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R.A.F. Form 540

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para. 2349, and War Manual, Pt. II, chapter XX, and
notes to R.A.F. Pocket Book.

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

Page No. 1

of (Unit or Formation) No. 144 (BS) Squadron, R.A.F. WEST RAYNHAM.

No. of pages used for day

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
West Raynham.	June, 1944	1st	Three crews operated uneventfully in support of a small bomber force to SAUMER. Weather 9-10/10ths cloud except at target. After being delayed and put off time and time again by the indomitable "Major" LeBoutte, the posting of this popular Belgian member of the Squadron became effective today, much to everyone's regret. His new post is as a Wing Commander in the Research Depot of the Belgian Inspectorate General. Others leaving the Squadron about this time, also four expired were P/Lt. H.C. Kelsey D.F.C. & Bar and P/O. E.M. Smith, D.F.C., D.F.M. both with fine records. Newcomers include two more Belgians, P/O. H.J.C. Legeuge and P/O. L.A. VanDen Bergher; P/O. P.A. Riddoch & P/O. C.S. Romayne. P/O. Mallett deprived of his Pilot (The Major) teamed up with P/L. Engelbach.	F.541 P.1. APP. 82. Entry 4.
		2nd	Stand down for Squadron. Diving drill at Norwich.	F.541 P.1.
		3rd	Air Firing during the day. From out of six aircraft which operated uneventfully in support of the Bomber Force on the FRENCH COAST and LANNEDU two returned early with Radar trouble. W/Cdr. Davis, Officer Commanding, guide, philosopher and friend of all in the Squadron, and one of the few running links with the Squadron's earliest days, posted to Headquarters No. 100 Group. Succeeded by W/Cdr. C.V. Winn, D.F.C., a happy choice, since he formerly commanded one of the Squadron Flights. More air-firing and another stand down. Two new Navigators Radio posted in: P/O. R. Murphy and P/O. A.A. Melrose.	APP. 82. Entry 1. APP. 82. Entry 4. APP. 82. Entry 5. APP. 82. Entry 6.
		4th	Freshmen: P/O. W.P. Riser and W/O. H.J. Melrose. Air firing in afternoon. Five of 'D' Day, and an all out effort called for. Squadron put up twelve aircraft out of fourteen; previous record was ten aircraft.	F.541 P.1.2 & 3.
		5th	10/10ths cloud up to 9,000 feet and all patrols which were over NORTHERN FRANCE uneventful, two crews unfortunately having to return early, one with engine trouble the other with A.I. U/S. Squadron's new Commander Officer W/Cdr. Winn was out with the boys, despite lack of practice, and chased a ME110.	F.541 P.3.
		6th	Five out of six crews completed uneventful patrols in support of bombing and minelaying forces.	F.541 P.3.
		7th	Six aircraft operated in bad weather in support of attacks on PARIS. No fun or games, much to everyone's disgust.	F.541 P.4. & 5.
		6th (Contd)	Two more arrivals on the Squadron - P/Lt. R.A.W. Scott, D.F.C., formerly of the Squadron, here to act as Nav/Rad Leader and to crew with W/Cdr. Winn; P/O. A.R.A. Smalls (Netherlands) from No. 157 Squadron for Ground Radar Duties Superannary.	APP. 82. Entry 2. APP. 82. Entry 3.
		8th	Six crews again operated over NORTHERN FRANCE, but the night was far from uneventful. Weather mostly 10/10ths. P/O. Gallacher and W/O. Moleson chased an unidentified aircraft, which was taking violent evasive action, down into flak over REMES. Enemy blew up. P/L. Clements with P/O. Pierce hit by flak just after crossing enemy coast. Returning, port engine out, then starboard began to surge in Wisbech area. As aircraft was then at 3,000 feet, crew baled out. Several diversions, including Capt. H.J.B. D'Hautecourt and 2nd/Lt. E.E. Kocher, a promising and popular brace of Fighting French, on their seventh sortie. Making emergency single engine landing at Ford, their aircraft swung off the runway, hitting two fighters, and burnt up. Both unfortunately died from their injuries a few hours later.	F.541 P.4. F.541 P.4. & 5.
		9th	No operations. P/Lt. J.R. Wheldon, Nav/Rad Leader, who is succeeded by P/L. Scott, posted to B.S.D.U.	F.541 P.4.
		10th	1-crews sent to Belgium Research Duties, ending on a third thick ring on the way.	APP. 84. Entry 12.
			Bad weather again, but six out of seven crews operated over NORTHERN FRANCE uneventfully. The seventh aircraft turned back with one engine U/S.	F.541 P.5.
		11th	Squadron's run of bad luck continues. P/Lt. P.A. Riddoch and P/O. C.S. Romayne on a training flight when their aircraft disintegrated in mid-air. P/L. Riddoch blown out and parachute accidentally pulled	51 0

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to
Appendices.

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	
West Raynham.	June. 11th.		saved his life, as he landed unconscious, and will be in hospital for some time. F/O. Ronayne was, unfortunately killed. No operations, but three new crews on night training programme.	P. 54 P. 5 & 6
	12th		CRISWICK was the playground of seven crews, operating in 9/10ths cloud without any luck. F/Lt. D.V. Anderson with F/O. R.W. Osborn, an eight crew, turned back after port engine had burnt for five minutes. Successfully landed at base on starboard engine. F/O. H. Parrott, Air Sea Rescue Officer, posted to Headquarters, No. 100 Group, tour expired for Air Staff Duties, eventually to become Group Air Sea Rescue Officer.	App. 27 Enlg. 8.
	13th		Two crews night training. No operations.	P. 54 P. 5 & 6
	14th		7 crews operated over NORTHERN FRANCE in patchy weather. After a dog-fight at 4,000 feet, W/O. Welham with W/O. Hollis obtained a visual on a ME410 burning lights and jinking. Fire was returned by the enemy, but his starboard engine was hit and exploded. Enemy dived vertically, crashed and exploded. The rest of the tips were without incident. Two more departures: F/Lt. H.B. White, D.F.C. & Bar ("14 White Squadron") and F/Lt. M.S. Allen, D.F.C. & Bar given a rest after knocking down ten huns and damaging two others: posted to B.S.D.U. for instructor duties, but probably will operate occasionally with the Squadron. F/O. A.C. Newton reposted to the Squadron after being non-effective sick, and made O.C. Station Flight whilst still banned from operations.	App. 27 Enlg. 8.
	15th		No operations. Night training of new crews.	P. 54 P. 8.
	16th		W/Cdr. J.R.D. Braham paid one of his periodic visits, using this aerodrome as an advanced base and carrying out a further day Ranger patrol. No joy resulted however as low cloud was everywhere. Seven crews on STERNADE. F/O. LeSage and F/O. Vandenberghe discovered a new Beacon, and, whilst chasing a contact, also discovered four contacts on backward A.I., closing rapidly. Violent evasive action was taken, but contacts could not be shaken off so dived for cloud cover and were hit in starboard engine as entering cloud. Engine caught fire, which was put out by the automatic extinguisher, and propeller was feathered and course set for base. They were again chased and went down to 1,500 feet. For forty five minutes had to take violent evasive action. Then equipment failed, also R/T. Arrived back over England and picked up lights of an airfield and saw indications of enemy activity. Orbits with Navigation lights on and fired a red flare, which brought on the flare path lighting. Completed another orbit and was coming in to land when all lights were doused, our aircraft being mistaken for an enemy. Tried to go round again, but lost height and crashed landed just off the airfield. Whilst the crew were getting out, aircraft caught fire and burnt out. Scams of accident proved to be West Welling. New C.O.'s welfare policy beginning to bear fruit. Officer appointed in charge of all accommodation rooms, and frequent surprise visits paid by C.O. himself to the Airman's Mess and Barrack Block. Consequently some improvement in airman's conditions. Sports Officer also appointed, and games organised.	P. 54 P. 7.
	17th		No operations, only night training.	App. 28 Enlg. 1.
	18th		F/Lt. Clements posted Non-effective sick to West Raynham with recommendation for a rest. Again no operations, but training at night.	
	19th & 20th		Training at night, but no operations. "Bolin in daylight Flap". All aircraft stripped of special equipment and prepared to take T.A.F. markings. Scrubbed after 36 hours! Stand by.	
	21st		Squadron Parade for Investiture of W/Cdr. LeBoutte's D.F.C. by the A.O.C. No. 100 Group (Air Commodore E.B. Addison, C.B.E.). Several Belgian visitors of high rank. Parade followed by March Past. WELLSWICKS & CRISWICK the target for tonight. Four crews operated in 10/10ths cloud. F/O. Colles and F/O. Carter flew into intense heavy flak in DUSSELDORF area and were hit several times. On return, port undercarriage locked down, but started to swing loosely. Orbits base for 45 minutes to no avail, and baled out 10 miles S.W. of base. Aircraft landed in a field, and the crew made successful descents.	P. 54 P. 9.
	22nd		No operations. Training programme at night.	P. 54 P. 9 & 10.
	23rd.		Uneventful night's work. Two crews on OISEMENT, HENRIQUES, L'HEY & COUBRONNE, and two on BREMEN. A fifth aircraft turned back with lighting and A.I. v/s.	
	24th		Two crews operated in WANDER area uneventfully, and three crews were on night training.	

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of (Unit or Formation) No. 141 (BS) Squadron, R.A.F. WEST RAYNHAM.

No. of pages used for day

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
West Raynham.	19th July, 25th		Special patrols "D", "E" & "F" flown by two out of three crews. One turned back after crossing enemy coast with A.I. w/s. W/Odr. J.R.D. Brahm failed to return from a second daylight ranger patrol from here in a month. No news. A great blow to the Squadron he formerly commanded.	F.541 P.10.
	26th 27th		Day of rest except for four crews on an air firing programme in the morning. Eleven crews shared in a night of very mixed blessings, over NORTHERN FRANCE. Two Huns accounted for; but two crews failed to return. S/Ldr. Rice and F/O. Rogerson got their's - a JUB8, in the CAMERAI area. After causing two fires in enemy aircraft, this dived steeply, then looped over our aircraft, heading straight for it, next dived vertically and exploded in mid-air. Another JUB8 fell to W/O. Welham and W/O. Hollis, their second enemy destroyed, and both within a fortnight. Their kill was near TIEBURG. F/Lt. P.S. Engelbach (one of the veterans of the Squadron), with F/O. R.S. Mallett, D.F.C. (in his third tour), did not return, and no news was received of them or of F/Lt. H.R. Hampshire and W/O. A.A.W. Melrose, who were on their first sortie. S/Ldr. MacAndrew and F/O. Willk both new added the D.F.C. to their names in recognition of an excellent tour with the Squadron.	F.541 P.10 & 11. 412. F.541 P.10. F.541 P.10 & 12. 412. 22. 99 - 6.
	28th 29th 30th		No operations. Six out of eight crews on VIERZON. One turned back with engine trouble and the other because the Pilot was ill. The end of the month sees the Squadron in a pretty parlous state so far as crews are concerned. But C.O. conducting a drive to put this right; Group "blitzed" by him, and next month should produce results. Another drive - for National Savings - resulted in the record total of £14. 10/- being collected in the month.	F.541 P.12. F.541 P.13 & 14.
			LOSSES FOR MONTH : TWO MOSQUITOS & CREWS. SUCCESSSES FOR MONTH : TWO JUB8s, ONE UNIDENTIFIED ENEMY AIRCRAFT & ONE ME109 TOTAL FLYING : 698 HOURS. DESTROYED.	

Wing Commander, Commanding,
No. 141 (BS) Squadron,
R.A.F. Station, WEST RAYNHAM.

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