

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

Page No. 1

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.

of (Unit or Formation) 426 (R.G.A.P.) SQUADRON

No. of pages used for day _____

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	<u>SECRET.</u>	References to Appendices
INSTRUMENTAL STRENGTH OF UNIT AT 1st APRIL 1943					
OFFICERS					
			FLYING GROUND TOTAL		
			R.G.A.P. 17 5 42		
			R.A.P. 10 - 10		
			R.G.A.P. (USA) 1 5 1		
			TOTAL 48 5 53		
AIRCREW					
			FLYING GROUND TOTAL		
			R.G.A.P. 72 230 305		
			R.G.A.P. (USA) 5 2 8		
			R.A.P. 46 143 187		
			R.G.A.P. 12 32 42		
			TOTAL 135 497 632		
Dishforth	1-4-43		WEATHER: Cloudy; shower about noon; Visibility very good; Wind - W.N.W. -- 15-20 mph. There was a stand-down from operations. Routine training and servicing of A/C were carried out.		
Dishforth	2-4-43		WEATHER: Cloudy; slight drizzle - at noon; Visibility very good; Wind - W.N.W. 'ly, 10-20 mph. Group required two A/C for a relatively small-scale operation at SAINT MAHAIN, timed to coincide with a similar attack on LILLENT. ONE PILOT AND ONE PASSENGER CREW WERE CHOSEN. THE A/C TOOK OFF AT 13.45 hrs. BUT ONE PILOT, B/L HALL, 224, WAS FORCED TO ABANDON THE FLIGHT soon after take-off because the Marconi wireless set was unserviceable. The second A/C found the target well marked by R.E.P. & R.I.A., and was able to identify it visually in good visibility. They reported a successful trip, with fires still visible 50 miles from the town. The following appointments and promotions were announced: W/O MARSH, P.O. _____ to be PILOT OFFICER w.e.f. 12.12.42 P/O A/V/S/L DOWLES, C.S. D.F.C. & BAR TO BE TEMP. B/L W.e.f. 20.10.42 P/O MALONE, H.V. & P/O KIRKBY, D.M. to be PILOT OFFICERS P/O A/V/S/L MARSH, F.P. _____ to be TEMP. P/O w.e.f. 10.1.43 P/O A/V/S/L MC NEIL, A. _____ to be TEMP. P/O w.e.f. 20.10.42 B/L'S MELLIARD & MC NEIL attended a DISTRICT COURT MARTIAL held at R.A.P. STATION DISHFORTH as officers under instruction.		
Dishforth	3-4-43		WEATHER: Fair to cloudy; Visibility very good; Wind - N.W. 'ly, 5-10 mph. There was a stand-down from operations. The Squadron spent a very quiet day.		

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	SECRET.	References to Appendices
Dishforth	4-4-43		WEATHER: Fine; Visibility moderate; Wind - Light, S.E. by E., or calm.		
			The Squadron was able to put up 15 A/O for operations. Crews were briefed to attack KIEL. A/C H.L. 431 was unable to take-off, and A/C B.F. 619 returned early because it was not able to reach the target in time. The remaining A/O crossed the RUSSIAN SEA north of 55°N and found P.M.F. flares marking the turning point on the DANISH COAST. They flew on to KIEL but were disappointed to find 10/10 stratoconusus clouds over the whole target area. The markers were not easily discerned and in consequence bombing was probably scattered, although some bombs always saw the glow of markers below the clouds in KIEL nights on the BOMBING RUN. There was heavy but inaccurate flak over a wide area; searchlights were not able to penetrate the clouds. This last A/O returned to base. A/C X.3699, captained by S/O D.L. HENRY, was shot down at 2210 hours five minutes before H.T.A. target. The rear gunner was jettisoned and put out of action; other damage was sustained. The pilot decided to jettison the bomb load and return to base. On the way back it was noticed that a light was burning under the fuselage; caused presumably by a short circuit. The crew were unable to put it out. The A/C was then attacked by a Messerschmitt 109 which damaged the hydraulics so that the undercarriage went down and the bombs fell open, although the navigator could not determine his position it was calculated that the A/C would have sufficient petrol to reach ENGLAND and to make a crash landing. For this reason the pilot thought it was not necessary to take B.O.R. action, nor to switch I.P.R. to stand 3. Five minutes before the A/C would have reached the EAST ANGLIAN coast the engines cut. The pilot ditched the A/C but it went under the water and broke up at once. The bombardier and wireless operator S/O LANCY & SGT ANDREWS were able to swim to the overturned dingy and each helped the other to climb onto it. They could hear the cries of the Navigator and rear gunner, but could not paddle to their assistance. Four and one half hours later the two survivors were picked up by a naval destroyer. S/O HENRY's body washed up on the shore but the other two bodies have not been recovered. Details of the dead and missing airmen with the operational trips and hours are as follows:		A-275-A-289 A-276
Dishforth	5-4-43		WEATHER: Mainly cloudy; Visibility moderate to good; Wind- S.E.W. 30-40, gusting to 55; showering N.W. later.		
			A sea-search was carried out in an attempt to find the crew of X.3699. As previously related S/O LANCY & SGT ANDREWS WERE RECOVERED by a destroyer. They were taken to GIBRALTAR and captured. There was a stand-down from operations. S/L G.S. HOWE D.F.C. & Bar assumed command of 456 (L.F.C., F.) Squadron in place of W/O L. CHADWICK, R.F.C., absent on leave. SGT MUNRO reported to ALFREDHURST for an Engine Handling Course.		
Dishforth	6-4-43		WEATHER: Rain to cloudy; Visibility very good; Wind- W.N.W. 40-50 gusting to 55 at times. There was a stand-down from operations.		

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of (Unit or Formation) 426 (R.G.4, P.2) SQUADRON

No. of pages used for day _____

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	<u>SECRET.</u>	References to Appendices
Dishforth	7-4-43		WEATHER: Mainly cloudy; occasional showers. Visibility moderate to good. Wind W.N.W. 40-50 gusting to 60-70 mph. At times		
			There was a stand-down from operations. The following appointments were announced: S/L R. HARRIS, A.C. to be PILOT OFFICER - W.O.F. 6-3-43 S/L R. G. COWLEY, A.C. to be REAR OPERATOR - W.O.F. 6-3-43 S/L D. HENRY, C.L. to be PILOT OFFICER - W.O.F. 6-3-43		10
Dishforth	8-4-43		WEATHER: Cloudy. Visibility very good. Wind N.W. 10-15 mph. In 10-15% later		
			In the morning Group requested 10 experienced crews for night operations. The target was to be MIRAMAR, for the second time in two weeks. At 1845 hrs plane 1650 in the afternoon, and at 21-30 hrs flight A/B took off. Crews had been warned to expect a strong front over the NORMANDY and had been advised to climb from base. Cloud rose to 15,000 ft over the sea and HOLLAND, and after 10 miles A/B took on a considerable amount of ice. Four more crews formed to turn back. One 4/B started engine 6/6 - H.E. 430 rear turret master valve frozen. H.E. 390 delayed by bad weather, and H.E. 430 stood up and unable to climb above clouds. The last 4/B claimed to have bombed MIRAMAR. Six 4/B went on to the target and claimed to have bombed MIRAMAR. There was 10-15 cloud at 10,000-12,000 ft with good visibility above. Observation of results was impossible. All A/C returned to base. One day cross-country was flown. P/O Carruthers and crew reported for duty with this Squadron from No. 22 O.T.U., WELLSBOROUGH - INSTRUCTED. 8/0 miles represented the Squadron at the funeral of P/O KENNEDY at R.A.F. Station COLDSTREAM.		10
Dishforth	9-4-43		WEATHER: Fair at first; soon cloudy. Visibility excellent. Wind W.N.W. 5-10 mph.		
			There was a stand-down from operations. S/L HENRY (Pilot) reported to R.A.F. Station MIRAMAR W.E. 0800 hrs for a N.E.W. course. S/L HENRY (A.C.) reported to R.A.F. Station MIRAMAR for 0800 hrs. GUNNERY practice.		
Dishforth	10-4-43		WEATHER: Cloudy. Visibility excellent. Wind E. by N., 10-20 mph.		
			Group requested 4/C (16) for operations, and advised the Squadron that one overloaded tank was to be fitted on each 4/C. Crews were briefed to attack MIRAMAR & 1000'. Two 4/C type A/C were withdrawn in the afternoon. Two A/C failed to take-off - Pilot sick -- and H.E. 739 A/C 1/C. The remaining twelve took off at 21.00 - 2150 hrs and flew low over HOLLAND to MIRAMAR, climbed to 10-12,000 ft across the CHANALE, and flew at an average height of 10,000 ft to the target area. Track marker flares were well placed 75 and 15 miles from MIRAMAR, but few A/C saw flares - marker over the target. Majority of bomb-sights were forced to bomb into what they believed to be motion glow in the clouds which entirely obscured the ground and lay at a height of 10,000 ft. Flare over the target was heavy but inaccurate and scattered. 4/C returned by the same route. Four A/C were landed at 0000 HALLING and one at ASHFORD because of fuel shortage. One A/C H.E. 652 took off at 23.12 and has not been heard of since. Details of crew with operational losses and trips are as follows: (See page 4)	A-393 - A-309	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events						<u>SECRET.</u>	References to Appendices	
Dishforth	10-4-43	(Cont'd from page 3)									
			NUMBER	R/N	NAME	ROLE	O.A. TIME	O.P. TIME			
			J. 16941	H/O	GARRETT, J.H.	PILOT	10	48:00			
			S. 114202	C/S	HEDDER, G.W.	NAVIGATOR	7	50:29			
			1A87005	S/ST	WILLIAMS, D.E. 7/A	ARMORER	8	46:35			
			1077563	S/ST	LAURENT, G.	ARMORER	10	48:59			
			1A 61124	S/ST	MURRAY, W.H.	ARMORER	11	53:42			
			2/A MALES reported to ALBEMARLE for an Engine handling course.								
			7/A HAWK and crew reported to 811 SQUADRON FROM NO. 22 U.T.C. WELLINGTON NOT INOPERATIONAL								
Dishforth	11-4-43	WEATHER: Fair to cloudy. Visibility excellent. Wind S.E. 1ly, 10-20 m.p.h.									
			Five A/C were requested by Group for mine-laying operations. Experienced crews which had not taken part in the previous night's raid on SW. GERMANY were chosen. They were briefed to fly two mines apiece in the SW. HD area of the RHINE COAST. The five took off at 21:05 -- 21:08 hours, flew to MANNHEIM RHD, and crossed the RHINE RHA at 2,000 ft. They were able to drop their mines successfully on "T-2". There was considerable haze and poor visibility. The participants only were seen to open. Little opposition was encountered and all A/C returned to base. One A/C which had landed away from base in the morning, returned about noon.								
Dishforth	12-4-43	WEATHER: Cloudy; squally shower 10:30 hours. Visibility moderate. Wind S.E. 1ly, 5-10 m.p.h.									
			There was a stand-down from operations on account of bad weather. All sections carried out routine training--servicing of A/C and equipment. Several Mark II A/C have recently reached the Squadron to replace Mark III's, and after two or three days in the hangars, during which many modifications have fitted, engines and 1/2 loads are run, and A/C sent down, before being put on the operational lists.								
Dishforth	13-4-43	WEATHER: Cloudy. Visibility moderate. Wind S.E. 1ly, 10-15 m.p.h.									
			There was a stand-down from operations. Four crews were detailed to take part in a MILITARY exercise-in-cooperation-with-Ground-Defences but this was cancelled after briefing. Several crews flew to FARNBOROUGH RAF to test guns of new A/C.								
Dishforth	14-4-43	WEATHER: Cloudy; slight rain early. Visibility excellent. S.E. 1ly 10-20 m.p.h.									
			During the morning Group requested 16 crews for night operations, and advised the Squadron that one overstrained task was to be fitted to each A/C. The crews were briefed to attack HAMBURG. A/C HAWK 595 was withdrawn total 1/2. A/C took off between 20:05-21:07½ hours and flew by way of DUNDEESIDE, LYTHAMSTAN, approx 100 miles to the target. At 21:05 hrs HAWK 597 and HAWK 571 returned early. At 21:35 hrs HAWK 595 flew on past the target. The target was marked by a good concentration rear gunner sick and engine trouble respectively. The target was marked by a good concentration of P.R.E. T-2's into which Air Bombs released their loads. There was little cloud, visibility was excellent, and crews saw many buildings in the target area well defined in the glow of fires. No searchlights were operated over the target, considerable heavy inaccurate fire was seen.								

(PROB-2300) Wk 1001-2300 1942 T.D. 700

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No. of pages used for day _____

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	SECRET.	References to Appendices
Dishforth	15/4/43	— Continued from page 4—	A/c returned by the same route, one to MANCHESTER and one to WEST BALLINGLASS. At interrogation crews were enthusiastic about what they believed to have been a very successful operation.		
Dishforth	15/4/43	WEATHER: Cloudy becoming fair to fine in evening. Visibility very good. W.E.W. by wind 10-15 m.p.h. A/c which had landed at MANCHESTER the night before returned to MANCHESTER the morning after. There was a stand-down from operations. Local flying was carried out P/O. Carruthers and crew were posted to 420 (R.G.A.F.) Squadron, Middleton St. George.			
Dishforth	16/4/43	WEATHER: Fine to fair. Visibility very good. Wind generally calm or light N.W. by E. Fourteen crews were briefed to attack MANCHESTER. Operational teams scored 111000 for the third time in one week. At briefing crews were told that they were taking part in one of the Command's largest operations of the year. A/c took off shortly after 2100 hours and followed approximately the same route as they had taken to MANCHESTER. A/c returned early. Fine under pilot's seat and intercom. W.O. A/c R.A. 431 was attacked by an unidentified a/c on the outward journey, and returned to RAF nearby, and it would have been 2 hours late on target. The target was well marked by P.P.M. Vertical visibility and weather in the area was excellent. Four fairly large clusters of U/G's were in operation and there was a good mix of light and heavy flak. Numerous flak sites seen. There was little opposition on the way back. Two a/c landed at 0000 hrs and one at 0100 hrs. Eight a/c R.A. 501 took off at 2115 hrs and has not been heard of since. Details of crew together with details of operational parties and hours are as follows:			A-207-4-39
		Pilot 1004634 SGT. THROCKMORTON, L.	16	01450	
		Nav. R.109126 SGT. KIRKHAM, J. G.	15	02.35	
		A/B 242805 P/O. WOOD, H. G.	12	70.45	
		W/M 1070305 SGT. PARKERSON, J.	15	07.50	
		A/G R.239979 P/O. WHALEY, R. A.	16	02.45	
Dishforth	17/4/43	WEATHER: Cloudy. Visibility very good. Winds W.E.W. by 15-25 m.p.h.			
		There was a stand-down from operations.			
		The appointment of CAPT. 104224 Sgt. W. F. Gillies (Air Gunner) to the rank of Pilot Officer was announced.			
Dishforth	18/4/43	WEATHER: Excellent. Visibility excellent. Surface wind S.W. by 20-30 m.p.h.			
		There was a stand-down from operations. Local flying was carried out.			
Dishforth	19/4/43	WEATHER: Fair. Visibility excellent. Winds W.E.W. by 15-25 m.p.h.			
		Groups requested 42 a/c for night operations. Crews were briefed to attack MANCHESTER - a relatively small effort, while four engined aircraft were to go to MANCHESTER. Weather was bad and crews were warned that they would have to fly through a cold front. The operation was cancelled at 1800 hours.			

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	<u>SECRET.</u>	References to Appendices
Dishforth	20.4.43		WEATHER: Fine, becoming fair; Visibility becoming excellent. Winds S.W. 'ly 10-20 mph. There was a stand-down from operations. Local training flights took place.		
Dishforth	21.4.43		WEATHER: Fine, becoming cloudy during afternoon. Visibility poor at first; becoming good by afternoon. There was a stand-down from operations. Two s/c's were detailed to take part in a BULLDOGS exercise. This was later cancelled. In the morning aircraft heard a lecture by P/Lt. Anderson on Fighter Tactics. This was continued in the afternoon by fighter affiliation exercises in which six Wellingtons and three Spitfires took part.		
Dishforth	22.4.43		WEATHER: Overcast; with fog until after 1600 hours. Visibility less than 1000 yards in fog - 2/4000 in evening. Windy, calm till 1600 hours then light S.W. 'ly. There was a stand-down from operations. Weather was very bad. P/O. R.J. Dury was promoted to the rank of Flying Officer.		
Dishforth	23.4.43		WEATHER: Overcast, with continuous rain till noon; thunderstorms 1900 hours. Visibility, poor at first; becoming moderate. Windy, S.W. 'ly 10-15 mph. There was a stand-down from operations. The following air crews were posted to 420 (R.A.F.A.S.) Squadron, Middleton St. George prior to overcast starting: S/Ldr. Merrifield, Sgt. Keen, P/O. Anderson, Sgt. Nicholls, Sgt. Gillis Sgt. Collings, P/O. Wilson, P/O. Jackson, Sgt. Lomax, P/O. Lewis, P/O. Foster Sgt. Steer, P/O. Golby, P/O. Friggs, Sgt. Mayhew, Sgt. Steele Sgt. Wright, Sgt. Kennedy, P/O. Bittencourt, Sgt. Brown, Sgt. Chapman Sgt. Lloyd, P/O. Baldwin, Sgt. Meredith, Sgt. Hector, Sgt. Johnson Sgt. Dingwall, Sgt. Collier, Sgt. Maytor, Sgt. Macmillan, Sgt. Bowley		
Dishforth	24.4.43		WEATHER: Fair to cloudy. Visibility, Excellent. Winds W. 'ly, 20-30, gusts 40/50. Fourteen crews were briefed for an attack on BURGAS. The operation was cancelled after briefing. Eighty-ground crew personnel arrived on the Station. No quarters could be found for them because of the number of personnel detailed in organising the posting of A25 Squadron. They had therefore to be sent to Middleton St. George. Sgt. Gault reported to Middleton St. George for a R.A.A. course. Sgt. McBratney reported to Driffield for an AIR GUNNERY course.		
Dishforth	25.4.43		WEATHER: Fair to cloudy. Visibility excellent. Winds S.W. 'ly 25/30, gusts 45/50. There was a stand-down from operations. P/O. Gault, McBratney, P/O. Goss, P/O. Goss, P/O. ... gave a most interesting and illuminating lecture on "Pathfinders" to an enthusiastic audience.		SAC 276
			It was announced that His Majesty the King, on the recommendation of the A.C.C. Air C. Bomber Command, had approved the immediate award of the D.F.C. to S/L. 22325 P/O. Dallas Laskey (A/B) and the F.D.M. to F/O 101990 to Sgt. Leslie Hester underofficer (W/S/M).		

R.A.F. Form 540
See instructions for use of this form in K.R. and A.C.I.,
para. 249, and War Manual, Pt. II, Chapter XX., and
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of (Unit or Formation) 426 (R.C.A.F.) SQUADRON

No. of pages used for day

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	SECRET.	References to Appendices
Dishforth	26.4.43		<p>WEATHER: Mainly cloudy. Visibility very good exc. in showers. Winds W. by SW 25/35 miles 45/50. Four crews were briefed to attack MULHOUSE. Flying by way of FLAMBOURG and BRONDE, crews found the target area well indicated by P.M. markers. There was no cloud over the area, sun had, but good visibility. Nine crews claim to have bombed the target successfully in the face of heavy intense flak. Crews reported a good number of fires burning well. These nine returned to base without incident. A/c H.M. 867 - Capt. W.C. L. Crook, DFC, 2nd Pilot, Sjt. J. G. Pennington, Navigator, F/O. Simpson, Air Bomber P/O. Power, W/M P/Lt. F.C. Marsh and A/G Opt. C.S. Howe, received the same news at 0205 hours when it was announced by a night fighter. The hydraulics were w/s, brake pressure w/s, intercom in fuselage and rear, turret w/s, electrical failure of bomb release apparatus, navigation lights w/s, port tail plane and all fairing w/s off, port aileron damaged and trailing edge of mainplane w/s. Any fairing which fell from the fuselage, centre body fairing badly damaged, port engine overheating. The Captain of a/c decided to turn back, when the a/c remained flat he decided not to make a landing and he decided since the bomb could not be jettisoned and the undercarriage would not go down, he decided therefore to abandon a/c as all members of the crew bailed out successfully and were quickly placed up. W/Cdr. L. Crook, DFC, was taken to hospital with severely strained back muscles, and 1/0 power with a broken foot. The other members of the crew were uninjured.</p>		A.340 - A.349
Dishforth	27.4.43		<p>WEATHER: Cloudy, continuous rain till noon. Visibility good. Winds W. by N 10-20 m.p.h. In the morning Group requested ten crews for the night bombing operations. The bombing trip was later cancelled and a mine-laying trip substituted. In the afternoon four crews were withdrawn and six crews detailed to lay mines in the BISCAY area. A/c took off between 2200-2220 hours and returned. This journey by way of CHARTRES and BRONDE. When they reached the mining area they found cloud base 5-600', fairly good visibility, but very dark. Three a/c pinpointed successfully and laid two mines each. A/c H.M. 867 had one hang up. A/c H.M. 905 - A/c H.M. 632 brought back mines, as they were unable to locate position. All a/c returned to base. Sgt. Cox and crew were posted to R.A.F. BEAUFORT, NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE. Shortly after midnight Capt. L. Crook, DFC, was walking into the propeller of a Wellington aircraft and sustained head injuries from which he died nine hours later.</p>		A.350-A.359
Dishforth	28.4.43		<p>WEATHER: Fair to cloudy; occasional showers in afternoon. Visibility very good exc. in showers. Winds N.W. by E 10-20 m.p.h. Four crews were briefed to lay mines off the NORWEGIAN COAST, between the island of KAROY and the mainland in a narrow strait of water about 200 yards wide. As this area had not been mined before, little information could be given abt flak and S/L defences. The a/c took off at 2015-2017 hours and flew direct to their pinpoint position. A/c H.M. 867 brought back two mines unable to locate position. A/c H.M. 916 laid two mines in the wrong position. A/c H.M. 920 laid mines successfully but brought one back as the fuse distributor had stuck. A/c H.M. 729 laid two mines successfully. All a/c encountered 2/2" and 4/2" anti-aircraft fire. A/c H.M. 920 was hit in several places, the port propeller was damaged, and the Captain Sjt. J. G. Pennington decided to make for the emergency base at FARNBOROUGH. The other a/c landed at BASE.</p> <p>Lt. Payton DFC, RCAF gave a lecture on SUBMARINE Warfare. S/Ldr. F.W. Parker aircraft engineer of the Squadron vice W/Cdr. L. Crook, DFC, (in hospital)</p>		A.350-A.359

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of (Unit or Formation) 426 (R.G.A.P.) BOMBERS

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	SECRET.	References to Appendices
OPERATIONAL STRENGTH OF UNIT AS AT 30th APRIL 1943					
			STRENGTH	STRENGTH	TOTAL
Luftwaffe			33	4	37
Luftwaffe			6	-	6
Luftwaffe (Unknown)			1	-	1
TOTAL			40	4	44
OPERATIONAL, NON-OPERATIONAL AND FLYING TRAINING HOURS: APRIL 1943					
(a) Operational Flying Hours					
			DAYS 111		
			NIGHTS 505.50		
(b) Flying Training Hours					
			DAYS 37.30		
			NIGHTS 26.15		
(c) Other Non-operational Flying Hours					
			DAYS 65.55		
			NIGHTS 40.00		
TOTAL HOURS 680.25					

Liam Parker
Operations Officer, Commandant,
426 (R.G.A.P.) BOMBERS