evening. Rain and drizzle to 10:45. Visibility moderate becoming good. Wind NW'ly 5-12 mph.

This morning a battle order detailed eleven crews for a day attack. Briefing was scheduled for 08:30 hours. Takeoff around 11:50 hours. The target was ESSEN. Crews report 10/10ths cloud at the target with tops at 6-8000 feet. Visibility was poor at times. All crews bombed on GEE. Results cannot be assessed due to cloud condition. There was a good concentration of aircraft at the target. Flak was slight to medium and inaccurate. All aircraft returned safely to base by 18:20 hours.

24/2/45

Weather: Fine becoming cloudy. Visibility good. Wind SW'ly 10-30 mph gusty at times. Again this morning a battle order was issued detailing ten aircraft. Main briefing was scheduled for 09:00 hours. Take off around 12:45 hours. The target was KAMEN. Crews report 10/10ths cloud in the target area. Master Bomber instructed to bomb on Navigation aids. It is believed to be a scattered attack. Flak was slight in target area. A/C "B" NR171 was abortive and landed at Carnaby on two engines. All other aircraft landed at Base.

25/2/45

Weather: Cloudy. Slight rain to 0700. Slight drizzle 1635 to 2250. Visibility good. Wind SW'ly to W'ly 5-30 mph gusty at times to 40 mph.

Operation order issued at noon detailing five aircraft for mining operations. Briefing scheduled for 14:30 hours. Takeoff at approximately 16:45 hours. Target was ARENDAL south of Norway. Crews report nil cloud in mining area but several crews found difficulty in identifying the target and orbited to make certain of their position for mining. In northern minnng area flak was encountered being fired from a ship. All crews attempted photographs, and returned safely to base.

On Lancaster training three crews carried out Cross Country and Range Bombing.

26/2/45

Weather: Cloudy, slight rain. Good visibility

This afternoon four crews carried out Lancaster training. It was cross country, Range Bombing and Air to Sea. Four other pilots had a check out flight.

27/2/45

Weather: Cloudy, scattered showers. Good visibility.

Operation order issued this morning detailing seven crews. Briefing scheduled for 11:00 hours. Target - Mainz. Five

aircraft took off due to an aircraft which crashed and exploded on the runway. Crews report 10/10ths cloud in target area but visibility was good above. Sky markers were late and meagre. No assessment of the raid is possible due to the cloud condition. All aircraft returned safely to base.

28/2/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy. Good visibility.

News came through today that the Squadron is temporarily taken off operations on conversion to Lancaster Aircraft. Seven crews carried out Cross Country, Range Bombing and Air to Sea exercises. Quiet otherwise.

HONOURS AND AWARDS: J.5102 S/L R.J. Lawlor, J.16091 F/L J.M. Morrice and 169141 F/O J.H. Gribbon were awarded a non-immediate D.F.C.

COMMISSION: NIL

CASUALTIES:

	<u>Trips</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Points</u>
<u>14/15.2.45</u>			
J.28286 S/L W.B. Brittain	33	177.5	114
J.29619 F/O C.J. Driscoll	31	167.15	107
J.35102 F/O H. MacKay	31	167.15	107
J.90507 P/O R.V. Dallin	31	167.15	107
J.89175 P/O J.E.A. Peak	30	163.05	104
J.89704 P/O E.M. Ford	30	162.10	103
1968809 Sgt De Metz P.	31	167.15	107
J.86214 F/O V.S. Roy	1	6.30	3
R196508 F/S Williams, A.R.	NIL		
R198441 Sgt Morrison, A.L.	"		
R187219 F/S Scorah, A.N.	"		
R279178 Sgt Cybulskie, A.J.	"		
R271861 Sgt Callagher, H.	"		
R225219 Sgt Mayer, H.L.C.	"		
<u>20.2.45</u>			
J.22769 F/L Murphy, J.M.	26	151.50	96
J.35514 F/O Mann, J.M.	25	147.00	93
J.36225 F/O Essenberg E.	24	142.50	90
J. 86775 F/O VBreault, A.J.	32	175.05	114
1594813 Sgt Tate, G.B.	25	150.00	94
J.89880 P/O Wallace J.M.	25	146.55	94
R74751 W/O Perdue, E.A.	(Second Tour: Nil Trips.)		
<u>21.2.45</u>			
J.89647 P/O Wilson, W.R.	28	167.15	104
J.35507 P/O Webster, L.	26	160.55	98

1/3/45

Weather: Intermittent rain becoming cloudy. Excellent visibility.

More Lancaster training. Cross country was put on, taking the crews up to Inverness, down through the Irish Sea to Land's End, and then back up through the Midlands. The route took 6 hours, 30 minutes. Some fighter affiliation was added to the program.

2/3/45

Weather: Fine becoming cloudy, then fine. Excellent visibility.

Operations through this morning. Operations order No. 354, details 6 aircraft. Aircraft did not take off by midnight.

3/3/45

Weather: Fine becoming cloudy. Excellent visibility.

Aircraft took off early this morning from 0003 hours to 0028 hours. Aircraft got away to a good start. "M" LV993 Halifax III was a non-starter. Target: GARDENING - S. NORWAY. Crews returned to base by approx. 0700 hours. Crews report weather over target was clear with no cloud. Visibility was reported from good to excellent although some crews reported difficulty in identification due to angle of approach in relation to the moon and orbits were necessary in some cases. One crew abandoned mission over the garden due to inability to identify the release point. Crews who mined claim that their attacks were successful. Nil to slight flak.

4/3/45

Weather: Cloudy with slight rain about noon. Good visibility. Training order issued this morning detailing nine Lancs on Sim and Range Bombing, Cross-country and Fighter Affiliation. Airborne at 1930 hours.

5/3/45

Weather: Partly cloudy. Slight rain about noon. Good visibility. More day and night Lancaster training. Exercises participated in were Fighter Affiliation, Range and Sim Bombing.

6/3/45

Weather:- Cloudy. Good visibility.

The Squadron is still undergoing conversion and therefore there are bags of training. Today's training orders detail Cross Country exercises, S.B.A., Fighter Affiliation, Air to Sea, Range and Sim Bombing.

7/3/45

Weather: Cloudy. Excellent visibility.

Training still taking place. Exercises participated in today were Cross Country, Fighter Affiliation, Range and Sim Bombing. Bags of lectures by F/L F.J. Wilgress (82005) Flight Engineer Leader, on Lancaster Engines for Pilots and Flight Engineers of "A" Flight.

8/3/45

Weather: Intermittent slight rain at first becoming cloudy. Good visibility. The eighth day of Lancaster conversion training continues with Cross Country flights, Range Bombing, Fighter Affiliation, Air to Sea.

9/3/45

Weather: Fine becoming cloudy. Moderate to good visibility.

The Squadron is becoming well "genned" on Lancasters now. Training continued today with more lectures. F/L F.J. Wilgress (52005) F/E Leader, lectured Pilots and Flight Engineers of "B" Flight on what makes a Lancaster tick.

10/3/45

Weather: Cloudy. Moderate to excellent visibility.

The day started off very quiet, but late in the afternoon Operation Order No. 355 was issued detailing 14 aircraft on our first Lancaster Operation. Aircraft did not take off by 2359 hours.

11/3/45

Weather: Cloudy, becoming fine during evening. Wind calm. Visibility good, becoming moderate.

Aircraft got away to a good start around 1130 hours. Target - ESSEN. All aircraft returned safely to base by 1813 hours. Crews report 10/10 strata cumulous cloud. Tops 4-8000 feet completely obscured the target area. Visibility above cloud was reported from good to excellent. All crews identified the target area by skymarking smoke puffs blue and red. Variously checked by Gee and H2S. The raid appears to have been very well directed by the M/B who was heard clearly through the attack. Skymarking was generally sufficient and easily identified. Considerable turbulence existed in the cloud immediately over the area, and two columns of smoke were reported rising to 8000 ft. Raid would appear to have been very successful.

12/3/45

Weather: Fine at first with fog developing either 0400 hours, becoming windy. Visibility poor in fog otherwise moderate. Wind, light S.W.'ly.

Operations through today. Operations Order 356 details 13 aircraft. Briefing scheduled for 1000 hours. Take off around 1245 hours. Target DORMUND. All aircraft returned to base by 1930 hours. Crews report 10/10 strata cumulous cloud with tops ranging from 3000 to 10,000 ft. All crews were satisfied with tactics and found Met conditions as briefed. P.F.F. marking was plentiful. All bombing was directed by the M/B. Two columns of cloud at the northern section were distinctly oily black and rose to heights of 500 to 1000 ft. above the main turbulence of cloud. It is beleived that the attack was quite successful.

Operations Order No. 357 detailed two a/c on Gardening. Aircraft "G" NK.551 piloted by J.21276 F/L W.M. Walker, was a non-starter. The other aircraft took off at 1756 hours. It was not back at base by midnight.

13/3/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy. Visibility moderate. Wind S.E.'ly. Gardening aircraft returned to base by 0028 hours. Target GARDENING "KATTEGAT". Crew report nil to 4/10 strata cumulous, with tops 8000 to 10,000 feet. All crews mined on H2S. The operation is considered successful. One S/L operated ineffectively from the eastern shore of the T/A.

14/2/45

Weather: Fine at first with fog between 0300 and 1100 hours. Visibility poor in fog, otherwise moderate. Wind westerly 5-10 mph.

Operations Order No. 358 issued this morning detailing 12 aircraft. Kites took off around 1628 hours. Target - ZWEIBRUKEN. Aircraft returned to base by 0047 hours. Crews report nil cloud. Visibility generally good. Crews bombed by P.F.F. markings. As the attack progressed T.Is. were obscured by smoke and some later crews bombed on the concentration of smoke and fires. Bombing appeared well-centered and concentrated on the markers. Several fires were seen and five large explosions in the T/A were noted. Another large explosion at 2025 hours on the southern edge of the target appeared to be an ammunition dump which blew up with a vivid flash throwing debris 2000 feet in the air. This raid would seem to have been very successful.

15/3/45

Weather: Fine becoming fair to cloudy. Wind westerly during the afternoon. Visibility moderate.

Battle Order No. 359 detailed 13 aircraft. Take off around 1640 hours. Target "HAGEN". A/C returned to base by 2358 hours. Crews report no cloud over the target. Crews bombed by ground marking and illuminating flares. M.B. was clearly heard. Fires were visible up to 100 miles from the target. Many bombs were seen brusting right on the ground markers. Attack rated as very good to excellent.

16/3/45

Weather: Cloudy. Visibility moderate to good. Wind westerly 10-15 mph.

Operations Order No. 360 detailed 5 aircraft. Take off around 1758 hours. Target: "Gardening - HELIGOLAND". All aircraft returned to base by 22:40 hrs. Crews report 7/10 to 9/10 strata cumulous with tops generally 6000 to 7000 ft. Visibility above the cloud fairly good to excellent. All a/c mined on H2S. No results are as yet available.

17/3/45

Weather: Mainly fair to fine. Visibility good. Wind westerly 10-15 mph. Training Order issued today for 8 crews. Training exercises included Fighter Affiliation, air to Sea, Cross Country, Range and Sim Bombing. The day was quiet otherwise.

18/3/45

Weather: Fair at first becoming cloudy. Wind S.W.'ly 10-15 mph. Visibility moderate to good.

Three crews were detailed on Operations Order No. 361 for Sweepstakes effort. Take off at approx. 2223 hours. Crews did not return to base by midnight.

19/3/45

Weather: Cloudy becoming rainy. Visibility moderate. Wind light S.E.'ly becoming moderate S.W.'ly.

Crews returned to base by 0614 hours this morning. Sweepstakes exercise was carried out as per schedule. No. Operations today but big clean-up campaign was in progress. All sections are painting and cleaning up.

20/3/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy. Visibility excellent. Wind W'ly moderate.

Operations Order No. 362 was issued today detailing 15 aircraft. Kites did not take off by 2359 hours.

21/3/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy. Visibility excellent. Wind W'ly light to moderate.

Crews took off around 0150 hours. Target: HEMMINGSTEDT (HEIDE). Crews returned to base by 0723 hours. Crews report weather over the target was nil to 4/10 broken stratus. All crews bombed with the aid of M.B. who was clearly heard giving concise instructions. Some crews were aided by H2S off Heligoland, in identifying the target position. Fires and smoke over the target area were visible 50 miles (homeward). All crews are of the opinion that this attack should be a definite success.

22/3/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy. Vis. poor at first becoming moderate. Wind light S'ly.

Operation Order No. 363 issued this morning detailing 15 aircraft. Take off around 1100 hours. Target: HILDESHEIM. Crews returned to base by 1723 hours. They report continent clear of cloud. Target was identified visually. The centre of the target was covered by billowing smoke obscuring the T.Is. M.B. instructed bombing on cascading T.Is. Area of fire and smoke grew under very accurate bombing until huge ring of smoke covered everything but the outskirts of the town. Target considered a write-off.

Battle Order No. 364 through late this evening detailing 15 aircraft. Kites did not take off by midnight.

23/3/45

Weather: Fog at first becoming fine with moderate vis. Wind light S'ly.

Operations were scrubbed, but in the afternoon another Battle Order No. 365 was issued detailing 11 aircraft. Aircraft did not take off by midnight.

24/3/45

Weather: Little cloud with poor Vis. at first, becoming moderate. Wind calm becoming light SE'ly.

Aircraft took off around 1300 hours. Target: (BONITROP) MATHIAS STINNES. Crews returned to base by 1905 hours. Crews report all cloud in target area. P.F.F. marking was not considered too satisfactory. M.B. instructed that these be disregarded. Crews bombed by various methods. Bombing would appear to have been somewhat scattered although assessment cannot be considered too accurate because of smoke obscuration during the latter part of the attack.

25/3/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy. Vis. poor becoming moderate. Wind calm becoming light S'ly. Operations Order No. 366 issued detailing 14 aircraft. Take off around 0600 hours. Target: HANOVER. R178842 W/O Proudlove, A.O., Rear Gunner of P/O Kaye's crew was wounded by flak. All crews returned to base by 1251 hours. Crews report weather over continent ideal. The A/P was obscured by smoke which covered most of T/Is. Some RT/s seen to have been dropped short and Bombing of these was short of A/P. M.B. heard clearly by most crews. Instructions were changed from CR of R and GTI's to overshoot 1 Sec. on RTI., and then Pickwick. These instructions seemed to control the bombing very effectively. Target was enveloped in a huge mass of billowing smoke which rose to at least 8000 ft. All crews seemed satisfied that the raid was very effective.

26/3/45

Weather: Fine. Excellent vis. Wind light variable.

Very quiet today. No operations. Stand down.

27/3/45

Weather: Fine, becoming rainy in evening. Vis. excellent, becoming moderate. Wind S'ly light to moderate.

Operations Order No. 367 issued this morning detailing 15 aircraft. This operation was scrubbed in the afternoon.

27/3/45

Weather: Fair with rain in evening. Vis. good but poor in rain. Wind S to SW light to mod. No operations laid on today. The following awards of Non-Immediate D.F.C. were received today for officers recommended at this Squadron but are no longer on our strength. These awards are issued under authority of Bomber Commander letter

J.11866 F/L R.D. Bue                      J.18935 F/O C.E. Monty  
J.8133 F/L J.D.V. Lariviere              J.25544 F/O P. Slipec  
J.14908 F/L D.T. Hepburn                  J.88373 P/O McKenney R.R.  
J.28286 F/O W.B. Brittain

Operations Order No. 368 issued detailing 14 aircraft.  
Ops were scrubbed however.

29/3/45

Weather: Fair apart from rain in the evening. Vis.  
excellent. Wind S/W'ly, light to mod.

No operations, laid on for today. Some training carried  
out for the benefit of new crews.

30/3/45

Weather: Occasional showers. Visibility excellent.  
Wind W'ly moderate to strong.

Very quiet day, no operations laid on.

31/3/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy becoming rainy in evening. Wind  
S/W'ly moderate to strong.

Two operation orders issued this morning detailing five  
crews for mining and ten crews for bombing. The mining "do"  
was scrubbed however. All aircraft took off for the bombing  
and the target was HAMBURG. 10th cloud in target area. The  
target was poorly marked and the gaggle was 9 minutes late  
on the target. Enemy fighters were encountered. A/C "S"  
NX552 had three combats. A JU 88 and a ME 262 were sighted  
and both gunners opened fire but the enemy aircraft disappeared  
from sight. A Jet A/C attacked and opened fire at 700 yds.  
Gunnery opened fire and E/A/C was observed by our crew to  
roll on his back and go down in a vertical dive issuing black  
smoke. Claim "B". A/C "D" ME553 also encountered a ME292  
and R/AG fired 150 rds at 800 yds. astern. No claims. A/C  
"H" NX553 also encountered a ME262 on starboard quarter at  
400 yds. R/AG opened fire and E/A/C disappeared. No claims.  
A/C "W" PA271 encountered a ME262 and R/AG and MU/AG fired  
200 rds. and 75 rds. respectively and E/A/C broke away. Heavy  
flak was encountered over target. All aircraft returned to  
base.

HONOURS AND AWARDS: J.11036 R.J. Garvin, J22764 F/L J.M.  
Murphy, J.27798 F/L J.F. Smart were  
awarded immediate D.F.C.

CASUALTIES: NIL

POSTINGS:

J.39970 F/O G.M. Campbell posted from 429 Sqd. 3.3.45  
J.35712 F/O J.E.L. Crewson, to 1666 C.U. 1.3.45  
J.25816 F/O W.E. Britton, to 1659 C.U. 8.3.45

J.27163 F/O J.A. Martyn, to 22 O.T.U. 1.3.45  
J.36412 F/O N.J. Barrett from 63 Base 26.2.45  
J.26347 F/O V.J.P. Gerald from 63 Base 22.2.45  
J.35282 F/O N.E. Roberts to 63 Base 20.2.45  
J.16872 F/O A.W. Kennedy from 76 Base 28.2.45  
J.12968 F/L E.H. Gardner                   "  
J.19298 F/O L.E. LeDressay               "  
J.88305 P/O R.A. Baines                   "  
J.18851 F/O C.R. Townsend               "  
J.19168 R.I. McGillivray               "  
J.35137 F/O N.R. Gorrell to "R" Depot 27.2.45

COMMISSIONING IN MARCH:

J.93633 P/O S.G. Woods (Joined for duty)  
J.93560 P/O T.R. Tollifson               "  
J.93867 P/O B. Maltihsky               "

1/4/45

Weather: Cloudy with occasional slight rain during morning.  
Continuous moderate rain in evening. Vis. moderate. Wind  
SW'ly 20-40 mph, gusty at times.

Easter Day. Very quiet, appropriate to the occasion. No  
Operations laid on. Today is the 21st Anniversary of the  
founding of the R.C.A.F. A parade was called, but later  
washed out due to rain.

2/4/45

Weather: Variable skies with rain early. Showers at midday.  
Vis. good. Wind W'ly 10-25 mph, gusty at times, falling light  
late in evening.

Operation Order No. 370 issued detailing 5 aircraft for Mining,  
and Operations Order No. 371 detailing 9 aircraft for bombing.  
Both Operations were scrubbed due to uncertainty of the exact  
whereabouts of the front line in Europe.

3/4/45

Weather: Fair becoming cloudy. Shower at midday. Vis.  
excellent. Wind 10-35 mph W-NW'ly, gusty at times.

Seven aircraft detailed for bombing on Operations Order No.  
372. Effort was practically stillborn. Tried again later  
in the day, with the same seven aircraft with the same net  
result.

4/4/45

Weather: Fair becoming cloudy. Shower at midday. Vis.  
excellent becoming moderate late. Wind mainly W'ly 5-20 mph.

Finally got cracking with two good efforts, a 3 kite Mining  
"DO" in the "Onions" area, and a 13 kite bombing attack on  
MERSBURG. All aircraft took off, and all returned safely to

base, one being diverted to Blackbush. Crews report the weather in the Mining Area was 6-8/10ths cloud with tops generally 6000 to 7000 ft. Visibility above cloud being very good with a starlit sky. All aircraft mined on H2S. Crews considered this a successful attack and that mines were laid in correct positions.

Bombing crews report 7 to 10/10th strata cumulous cloud over target with tops 6/1000 above which visibility was very good. Some ground marking was reported. Sky marking was considered inadequate. Several crews orbited the target due uncertainty as to what to bomb. Assessment of success is difficult as target was almost completely obscured by cloud, but several large explosions were reported, two in particular at 2252 and 2254 after which dark smoke rose to 3/4000 ft. Bombing variously reported from scattered to concentrated.

5/4/45

Weather: Cloudy becoming fine in late afternoon. Continuous rain before dawn. Showers at midday. Vis. poor till dawn then becoming excellent. Wind W'ly 5-20 mph. Fifteen aircraft laid on in Operations Order 377 for bombing raid. This was later scrubbed. Stand down till 0930 hours of the following morning.

6/4/45

Weather: Fair becoming cloudy. Continuous rain during late morning and afternoon. Vis. good becoming poor during evening with fog forming late. Wind light variable. Quiet day. Nothing laid on. Aircrew boys were given a talk on the Victory Loan.

7/4/45

Weather: Overcast to cloudy becoming fine during evening. Vis. poor to moderate. Wind light variable.

Five aircraft were detailed for mining, and eleven for bombing. Both were scrubbed. Later on they tried again with eleven aircraft for bombing. Bombing effort was scrubbed during briefing.

8/4/45

Weather: Mainly fine. Fog during morning. Vis. poor to moderate. Wind light S'ly. Eleven aircraft detailed to bomb HAMBURG. Operation Order 380. All aircraft took off and successfully completed their missions. All aircraft were diverted to Pershore. Crews report weather over the T/A was 8/10 to 10/10 thin stratus with tops between 1000 ft. and 4000 ft. P.F.F. Marking was plentiful and well sustained. Although the bombing was claimed to be very concentrated, no outstanding area or size of the fires could be assessed because of the cloud cover. There were several explosions noted between 2231 hours and 2241 hours. In view of the target being cloud-obscured, enthusiasm regarding the attack was somewhat curtailed. A reasonably good assessment, all things being equal, was the general opinion.

427 "H" was attacked by an ME.262 from Stbd quarter up at 5420N 0935E, 2216 hrs., 17800 feet outward. First sighted at 300 yards. The R.G. opened fire at 250 yards. During evasive action the E/A was lost. No strikes seen.

427 "H" 5400N 0948E. 2218 hrs, 17800 ft (Outwards) a ME.262 came in from Port Quarter down. First sighted at 200 yds. The R.G. opened fire with 150 rounds. Violent evasive action was taken and E/A disappeared. No strikes noted.

427 "W" 5325N 0930E 2252 hrs, 14000 ft (Homeward). A ME.262 came in from astern, stbd down at 600 yds. Our A/C took evasive action and the R.G. opened fire. The E/A closed in to about 200 yds then broke away to Port and was lost. No strikes were seen.

427 "W" 5325N 0930E 2252 hrs, 14000 ft (Homeward). A ME.262 came from Stbd behind and slightly above, crossing the nose. The B.A. opened fire no strikes were noted.

NOTE. All of the encounters by 427 "W" followed in quick succession. No accurate time or height could be given for the latter engagements. No firing was noted at any time from the enemy.

9/4/45

Weather: Fine to fair with fog early. Vis. poor. Wind light S'ly.

Crews returned from diversion at Pershore about 1320 hours. Five crews were detailed for Mining on Operations Order 382. Target KIEL BAY, T.O. 1934 hrs. Crews were not back at base by midnight.

10/4/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy, becoming overcast late. Vis. poor to moderate. Wind mainly light variable or E.S.E. fly 5-10 mph.

Crews returned from Gardening by 0129 hours. They report weather over T/A was clear with some very low stratus cloud or haze. Visibility above this was good. Crews mined on H2S and consider the effort as successful.

Operations Order No. 382 issued today detailing 11 aircraft. Take off was at approximately 1314 hours. The target was LEIPZIG. All crews returned safely to base by 2158 hours. Crews report weather over the Target was clear with some slight ground haze. P.F.F. marking was considered excellent. Crews map read into the target and bombed either visually, or on the markers according to the M.B.'s instructions. A good concentration of bombing was reported. All crews consider the raid to be a definite success.

Wing Commander V.F. Ganderton DFC (J.10133), the Squadron Commander, was screened upon the completion of his second tour. (W.C. Bryson assumed command of N.427).

11/3/45

Weather: Overcast to cloudy. Periods of continuous rain. Vis. poor. Wind mainly N'ly 5-10 mph.

Quiet day with no Operations laid on. All aircrew personnel of this Squadron visited S.S.Q. this afternoon to have X-Rays taken.

12/4/45

Weather: Overcast at first becoming fine late. Fog forming before dawn, clearing early. Continuous rain during morning. Vis. poor becoming good. Wind W'ly 10-20 mph.

No operations laid on for today, but training program out in the afternoon. 7 crews carried out Fighter Affiliation, Range Bombing, Air to Sea, and Cross-Country exercises in the afternoon. In the evening 9 crews carried out Cross-Country, Range Bombing and F/A exercises.

13/4/45

Weather: Mainly fine with fog forming late. Vis mainly good becoming poor later. Wind, light variable.

Two Operations Orders issued this morning. Operation Order No. 383 detailed 4 crews on Mining, and No. 384 detailed 10 crews on Bombing. All crews took off around 2000 hours. Target for Gardening was KIEL BAY and Bombing Target was at KIEL itself. Crews were not back by midnight.

14/4/45

Weather: Cloudy with a period of continuous rain, moderate at times. Vis. moderate to poor. Wind S'ly 5-15 mph.

All crews returned safely to base by 0249 hours. Crews report weather in the Target Area (Gardening - Forget Me Not) was 5/10 to 10/10 stratus cloud with tops ranging from 2000 ft. to 6000 ft. Some crews claimed that instead of cloud a thick sea haze obscured the area. Visibility above was fair to unlimited. All crews mined on H2S. The operation is considered successful.

In the Bombing area there was 10/10 stratus cloud with tops 3/5000 ft. over the target. Above cloud visibility was good. M.B. instructed crews to bomb alternative target. This was done by all except one crew who did not hear M.B. until after bombing. Cascading green T.I.'s were seen in good time and quantity. Plus the glow of the fire on the ground made identification of target sure. Bombing was fairly well concentrated, but scattering was seen. Glow from the target could be seen for at least 50 miles. Accurate assessment of the raid impossible due to prevailing cloud coverage.

.../215

427 "O" reports 5409N 1010E 2335.6 hrs., 17000 ft. A Fishpond 1000 yds up stbd. We corkscrewed stbd. A visual obtained on U/I E/A - R/G and M/U fired 200 x 50 rounds respectively as E/A veered to stbd and was lost.

15/4/45

Weather: Cloudy becoming fine. Visibility good except early and late, then moderate. Wind SW'ly 10-15 mph.

Operations through this morning detailing 15 aircraft. Main briefing was scheduled for 1500 hours. Operations were scrubbed, however, around 1600 hours with the order to "Stand By".

16/4/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy. Visibility moderate. Wind S-SW'ly 10-15 mph.

Operations Order No. 386 issued today detailing 15 aircraft for Bombing. Main briefing scheduled for 2000 hrs. Aircraft took off around 2245 hours. Target SCHWANDORF. Aircraft were not back at base by midnight.

17/4/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy. Visibility excellent. Wind W'ly 5-10 mph.

Aircraft returned safely to base by 0808 hours. 427 "C" ME.426 piloted by F/L W.E. Towne (J.20385) was an early return, landing at base at 0042 hours, on three engines. Crews report weather over the target ranged from clear to 3/10 to 9/10 thin stratus cloud or ground haze. The target was well and consistently marked. All crews bombed on the instructions of the M.B. who was loud and clear. The M.B. gave regular and concise instructions. As the raid progressed the target became completely obscured by columns of dense greyish-black smoke rising to 8000 ft. Four outstanding explosions occurred at 0401 0403 0408 and 0411 hours, and in 2 instances emitted smoke which might have indicated oil stores. The attack is considered to have been quite successful.

18/4/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy. Visibility excellent. Wind W-NW'ly 5-15 mph.

No operations through today, but Training Program came through in the morning. 15 a/c were detailed for Cross-Country, Range Bombing, Air to Sea and Fighter Affiliation. Aircraft were airborne at 1500 hours. 2 crews were detailed for F/A. Cross-country, and Range Bombing. Take-off at 2000 hours.

19/4/45

Weather: Fine. Visibility excellent becoming moderate late. Wind light variable.

More training through today. Three crews detailed for Range Bombing, Sim Mining and Fighter Affiliation at 1400 hours. Two crews detailed for Range Bombing and X-Country at 1430 hours, and three crews detailed for X-Country, Range Bombing & F/Affiliation at 1900 hours.

20/4/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy. Slight rain during late afternoon. Visibility moderate. Wind mainly light variable.

Operation Order No. 387 came through today detailing 5 aircraft for Mining. This was later scrubbed. Stand down till 1100 hours following morning.

21/4/45

Weather: Cloudy. Slight shower at noon. Visibility moderate becoming excellent. Wind NW'ly 10-20 mph.

Tried again with same Operation Order as yesterday. This time kites took off at approximately 2007 hours. Aircraft were not back by midnight.

The Squadron was called to form a parade early this afternoon. The occasion was the presentation of the Bristol Bombing Trophy to our Squadron for the best bombing score for March. The trophy was presented by Air Vice Marshal C.M. McEwen, M.O., DFC, A.C.C., No. 6 (RCAF) Group. The trophy was received by Wing Commander V.F. Ganderton DFC on behalf of No. 427 (RCAF) Squadron.

22/4/45

Weather: Cloudy. Wind N-ly 10-15 mph. Vis. good.

Aircraft returned to base from Gardening by 0228 hours. Target - KATTEGAT (SILVERTHORNE). Crews report 2-4/10 broken stratus and strato-cu. Base 8000, tops 14000 was encountered in Garden Area. Visibility was good to excellent. Crews mined on H2S and visually. All reported good mining runs and consider attack successful.

Operations Order No. 388 was issued today detailing 10 aircraft. Take Off at approximately 1600 hours. Target BREMEN. Aircraft returned safely to base by 21.45 hours. Crews report weather over the target ranged from 2/10 to 10/10 stratus cumulous with tops 6,000 to 10,000 ft. Visibility above the cloud was considered slightly hazy to excellent. No target marking was observed by any of the crews. The M.B. was heard before the target, and by some crews at the target, but no instructions were received to bomb. Some crews did not hear the M.B. at all. All crews reported the actual aiming point to have been cloud obscured.

23/4/45

Weather: Cloudy becoming fine. Visibility moderate. Wind N'ly 5-10 mph. Falling late.

The Squadron held a farewell presentation today for Wing Commander V.F. Ganderton DFC (J10133) who is leaving the Squadron after completion of his 2nd tour. The presentation took place outside No. 2 Hangar. W/C Ganderton received a silver trophy from S/L C.C. Collins (J.5819) on behalf of the Squadron. Squadron pictures were then taken with W/C Ganderton and his Adjutant, F/L H.O. Holroyde (C.9960), and the new Squadron Commander W/C E.M. Bryson

DFC (J.5116) and the new Adjutant F/L S.S.D. Francis (C.35419).

Operation Order No. 389 came through detailing 10 aircraft for Bombing. This was later scrubbed.

24/4/45

Weather: Weather fine becoming fair. Visibility moderate to poor. Wind S.E.'ly 5-10 mph.

A quiet day with no Operations. Two crews were detailed for Range Bombing and S.B.A. Homings, and one for Bullseye.

25/4/45

Weather: Cloudy. Visibility poor. Wind light at first becoming N'ly 5-10 mph.

Operation came through today with Operations Order No. 390 detailing 10 aircraft. Takeoff was at approximately 1500 hours. The target was WANGEROOGE. All crews returned safely to base by 2000 hours. Crews report no cloud over the target, but it was hazy with a lot of smoke in the area. Most of the crew heard the M.B. loud and clear, and on his instructions bombed Pickwick. There was a good concentration of bombing in the area of the aiming point, but some bombs fell short, also some in the water. It was thought by most crews that the scattered bombing was caused by the compactness of the gaggle as this hindered a good bombing run. An explosion is reported at 1722 hours, and a column of black smoke rose to 2000 ft.

26/4/45

Weather: Cloudy. Occasional rain. Wind N'ly 5-10 mph. Visibility poor to moderate.

Operation Order No. 391 was issued today detailing 15 aircraft. This was later scrubbed. The rest of the day was quiet.

27/4/45

Weather: Cloudy. Occasional showers. Wind N'ly 10-15 mph. Visibility good.

Yesterday's Operation Order was again put through today, but was scrubbed again before briefing. Some training was carried on.

28/4/45

Weather: Fine becoming cloudy with snow showers. Wind NW'ly 10-15 mph. Visibility good.

Several new crews have arrived during the week. They are participating in training exercises and lectures to make them good "Operational Types."

29/4/45

Weather: Cloudy. Occasional showers, rain sleet. Visibility good. Wind 10-15 mph.

Still no Operations through, but History is still being made. A.C. Cochrane has submitted F541 completed at 1200 hours on the 29.4.45. Must be working for a repat.

30/4/45

Weather: Cloudy with snow. Visibility good. Wind 10-15 mph.

A quiet day, although training was carried out this afternoon. F/L A.L. D'Eon DFC (J.85496) was posted to RCAF "R" Depot today. F/L D'Eon is the Squadron Signals Officer. A telegram was immediately made out to recall F/L D'Eon from leave, when he walked in himself and offered to take it down for despatch.

1/5/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy with showers in evening. Visibility good. Wind NW to N., 15-20 mph, moderating 5-10 mph in evening.

A quiet day with no flying. The Station Commander held a muster parade in No. 2 Hangar at 1500 hours. Speaking to the Parade, the C.O. dealt with the problems arising after VE day, namely our return to Canada, and the period prior to our departure. During this period personnel will be able to take advantage of a variety of courses in order to improve their Educational standing qualifying them for better positions in the post-war world. Organized Sport will be stepped up, and the entertainment at Leeming, which at present leads all 6 Group, will continue at the same pace.

On their return to Canada all R.C.A.F. personnel will be granted 30 days leave, after which they may volunteer for Service in the Pacific.

2/5/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy. Fine intervals, but cloudy with showers and a thunderstorm in the evening. Visibility good. Wind NW to N. 10-15 mph, falling light variable in the evening.

A Training Program was carried out this afternoon. Ten crews carried out Bombing Practice at Snape. Information has been received that R.82529 WO.1 Sobkowicz. W.E., missing since 14.7.43, has been reported safe in the U.K. on 23.4.45.

3/5/45

Weather: Fair becoming cloudy with showers and thunderstorm at night. Visibility moderate becoming good but moderate in rain at night. Wind light and variable.

Operations Order No. 392 was issued this morning. Nine aircraft were detailed for Night Mining Operations. Operation was cancelled, however, after eight aircraft had taken off, at approximately 2030 hours. All mines were brought back due to recall.

Information has been received that R108426 Sgt. Hooley, missing since 26.6.43., has been reported safe in the U.K. while P/O Fuller (J88700) missing since 22.1.44., is now a patient in No. 4 Canadian General Hospital.

4/5/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy with slight showers. Fine at night. Vis. mod. to poor early becoming good. Wind NW 6-12 mph.

Aircraft from yesterdays Operation landed at approximately 0255 hours this morning after circling the aerodrome for several hours. The day was very quiet with very little training. Information has been received that W/O Hamel, Spencer, and Sgt. Page, who went missing on 24.3.44, 22.6.43, and 26.6.43, respectively, arrived in the U.K. 27.4.45.

5/5/45

Weather: Fine becoming cloudy with rain all afternoon and continuing into the night. Visibility moderate but poor at night. Wind calm becoming SE to S 6-12 mph.

Twelve crews were detailed for training this afternoon. Take off at app. 1333 hours. Aircraft landed at approximately 1548 hours.

6/5/45

Weather: Rain at first, becoming fair to cloudy in the afternoon, fine at night. Visibility moderate to poor early, becoming good, Wind light variable becoming W'ly 10-15 mph.

Another training program was carried out this afternoon and evening. Three crews were detailed for the afternoon program, while 8 were detailed for night flying.

7/5/45

Weather: Fine early, becoming cloudy with intermittent rain ceasing early afternoon. Cloudy hazy with mist by midnight. Vis. good, falling moderate, poor in evening. Wind light S'ly or variable.

Very little flying today. Word has been received that tomorrow would be VE Day and everyone is busy preparing for it.

8/5/45

Weather: Cloudy with fog. Rain till evening with a thunderstorm in the night. Visibility bad becoming moderate to good, but poor at night. Wind calm.

"VE DAY". This is the day for which we have been waiting for a long time. Everyone is celebrating except crews detailed for "Exodus" Flights, who, on this first trip conducted 288 ex-P.O.W.'s to England.

The day-finished with free beer in No. 2 Hangar followed by an all ranks dance in the N.A.A.F.I.

9/5/45

Weather: Cloudy with fog, slight rain at times, fair in evening. Visibility bad, improving to good in the afternoon. Wind mainly light in the morning but becoming SW'ly 10-15 mph in afternoon.

12 Crews were detailed again today for Exodus Operations. Take off was at approximately 1923 hours. Crews returned to base by 21.45 hours.

10/5/45

Weather: Fine becoming cloudy. Visibility good, moderate at times. Wind light S to SW falling calm.

Maximum effort today. 20 kites from this Squadron were off to the Continent for another Exodus Operation. Take off was at approximately 1510 hours this afternoon. Only 9 kites had returned to base by 2359 hours.

11/5/45

Weather: Fine with mist and fog clearing, becoming cloudy with slight rain. Visibility bad, improving to moderate to good in afternoon. Wind calm, later S to SE 2-5 mph.

Eight aircraft returned early this morning from yesterday's operations, landing at approx. 0217 hours.

Five crews were despatched to the continent this afternoon mostly carrying Technical Types and flying crews to pick up aircraft which were left behind owing to unserviceability. Aircraft took off at app. 1513 hours and returned to base by 2315 hours.

It is evident that many crews on this Squadron are due for disappointment on the issue of being able to fly home. Current rumour has it that no consideration of the type of good work, (Top Dzussten in Hteup) - not to mention the mining that this Base has been doing so well in the past, is to be taken as a basis of priority, but that the mere toss of a coin - should decide priority in Transatlantic flying.

12/5/45

Weather: Fine early, later cloudy with a shower, becoming fine in the evening, hazy at night. Visibility moderate improving to good, but moderate at night. Wind calm becoming S to SE 6-12 mph, falling light at night.

Very little doing today owing to the instability of the weather.

13/5/45

Weather: Cloudy with thunderstorms early, fair to cloudy with rain or thundery showers. Visibility moderate becoming good. Wind light variable becoming S to SW freshening 20-30 mph.

This morning a Church Parade was held in No. 3 Hangar. Thanksgiving Services were conducted by Padres Clarke and Williams. After dinner a Stand-down came through until 2359 hours.

14/5/45

Weather: Fair, becoming fair to cloudy with showers. Good visibility. Wind SW to W 30-40 mph. Falling to 10-20 mph at night.

A very quiet day. There was a stand down during the afternoon.

15/5/45

Weather: Mainly cloudy, fair to fine in evening. Visibility excellent. Wind WSE'ly 10-20 mph, moderating 4-8 mph in evening.

Eleven kites were detailed this afternoon for Cross Country to France. Four ground crew personnel accompanied each aircraft to look over the "D" Day beaches and points of interest. Take off was at 1430 hours and the aircraft returned to base by 2024 hours.

16/5/45

Weather: Fair becoming cloudy with a period of rain and drizzle during the morning, cloudy rest of day. Visibility moderate in rain becoming excellent. Wind SW to S 8-10 mph, veering SW to WSW 15-20 mph.

No flying was laid on for today. G/C A.C. Hull, the Station Commander, addressed the Squadron Aircrew in 427 Briefing Room. The aircrew were given papers to fill out to ascertain where they wish to serve in the 2nd phase of the War.

17/5/45

Weather: Fair becoming cloudy with rain and drizzle around midday. Visibility moderate improving to excellent. Wind SSW to WSW 8-12 mph veering W'ly.

There was a stand-down today. Very quiet day. More ex-Squadron personnel have returned to the U.K. with the latest Prisoners of War released, e.g. F/O Beaton and Carson who went missing 13.6.44, and 22.1.44, respectively, arrived in the U.K. 8.5.45.

18/5/45

Weather: Cloudy with fair intervals. Visibility moderate early, becoming good. Wind light and variable becoming SE'ly 4-8 mph.

Fourteen aircraft were detailed for flying this afternoon. They carried out various exercises. Take-off was at 1435 hours, and aircraft landed by approximately 18.50 hours.

19/5/45

Weather: Cloudy, then fair to fine, cloudy after dark. Visibility excellent. Wind light S to SE backing ESSE to E 10-16 mph.

Nine aircraft were detailed for flying this afternoon. Exercises carried out were Range Bombing, Fighter Affiliation, Air to Sea, S.B.A., and Local. Take off was at 1344 hours. Aircraft returned to base at app. 1734 hours.

20/5/45

Weather: Cloudy, thundery rain in the evening. Visibility good falling moderate in the evening. Wind light and variable, becoming E to SE 5-10 mph falling calm at night.

Several lists were received today of repatriated Prisoners of War. Among these were the following Squadron personnel, F/O Carter-Edwards who went missing 8.6.44., W/O Hutchings and W/O McKinnon who went missing 14.7.43., and 26.6.43, respectively, returned to the U.K. 9.5.45.

21/5/45

Weather: Overcast with fair periods. Fog early. Shower after noon. Visibility poor becoming moderate to good. Wind light variable becoming SE'ly 5-10 mph.

Nine aircraft were detailed for training this afternoon. Four aircraft carried out Range Bombing exercises in addition to the exercises carried out by all aircraft, such as Fighter Affiliation, Air to Sea, Homings and S.B.A. Take off was scheduled for 1400 hrs. Kites returned to base by 1718 hours.

22/5/45

Weather: Cloudy. Visibility poor early becoming excellent. Wind NW'ly 5-12 mph falling light.

More training was carried on this afternoon. Eight crews were detailed for the same exercises as yesterday. Take off at app. 1345 hours, returning to base by 1739 hours.

23/5/45

Weather: Overcast to cloudy with fair periods. Fog during morning. Visibility poor becoming moderate. Wind N-NNE'ly 5-25 mph.

Very quiet day with no flying.

24/5/45

Weather: Cloudy with fair periods. Visibility moderate becoming poor late. Wind N'ly 5-12 mph falling light S'ly.

Ten aircraft were detailed for a tour over the Continent. Four ground crew personnel accompanied each aircraft. Points of interest were pointed out to them and many a camera shutter clincked. (Where do they get the film?) Aircraft were airborne at 1630 hours and returned to base at 2030 hours.

Six aircraft carried out night flying exercises. T.O. at 22.02 hours.

25/5/45

Weather: Cloudy with intermittent, slight rain during morning. Visibility poor becoming excellent. Wind light S'ly early veering W'ly 5-20 mph.

Aircraft on night flying returned to base by 0229 hours.

Eleven aircraft carried out Cross-Country trips over France and Germany. Nine crews took off at app. 1400 hours to fly the French route, and two aircraft took off at 1030 hours, for the German route. Aircraft returned to base by 2118 hours except S. Deegan, who landed at East Kirby on two engines - one engine feathered, over the continent and a second caught fire on approaching East Kirby.

26/5/45

Weather: Cloudy with occasional showers. Visibility excellent becoming moderate. Wind light variable becoming SSW-NNW 4-10 mph.

Two crews were airborne at 1045 hours for another German X-Country. They returned to base at 1800 hours.

All crews were busy this afternoon "signing up" for further service in the R.C.A.F. in various theatres of war, after a lecture by W/C E.M. Bryson at 10 a.m.

27/5/45

Weather: Cloudy becoming fair then fine. Slight rain and drizzle during morning. Occasional showers. Fog forming late. Visibility good becoming poor. Wind N'ly 5-12 mph., falling calm.

Two crews were detailed for a Cross Country over Germany, but this was scrubbed due to duff weather conditions. A stand-down was declared till 0930 hours tomorrow.

28/5/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy with fog early. Occasional showers. Vis poor to moderate. Wind calm or light variable.

Two crews again detailed for German route. This was again scrubbed.

The Commanding Officer called a parade of all aircrew for inspection purposes. This parade was held at 0930 hours. Five crews were detailed for Sim Mining, but this was scrubbed due to duff weather.

29/5/45

Weather: Mainly cloudy with rain early, showers later. Vis poor becoming good. Wind light variable becoming W'ly 5-15 mph.

Word has been received today that the following awards have been approved by His Majesty the King:

F/O D.B. Ross DFC	(139642)	-	Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross		
F/O W.W. MacKeracher	(J25923)	-	Distinguished Flying Cross		
F/O G.R. Kirby	(J88505)	-	"	"	"
F/O T.C. Wagar	(J35266)	-	"	"	"
P/O H.M.B. Millward	(J90550)		"	"	"
F/O J.R. Thackeray	(J28984)		"	"	"
F/L F.J. Wilgress	(52005)		"	"	"

30/5/45

Weather: fair to cloudy, occasional showers. Vis. good. Wind SW'ly backing S'ly mph.

A Sports Parade was held today on the Station. All sections of 427 Squadron were represented. Two crews were detailed on a German Cross-Country flight, each aircraft carrying five passengers.

31/5/45

Weather: Fair to cloudy with thunderstorms in evening. Visibility moderate. Wind mainly S'ly 5-15 mph.

Eight crews were detailed for day flying today, carrying out various training exercises. Two crews carried out a Cross Country Flight over Germany. Their aircraft were airborne at approximately 1030 hours. No. 427 Squadron Orderly Room was represented on this flight in the person of LAC "Documents" Robinson. "Robbie" has now made the first "installment" on a parachute. Do you know what the silver handle is for now, Robbie?

HONOURS AND AWARDS: F/L J.L. Storme (J20845) and F/L W.M. Walker (J21276), were awarded Immediate Distinguished Flying Crosses.  
F/L D.B. Ross DFC (139642) was awarded a Bar to the Distinguished Flying Cross.

F/O W.W. MacKeracher (J25923), F/O G.R. Kirby (J88505),  
F/O T.C. Wagar (J35266), P/O H.M.B. Millward (J90550),  
F/O J.R. Thackeray (J28984), and F/L F.J. Wilgress  
(52005) were awarded non-immediate D.F.C.'s.

CASUALTIES: NIL.

POSTINGS:

J 24041 F/L J.F. Still, posted from 63 Base wef 27.4.45  
J 89800 F/O W.J. Savage " to 22 O.T.U. " 3.5.45  
J 85496 A/F/L A.L. D'Eon " " "R" Depot " 30.4.45  
J 23907 F/L G.W. Swann " from 76 Base wef 11.4.45  
J 88844 F/O S.O.V. Teit " " " "  
J 90998 P/O W.P. Metcalfe " " " "  
J 87317 F/O A.J.J.B. Marion " " " "  
J 26757 A/F/L G.M. Togardine posted to "R" Depot wef 4.5.45  
J 25796 A/F/L L.J. Ayers " " " 7.5.45  
J 37520 F/O R.E.F. Crossey " " " "  
J 39303 F/O G.F. Stratford " " " "  
J 37719 F/O C.S. Willis " " " "  
J 27312 F/O P. Strutynski " " " "  
G 91012 P/O J. Tribe " " " "  
J 93867 P/O B. Maltinsky " " " "  
J 88825 F/O G.H.M. Walker " " " "  
J 42041 F/O R.H. Renault posted to 76 Base wef 28.4.45  
J 40454 F/O A.C. Bruce " " " "  
J 39863 F/O L.B. Lemon " " " "  
J 38808 F/O C.G. Nelson " "R" Depot wef 8.5.45  
C 1346 S/L D.J. Cleland posted to 420 Squadron wef 7.5.45  
J 93943 P/O L.W. Pyke " " " "  
J 91019 P/O H.W. Clapham " " " "  
J 10133 S/L A.W.C.V. Merton posted to RCAF "R" Depot wef 9.5.45  
J 17034 F/L C.N. Stanley posted from 408 Sqn wef 29.5.45.