

DATE	AIRCRAFT TYPE & NUMBER	CREW	DUTY	TIME		DETAILS OF SORTIE OR FLIGHT	REFERENCES
				UP	DOWN		
20-2-44	MJ352	IX F/Lt M.J. Gordon	Operational	1415	1615	RANGROD 567: continued: He was given instructions over the R/T by the wing leader but his engine failed to revive and so when his a/c had entered cloud just east of Lille he was told to bale out at 3,000 feet. No enemy a/c were encountered. The remaining a/c MEMB of our squadron accompanied a box of Fortresses in over the Isle of Wight.	
	MJ480	IX F/Lt J. Hodgson	"	1415	1615		
	MJ645	IX F/O H.R. Finley	"	1415	1630		
	MJ356	IX F/O J.D. Orr	"	1415	1615		
	MJ876	IX F/O J.H. Ballantyne	"	1415	1630		
	MJ985	IX F/Lt L.G. Keltie	"	1415	1555		
21-2-44	MJ341	IX W/O H.C. Godfrey	Operational	1435	1625	RANGROD 573: Our wing was high cover to seventy-two Harouiders. The raid was carried out according to plan but no enemy aircraft were seen. Intense accurate heavy flak was experienced from Rotterdam at 18,000 feet. The cloud over the channel and target area was 10/10ths at 5,000 feet. Results of the bombing were unobserved due to the cloud.	
	MJ306	IX S/Lt R.A. Buckham	"	1435	1635		
	MJ942	IX F/O J. Preston	"	1435	1635		
	MJ876	IX F/O J.H. Ballantyne	"	1435	1635		
	MJ355	IX F/O H.H. Smith	"	1435	1635		
	MJ664	IX F/O L. Foster	"	1435	1555		
	MJ352	IX F/Lt J.P. Leese	"	1435	1555		
	MJ980	IX F/O R.W. Denison	"	1435	1635		
	MJ939	IX F/Lt M.J. Gordon	"	1435	1635		
	MJ645	IX F/O H.R. Finley	"	1435	1635		
	MJ986	IX W/O A.B. Glenard	"	1435	1635		
	MJ580	IX F/Lt L.G. Keltie	"	1435	1635		
	MJ985	IX F/O A.J.A. Bryon	"	1435	1635		
	22-2-44	MJ306	IX S/Lt R.A. Buckham	Operational	1425		1625
MJ985		IX F/Lt J.D. Lindsay	"	1425	1625		
MJ356		IX F/O J. Preston	"	1425	1625		
MJ352		IX F/Lt M.J. Gordon	"	1425	1625		
MJ985		IX F/O L. Foster	"	1425	1610		
MJ942		IX F/O T.A. Brannagan	"	1425	1705		
MJ980		IX F/O R.W. Denison	"	1425	1635		
MJ480		IX F/O H.H. Smith	"	1425	1635		
MJ570		IX F/Lt L.G. Keltie	"	1425	1645		
MJ986		IX F/O W.J. Jagers	"	1425	1645		
MJ876		IX F/O J.H. Ballantyne	"	1425	1625		
MJ356		IX F/O J.D. Orr	"	1425	1555		
MJ986		IX W/O A.B. Glenard	"	1425	1645		
FROM THE 23rd FEBRUARY TO 29th FEBRUARY THERE WAS NO OPERATIONAL FLYING DONE.							
TOTAL OPERATIONAL SORTIES FOR MONTH OF FEBRUARY/44 : 1235.							
<i>R.A. Buckham</i> (R.A. Buckham) Squadron Leader, Officer Commanding, No. 403 Squadron, RAF.							

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OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

Page No. \_\_\_\_\_

of (Unit or Formation) No. 403 Squadron, R.A.F.

No. of pages used for day \_\_\_\_\_

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	SECRET.	References to Appendices
127 Airfield H.Q., R.A.F. Station, Fenley, Surrey.	1-3-44		No operations and no non-operational flying to-day. The remainder of the pilots and our H.Q. F/Lt D.G. Hurroo, and the squadron clerk came back from Hutton Cranswick by rail to-day. The other squadrons here did a sweep to-day which proved uneventful. We are all hoping the food here will in time until it reaches the high standard set by Hutton Cranswick. F/O H.R. Finley was posted to the squadron to-day as one of "B" Flight. F/O T.A. Brannagan, F/O L.G. Keltie and F/Lt R.G. Middleton were posted to 144 Airfield H.Q. W.A.F. to-day.		
	2-3-44		There was one operation carried out to-day and outside of being bounced by Thunderbolts it proved uneventful. There were only six non-operational sorties carried out to-day.		
	3-3-44		One operation was carried out to-day, escorting 108 Harouiders to bomb Leaz/Achise. No enemy aircraft were seen. Jerry seems to be conserving his fighter strength for something big. In the afternoon a fighter sweep was done by our wing which penetrated to the Lille/Contraal area. No enemy aircraft were seen but some flak was experienced from Lille. To-day again there were only six non-operational sorties carried out.		
	4-3-44		There were two operations carried out to-day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. On the morning the bombers were recalled after reaching the French coast. No enemy aircraft were seen to-day. There were thirty-four non-operational sorties to-day.		
	5-3-44		To-day there were no operations carried out nor was there any non-operational flying done. F/O G.B. Nelson was posted to the squadron to-day from A.S.O.B. Hqs. He has done a tour in Hqs. and all the pilots welcomed him to our squadron.		
	6-3-44		One operation to-day as close escort to the bombers. Enemy aircraft were reported but none were seen. There were 15 non-operational sorties done to-day for a total of (9:10) hours.		
	7-3-44		To-day our pilots saw some enemy aircraft but luck was not with us as they could not be engaged. There was only one operation done to-day. We did our first bit of night flying this evening 3 sorties for a total of 3 hours.		
	8-3-44		Two shows to-day - one and also 21 non-operational sorties. We were escort wing on the morning and this afternoon carried out an eight man Ranger. No enemy aircraft were seen. On the Ranger we lost two pilots, F/O J.H. Ballantyne, 1246 and F/O B. Goldberg our adjutant. F/O J. Preston's aircraft was severely damaged by flak but he managed to land at Priston. F/O Ballantyne's a/c was seen to hit the ground and explode and very little hope is held for him. He has been posted as missing believed killed. F/O A. Golding reported that he was going to attempt a crash landing. He has been posted as missing but we all are hoping he will be walking back to see us one of these days. F/O L. Foster was posted to No. 53 O.T.U. W.A.F. to-day.		
	9-3-44		No operations to-day but 28 sorties were carried out on practice flying in the late afternoon. We were scrambled to Ford to patrol & practice landing of troops.		
	10-3-44		The aircraft were unable to return to base to-day the weather being very w/s. A lot of grumbling was heard but it wasn't very long before a party was organised.		
	11-3-44		The aircraft returned to-day, but their trip back home from Ford was the only flying done to-day. "B" Flight had a party this evening and according to all reports it was a howling success.		

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	SECRET.	References to Appendices
127 Airfield H.Q. RAF Station, Kenley, Surrey.	12-3-44		No operations to-day but an early morning exercise in co-operation with the army. This evening 3 sorties were carried out on night flying for a total of 3 hours flying time. P/O's Whitaker, Williams, and P/O. Greaves were posted to 403 to-day from 3 (RAF) FMS.		
	13-3-44		The aircraft were scrambled to-day and they fired their guns into the sea off Beachy Head on their return the re-arming of the aircraft was timed. When we go to the field it is not at all unlikely that all our aircraft will return with empty guns and it is a good thing to know how long it will take to re-load them. An army convoy was beat-up to-day and in all there were 33 non-operational sorties.		
	14-3-44		A rather quiet day -- a great panic in the morning with the pilots up by seven for briefing at 8:15. The sweep was subsequently cancelled and the pilots got their excitement from doing readiness to-day.		
	15-3-44		One sweep was carried out to-day and we went in behind 401 Squadron who caught up with 6 P.N.U. FW190's trying to land at Ca. brd. <del>401</del> shot four of them down. After this sweep the wing landed at Houston. No other sweep developed to-day and our aircraft returned to base at 1800 hours.		
	16-3-44		No operations to-day -- we were released to do some training. We were escort to some Mustangs who were late at R.V. as usual. The pilots report a fairly good picture in the Mess to-night.		
	17-3-44		Thick fog stopped all flying to-day. Some mock shooting was organized by the pilots. All the pilots appear to be in good spirits and they have been busy all day polishing the cockpit covers of their aircraft.		
	18-3-44		Only non-operational flying done to-day. There were 38 sorties on this type of flying to-day. One of our best pilots was killed in a flying accident to-day. Three pilots led by P/O. R.W. Denison took off on a sector recon and when near <del>Ca. brd.</del> aerodrome P/O. Denison's engine failed. He attempted a crash landing on <del>Ca. brd.</del> drome but undershot the field crashing on a highway. P/O Denison was killed instantly and the aircraft was a complete write off.		
	19-3-44		No flying at all to-day as the weather was very bad. The wing was released in the afternoon so that it was very quiet around our dispersal this afternoon.		
	20-3-44		There was one operation carried out to-day and as usual no enemy aircraft were seen. The pilots report that the flek is very accurate. There were 11 non-operational sorties carried out for a total of 5 hours flying time.		
	21-3-44		Bad weather prevented flying to-day and the pilots spent a quiet day in the mess. Several arrangements have been completed for the burial of P/O. R.W. Denison.		
	22-3-44		Just a few sorties on practice flying to-day. P/O. Denison's funeral was held to-day at Brookwood Cemetery in Surrey. Most of the pilots attended and the funeral was carried out with full Military Honours. At the conclusion of the ceremony all the pilots present led by the Commanding Officer, S/Lt. R.W. Buxton, DFC stepped up to the grave and saluted P/O. Denison for the last time.		

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OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

Page No. \_\_\_\_\_

of (Unit or Formation) 403 Squadron, R.C.A.F.

No. of pages used for day \_\_\_\_\_

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	SECRET.	References to Appendices
127 Airfield H.Q. R.C.A.F. Station, Kenley, Surrey.	23-3-44		There was a sweep carried out to-day and even though our aircraft flew at 8,000 feet over Paris they were not detected by either flek or enemy aircraft. There were 10 non-operational sorties done to-day.		
	24-3-44		Non-operational flying to-day. The weather cleared in around 3 p.m. after 21 sorties had been completed. We are practicing dive bombing and army co-operation. P/O. J.A. Wilson was posted to R.C.A.F. "B" Depot, Harrington, for repatriation for duty in Canada.		
	25-3-44		Practice dive-bombing again to-day. More bad luck. P/L. Pennock backed out when pulling out of a dive after bombing rolled over on his back and crashed on the edge of the aerodrome. He was killed instantly and the aircraft was completely wrecked. We have lost four pilots this month and we are all hoping that this run of bad luck will stop soon.		
	26-3-44		More practice flying to-day. To-day there was a church service held in the dispersal. In the morning some mock shooting was done by the pilots who are now thinking of taking on the pilots of 421 Sqn in a mock shooting contest. P/L. Pennock will be buried to-morrow at Brookwood Cemetery.		
	27-3-44		Army coop exercises to-day. 40 non-operational sorties were carried out by the squadron to-day. In the afternoon the pilots were at Brookwood for P/L. Pennock's funeral. The service was conducted by a Rev. Anderson the reverent padre and full military honours were accorded with the Last Post being sounded at the conclusion of the service. P/O. H.V. Boyle and P/O. E.D. Kelly were posted to the Squadron from 3 (RAF) FMS to-day for flying duties.		
	28-3-44		Thirteen sorties on army co-operation to-day. There were no operations carried out. It was sunny until noon to-day but the weather cleared enough in the afternoon to allow the army co-operation show to be carried out.		
	29-3-44		No flying at all to-day, it was foggy in the morning and remained very dull for the whole day. We were released at 2 p.m. this afternoon and the pilots were soon on their way to London.		
	30-3-44		We were again flying in co-operation with the army to-day. Our squadron has been getting plenty of practice with the army lately and the pilots are getting anxious to do some more operational flying. There were 36 non-operational sorties carried out to-day.		
	31-3-44		In the morning the cloud was 10/10ths but it cleared up later in the afternoon allowing our pilots to take part in an army beat-up exercise which was the only flying done to-day. <b>Health.</b> The health of the Squadron was very good this month and outside of a few pilots having slight colds there was nothing to worry about.		

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	SECRET.	References to Appendices
127 Airfield H.Q. R.A.F. Station, Kenley, Surrey.	31-3-44		NO. 403 SQUADRON REPAIRS AND FIXING TILES FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH/44.		
			OFFICERS FIXING 21 AIRCRAFT FIXING NIL	OFFICERS GROUND 1 AIRCRAFT GROUND 2	
			U.S.A. PERSONNEL		
			OFFICERS FIXING 4 AIRCRAFT FIXING 1	OFFICERS GROUND NIL AIRCRAFT GROUND 1	
			FLYING TIME FOR MONTH:		
			Operational hours: 256:15		
			Non-operational hours: 328:05 (Day)		
			Non-operational hours: 6:20 (Night)		
			Master III: 1	8:35	
			TOTAL: 609:15		
			LIST OF AIRCRAFT:		
			18 Spitfires IXA: 14570, 14585, 14587, 14645, 14988, 14306, 14742, 14936, 14194, 14980, 14664, 14352, 14480, 14179, 14928, 14942, 14939		
			1 MASTER III: 14181		
			1 TIE UP UNIT: 27402		
			OUR OPERATIONS FOR MONTH:		
			8-3-44 P/O J.H. Ballantyne, IPI - missing believed killed.		
			8-3-44 P/O D. Goldberg - missing.		
			18-3-44 P/O R.H. Hodgson - killed flying accident.		
			25-3-44 P/O C.G. Pennock - killed flying accident.		
			OUR OPERATIONS FOR MONTH: NIL.		
			(R.A.F. STATION) SQUADRON LEADER, IPI.		
			Officer Commanding, No. 403 Squadron, Kenley, Surrey.		

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Page No. \_\_\_\_\_

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FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 19 44

DATE	AIRCRAFT TYPE & NUMBER	CREW	DUTY	TIME		DETAILS OF SORTIE OR FLIGHT	REFERENCES
				Up	Down		
1-3-44						NIL OPERATIONS	
2-3-44	MK341 M7887 M7306 M7645 M7870 M7988 M7939 M7352 M7563 M7942 M7356 M7980	W/O R.G. Godfrey P/O W.H. Morrison S/Lt R.A. Buckham P/Lt L.G. Keltie P/O J.D. Orr P/O A.J. Bryan P/Lt H.R. Finley P/Lt M.J. Gordon P/O J. Preston P/Lt J.P. Leocq P/Lt C.P. Thornton P/O R.H. Smith	Operational	1050	1250	RAMROD 610: The wing, led by W/O R.G. Godfrey, IPI & Bar, acted as penetration cover to Fortresses and Liberators and covered the penetration to Forest d'Ardenne. In this area they were bounced by Thunderbolts. Around Lens some unidentified aircraft were seen but the wing could not close on them. The wing now swept Lille area on the report of enemy a/c in that area but when these were later reported to have probably landed, Douai, Vitry and Lille aerodromes were swept from 7,000 feet but nothing was seen. North of a line across to Ardenne the cloud was 6/10ths - 7/10ths and south of this 10/10ths	
3-3-44	M7306 M7986 M7563 M7942 M7876 M7645 M7355 M7988 M7939 M7887 M7480 M7570 M7480 M7986 M7356 M7876 M7645 M7355 M7988 M7939 M7480 M7563 M7887 M7570	S/Lt R.A. Buckham P/O K.V. Chevers P/O J. Preston P/Lt M.J. Gordon P/O J.H. Ballantyne P/Lt C.G. Pennock P/Lt J. Hodgson P/Lt W.J. Hill P/Lt H.R. Finley P/Lt D. Goldberg P/Lt J.P. Leocq W/O A.B. Glenard S/Lt R.A. Buckham P/O M.V. Chevers P/Lt C.P. Thornton P/O J.H. Ballantyne P/Lt C.G. Pennock P/Lt J. Hodgson P/Lt W.J. Hill P/Lt H.R. Finley P/Lt J.P. Leocq P/O J. Preston P/Lt D. Goldberg W/O A.B. Glenard	Operational	0830	1055	RAMROD 616: On this ramrod our wing acted as escort cover to 108 Marauders bombing Laon/Ardenne. The bombing appeared to be good. No enemy aircraft were seen. The wing landed at Manston.	
	M7480 M7986 M7356 M7876 M7645 M7355 M7988 M7939 M7480 M7563 M7887 M7570	S/Lt R.A. Buckham P/O M.V. Chevers P/Lt C.P. Thornton P/O J.H. Ballantyne P/Lt C.G. Pennock P/Lt J. Hodgson P/Lt W.J. Hill P/Lt H.R. Finley P/Lt J.P. Leocq P/O J. Preston P/Lt D. Goldberg W/O A.B. Glenard	Operational	1630	1750	RAMROD 617: Our role on this ramrod was fighter sweep. The wing swept Lille - Central area but no enemy aircraft were seen and no bombs were seen sighted. Some flak was experienced from Lille. In the Lille - Central area the weather was clear whereas west of Lille the cloud was 3/10ths the top being 13,000 feet.	
4-3-44	M7306 M7355 M7887 M7645 M7988 M7356	S/Lt R.A. Buckham P/Lt W.J. Hill P/O J.H. Ballantyne P/Lt C.G. Pennock P/O J.D. Orr P/Lt C.P. Thornton	Operational	1745-0935 1745-0935 1745-1015 1745-0935 1745-0935 1745-0935	1745-1015 1745-1015 1745-1015 1745-1015 1745-1015 1745-1015	RAMROD 622: The wing took off from Manston and were to act as close escort to 108 Marauders bombing Malines marshalling yards but were recalled at the French coast and landed at Manston.	

CJT