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R.A.F. Form 540

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

Page No. 1.

See instructions for use of this form in K.R. and A.C.I., para. 2349, and War Manual, Pt. II, chapter XX., and notes in R.A.F. Pocket Book.

of (Unit or Formation) 150 Squadron, No.1 Group, Royal Air Force. No. of pages used for day

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
R.A.F. Station,			Officer Commanding R.A.F. Station Smith - Group Captain D.L. Thompson.	
Smith, Nr., Gode,			Officer Commanding 150 Squadron - Wing Commander K.J. Mellor.	
Yorkshire.				
	1.4.42.		Two "Fresher" aircraft and crews were prepared for operations, together with an extensive night flying programme including blind approach training at R.A.F. Station Holme. Weather conditions had been good all day, but poor visibility and low cloud locally prevented the training aircraft from taking off.	
	1/2.4.42.		Executive Order for Operations No.69 called for two "Fresher" aircraft to make an attack against the port and docks at LE HAVRE. After flying for two and a half hours, P/O.Love and crew were forced to abandon their mission owing to a wireless failure. The remaining sortie carried out a successful attack against the docks at LE HAVRE. Weather conditions were good over the target and from 16,000 feet detonations of the bombs released could be seen to cross the docks and quay-side buildings. Little opposition was encountered and the aircraft and crew returned to base without incident.	Form 541
	2/3.4.42.		Executive Order for Operations No.70 gave instructions for seven aircraft to attack the M.TFORD works at POISSY near PARIS. This operation was carried out from an altitude of 8,000 feet. Although the weather was good, other conditions had changed somewhat since our last visit to PARIS. The hum, evidently anticipating further raids such as the one against the RENAULT works, had brought up a considerable number of light flak guns that were capable of extremely accurate The barrage that met our aircraft was an extremely accurate one making violent evasive action necessary in many cases, but in spite of this, accurate bombing was carried out, detonations and the raging of fires being clearly seen in the target area. This operation was carried out in excellent weather conditions, one aircraft and crew being missing.	Form 541.

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Smith.	2/3.4.42.	(Cont'd).	<p><u>Aircraft.</u> Pilots. Observer. Wireless Operator. Gunners.</p> <p>43440. 36476. 1359903. 922210.</p> <p>X.9814. P/O.Powell. W/Sgt.Sykes. Sgt.Barton. Sgt.Shepherd.</p> <p>16212. 1377455.</p> <p>"Q" Group Captain Webb. Sgt.Maitby.</p>	
			In addition to operations and extensive night flying programme was carried out combining B.A.F. with night experience on the new Wellington III aircraft.	
	3.4.42.		Five crews prepared to operate and during the afternoon flew to an advanced base at Morham St Faith where the proposed operation was cancelled at 18.00 hours. Aircraft returned to base.	
	4.4.42.		Weather conditions on the continent prevented five aircraft taking off on operations. Five crews converting on to Wellington III aircraft carried out a blind approach training programme at Wans Holmes, the first aircraft being on the beam at 20.30 hours.	
	5.4.42.		<p>Executive order for Operations No.71 instructed seven main aircraft to attack COLOGNE and one "Fresher" aircraft to attack LE HAVRE. One main sortie was cancelled owing to an engine failure. These operations were carried out in varying weather conditions, 6/10 to 8/10 low cloud obscured the target and, both on the route and in the target area, landmarks were difficult to locate. The concentrated defences all along the RUHR were extremely accurate and the searchlight belt both leading to the RUHR and surrounding the target were active co-operating with flak and fighters. Bombs were released from heights between 15,000 and 18,000 feet but owing to the low cloud and the continual flashes of A.A. guns, no results could be seen. It was on leaving the target that one of our aircraft, captained by P/O.Mardon, was attacked by an enemy night fighter believed to have been a J.U.88. This aircraft made two attacks against the Wellington, firing can and machine gun fire at close range. On the second attack the rear gunner of our aircraft, Sgt.Roberts, got a long burst in at the Hun and claimed to have shot it down. The remaining aircraft completed their mission without incident.</p> <p>One "Fresher" crew carried out a successful and uneventful attack against the docks at LE HAVRE.</p>	Form 541

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of (Unit or Formation) 150 Squadron, No.1 Group, R.A.F.

No. of pages used for day

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Royal Air Force Station, Snaith, Nr. Goole, Yorkshire.	6/7.4.42.		<u>Executive Order for Operations No.72</u> called for six aircraft to attack ESSEN. Weather conditions had not altered from our visit to COLOGNE last night. 6/10 to 8/10 cloud covered the target where fires were already burning when our aircraft arrived. The combination of searchlight and anti-aircraft defences are wonderfully co-ordinated in the RUHR and make violent evasive action the only course to take when approaching a target. Pin-pointing themselves on the river South of the town, our bombers approached ESSEN at heights between 15,000 and 18,000 feet, bombs being released on the fires already burning. After making a successful attack against the target, one of our aircraft captained by P/Sgt. Stirling, was intercepted by an enemy night fighter believed to be a J.U.88 - the rear gunner managed to get a burst in at the intruder and claims to have damaged it as no second attack was made. Our aircraft and crews returned to base without further incident.	Form 541.
	7.4.42.		No operations were ordered.	
	8/9.4.42.		<u>Executive Order for Operations No.73</u> instructed eight main aircraft to attack HAMBURG. One sortie was abandoned before take off owing to engine failure. Weather conditions were quite good for this operation, landmarks and pin-points being picked out with comparative ease. Arriving in the target area the river ELBE was clearly seen and runs were made straight across the target from East to West. Bombs were released from heights between 15,000 and 18,000 feet where detonations were seen to be in the area surrounding the point of aim. Flak and searchlight activity was intense and accurate but our pilots evasive action proved successful and all aircraft and crews returned to base.	Form 541.
	9.4.42.		No operations were ordered. Both Flights attended lectures during the day on Wellington III	31

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Smith.	9.4.42.		aircraft and Hercules XI engines.	
	10/11/4.42.		<u>Executive Order for Operations No.74</u> ordered eight main aircraft to attack <u>ESSEN</u> . A cloudless sky and almost perfect night contributed largely to making this operation a successful one. Approaching the RUHR, large fires could be seen burning at COLOGNE and other targets, while <u>ESSEN</u> itself was a mass of fires. Flak and searchlight activity was traditional of the RUHR, being accurate and one perfectly co-ordinated with the other. Bombs were released from between 15,000 and 18,000 feet, detonations being seen to be in the target area. The operation was completed without incident.	Form 541.
	11.4.42.		Seven aircraft and crews were prepared for operations that were cancelled during the afternoon. During the day "A" Flight continued with their conversion training on Wellington III aircraft.	
	12/13/4.42.		<u>Executive Order for Operations No.75</u> gave instructions for seven Wellington 1c main aircraft to attack <u>ESSEN</u> , 6 Wellington III aircraft and two Wellington 1c aircraft to attack <u>LE HAVRE</u> . This operation was the first from the Squadron to be carried out by Wellington III aircraft. The Wellington 1c is undoubtedly a very wonderful aircraft but it is the opinion of pilots in this Squadron that after the 1c the Mk.III are a revelation. <u>ESSEN. Wellington 1c Bomb load 6 s.b.o. incendiary.</u> Weather conditions were good from the time of take off to the time of landing, a practically cloudless sky helping considerably in locating and the effective bombing of the target. Flak and searchlight activity caused our aircraft little trouble and the operation was completed without incident. <u>LE HAVRE. Wellington III and 1c aircraft. Bomb load 14x50 G.P.</u> The first operation with our new aircraft and a very successful one. Crews reported that their aircraft behaved magnificently. <u>LE HAVRE</u> was located through 4/10 to 6/10 cloud and from heights	Form 541.

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of (Unit or Formation) 50 Squadron, No. 1 Group Royal Air Force.

No. of pages used for day

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
R.A.F. Station, <u>Snaithe, Mr. Goole, Yorkshire.</u>	<u>12/1/42.</u>		<p>ranging between 16,000 and 18,000 feet, was effectively bombed. In the clear night the coastline, docks and harbour could be clearly seen and crews are confident that their bombs found their mark. Little opposition was encountered from the ground defences.</p> <p><u>LS HAVRE. Wellington 1c aircraft. Bomb load 1x250 G.P.</u></p> <p>One sortie was cancelled after take off owing to an engine failure. The conditions of the one sortie completing the operation are as given above.</p>	Form 541.
	<u>13.4.42.</u>		No operations were ordered. Training on Wellington III aircraft was continued during the day.	
	<u>14/15.4.42.</u>		<p>Executive Order for Operations No. 76, called for three Wellington III and six Wellington 1c main to attack DORTMUND and four Wellington III and one Wellington 1c "Freshers" to attack <u>LS HAVRE, DORTMUND</u>. No cloud and good visibility contributed largely in making this operations successful one. Landmarks such as the DORTMUND - Rhine canal were picked out with comparative ease and the actual target bombed from heights between 15,000 and 16,500 feet. Large fires were burning in town when our bombers left and crews reported that the whole of the RUHR was well alight with fires, especially COLOGNE.</p> <p><u>LS HAVRE.</u> Aircraft attacking <u>LS HAVRE</u> reported weather conditions as being good until arrival in the target area where ground haze tended to obscure the objective. Several runs were made across the area where little opposition was encountered and bombs were released from between 15,000 and 16,500 feet, no results being seen.</p> <p>From these operations all our aircraft returned.</p>	Form 541
	<u>15/16.4.42.</u>		<p>Executive Order for Operations No. 77 gave instructions for eight aircraft to attack DORTMUND. Weather conditions were good until 50° North and 04° East where cloud formation increased to</p>	32

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Smith.	15/16.4.42.		8/10 to 10/10 about obscuring landmarks. Fierce opposition greeted all aircraft as they approached the RHMR and the close co-ordination of searchlight and anti-aircraft defences was again evident. Attacking at heights between 14,000 and 18,000 feet bombs were released on E.T.A. no results being seen.	Form 541.
	16.4.42.		No operations were ordered.	
	17/18.4.42.		<u>Executive Order for Operations No. 78</u> instructed eight aircraft to attack HAMBURG. Aircraft took off in good weather conditions that prevailed along route and target area. Visibility was exceptionally good and pin-points were made without difficulty. All crews located the river Elbe and runs were made across the target at heights between 14,000 and 17,000 feet, detonations of the bombs released being seen to be well in the target area. The Flak and searchlight defence was intense and accurate but our aircraft left the target seeing large fires burning and the impression of successful bombing. Aircraft and crews returned to base without incident.	Form 541.
			<u>aircraft</u> Six "B" Flight and Crews continued their conversion on Wellington III aircraft by successfully completing a blind approach programme at Holme.	
	18.4.42.		No operations were ordered. Six aircraft prepared for nightflying that was cancelled owing to adverse weather.	
	19.4.42.		No operations were ordered.	
	20.4.42.		Two "Fresher" crews prepared for operations but owing to adverse weather these were cancelled.	
	21.4.42.		Bad weather again prevented the Squadron from operating.	

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of (Unit or Formation) 150 Squadron, No. 1 Group, Royal Air Force.

No. of pages used for day.

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices																									
R.A.F. Station, Snaith, Nr. Goole, Yorkshire.	22/23.4.42.		Executive Order for Operations No. 79 gave instructions for six main aircraft to attack COLOGNE and three aircraft to attack a "Fresher" target. The "Fresher" sorties were cancelled during the afternoon. Weather conditions had not improved from weather forecasts of the previous three days. Leaving base our aircraft ran into much low cloud, beneath which there was some considerable amounts of haze. On the route out and home, variable amounts of cumulus was encountered while the target itself was almost completely obscured by industrial haze. Flak was intense and accurate the heavy variety coming up to approximately 19,000 feet while the light flak could be seen bursting below our aircraft at 6,000 to 8,000 feet. Bombs were released between the heights of 11,000 and 16,000 feet results could not be seen. All aircraft and crews returned to base.	Form 541																									
	23.4.42.		No operations were ordered.																										
	24/25.4.42.		Executive Order for Operations No. 80 called for ten "Fresher" aircraft to attack DUNKIRK. Taking off on this operation one aircraft, captained by Sergeant Thorogood, crashed into a field adjacent to the W.A.A.F. site in Pollington, all six members of the crew being killed. <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Aircraft.</th><th>Pilots.</th><th>Observer.</th><th>Wireless Operator.</th><th>Gunnery.</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>X 3305.</td><td>137586.</td><td>P/O James.</td><td>131122.</td><td>1181834.</td></tr> <tr> <td>"A"</td><td>P/O Lerwill.</td><td></td><td>Sgt. Jordan.</td><td>Sgt. Chaston.</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>Cen. 64474.R.</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>Sgt. McLeod.</td></tr> </tbody> </table> Good weather conditions both on the route and the target area made DUNKIRK an easy target for for location. From a cloudless sky with exceptionally good visibility the docks and town could be clearly identified and with little opposition from the ground defences bombs were released from heights between 11,000 and 16,000 feet detonations being observed to be in the target area.	Aircraft.	Pilots.	Observer.	Wireless Operator.	Gunnery.	X 3305.	137586.	P/O James.	131122.	1181834.	"A"	P/O Lerwill.		Sgt. Jordan.	Sgt. Chaston.					Cen. 64474.R.					Sgt. McLeod.	Form 541
Aircraft.	Pilots.	Observer.	Wireless Operator.	Gunnery.																									
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"A"	P/O Lerwill.		Sgt. Jordan.	Sgt. Chaston.																									
				Cen. 64474.R.																									
				Sgt. McLeod.																									

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Smith.	25.4.42.		No operations were ordered.	
	26.4.42.		During the day, four aircraft and crews took part in a square search for dinghies in the North Sea. Four aircraft flew for period up to five hours but were unable to locate the dinghies. Four aircraft took part in a practice bombing programme at the Mission Bombing Range. Crews bombed from 6,000 feet, results being average. At 21.30 hours three crews carried out local night flying on Wellington III aircraft.	
	27/28.4.42.		Executive Order for Operations No 81 gave instructions for fourteen main aircraft to attack COLOGNE. Weather conditions were exceptionally good for this operation, no cloud and good visibility making the location of the target a matter of ease. The bridges across the RHINE could be clearly seen and the detonations of bombs were observed to be well in the target area. Numerous small fires could be seen burning over a widespread area of the town. Anti-aircraft and searchlight activity was intense and extremely accurate and the impression left with our crews was that the a large proportion of the RHINE defences were concentrated on COLOGNE and the surrounding districts. Returning from this mission, one of our aircraft, captained by Sgt. Law, was attacked by a night fighter presumed to be a M.E. 110 flying at 10,000 feet approximately 50 miles due West of WALSHEIM. Attacking from above and behind the enemy aircraft made one attack opening fire at one hundred and fifty yards with cannon and machine gun fire. Our rear gunner replied and claims to have put one engine of the M.E. out of action. The enemy aircraft must have been using explosive incendiary ammunition for immediately after the attack the fabric on the centre section of the port wing became alight, the flames spreading to the rear position of the fuselage. The fire burnt continually for a quarter of an hour, by which time the whole of the fabric from the astro dome to the rear turret had burnt away, leaving the bare geodetics. In an attempt to evade the M.E. our aircraft lost 7,000 feet in height and at approximately 3,000 feet the English coast was crossed, and a course set for base. Arriving over the aerodrome at Smith a successful forced landing was made with undercarriage up and with NO flaps. Three aircraft were damaged by flak over the target but these returned to base without incident.	Form 541

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of (Unit or Formation) 150 Squadron, No.1 Group, R.A.F.

No. of pages used for day

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
R.A.F. Station,	27/28.4.42.		Two aircraft and crews are missing from this operation.	
Smith Mr. Goole,			Aircraft. Pilots. Observers. Wireless Operators. Gunners.	
Yorkshire.			X.3288. Sgt. Hutchinson. P/O. Mitchell. Sgt. Potts. 91377.	
			1379636. Sgt. Cowan. 1186829. Sgt. Fussell.	
			"H" 115993. 1381070. J.15126.	
			X.3700. P/O. Bailey. P/O. Wilkinson. Sgt. Marsh. P/O. Grundy.	
			1375485. Sgt. McGin. 1250695. Sgt. Sutton.	
	28.4.42.		Five aircraft and crew were prepared for operations that were cancelled during the afternoon.	
	29/30.4.42.		Executive Order for Operations No.82 instructed nine aircraft to attack the GNOME RHONE works at PARIS.	Form 541.
			Good visibility both en route and over the target made observations comparatively easy. Arriving over PARIS the bend in the river on which the GNOME RHONE works are situated was picked out, and captained made individual attacks varying their heights between 1,500 and 7,000 feet. Bombs were seen to detonate across the target and it could be seen that considerable damage had been inflicted against the works. Light flak was moderate and fairly accurate but had little effect on the course of our aircraft, approximately four searchlights were in operation but these were not co-operating with the anti-aircraft posts. Our aircraft and crews returned to base without incident or loss.	
	30.4.42.		Nine crews prepared for operations but a cancellation order was received during the afternoon.	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Snaith.	April, 1942.		<p><u>HONOURS AND AWARDS.</u></p> <p>619126. Sergeant Roberts awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal.</p> <p><u>EXTRACTS FROM PERSONNEL OCCURRENCE REPORTS.</u></p> <p>106159. Pilot Officer H.H. Wilding, G.D. posted from 20.O.T.U. w.e.f. 31.3.42.</p> <p>69456. Pilot Officer G.E. Yates, G.D.(O) posted to No.1 R.A.F. Depot Unbridge w.e.f. 13.4.42.</p> <p>J.7021. Pilot Officer G.H. Morgan, G.D.(O) posted from 22.O.T.U. w.e.f. 9.4.42.</p> <p>110661. Pilot Officer M.D.A. Mander, G.D.(O) posted from 23.O.T.U. w.e.f. 4.4.42.</p> <p>115026. Pilot Officer W.E. Collingwood, G.D.(G) attached to H.I.No.1 Group w.e.f. 4.4.42.</p> <p>Pilot Officer W.C. Lervill, G.D. posted from 22 O.T.U. w.e.f. 15.4.42.</p> <p>J.7214. Pilot Officer A.F. James, G.D.(O) posted from 22 O.T.U. w.e.f. 15.4.42.</p> <p>N.Z.40429. Pilot Officer A.W.G. Cochrane, G.D. appointed to a Commission as Pilot Officer on Probation w.e.f. 14.4.42.</p> <p>120496. Pilot Officer J.B. Skremer, G.D. appointed to a Commission as Pilot Officer on Probation w.e.f. 20.4.42.</p> <p>82961. Flying Officer W.C. Derrett, G.D.(O) attached to No.21 F.D.G. pending posting to 1st N.S. Canada.</p> <p>87126. Flight Lieutenant R.H.J. MacLure (Med) posted to R.C.R.C. (London) w.e.f. 1.5.42.</p> <p>88826. Flight Lieutenant C.M. Chambers (Med) posted to this Unit from 419 (R.C.) Squadron. w.e.f. 30.4.42.</p>	

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By 370 Squadron, No.1 Group, Royal Air Force.

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