

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

of (Unit or Formation) 420 (RCAF) Squadron

3852

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| Place | Date | Time | Summary of Events | SECRET. | References to Appendices |
|------------|---------|------|--|---------|--------------------------|
| Thelthorpe | 1-1-44 | | The Squadron has settled down since New Years Eve and all sections are almost fully organised. Personnel are arriving daily to fill vacancies within the establishment. 10 new aircrews arrived from 61 Base, they are as follows: 07114 E/O Baker, J.J. - Pilot, J21366 E/O Long, R.W. - Pilot, J14827 E/O Blakeney, L.F. - Pilot, J14032 E/O Plummer, A. - Pilot, J21369 E/O Rice, H.W. - Pilot, J24475 E/O Damsard, H.E. - Pilot, R142702 E/S Sollic, R.F. - Pilot, R60856 E/S Holway, L. - Pilot, R142570 E/S Ward, J.G. - Pilot and R156774 E/S Keegan, E.K. - Pilot, and crew. Our strength is now up to 24 crews. Towards the end of the week the Squadron should have its complement of aircraft. 17 aircraft have now been delivered to date. 42511 W/C D. McIntosh, R.F.C. has started to convert his new crew, many of the pilots are now solo. | | |
| | 5-1-44 | | Station Parade was held today. Inspection being made by Air Commodore McEwen, R.F.C. | | |
| | 6-1-44 | | Cen. 7789 WD2 Wase, G.R. - Pilot and crew returned to unit today from 1659 Conversion Unit. WD2 Wase was considered unable to fly Halifax III due to the shortness of his legs. His inability to reach and handle the controls safely, necessitated this move. WD2 Wase is a very good pilot and it is regretted we have to lose him to another squadron where aircraft will be more suitable to him. | | |
| | 7-1-44 | | Today was normal. Practice flying, circuits and landings. More aircraft arrived from Linton, we now have 19 on hand. | | |
| | 8-1-44 | | 182956 E/L Woodruff, A.J. - WO/AG was posted to 1663 Conversion Unit for conversion duties, R.F.C. 9-1-44. 42511 W/C D. McIntosh, DFC piloted the last plane from Linton Base today to this Squadron. We are now up to full strength - 20 aircraft. | | |
| | 9-1-44 | | A regular schedule has been drawn up and crews are now being fully converted. The program to date has been very satisfactory. 42511 W/C D. McIntosh, DFC relinquished command of RCAF Station, Thelthorpe on the return of G/O Gordon, R.F.C. | | |
| | 10-1-44 | | Four crews returned to unit from 1659 Conversion Unit today, having completed their initial conversion period there. Two new aircrews arrived from 1659 Conversion Unit, bringing our aircraft strength up to 26 crews. The new arrivals were J27883 E/O Proud, E.R. - Pilot and crew, also R122776 E/S Walker, J.R. - Pilot and crew. Normal flying day. During the morning most aircraft were grounded due to frosting. | | |
| | 11-1-44 | | 01344 S/L G.S. Beall departed for Lening to attend meeting to discuss the various installations of the downward vision blister. | | |
| | 12-1-44 | | R165951 Sgt Simpson was posted from RCAF H.Q. to this unit for Educational duties. The 1939-43 ribbon was given to aircrew today, who were considered eligible to wear it. Poor weather conditions have kept our aircraft grounded. | | |
| | 13-1-44 | | Word has just been received that our ground crew were not considered eligible to wear the 1939-43 ribbon. It is felt that since they were called upon to give a maximum effort in R.W.A., they are now taking a very dim view of the matter. It is hoped their case may be reviewed. A very interesting lecture was given by two officers on "Parties & Flak". | | |
| | 14-1-44 | | Weather today clear, viz. very good. Many 4 to 5 hour cross country trips were made, also local, with circuits and landings. Three aircrews returned from leave today. | | |
| | 15-1-44 | | A Command "Stand Down" - Weather - thick fog "Zero". Many lectures took place within the various sections. Two aircrews departed on leave today. | | |

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| Tholthorpe | 16-1-44 & 17-1-44 | | Work within the Squadron has progressed satisfactorily. Due to intense fog at zero level all flying exercises have ceased. H.I.s and run ups are occurring daily. Lectures given by ASTP NOO's are proving very beneficial to those concerned. | |
| | 18-1-44 | | During conversation at 1659 Conversion Unit, Topcliffe, an aircraft piloted by J21903 P/O P.H. Baker from this unit, crashed on landing. R101913 P/S Sharpe, H.J. - A/B and R14756 P/S Petry, L.L. - A/C were seriously injured. They were taken to Northallerton Hospital and P/S Sharpe died at 1830 hrs on 18-1-44 and P/S Petry died at 0135 hrs on 19-1-44. P/O Baker was also injured and taken to Northallerton Hospital, his leg was fractured but his condition is satisfactory. The remaining members of the crew were badly shaken and received medical attention from Sick Quarters, ROAF Station, Topcliffe. All action was taken by 1659 Conversion Unit. Today was normal respecting round duties, many lectures but no flying by this unit. | Noted J R 4326 |
| | 19-1-44 | | A meeting was held today to review "Committee of Adjustment" instructions, object being to assure S.L.A. everyone concerned would know exact procedure laid down. Cross country flying was arranged for, but was cancelled this afternoon due to adverse weather coming in. | |
| | 20-1-44 | | J21170 P/O P.H. Jackson - A/B will proceed to No. 1 A.A.S. Manby to attend No. 76 Bombing Leaders Course w.e.f. 22-1-44. Aircraft were again grounded due to adverse weather. | |
| | 21-1-44 | | Normal flying day. Four crews took off on cross country flying of 5 hours duration, returning after black out. During the day many hours of local flying were reported. C1344 S/L Beall, G.S. - Pilot and J14565 P/L R. Northern - Pilot, departed for Linton Base to take part in operations tonight on MAGEBURG. Also, J21935 P/O D.H. Calder and R12834 Sgt Patterson, L.H. - Pilots, who were operating from Eastmoor. All were 2nd Dick'ns. | |
| | 22-1-44 | | Adverse weather settled in again today and all flying by this unit was cancelled this morning. Funeral arrangements re R101913 P/S Sharpe, H.J. - A/B and R14756 P/S Petry, L.L. - A/C who died from injuries received in crash at 1659 Conversion Unit on 18-1-44 were completed and the funeral took place at 1030 hrs in Harrogate today. The Squadron was represented by J21908 P/O R.R. Judge - Pilot and other officers and N.G.U.'s who gathered in remembrance. P/S Sharpe and P/S Petry had completed 19 sorties in H.I.A. and were well liked by all. C5640 P/L R.P. Kilmbsie, Operational Records Officer from No. 6 Group visited the unit yesterday and discussed Form 540. R12834 Sgt Patterson, L.H. - Pilot, who was scheduled to go on operations to MAGEBURG last night from Eastmoor - did not go, due to aircraft being declared U/S. | |
| | 23-1-44 | | Seven A/C took off on a five hr. cross country flight today. All returned safely to base. Good flying was regular. At 2030 hrs 5 A/C took off on night cross country, one A/C returned after take off due to inner port engine becoming U/S. The remainder finished their exercises and returned to base at 0200 hrs. W/Col. P.W. Schroeder and P/Col. J.A. Dauphine from No. 8 Canadian General Hospital visited the Squadron and flew with J2511 W/C D. McIntosh, DFC on a short flight. C1051 S/L G.A. McKenna arrived today with his crew to take over the leadership of "A" Flight. His crew consisted of J26020 P/O B.H. Ballentyne - Nav., J29735 P/O L.B. Greenhalgh - B/L, J1594957 Sgt Clayton, W.A. - MU/AS, J2209011 Sgt Jas. Moirale - P/Eng. J183147 Sgt L.R. Dower - A.G., and R125244 P/S P.H. Wilson - WO/AS. | |

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| | 24.1.44 | | 0086279 Lt. J.H. Thomson (A/C) (WMAF) replacement, was posted to this unit from No. 61 Base waf 25.1.44. The following crew arrived from No. 61 Base waf 25.1.44. R.54029 Sgt May, R.M. Pilot - R.122282 WO2 Anderson, R.D. Nav - 127006 P/O J. Monaghan A/B (RAF) R.117227 WO2 W.R. Iggo WAG - R.89286 Sgt R.J. Babby P/R - R.186518 Sgt Pelletier, C.W. WAG - The above aircrew will be attached to "B" Flight. R.148435 P/S R.W. Tait (AG) Ceased attachment to 1659 Ops Unit No. 61 Base and will be crewed up with R.54029 Sgt May pilot. Preparations were made today for 10 crews to take off on 5 x 6 hours cross-country trips. Time off take-off was set at 2000 hours. Adverse weather, heavy rain and high winds cancelled operations. | | |
| | 25.1.44 | | R.128345 WO2 Patterson, L.H. Pilot. R.60856 P/S Halsey, L. pilot and J.21369 P/O H.W. Rice pilot departed for Eastmoor (432 Squadron) at 1130 hours to be briefed for operations tonight. J.14032 P/O A.G. Plummer pilot and J.21366 P/O H.M. Long departed for 408 Sqdn Linton at 1130 hours to be briefed for operations tonight. Operations were scrubbed and the above pilots returned to base. The Commanding Officer inspected the flight and Admin. Offices of the Squadron today. 6 aircrews took off on cross-country trips at approximately 1800 hours. They all returned to base at midnight. Local flying exercises and lectures during day. | | |
| | 26.1.44 | | Today's flying exercises were practically scrubbed due to dull weather settling in around 1200 hours. J.21935 P/O D.H. Calder pilot and crew took off this morning and on returning to base found it impossible to land safely due to smoke haze. He landed his aircraft safely at RAF Station Leeming. | | |
| | 27.1.44 | | 13 pilots of this unit were detailed to act as 2nd Dicky's on operations over Berlin tonight. 7 pilots took off from 420 Squadron, 5 pilots from 408 Squadron and 1 pilot from 432 Squadron. All returned safely to base with the exception of J, reported missing due to operations. J.27845 P/O E.R. Proud, C.7114 P/O J.J. Baker and R.128345 Sgt Patterson, L.H. Local flying and cross-country trips were in schedule for today. | | |

J.M.
w/cdr.

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| Thaltheys | 28.1.44 | | R.90001 WO2 Jacobs, E.E. (A/G) was appointed to the rank of commissioned officer wef 2.1.44. A/G took off on cross country flying today of a 6 hour duration. All returned safely to base. R.130057 P/O Wg. H.O. pilot and crew including R.20141 Sgt Masse, J.E. MU/AG and R.2216130 Sgt Hodgson J.W. P/O returned from 1664 Conversion Unit having completed the basic part of their conversion training. | | |
| | 29.1.44 | | Arrangements were made for cross country flying of 6 hour duration. This was changed to Fighter Affil and finally scrubbed. 5 crews returned from 1659 Conversion Unit today having completed the basic part of their conversion training. J.1722 P/O E.J. Albert pilot with crew including R.252161 Sgt Omar, G.W. MU/AG R.217796 Sgt Wallace, R.W. A/G. and R.2162826 Sgt Herred, R.E. P/O R.126977 P/O McKenney, R. pilot and crew including J.23350 P/O P. Caplan - Wg. J.37757 P/O K.W. Mosher MU/AG and R.2165594 Sgt Larkins, A.E. P/O; R.121615 WO2 Redway, J.W. pilot and crew including R.204837 Sgt Johnson, A.E. MU/AG and R.2169204 Sgt Swells, T.H.J. P/O and R.122853 Sgt Leonard P.O. pilot and crew including R.191468 Sgt Anderson, R.A. MU/AG and R.21652348 Sgt Gough, P. P/O, R.138086 Sgt Lapointe, P.J. pilot and crew including R.117210 Sgt MacDougall, J.E. MU/AG and R.2169256 Sgt Kilwood, G. P/O. | | |
| | 30.1.44 | | C.1344 S/L Beall, G.E. pilot departed today for Bomber Command to attend Tactical Course wef 31st January, 1944. S/L Beall took with him Squadron CREST to have 500 copies Regnum Squad. 10 aircraft took off tonight on a long cross country with lasted for approximately 3 1/2 hours. A/G returned safely to base after dropping a bomb load of 5000 lbs. 1 A/G made a forced landing at Rufforth due to petrol shortage at approximately 0055 hours 31.1.44. Under Carriage failed to come down. J.21369 P/O H.W. Rice pilot of the aircraft 14345 made a belly landing. None of the crew were injured. | | |
| | 31.1.44 | | 1st Lt. Bulmer, R.E. and 1st Lt. Stojak, F. from the Can. Ord. Reinforcements Unit were attached to this unit through SHQ Thaltheys for 1 week. Objective being a liaison visit. | | |

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| | | | <u>Strength of personnel</u> | | |
| | | | <u>Aircraft</u> | | |
| | | | R.C.A.F. Officers 37 | | |
| | | | R.C.A.F. Airmen 51 | | |
| | | | R.A.F. Officers 3 | | |
| | | | R.A.F. Airmen 48 | | |
| | | | R.C.A.F. Officers 2 | | |
| | | | USAAF Officers 1 | | |
| | | | USAAF Airmen 1 | | |
| | | | <u>Ground Crew</u> | | |
| | | | R.C.A.F. Airmen 220 | | |
| | | | R.A.F. Airmen 8 | | |
| | | | W.A.A.F. - Airmen 6 | | |
| | | | Hours flown (non) operationally for the month of January, 1944. 25220 338.55 | | |
| | | | The health of the Squadron continues to be satisfactory. | | |
| | | | Type and number of aircraft on charge on 31.1.44. 20 Halifax III | | |
| | | | <i>(Signature)</i> (R. McIntosh) Wing Commander, Officer Commanding, No. 420 (R.C.A.F.) Squadron | | |

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