

## OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	SECRET	References to Appendices
No. 424 Squadron Br. Kairoan. <i>HANE E.</i>	2.10.43		The work in the new camp is progressing satisfactorily. Latrines are being dug, all tents are up and it is expected that in a day or two the work will almost be completed on the new site. The Squadron was ordered to detail 12 A/C for operations against the Road Junction at FORTIA, ITALY. One of our aircraft was cancelled at the last minute because of engine pressure trouble. Very bad weather prevailed all the way over to the target but the latter was quite clear at the time our A/C arrived. One of our aircraft returned early owing to the bad weather. The other A/C reached the target and the latter was identified in flames which were well and accurately dropped. Most of our A/C claimed to have seen their own and other bomb bursts on the target. Defences practically nil. No S/L. No enemy A/C were seen on the target. Due to weather conditions this sortie can not be claimed as being very successful, but very fair. Unfortunately two of our A/C are missing from this operation. Operational flying time 53 hrs 25 mins. Our missing A/C and crews are as follows: Wellington T, "A" RE-424, P. P/L LESTER, G.B. NAV. P/O MORRISON, W.R., S/A. SGT ALLEN, S., W/CP. W/O. KRAMER, J.A., A/C. P/O. REED, A.S. P. SGT. MARTIN, I.A., NAV. SGT. WARD, R.S., S/A. SGT DICK, J.S., W/CP. SGT. DODGE, G.D., A/C. SGT. GUTH, J.L.		
DO.	2.10.43		The Squadron was stood down today. News was also received that S/L J.L. McCarthy, DFC. of No. 424 (R.G.A.F.) Squadron would take over command of the Squadron replacing C.O. 1362 W/O. G.A. ROY. DFC. who completed his first tour some time ago and is repeated back to the U.K. The Squadron also received news that H.M. the KING had approved the awards to the following personnel attached to and who were <del>also</del> attached to the Squadron. C.O. 1362 W/O. G.A. ROY, awarded Bar. to the DFC. - C.O. 1362 P/L J. MORRIS awarded DFC. - C.O. 1362 P/O W.N. BROWN awarded DFC. - C.O. 1362 P/O L.B. GORDON awarded DFC. - C.O. 1362 P/O G.W. DUFFIELD awarded DFC. - C.O. 1362 P/O D. HACKETT awarded DFC. - C.O. 1362 P/O L.W. WILSON awarded DFC. - C.O. 1362 P/O G.W. FADLOCK awarded DFC. - C.O. 1362 P/O G.A. BOUCH (killed 27th July 43.) awarded DFC. - C.O. 1362 SGT. S.R. FINELY awarded DFC. - C.O. 1362 SGT. D.P. FAGER awarded DFC. All those mentioned have completed their tour and are now either in the U.K. or awaiting transportation thereto, except P/L FADLOCK who is presently Gunnery Leader on this Squadron and P/O BOUCH who was accidentally killed on July 27/43. An intimate dinner took place in the Officers' mess last night to celebrate these decorations and specially for P/L FADLOCK, DFC., who is still on the Squadron. The C.O. W/O. ROY, DFC., the C.O. 351 Wing, G/O. DUFFY and the new C.O. W/O. MCCARTHY DFC., were present. A good meal and most enjoyable evening for all.		
DO.	3.10.43		C.O. 1362 W/O. G.A. ROY, DFC. officially took over command of the Squadron this morning. C.O. 1362 W/O. G.A. ROY, DFC. left for Tunis at 10:00 hrs. The best wishes of all Squadron personnel went to the departing Commanding Officer who did a very good job with the Squadron and was very well liked by all those who came in contact with him. The Squadron was ordered to detail 9 aircraft for operations to night. The 9th A/C was cancelled owing to engine trouble. A few minutes before take-off one of our nickelling A/C developed a leak and had to be cancelled. All our other A/C took off on schedule and flew in good weather and visibility. The same conditions were found over the target. Flares were accurately dropped and the lighting post was well illuminated. Numerous bombs were seen to straddle the marshalling yards including one 4000 pounder. Bombs were also noticed bursting in the town itself. Several fires were started and the area became enveloped in thick black smoke. No defences or S/L in the area. Our nickelling A/C also flew in good weather and visibility. Leaflets were dropped over FORTIA between 23.24 hrs and 23.46 hrs. from a height of 6,000 ft. No defences or S/L over the target. All our A/C returned and landed at base. A very successful sortie. Operational flying time 53 hrs 54 mins.		

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	SECRET.	References to Appendices
NR. KAIROUAN	4.10.43		This Squadron was ordered to detail 7 A/C for bombing operations on the FOMIA cross road and 2 A/C for NICKELLING duties on SPERIA, PISA, & LEGHORN. One of our nickelling A/C had trouble shortly before take off time and was taken off. A bombing A/C was used instead leaving one nickeller instead of two. One of our bombing A/C had an early return due to prop trouble. One of the propellers could not remain in fix pitch. All other reported very good flying weather and good visibility. Flares were very accurately placed and the target well illuminated. Numerous bomb bursts were seen on and near the aiming point. The latter was covered with craters. Quite a number of fires were also seen, in particular one large fire giving up volumes of black smoke which obscured the target at last. Negligible flak and no 3/4. A very satisfactory raid. Our nickelling A/C had fine flying weather during its trip. 600,000 nickels were dropped on SPERIA, PISA, and LEGHORN, from 10,600 ft. between 21.35 hrs and 21.57 hrs. Some heavy flak shot up from SPERIA and LEGHORN. No 3/4. Both raids were very successful. No damage to any A/C. All of which returned and landed safely at base. Operational flying time 54 hrs 55 mins.		
DO.	5.10.43		The Squadron was notified at 0230 hrs this morning that F/L Ledy and crew who were missing from operations over FOMIA, on the night of 1/2nd October had been picked up by an American Destroyer after having been obliged to ditch at sea. All the crew were safe and were landed at 0800. A/C was detailed by this unit to pick them up and left at 0900 hrs today. The Squadron was ordered to detail 6 A/C for bombing operations on GRASSETO A/D. All our A/C took off on schedule. Very good weather on the way to the target. The latter was easily identified. Clear visibility and flares were very accurately dropped. Numerous A/C could be seen on the dispersals. Our A/C bombed at will. Several bombs were seen to straddle the A/C on the dispersals. Bombs were also seen to explode on the runway and administration buildings or hangars. Very accurate bombing on the whole which should put this A/D out of use for some time. No 3/4 and no defence whatsoever on the bombing point. Most successful sortie. All our A/C returned and landed safely at base. Operational flying time 41 hrs 15 mins.		
DO.	6.10.43		The Squadron was ordered to detail 6 A/C for operations to-night. Due to high winds and rain operations were cancelled at 15.30 hrs. A real dust storm is raging again this afternoon. Clouds of dust are in the air and everything is dusty and dirty. The wind fell down at approximately 16.30 hrs and all busied themselves trying to get the dust out of their personal belongings.		
DO.	7.10.43		F/L LEDY and crew returned to unit from GRAN at 12.30 hrs today. A few bruises but nothing serious. They were at sea 13 hrs 10 mins before being picked up by the American Destroyer. (U.S. DESTROYER BERSON.) F/L LEDY and crew were all full of praise for the officers and crew of the destroyer for the good care and attention they received while on board. Apparently the officers of the destroyer could not do enough for them and were so kind in every way that F/L LEDY and crew say they felt embarrassed and could not find <del>words</del> to thank them the way they would have liked to do. The Captain even moved out of his cabin to give it to F/L LEDY who has several facial injuries. Due to adverse weather conditions over the target operations were cancelled at 15.30 hrs.		
DO.	8.10.43		The Squadron was notified today that the operations are to cease as of today in this theatre of war. Only personnel baggage is to be taken away when the Squadron moves. All tents, equipment, A/C, are to be left behind. The personnel of the Squadron appeared to be very pleased and happy about the movement.		
DO.	9.10.43		Preliminary steps were taken this morning in view of the pending move. After a meeting with the Wing Administrative Officer it was decided that our Squadron would be divided in 6 flights for embarkation and disembarkation, train and ship. All officers of the Squadron were detailed certain duties regarding the movement of flights, baggage etc. Preliminary work was also started regarding the <del>XXXXXX</del> moving rail.		

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424 Squadron Airfield Near Kairouan	10.10.45		All parachutes were checked today and preparations were made in view of ferrying ten of our A/C to SWIF. Squadron stores tents were pulled down and bunched. All our petrol and bombs were transported away from the aerodrome.		
	11.10.45		Ten of our A/C were flown to SWIF this morning. All these A/C carried a crew of five and baggage belonging to those personnel. They will rejoin the Squadron at Algiers before we leave the country. Work on the camp is almost finished. It is expected that by tomorrow noon all this work will be completed.		
	12.10.45		Routine work carried out on the camp. Two trucks filled with Airmen left this afternoon for a swimming party.		
	13.10.45		The Squadron was notified that it would move Monday A.M. All tents are to be taken down, folded and left here. We are to proceed by road to Tunis and from there by train to Algiers.		
	14.10.45		Movement Order received this morning. The Squadron is to definitely leave at 06.00 hours Monday. All Personal Effects were made and the Squadron was divided in one Aircrew and six Groundcrew flights to facilitate the checking of men. One flight is to be in charge of all baggage and assume guard of it until it is put aboard ship. All Officers were detailed for different duties from the time we leave the camp until we go aboard ship.		
	15.10.45		The Squadron was notified that all its 3 tankers were to be delivered at No. 10 R.U., LaBardie, Tunis. They will leave the present site Sunday and driven by our drivers. The latter will meet the Squadron at LaBardie where the Squadron will entrain.		
	16.10.45		Routine work carried out regarding moving. Several tents were pulled down. Officers and Airmen are queuing up in view of saving time when the rest of the tents are struck.		
	17.10.45		All baggage put together and checked as to markings. A Squadron parade was held at 14.00 hours. All ranks were instructed as to their duties while en convey and the train trip. No one is to get off the train except at authorised stops and no water is to be drunk other than what is obtained at places detailed by the R.T.O. All unwanted baggage was loaded on trucks ready to move.		
	18.10.45		General reveille at 03.00 hours. Tents were struck, rolled and collected. Breakfast between 04.00 hours and 05.00 hours. All personnel were embussed and the Squadron left at 06.00 hours. Fine weather and good trip. All arrived at LaBardie missing at 13.00 hours. Several flat cars had to be taken off the train and replaced by closed cars for baggage. Passenger cars had also to be added. Very dirty cars. The train pulled out at 21.00 hours, one hour late.		

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	19.10.43		Our train was late at every station and no R.T.O. was seen during the day. Half of the train was cut off at Bouk Ahras and unfortunately our rations and tea were in the section of the train which was left behind. Fortunately personnel has provided themselves with food, fruits, etc. before the trip. The M.O. told the men not to use the engine water for tea. The train is very slow. The country is beautiful and very picturesque. The nights are quite cold as the train is going through the mountains.		
	20.10.43		Our train stopped 5 hours at one station. No sight of ration car. Very slow trip.		
	21.10.43		Still travelling very slowly, at 12.00 hrs. we were only 25 miles from Algiers. Nevertheless we arrived there at 22.00 hours. The Squadron detrained immediately. Here we found the R.T.O. very effective. Transport was waiting for the Squadron as it detrained. Hot tea, meal, and tent provided for all at Fort de l'Est. This Unit is to be complimented the way they handle everything and provide the necessary food and accommodation for all.		
	22.10.43		All personnel appeared in good shape after a good night's rest. There was a rush for passes to visit Algiers. Three of our Airmen who were sick and not supposed to move with the Squadron were found to be here on the camp. Arrangements were made to take them along with the Squadron. The Camp Adjutant was seen concerning these Airmen's kits which are presently at No. 2 P.B.C. He immediately wired and the kit will be sent to England in due course.		
	23.10.43		Squadron parade. All personnel advised to obliterate previous markings on baggage and only leave name, number, rank and add U.K. It is possible that the Squadron may leave to-morrow.		
	24.10.43		Departure put off 48 hours. All personnel given the day off.		
	25.10.43		Personnel advised that they are confined to camp to-day. All baggage loaded in preparation for our leaving to-morrow.		
	26.10.43		The Squadron moved off this morning at 08.00 hrs. for embarking at Algiers. The Squadron was all on the ship "SABRIA" by 10.00 hours. It seemed a fine ship and all personnel seemed to enjoy their meals. A tremendous amount of baggage going on the ship. Cdr. J.16770 P/B C. W. Paskeck DFC was put in charge of baggage. The loading went on until midnight.		
	27.10.43		Good meals on board. 100 bags of mail loaded for the Wing. Several Airmen and Officers were detailed for various duties on the ship. P/O MacGillivray and 24 Airgunners, Bomb Airmen, were detailed for gunnery duties. The boat sailed at 15.30 hrs.		
	28.10.43		Fair weather and good sailing. Sea very calm. This is a large convoy and protected by numerous destroyers and flak ship.		

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	29.10.43		Everyone seems happy and satisfied. All Junior Officers were detailed to ship duties such as deck officers, etc. Weather still fine and sea calm.		
	30.10.43		As on previous day very good weather still prevails. Ship appears to be very steady. Beat drill for all personnel at 10.00 hrs.		
	31.10.43		The fine weather we have had so far is still holding out. Smooth sailing and calm seas. Friendly A/C are scouting around ahead of the convoy.		
			Aircraft on board - Nil		
			Health - The health of the Squadron remains exceptionally good. A few colds and ordinary ailments. Very small sick parades. No cases of jaundice, malaria or V.D.		
			Numerical Strength of Unit as at 31st October, 1943.		
			(Officers)		
			R.C.A.F. (Officers)		
			R.C.A.F. (USA)		
			R.C.A.F.		
			TOTAL (Officers)		
			(Airmen)		
			R.C.A.F. (Airmen)		
			R.C.A.F. (USA)		
			R.C.A.F.		
			TOTAL (Airmen)		
			(Groundcrew)		
			R.C.A.F. (Groundcrew)		
			R.C.A.F. (USA)		
			R.C.A.F.		
			TOTAL (Groundcrew)		
			OPERATIONAL AND NON-OPERATIONAL HOURS FLOWN DURING MONTH OF OCTOBER, 1943.		
			(a) Operational Flying Hours.		
			DAY	Nil	
			NIGHT	205 hrs. 44 mins.	
			(b) Non-Operational Flying Hours		
			DAY	58 hrs. 15 mins.	
			NIGHT	Nil	
			<p><i>R. H. Jones</i></p> <p>Wing Commander, Commanding, 424 (R.C.A.F.) Squadron.</p>		

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