

R.A.F. Form 540

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.

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

Page No. ONE

of (Unit or Formation) NO. 408 (R.C.A.F.) SQUADRON.

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
SIBERIAN	1/12/41		Clouds 6 - 10/10ths at 2000 - 4000 feet, becoming 10/10ths on surface. Poor during the afternoon, with fog developing towards end of day. Visibility 2000 - 4000 yards increasing later to 2 - 3 miles, deteriorating to less than 1000 yards by mid-night. 13 experienced and 3 freshmen crews were detailed for night operations this date but, these operations were cancelled at 15.35 hours due to adverse weather conditions.	A-100
SIBERIAN	2/12/41		Dense fog all day with visibility of less than 50 yards. There were no operations in No. 5 Group this date, due to fog. 1 crew participated in practices in co-operation with the Home Guard in the vicinity of Newark.	A-101
SIBERIAN	3/12/41		Clouds 10/10ths EC. & SO. on surface, lifting later to 3000 feet. South-West wind with visibility increasing from 50 yards to approximately 500 yards. 13 experienced and 3 freshmen crews were detailed for night operations this date but, operations were cancelled at 15.35 hours, due to fog. No other flying took place on the Station owing to adverse weather conditions.	A-102
SIBERIAN	4/12/41		Fog throughout forenoon, turning to mist in the afternoon. Foggy again during the evening with visibility ranging from 300 - 1500 yards. Clouds 10/10ths EC. at 2000 feet with light West wind. Owing to adverse weather conditions there was no flying on this Station this date. There were no operations in Bomber Command, due to fog.	A-103
SIBERIAN	5/12/41		Clouds 5 - 10/10ths EC. at 2000 feet, falling later to 1400 feet with mist throughout the day and slight drizzle during the evening. Visibility 1000 yards during the forenoon, improving to 2 miles and deteriorating again to less than 1000 yards in the evening. There were local practice flights during the day. All operations in Bomber Command were cancelled at 16.00 hours, due to fog.	A-104
SIBERIAN	6/12/41		Clouds 7 - 10/10ths SO. & SE. at 1000 feet with rain beginning at mid-day until approximately 22.00 hours. Visibility 2 - 7 miles. There was no flying on this Station this date, gale warnings being received throughout the day. Squadron stood down from operations and, all operations in Bomber Command were cancelled at 15.15 hours, due to adverse weather conditions.	A-105

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
SYERSTON	7/12/41		<p>Fair, with varying amount of SG. & GU. at 3000 - 4000 feet, with Westerly wind of 15 m.p.h. Visibility 3 - 5 miles. Local industrial base but, apart from this, weather conditions fair with front during the evening. Local practice flights and N.F.T.s. took place during the forenoon.</p> <p>12 crews were detailed for operations, but 6 were cancelled due to deterioration in weather. The 6 remaining crews proceeded from this aerodrome on a bombing attack over AACHEN. The objective of their attack at Aachen was the Nazi Party Headquarters. 2 of the 6 crews definitely identified and bombed the target, and 2 others identified buildings on E.T.A., presuming same to be in Aachen. Flares were dropped and bombs were seen to burst amongst the buildings. Of the 2 remaining crews, being unable to locate or identify the target or any town or buildings on E.T.A., one remained over the area for 40 minutes without success, eventually returning to base with bombs and, the other attempted to locate the docks at DUNKIRK and OSTERDIEP, also without success, returning to base with its bomb load.</p> <p>Today an Advance Party from the Squadron proceeded to BALDERTON in preparation for the complete move of No. 406 Squadron from SYERSTON to BALDERTON.</p>	A.232 A.233 A.234 A.235 A.236
SYERSTON	8/12/41		<p>During the forenoon, small amount of cloud less 1/10ths SD. at 4000 feet, with visibility from 2 - 3 miles. At 11.45 hours there was a sudden deterioration in weather and visibility fell to 2000 yards, decreasing steadily on to approximately 1300 yards. The occupation of the Squadron today was preparing for the move to BALDERTON. Group requested 5 experienced and 5 freshman crews but, the Squadron was eventually stood down owing to the move to Balderton. Some of the Hampden aircraft were flown from Syerston aerodrome over to Balderton aerodrome. General preparedness around the Camp today for move to Balderton first thing tomorrow morning.</p>	
SYERSTON	9/12/41		<p>Visibility 3000 yards with improvement later by mid-day to 3 miles. At 17.00 hours visibility was less than 2000 yards and, during the evening, after 18.00 hours, it improved from 2000 - 3000 yards. Clouds 6 - 8/10ths at 2000 feet and occasional patches at approximately 1500 feet. Today was moving day for the whole Squadron. Officers and Airmen with Squadron equipment complete, all but bombs, moved to BALDERTON Aerodrome. All remaining aircraft at Syerston were flown to BALDERTON.</p>	

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OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

R.A.F. Form 540

No. of pages used for day

of (Unit or Formation) NO. 408 (R.G.A.F.) SQUADRON

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
BALDERTON	10/12/41		<p>Clouds 10/10ths S.T. with ceiling of 800 - 1000 feet, otherwise fine with visibility 2 - 5 miles. 2 crews were detailed for daylight operations. One crew took off at 12.15 hours to bomb LEEUWARDEN, an aerodrome in HOLLAND, and flew across the North Sea at 1000 feet. On E.T.A. this crew came down to 100 feet and searched for the target, but was unable to find either the target or any alternative objective, so returned to base with bomb load. The second crew took off at 12.16 hours to bomb ENKHUIZEN, and also flew across the North Sea at 1000 feet. The cloud base was too low to permit the crew to locate the town but, fortunately, they located a tanker in the mouth of the ERK and bombed it from 50 feet. It is believed that at least one bomb struck the ship, flares being observed, but the crew could not definitely certify this fact, being forced into the cloud due to intense fire from shore batteries. This crew also bombed and machine-gunned a flak emplacement and then returned to base.</p>	A. 257
BALDERTON	11/12/41		<p>Clouds 10/10ths at 2000 feet, breaking from 3 - 7/10ths at 3000 - 4000 feet. Visibility mainly 3 - 5 miles. At 10.00 hours Group requested 2 crews for daylight operations with a mid-day take-off. Of the 2 crews detailed for daylight operations, both took off at noon and, the first one proceeded to attack ENKHUIZEN but, due to lack of cloud cover 40 miles from the town, this operation had to be abandoned and the crew returned to base. The second aircraft took off to bomb LEEUWARDEN, an aerodrome in Holland. After crossing the North Sea between 1000 and 3000 feet, the navigator pinpointed at ENKHUIZEN. The target was located and bombed from 50 feet and one large burst was observed amongst buildings. The personnel were machine-gunned and casualties were noticed.</p> <p>At 10.30 hours this date 12 experienced and 5 freshman crews were requested by Group for night operations but, later this was altered to request 10 experienced and 5 freshman crews, making a total of 15 all told. The 5 freshman crews were detailed to attack docks and shipping at LE HAVRE. One returned to base due to electrical trouble. One was recalled and another accepted a recall signal. The remaining 2 freshman crews reached the target area but, were unable to identify same owing to 10/10ths cloud, and thereby returned to base with bomb loads. (Continued overleaf....)</p>	A. 259 A. 260 A. 261 A. 262 A. 263 A. 264 A. 265 A. 266 A. 267 A. 268 A. 269 A. 270 A. 271 A. 272 A. 273

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices																						
BALINGTON	11/12/41		<p>....(Continued from overleaf)</p> <p>....5 aircraft were detailed to attack COLOGNE but, at 12.50 hours this number was reduced to 3.</p> <p>Of the three aircraft detailed, one was cancelled (ME.267) due to starboard magnetos trouble. Of the two remaining aircraft, one attacked the town on E.T.A., observing one bomb burst, the other aircraft attacked an aerodrome in the vicinity of the city with 1 x 2000 H.C. observing the burst and noticing all lights being extinguished. Five aircraft were detailed for gardening in KIEL BAY. One identified the area xxxx and successfully dropped its mine. Three others were unable to identify the target xxxx as xxxx owing to cloud and, one dropped the mine in the NECTARINE area, another dropped his just outside the ELBE estuary and the third returned to base with his. The remaining aircraft ME.110 B piloted by RCAF/J.5918 Pilot Officer W.F. Hall, did not return from this operation and, subsequently reported as missing. The members of the missing crew of Hampden ME.110 B were as follows:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">OPERATIONAL</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>Trip</th> <th>Hours</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>RCAF/J.5918 P/O W.F. Hall</td> <td>(Pilot)</td> <td>3</td> <td>15.25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ME.110/575 Sgt. Trott, D.L.</td> <td>(Navigator)</td> <td>3</td> <td>15.25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>508276 Sgt. Jasinski, S.</td> <td>(1st W/O/M)</td> <td>3</td> <td>15.25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1059179 Sgt. Hartling, L.</td> <td>(2nd W/O/M)</td> <td></td> <td>1st Operational Trip</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>At 17.15 hours this date, the above mentioned aircraft and crew left this aerodrome to take part in the operations already mentioned over KIEL BAY, Germany. At the time this crew was reported to Air Ministry (P.L. Casualties) and to Records, Gloucester as missing and, individual next of kin advised. It is regretted that nothing further has been heard of from either member of this crew.</p>	OPERATIONAL				Trip	Hours	RCAF/J.5918 P/O W.F. Hall	(Pilot)	3	15.25	ME.110/575 Sgt. Trott, D.L.	(Navigator)	3	15.25	508276 Sgt. Jasinski, S.	(1st W/O/M)	3	15.25	1059179 Sgt. Hartling, L.	(2nd W/O/M)		1st Operational Trip	
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1059179 Sgt. Hartling, L.	(2nd W/O/M)		1st Operational Trip																							
BALINGTON	12/12/41		<p>Cloudy during forenoon with periods of rain, becoming finer during the afternoon. Clouds during forenoon 8 - 10/10ths at 2000 feet, becoming nil in later afternoon. Visibility 3 - 5 miles throughout the day. No operations this date and only local flying practices were carried out. At 16.15 hours 6 crews were requested for daylight operations, to stand by until next morning.</p>																							
BALINGTON	13/12/41		<p>At 09.30 hours cloud base fell to 600 feet, with slight rain. Mainly cloudy throughout day. Cloud increased to 10/10ths falling to 1800 feet with a visibility of from 2 - 3 miles during forenoon and 4 miles in afternoon and evening. 4 freshmen crews were requested at 10.00 hours but later cancelled at 13.15 hours. 6 crews were detailed for daylight operations to bomb docks and shipping at BREST, France. 5 of the 6 crews flew to within a short distance of their objective but,</p>	A.317																						

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R.A.F. Form 540

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OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

Page No. **FIVE**

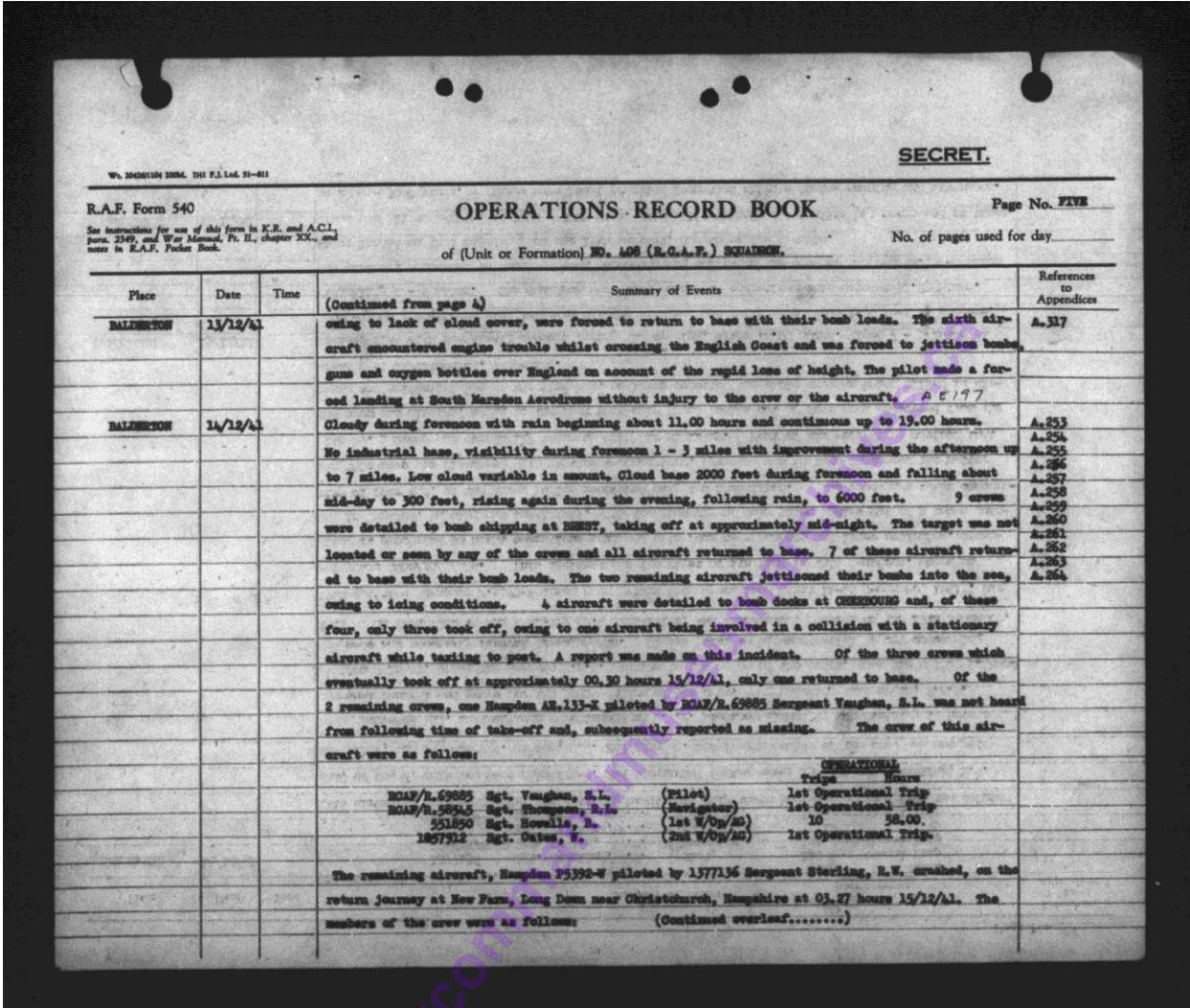
No. of pages used for day.....

of [Unit or Formation] No. 400 (R.G.A.F.) SQUADRON.

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events (Continued from page 4)	References to Appendices
BALDERTON	15/12/41		owing to lack of cloud cover, were forced to return to base with their bomb loads. The sixth aircraft encountered engine trouble whilst crossing the English Coast and was forced to jettison bombs, guns and oxygen bottles over England on account of the rapid loss of height. The pilot made a forced landing at South Marston Aerodrome without injury to the crew or the aircraft. A E197	A.317
BALDERTON	16/12/41		Coudy during forenoon with rain beginning about 11.00 hours and continuous up to 19.00 hours. No industrial base, visibility during forenoon 1 - 3 miles with improvement during the afternoon up to 7 miles. Low cloud variable in amount. Cloud base 2000 feet during forenoon and falling about mid-day to 300 feet, rising again during the evening, following rain, to 6000 feet. 9 crews were detailed to bomb shipping at BIEBERT, taking off at approximately mid-night. The target was not located or seen by any of the crews and all aircraft returned to base. 7 of these aircraft returned to base with their bomb loads. The two remaining aircraft jettisoned their bombs into the sea owing to icing conditions. 4 aircraft were detailed to bomb docks at CHESTERFIELD and, of these four, only three took off, owing to one aircraft being involved in a collision with a stationary aircraft while taxiing to port. A report was made on this incident. Of the three crews which eventually took off at approximately 00.30 hours 15/12/41, only one returned to base. Of the 2 remaining crews, one Hampden AH.133-X piloted by RCAF/R.69885 Sergeant Vaughan, S.L. was not heard from following time of take-off and, subsequently reported as missing. The crew of this aircraft were as follows:	A.253 A.254 A.255 A.256 A.257 A.258 A.259 A.260 A.261 A.262 A.263 A.264

OPERATIONAL		
Trip	Hours	
RCAF/R.69885 Sgt. Vaughan, S.L. (Pilot)	1st Operational Trip	
RCAF/R.58545 Sgt. Thompson, R.M. (Navigator)	1st Operational Trip	
551820 Sgt. Howell, R. (1st W/O/AE)	10 56.00	
1857912 Sgt. Oxton, T. (2nd W/O/AE)	1st Operational Trip	

The remaining aircraft, Hampden P5392-W piloted by 1577136 Sergeant Sterling, R.W. crashed, on the return journey at New Farm, Long Down near Christchurch, Hampshire at 03.27 hours 16/12/41. The members of the crew were as follows: (Continued overleaf.....)



Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	OPERATIONAL	References to Appendices
(Continued from previous page)					
BALIENHORN	14/12/41		1577136 Sgt. Sterling, R.W. (Pilot) 158152052 Sgt. Hulin, J.O. (Navigator) 302217 Sgt. Williams, W.R. (1st W/O/M) 1056595 Sgt. Gibson, G.C. (2nd W/O/M)	Trips Hours 1st Operational Trip 1st Operational Trip 12 71.85 1st Operational Trip	
			This aircraft, Hampden P5359-E was entirely burnt out, only three bodies recovered from the debris and, of those, only two were identified. The identified bodies were: 1577136 Sgt. Sterling, R.W., the pilot, and 1056595 Sgt. Gibson, G.C. The fourth member of the crew has not yet been recovered but, instructions were issued to R.A.F. Station Culdrose by Air Ministry to have a communal funeral and grave for the four members of the crew. Following this crash, R.A.F. Station Culdrose, being the nearest R.A.F. Station to the scene of the crash, took the matter in hand and made all necessary funeral arrangements. Please refer to Circumstantial Report concerning this crash forwarded to Air Ministry (P.A. Committee) and Gloucester, Records on the 19th December, 1941 entitled "Hampden P.5359-E Crash Upon Return From Operations Night 14-15 December, 1941", for reference AOR/32/3/1D. This incident was the first of its kind in this Squadron, where an aircraft proceeded on night operations equipped with four crew members and later returning, crashing in England, burning out completely, with the recovery of only three bodies out of a known quantity of four and, of the three bodies recovered only two identified. The procedure taken concerning this case was discussed with Station Headquarters, Gloucester who in turn discussed the matter with No. 5 Group and eventually taken up with Air Ministry. Most of us were first advised that the crew was missing, owing to the fact that only three bodies out of four were recovered from the crash and unidentifiable at the time but, we later reported the whole crew as being killed in a crash near Christchurch, Hampshire.		
BALIENHORN	15/12/41		Weather fine with occasional showers during the evening, after 18.00 hours. Cloud 2 - 5/10ths at 2000 - 3000 feet, increasing later to 8/10ths at times and falling to about 1500 feet in showers. Visibility 5 - 6 miles. The Squadron was stood down from operations this date at 11.25 hours. One aircraft proceeded to South Marston Aerodrome and collected the crew of Hampden AR.197-H which force landed on that aerodrome on the 15th instant, due to engine trouble.		
BALIENHORN	16/12/41		Cloud was nil to 4/10ths at 2000 - 3000 feet. Visibility mainly 2 - 4 miles but decreased at times to 2000 - 3000 yards. There were local practice formation flights during morning and afternoon.		

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R.A.F. Form 540

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

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

of (Unit or Formation) No. 408 (R.G.A.F.) SQUADRON

No. of pages used for day.

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
BALFORTON	16/12/41		(Continued from page 6).... 3 freshman crews were detailed to attack docks and shipping at DUNKIRK. Only one of the three crews identified and bombed its target, the other 2 being unsuccessful, returned to base with their bomb loads.	A.265 A.266 A.267
BALFORTON	17/12/41		Weather fair with variable amounts of low cloud at 3000 - 4000 feet with visibility 2 - 5 miles. N.P.T.s. were carried out and three aircraft went to Upper Hayford, one returning with the crews of the other two. 10 aircraft were detailed to attack docks and German battleships at BREMEN. However, only 9 took off, one becoming bogged and it being too late to take-off when released. Of the 9 aircraft which took off, 6 were successful in their attack, the remaining 3 being forced to return to base with their bomb loads, due to cloud conditions over the target. Commander T.W. Bottley, Royal Navy, of the Mine Sweeping division, visited this station this date and gave a lecture to the airmen.	A.268 A.269 A.270 A.271 A.272 A.273 A.274 A.275 A.276
BALFORTON	18/12/41		Fine during first part of forenoon, becoming foggy by noon, causing visibility to deteriorate to less than 500 yards. Owing to weather conditions, there was no flying throughout the day. Wing Commander D.A.R. Bridgman (R.G.A.F.) who recently arrived at Bournemouth from Canada for operational posting as Officer Commanding 408 Squadron (R.G.A.F.), arrived on this Squadron this date in order to under study the Officer Commanding this Squadron, Wing Commander H.W. Timmerman R.S.O. & D.F.C., for a short period. At 10.00 hours No. 5 Group requested 2 experienced crews and a short while later, 4 freshman crews. At 11.10 hours all operations in Group were cancelled. A short while later we were requested to have 6 experienced crews stand by at the ready for daylight operations, with possible early take-off morning 19/12/41.	
BALFORTON	19/12/41		Cloud 10/10ths S.T. On. 2000 - 4000 feet. Foggy during first part of forenoon, changing later to a heavy mist and, generally foggy throughout remaining part of day. Drizzle during evening. Visibility less than 1000 - 2000 yards varying. At 09.47 hours Squadron was stood down from stand by of previous day, for proposed daylight operations this date. No flying in the Squadron this date, owing to adverse weather conditions.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
BALDERTON	20/12/41		Fog during early part of day, turning into heavy mist. Clouds 10/10ths ST.Ou. 1000 feet. Continuous slight drizzle throughout evening. Visibility during forenoon 500 yards and later approximately 1 - 2 miles. There was no flying in the Squadron today, due to adverse weather conditions. At 09.55 hours Group had requested 11 experienced and 5 freshman crews but, at 10.15 hours, all operations in Group were cancelled owing to continuous fog conditions.	
BALDERTON	21/12/41		Cloud 10/10ths ST. 2000 - 3000 feet. South-West wind 5 - 10 m.p.h. Mist throughout the day gradually dispersing at dusk. Visibility 1000 - 3000 yards. At 11.05 hours 3 freshman crews were requested by Group, also training on circuits and landing practices for trainees. At 14.42 hours freshman operations were cancelled and, at 17.42 hours the training was also cancelled. At 17.09 hours Group requested 6 experienced crews for early take-off 08.45 hours daylight operations following morning. Everything in preparation for this take-off.	
BALDERTON	22/12/41		Cloudy with drizzle and fog during early forenoon and becoming fine later. Cloud 8/10ths ST. at 2000 feet, with a South-west wind of 5 - 10 m.p.h. Visibility varying from 100 yards to 4-6 miles. At 06.50 hours we informed Group that, of the 6 experienced crews previously detailed to stand by for this morning's early take-off, only 4 aircraft were now available. At 08.55 hours morning operations were cancelled and we were requested to stand by. At 10.25 hours 4 freshman crews were also requested to stand by, over and above previous request but, at 10.37 hours all operations for this day were cancelled in Nos. 1, 3 and 5 Groups. At 11.45 hours a training program was prepared for 2 aircraft on cross-country flights, and 4 on circuits and landing exercises. Cross-country bombing exercises were cancelled at 15.12 hours but, circuits and landing exercises were proceeded with and completed at 19.15 hours.	
BALDERTON	23/12/41		Fair, becoming cloudy with intermittent drizzle. ST. cloud at 1000 feet with a West wind 5 - 10 m.p.h. At 09.44 hours a request was received from Group for 11 experienced and 2 freshman crews for tonight's operations. They also requested 6 aircraft for training, two on cross-country flights and 4 on circuits and landing exercises. At approximately 16.20 hours 5 aircraft took off on mine laying operations in KIEL FJORD. One aircraft jettisoned his 2x250 G.P. safe at approximately 19.10 hours from 6000 feet and returned to base with his mine, owing to very low 10/10ths cloud and being unable to locate target area. The second aircraft jettisoned fused his	A-277 A-276 A-279 A-289 A-281 A-282 A-283 A-284 A-285 A-286 A-287 (Cont'd.)

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R.A.F. Form 540

For instructions for use of this form in K.R. and A.C.I.,
page 236, and War Manual, Pt. II, chapter XX., and
notes in R.A.F. Pocket Book.

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

of [Unit or Formation] NO. 409 (R.C.A.F.P.) SQUADRON

No. of pages used for day.

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
BALMERTON	23/12/41		<p>(Continued from page 8)</p> <p>2 x 250 G.P. at 19.11 hours from 6000 feet on flak concentration in unidentified position of KIEL area, but believed to be SIEZ. This aircraft was forced down to 100 feet for several minutes, due to cloud cover but, was only able to see water at this height. Aircraft returned to base with mines. The third aircraft was forced to return, due to excessive motor vibration and jettisoned bombs safe from 6000 feet and landed at HAMBLETON Aerodrome with mines at approximately 20.20 hours. The fourth aircraft returned with complete load owing to very low cloud. The fifth aircraft jettisoned his 2 x 250 G.P. on a flak concentration on E.T.A. whilst taking evasive action. Exact location of this flak concentration unidentified but, believed to be somewhere in KIEL area. While descending to about 6000 feet, this aircraft was caught in very accurate flak and, while avoiding steeply to right, close flak turned aircraft on its back, but the pilot managed to pull over again and, after spinning down to 4000 feet, straightened out and headed for base. 2 aircraft were detailed on mining operations off the PHILIPPIAN ISLANDS, one returning approximately three-quarters of an hour after take-off, owing to inability to close cockpit hood. The second aircraft returned to base after unsuccessfully bombing target area on E.T.A. from low-level and being unable to pinpoint. Aircraft safely landed at base with both mines. 6 aircraft were detailed on a bombing attack over COLOGNE, successfully reached and bombed their target, several bursts and explosions being observed. All these aircraft returned safely to base.</p>	A. 288 A. 289
BALMERTON	24/12/41		<p>Weather fair. Low cloud at 2000 # 3000 feet, with N.E.W. wind reaching a velocity of 25 - 30 m.p.h. Visibility 5 - 10 miles. No operations in Bomber Command this date but, 6 crews were detailed to stand by for emergency with aircraft bussed up and ready for take-off. At 11.00 hours Group requested 5 aircraft for training program, one on cross-country loops and 2 on circuits and landing exercises, all successfully carried out. Wing Commander R.A.R. Brookes (R.C.A.F.P.) who has been undersigning the Officer Commanding this Squadron since the 16th instant, presented to 409 Squadron, R.A.F. this date.</p>	AT 137 'V' damaged 6th 8 in non-oper. flying

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
BALDERTON	25/12/43		<p>CHRISTMAS DAY. Weather fair, cloud ST. 2000-3000 feet with N.N.W. wind velocity 15-20 m.p.h. Visibility 5 - 10 miles. At 09.50 hours instructed by Group there would be no operations this date but, 6 aircraft to stand by, bombed up ready for take-off. The usual festivities took place on this Station this Christmas Day, the Sergeants being entertained in the Officers' Mess, followed by officers and sergeants proceeding to the Airmen's Mess where they served the Christmas dinner for the airmen. Flight Lieutenant Read, Press Relations Representative (R.C.A.F. London) arrived at Syerston last night, accompanied by the C.B.C. Broadcasting van, in order to record Christmas messages and festivities for the Canadian personnel. Owing to unexpected circumstances, Christmas messages were not recorded and, only the dinner festivities in the Airmen's Mess were recorded. Flight Lieutenant Read and C.B.C. van left Syerston during the afternoon and advised that they would return in two weeks time to record Christmas messages. Although we had 6 aircraft and crews standing by, we were not called upon for operations.</p>	
BALDERTON	26/12/43		<p>Slight fog during morning, clearing by mid-day, generally fair and fine from there on, cloud 10/10ths at 4000'-6000' with visibility at first 2000 - 3000 yards, but falling later to 500 yards at dusk. At 09.50 hours Group requested 2 freshman crews. At 10.00 hours a request came through for 3 crews on training program for circuits and landing practices. At 13.15 hours all operations in Group were cancelled and, at 14.45 hours, training was also cancelled. At 19.56 hours 6 aircraft were requested by Group for a dawn take-off and, at 22.26 hours requested to stand by. Wing Commander D.A.R. Bradshaw (R.C.A.F.) returned from Digby Station this date.</p>	
BALDERTON	27/12/43		<p>Continuous rain at beginning of day with 10/10ths S.T. Cu. cloud 1500'- 2500'. Westerly wind 15-20 m.p.h. with visibility 3 - 4 miles. At 10.14 hours Group requested 12 experienced and 2 freshman crews for night operations. Training program for circuits and landing practices was arranged, but later cancelled owing to operations. All aircraft were diverted to West Raynham, North Luffenham and Cottenham but, one aircraft returned to base at Balderton with R/T and B/T unserviceable. 12 aircraft were detailed to attack the MARSHALLING YARDS at DUSSELIGEN but, only 3 actually identified and bombed the primary target. 5 attacked alternative target DUSSELIGEN TOWN, two others attacked a last resort target, being MUNCHEN GLAIBACH and DUESSELDORF. The two remaining aircraft were forced to return, owing to motor vibrations and pilot's head unserviceability. The two freshman</p>	A-290 A-291 A-292 A-293 A-294 A-295 A-296 A-297 A-298 A-299 A-300 A-301 A-302 A-303

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R.A.F. Form 540

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notes in R.A.F. Pocket Book.

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

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of (Unit or Formation) NO. 406 (R.G.A.F.) SQUADRON

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events (Continued from page 10)	References to Appendices
BALMERTON	27/12/41		crews were detailed to attack and bomb the docks and shipping at BOULOGNE. 1 bombed from 14,000' and the other from 12,000'. Both aircraft were diverted, one landing at North Luffenham, the other at Cottessore.	A.304 A.305
BALMERTON	28/12/41		Weather fine, with slight fog, clearing by noon. Small amount of St. Cu. 2000'- 3000'. S.E. wind 2 - 5 miles per hour, with visibility 6 - 8 miles. At 10.00 hours Group requested 12 experienced crews for a special effort over HIRS, the primary target being the Synthetic Rubber Plant. The attack was successfully carried out by ten of the crews and, one aircraft was forced to turn back a short distance from the target, owing to port motor trouble where, at this point, they were forced to jettison their bombs in order to gain height. The bomb loads carried by the above mentioned crews were: 2000 lb.Gs., 1900 G.Ps., 1000 G.Ps., 500 and 250 G.Ps. The one remaining aircraft Hampden P.1145-B piloted by RCAF/J.5917 Pilot Officer S.R.E. Brackenbury, did not return from this operation and, has not been heard of from time of take-off at 16.55 hours and, subsequently reported as missing. Please refer to our Circumstantial Report of this date, reference 406 R/15/10/AIR. The names and numbers of the crews, including their operational hours and trips were as follows:	A.306 A.307 A.308 A.309 A.310 A.311 A.312 A.313 A.314 A.315 A.316
BALMERTON	29/12/41		All next of kin were advised and all necessary reports forwarded concerning this incident. Mist and fog during early part of day, with 2/10ths St. Cu. at 2500'- 3000'. S.W. wind 2 - 5 m.p.h. Visibility varied throughout the day from 500 yards to 2 miles. Congratulatory message received this date from the A.O.C., A.V.M. Slesser, D.S.O., M.C., on the work well done by the air and ground crews with reference to the successful attack and bombing of the Synthetic Rubber Plant at Hirs, Germany, yesterday, also on the successful photographs taken by the Flight Commander of "Y" Flight 2/Ldr. Clayton R.P.C. and his crew, over the target. At 10.55 hours, Group ordered a	OPERATIONAL ROAF/J.5917 P/O S.R.E. Brackenbury (Pilot) 7 40.30 RE/404257 Sgt. Thorne, D.W. (Navigator) 7 40.30 961262 Sgt. Williams, D.T. (1st W/O/Ps) 16 107.25 1259275 Sgt. Isaac, P.P. (2nd W/O/Ps) 7 40.30

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events (Continued from previous.)	References to Appendices
BALMERTON	29/12/41		training program, consisting of 2 aircraft on circuits and landing practices, which was later cancelled at 14.15 hours. At 11.09 hours Group requested 2 fresh crews for night operations, but these also were cancelled at 12.40 hours.	
BALMERTON	30/12/41		Fog throughout the day with low ST. Cu. cloud 9/10ths at 3000'- 4000'. Visibility varying from 500 - 900 yards. No flying on the Station this date. At 10.30 hours all operations in Bomber Command were cancelled. A W/T lecture was given the aircrews during the afternoon at Syerston. Wing Commander D.A.R. Bradshaw (R.C.A.F.) who had been with this Squadron under studying the Officer Commanding, proceeded to 14. O.T.U. Cottesmore this date, previous to being over command of 400 Squadron (R.C.A.F.) Hampden, as already mentioned in this report of the 15th instant.	
BALMERTON	31/12/41		Fog throughout the day with low 9/10ths ST. Cu. cloud at 2500'. S.W. wind 5 miles per hour, with visibility approximately 300 yards. At 10.00 hours all operations in Bomber Command were cancelled. There was no flying on the Station throughout the day, owing to fog, and all aircrews were returned to Syerston. A telegram from International Red Cross Society, through Air Ministry, reference P.5077, 30/12/41, quoting Berlin information, advised us that J.5918 (R.C.A.F.) P/O W.P. Hall (Pilot), ME/404575 Sgt. D.L. Todd (Navigator), 928276 Sgt. S Jamieson (1st W/O/AG) and 1055179 Sgt. L. Harding (2nd W/O/AG), crew members of Hampden ME.148-E previously reported, on the 13/12/41, as missing from night operations over KIEL RAY, night 11-12 December, 1941, are now believed killed in action and presumed dead. We are informed by Air Ministry in this same signal, that the next of kin have been informed accordingly.	

H.W. Timmerman
H.W. Timmerman (Wing Commander) Commanding,
No. 406 (R.C.A.F.) Squadron, BALMERTON.

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