

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

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) 263

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Charmy Down	January, 1942		For the second month in succession there has been, with the exception of two abortive scrambles, no operational flying.	
and			Training in air firing and practice attacks both with and without camera guns has been methodically carried out and so far as the	
Colerne			weather has allowed, but snow and fog have been frequent. It is not surprising that all pilots and so far as the weather has allowed,	
			but snow and fog have been frequent. It is not surprising that all pilots find this operational inactivity extremely tedious, especially in	
			a squadron which has no mean record in the offensive operations of 1941.	
	5/1/42		It has been ordered that all Fighter Squadrons should become operational at night. 263 Squadron had done no night flying with	
			Whirlwinds other than on operations on June 14 th and September 29 th 1941, which respectively started before dawn and ended after	
			dusk. It was planned that the most experienced pilots should start night flying training from Colerne during the moon period at the	
			end of January, but owing to unsuitable weather, only one dusk flight was made by S/Ldr Pugh on January 25th.	
			A perusal of the earlier pages of this book revealed that no records of squadron activities earlier than April	
			1940 were to be found and that several documents of the Norway expeditions were missing although	
			reference was made to them on existing forms 540 and 541. Accordingly a visit was made to Air Ministry Records on January 5 th by	
			the Intelligence Officer and clerk, and a summary of the history of the Squadron from its formation at Filton in October 2 nd , 1939 to	
			the end of March 1940 was made and placed in this book. The missing documents were found and photostats were made of them and	
			all the documents of the Norway Expeditions were re-ordered and indexed and placed in this book in their correct sequence.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	2/1/42		The twelve pilots with Whirlwinds which had been fog-bound at Exeter returned to Charmy Down.	
	8/1/42		F/Lt Warnes in an endurance test was airborne for two hours and thirty-five minutes, and had thirty-two gallons of petrol left (17 and 15 for each engine).	
	9/1/42		F/Lt Durnford of M.I.9 gave a lecture on "Escape" to all pilots.	
	9/1/42		W/Cdr A.H. Donaldson D.F.C. (W/Cdr. Flying) gave a lecture to all pilots on offensive operations.	
	28/1/42		The squadron moved to R.A.F. Station, Colerne. The maintenance echelon was already at Colerne and there will undoubtedly be a gain in efficiency in rejoining it. All the officers of the squadron find themselves comfortably billeted in Ashwick Park.	
			The relevant Order is appended as Appendix A.	Appendix A
			<u>Personnel.</u>	
			His Majesty the King was graciously pleased to confer the British Empire Medal on F/Sgt Samson. F/Sgt Samson had been posted from 263 Squadron on June 9th, but the decoration was conferred for F/Sgt Samson's work with the squadron in Norway and subsequently.	
			F/Sgt R.C. Mitchell of Signals and Sgt Turner, N.J. of the 263 H.Q., both of whom had been with the squadron during the Norwegian expeditions, were honoured by being mentioned in dispatches.	
	3/1/42		Sgt. Pilot D. Gill (R.C.A.F.) commissioned as a Pilot Officer.	
	7/1/42		Sgt. Pilot J. Meredith to Crenage on Navigation Course.	

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Of (Unit or Formation)

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	16/1/42		Sgt. Pilot C. King promoted Tempy. Flight Sergeant.	
	20/1/42		P/O S.G. Brannigan posted from 61 O.T.U.	
	28/1/42		Sgt. Pilots P. Jardine, C. Bell, P. Ewing posted from O.T.U.	
	26/1/42		F/O W.P. Weir Squadron Medical Officer posted to Goxhill as Flight Lieutenant. F/O C.W.D. Cole posted as Medical Officer to 263 Squadron.	
	27/1/42		Sgt. Pilot E. Brearley attached to A.F.D.U. Duxford.	
			<u>Addenda to Previous Months.</u>	
	30/10/41		F/O D. Stein, about whom no news has been received since his disappearance near Morlaix on 30/10/41 was posted to No. 1 R.A.F. Depot.	
	16/12/41		P/O S.J. Lovell posted from 55 O.T.U.	
			A Wordsworth F/O Intelligence Officer, 263 Squadron	

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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	February			
Colerne	1 st - 9 th		Time spent quietly at Colerne; mist and snow restricted flying to a minimum.	
			Nothing special to report.	
	1/2/42		Sergeant Pilots Coyne, Lovell, Brearley and Kennedy promoted to Flight Sergeants.	
	5/2/42		F/Sgt Pilot E. Brearley commissioned as Pilot Officer.	
	10/2/42		Moved by air, train and motor transport to Fairwood Common; the squadron took the air in sixteen	
			Whirlwinds, the Hurricane, Magister and Oxford. This is believed to have been the largest number	
			of Whirlwinds of one squadron airborne at any one time. Fairwood Common is under the command of	
			Group Captain R.L.R. Atcherley, OBE, AFC, who commanded the wing in which 263 Squadron operated	
			at Bardufoss in the Second Norwegian Expedition. The squadron was welcomed by a special broadcast	
			during the evening, of the squadron's achievements.	
	11/2/42		Intensive instruction in the principles of convoy patrol and in the peculiarities of the Fairwood	
			runways and control system.	
	12/2/42		Six convoy patrols completed without incident. Port engine of Whirlwind P.7017 cut at 2000 feet,	
			but the pilot, F/Sgt Lovell, returned to base and landed safely.	
			Squadron Leader T.P. Pugh, DFC, posted as Squadron Leader Tactics to Headquarters, No. 82 Group.	
			S/Ldr Pugh came to 263 Squadron as a Flying Officer in June, 1940; he was promoted Flight	
			Lieutenant of "B" Flight in the following November, and in August, 1941, became Squadron Leader	
			commanding the unit. He led the squadron in many operational sorties and was a noted protagonist	
			of the Whirlwind low level attack. In September, 191, he was awarded the D.F.C. for his exploits	
			with the squadron. He takes he best wishes of the officers and men with him on his new appointment.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	12/2/42		Squadron Leader R.S. Woodward, DFC, posted from No. 137 Squadron to command, vice S/Ldr Pugh.	
			S/Ldr Woodward was originally a member of the Oxford University Air Squadron and later transferred	
			to the R.A.F.V.R. Whilst serving with No. 600 (Beaufighter) Squadron he shot down three enemy	
			aircraft by night in the Colerne Section and received the DFC in July, 1941.	
	13/2/42		Four convoy patrols and three dusk patrols carried out. On returning from last convoy patrol at	
			dusk, F/Sgt½ Coyne swung off the runway on landing; the aircraft turned on its back and is	
			Category "B", F/Sgt Coyne was uninjured.	
	14/2/42		One convoy patrol, no incident.	
	15/2/42		Four convoy patrols without incident.	
	16/2/42		Sector carried out enemy patrol over Angle at 15,000 feet. Several short vectors given by	
			Fairwood Humby but nothing seen.	
	18/2/42		Two convoy patrols, nothing to report.	
	19/2/42		During convoy patrol, the starboard engine of P.7110, piloted by P/O J. Holmes, disintegrated and	
			caught fire 25 miles south of St. Gowans Head. By using full flap the pilot managed to gain	
			sufficient height to reach the coast and landed safely	
	22/2/42		Three convoy patrols carried out without incident.	
			Between 19 th and 21 st of the month six Whirlwinds developed serious engine trouble and the	
			squadron became virtually grounded and are only to fly on operational scrambles until the fault	
			has been remedied. The defect was traced, in five cases, to the three way union which supplies	
			oil to the camshaft and supercarger bearings, and the Manufacturers are constructing a series	
			of stronger unions.	
	22 nd - 28 th Feb		Squadron grounded for above reasons.	
			<u>Flying times for February, 1942.</u>	
			Operational.....86 hours.	
			Non-Operational.....154 "	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Fairwood	March 1942		His Majesty the King has graciously approve the granting of a crest and motto to 263 Squadron.	
Common	1 st		The crest, duly devised by the Chester Herald, consists of the Lion of Scotland rampant holding	
			in his forepaws the Blue Cross of Norway, commemorating thereby the Squadron's exploits in the	
			first and second North Western (Norway) Expeditions of 1940 and the period of refitting with	
			Whirlwinds which was spent in Scotland. The motto is EX UNGUE LEONEM, THE LION IS KNOWN BY HIS	
			CLAW.	
			Air Vice Marshall A.H. Orlebar, CBE, AFC, visited Fairwood Common on April 1 st to present this	
			crest and motto to the squadron.	
			At 1415 the Squadron paraded by Flights outside Watch Office and at 1430 hours Air Vice Marshall	
			Orlebar inspected the Squadron.	
			He spoke to F/Sgt Goss B.E.M., who is one of the several veterans of the Norway expedition still	
			serving with the Squadron. The A.O.C. then made a brief speech in which he commemorated the major	
			events in the Squadron's history. He remarked that WHEN the Squadron was chosen to be re-equipped	
			with Whirlwinds, because it was XXXXXXXX at that time the crack squadron of Fighter Command; but	
			events shows that height had become a major factor and this the Whirlwinds lacked.	
			Nevertheless Whirlwinds of 263 Squadron had been markedly successful in the offensive operations	
			of 1941. The A.O.C. then presented the crest and motto to S/Ldr R.S. Woodward DFC. The Squadron	
			then marched past the A.O.C. and was dismissed at 15.15. hours.	
			Group Captain R.L.R. Atcherley OBE, AFC and Wing Commander A.H. Donaldson, AFC, DFC, were both	
			present at the ceremony. The former was the Air Attaché in Norway at the time of the second	
			Norway Expedition and acted as Wing Commander of the Wing; he is at present the Station Commander	
			of Fairwood Common.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
			Wing Commander Donaldson's connections with the Squadron are well known.	
F/Common	3/3/42		Several new three-way unions arrived and six Whirlwinds were rendered serviceable.	
	4/3/42		Seventeen Whirlwinds were serviceable.	
	8/3/42		Co-operation in General Invasion Manoeuvres. Beat-up of approaches to Oxwich Bay, Railway lines, Swansea Station and Fairwood Aerodrome.	
	9/3/42		Extensive air-firing. F/Lt Warnes and P/O's Currie and Holmes all shot away their drogues.	
	11-13 th		Wet, with low cloud. No flying.	
	14 th		Much practice flying. Extensive camera-gun and air-to-ground firing.	
	15-16 th		Some operational flying in thick weather. Congratulations received from Group on being the only squadron able to take off.	
	20 th		Fine weather. 48 hours flying. A team of photographers arrived to photograph the aircraft and personnel of the Squadron, both on the ground and in the air, and all possible facilities were afforded them.	
	22 nd		Fine weather. Eleven patrols over the Saltee Island area.	
	23 rd		Five patrols in the Saltee area.	
	25 th		To-day the photographs of the Squadron first appeared in the newspapers, together with extensive accounts of the offensive operations of 1941. Cuttings of these were obtained from Durrant's Agency and will be found in the Squadron Scrap-book, together with a Brief History of the squadron which was prepared for the A.O.C. before his visit on March 1st.	
	26 th		10 Group Tactical Exercise 28. Six Whirlwinds led by S/Ldr Woodward DFC beat up eight lorries on Dartmoor. Two other squadrons had previously attacked and left one lorry blazing After the Whirlwind attack there were three more ablaze. Group Captain Edwardes Jones of Exeter congratulated the squadron on very good shooting and well planned attacks.	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	March			
Fairwood Common	26		A general message of congratulations was also received from A.O.C. 10 Group.	
			On the same day S/Ldr Jackson, Maintenance Officer of Fighter Command visited Fairwood Common	
			and congratulated the Engineer Officer Pilot Officer A.A. Hay B.E.M. o the high standard of	
			maintenance and serviceability which was evident during the whole of the month, after the	
			three-way union trouble had been cured.	
	1 st Mar.		P/O S.J. Lovell attached to 2 D.F. Colerne.	
			P/O S.G. Brannigan attached to 2 D.F. R.A.F. Colerne. on 11 th March.	
			P/O S.J. Lovell transferred from 2 D.F. to 51 O.T.U. on the 22 nd March.	
			Strength of Flying Personnel:- Officers 14, Airmen pilots 13.	
	<u>SUMMARY</u>		During the month 256 operational and 284 non-operational hours were flown.	
			Total 540 hours. There were twenty flying days.	
			There were 152 cine-camera exercises in which 2201 feet of film were exposed.	
			There were 58 air-firing exercises; fourteen air-to-ground, thirty one air-to-sea, and thirteen	
			air-to-air.	
			If the very large operational commitment of the squadron is born in mind, these figures become	
			comparable with the work done by the squadron as a unit under training with Gladiators in the	
			spring of 1940	
			The Squadron would like to comment on the unusually extensive co-operation between Fairwood	
			Common Station Officers and the squadron. This co-operation takes many forms, official and	
			unofficial, but is most evident in all flying matters. The Fairwood runways with their	
			multifarious slopes and borders of treacherous ground necessitate a complex system of Flying	
			Control, a system which is not always	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Fairwood Common			without friction. But in this, too, as well as in other spheres Fairwood Common has been found	
			to be a Station in which keenness on every branch of Flying develops properly to its full extent.	
			<i>A Wordsworth F/O</i>	
			<i>Intelligence Officer</i>	
			<i>for O.C. 263 Squadron</i>	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	April			
	1942			
Fairwood	1 st		The month started badly with two accidents in a 50 m.p.h. cross-wind.	
Common			P/O Holmes broke only a wing tip. P/O Harvey swung off the runway, bounced and turned over, and walked out of a sheer disintergration Cat.E. with a bruised arm. It was a spectacular esacpe.	
	2 nd		Another accident. The hydraulic system failed through the slow running (in extended taxying) of the starboard engine which operates the hydraulic pump, so that Sgt Small Sgt Small in going down one of the Fairwood Hills, contacted a bowser.	
	3 rd		Several good-average air-ground targets. More dusk landings.	
	8 th		Sixty-six hours twenty minutes flying, a record for the squadron with Gladiators or Whirlwinds. 3285 rounds, the contents of 55 boxes of ammo, were fired.	
	10 th		P/O Coyne made a good single-engine landing after his starboard engine had cut in the circuit.	
	15 th		Eight Smalls-Saltee patrols	
	18 th		The squadron moved by air and rail to Angle, the forward aerodrome in Fairwood Common sector. When the train was passing through Llanelly, the wooden truck next to the engine was found to be burning fiercely. It contained the whole contents of "A" Flight armoury. The truck was moved on to a siding where the Verey lights caused an excellent display, but the fire was extinguished by the fire-brigade before any ammunition, which was packed in drums, had exploded. The train went on its way after half an hour.	
	24 th		10 aircraft moved to Portreath and Predannack for a Ramrod operation which was cancelled. They returned the next day.	
	27 th		F/Lt Rudland, DFC, was ordered to shoot down an escaped balloon which he did. It burst into flames although only ball ammo. was used.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	April			
	30 th		10 Group Fighter Ramrod 18 from Predannack.	
			The Squadron in flying 382 hours 5 minutes operational and 276 hours 50 minutes non-operational,	
			total 658 hours 55 minutes, set up a record for any month since its first formation.	
			10,536 rounds of ball ammunition were fired.	
	26/4		F/Sgt J. Walker appointed Pilot Officer with effect from 20 March, 1942.	
			F/Sgt's Lovell and Kennedy appointed Pilot Officers with effect from 23 rd March, 1942.	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
R.A.F. Angle	MAY.	1942.	The month of May which was spent at Angle, was uneventful but meritorious. The Squadron flew a total of 818 hours 35 minutes, of which 535 hours 55 minutes were operational and 282 hours 40 minutes non-operational. These hours were divided almost equally between the two flights. THE MONTH WAS WHOLLY WITHOUT ACCIDENTS OF ANY KIND.	
			The number of hours flown was easily a record for this squadron and must be among the highest recorded without accidents in Fighter Command.	
			There were three days in which no flying was possible and several others in which high wind, low cloud and rain-storms reduced flying to a minimum.	
			In effect the squadron was responsible for the shipping protection and escort of Fairwood Common Sector, helped out on occasion by a section of 421 a new squadron under training at Fairwood	
			Some attempt were made to restart Rhubarb operations. Targets of considerable importance were selected in the Cherbourg area, but after full briefing, the destruction of them was postponed. This order came from a higher source than Group Headquarters.	
			Another section took off to attack targets in the Brest area on May 26th, but the weather proved unsuitable.	
			It is, in fact difficult to find, or forecast, days in which the weather is operational both here and at an advanced aerodrome a hundred and fifty miles away and which affords at the same time cloud cover over the target area.	
			Convoy commitments in this sector do not permit of aircraft being detached for more than 24 hours. It is to be understood that the Whirlwind aircraft have to be XXXXXXX serviced by Whirlwind trained crews, and that a daily inspection must be done once in every 24 hours. A detachment could not consist of less than three aircraft and it would be necessary to send forward at least ten ground staff over land distances of two or three hundred miles.	
			<u>SERVICEABILITY AVERAGE FOR THE MONTH.</u>	
			Maximum. Minimum. Daily Average.	
			On Charge.....20 18 19.3	
			Serviceable.....18 11 15.3	
			Serviceability percentage..... <u>79.2%</u>	
			It is to be understood that the Squadron Servicing Echelon 3055 is still at Fairwood Common, and that this makes the maintaining of high serviceability more difficult.	
			Besides flying a great many hours, which are summarised in a nominal roll attached as Appendix A, the pilots have occupied themselves in "binding", playing poker, shooting rooks and rabbits, dancing and sailing. The last two are recorded more fully below. (see over)	A

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
<u>ANGLE</u>	<u>MAY.</u>	<u>1942.</u>		
	10 th		Sgt Pilot Mac Fadgen posted to No 1 R.A.F. Depot Uxbridge. F/O AA Squadron Engineer Officer posted to R.A.F. Zeals on the 13th. F/O Hay has been E.O. of the Squadron since October 1941. The Serviceability figures quoted over are some measure of the work he has done for the Squadron.	
	14 th		P/O Ash posted as Engineer Officer to the Squadron.	
	19 th		S/Ldr Woodward D.F.C., F/O Wordsworth, and P/O Van Zeller paid a visit to H.M. Naval Base, Milford Haven and discussed details of escort. On the same day F/O Wordsworth secured on charter two twelve foot sailing dinghies from N. Ward Esq., the Secretary of the Pembrokeshire Yacht Club. These were towed across to Angle by the barge Mary Jane on the next day, and were carpentered, painted, rigged and varnished by members of the squadron. They were both operational by May 27 th and thereafter were regularly sailed by twelve members of the squadron who formed a sailing club. S/Ldr Clover, Station Commander, became Commodore, and generously presented £2;0:0d to the Club. Photographs will be found in the Squadron Scrap-Book.	
	20 th		Practice Rhubarbs were flown on this and other days to Carnsore Point and Trevoise Head.	
	21 st		F/O E.C. Eadie posted to the squadron as Medical Officer.	
	22 nd		F/Lt C.W.D. Cole posted to R.A.F. Zeals. F/Lt Cole had been M E O Officer to the squadron since January 1942. He showed a great interest in all flying matters and was a most popular member of the squadron. In the evening a dance was held in the Officers Mess, a rambling house in a woody garden by the sea known as the Hall. This was the first dance to be held there, and although the great distance from other human habitations prevented there being superfluity of young ladies a good time was had by all. An exciting operational flight is chronicled on Form 541.	
	25 th		F/Lt Rudland D.F.C. P/O Holmes, P/O Currie & P/O Crabtree U.S.A. were fetched by the Commander's Gig from the Hall jetty to dine in H.M Destroyer Brocklesby commanded by Lieutenant Commander Ash D.S.O. This officer was decorated for the work he did in leading M.T.B's to attack the Scharnhorst and Gneisenau in March 1942. The Squadron Officers returned very late in a thick mist.	
	30 th		P/O' S S.J. Lovell and Sgt Pilot Yates became operational on Whirlwinds. Two photographs, of the many taken by the various press agencies on March 12 th 1942, are attached to the Squadron copy of this form as Appendices B & C. B shows a group of pilots taking tea outside A Flight dispersal at Fairwood Common. C shows two Whirlwinds taking off behind a foreground of workmen. It is felt that these photographs may have some relevance should any future historian seek to elucidate the charge of idleness which is frequently brought by R.A.F. Personnel against workmen who work on airfields. Other photographs taken on the same day, will be found, with much other material in the Squadron Scrap-Book.	<i>B + C</i>

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	June			
Angle, Pembs	1942		During this month of June the Squadron flew a total of 695 hours 05 minutes, of which 489 hours 10 minutes were operational, and 205 hours 55 minutes non-operational	
	1 st - 4 th		Ordinary Convoy Patrols	
	5 th		This day saw the recommencement of Rhubarb operations by the Squadron. Four Whirlwinds (Red section) led by S/Ldr Woodward, D.F.C., took off Predannack at 1513 hours, with the intent to attack Lannion aerodrome.	
			Wing Commander Blake, DFC., together with a flight of Spitfires from 234 Squdaron provided the escort. Squadron Leader Woodward flew over Lannion aerodrome Watch Tower and saw a line of what he took to be five JU.88's parked close together in line abreast. He dived to the attack from 400 feet and fires a two and a half seconds burst and hit them, but was pretty sure after he had passed over them that they were dummies. He was also able to get in a short burst and observed hits on a flak post between Northern and North Eastern dispersal area, he saw men running and falling, or lying down. The second Pilot P/O Coyne also fired at and hit the dummy aircraft, only recognising them as such when he had passed over them. Pilot Officer Blackshaw turned to Starboard, South of the Watch Office and scored hits on three of the four blister hangers which he saw in the South Eastern dispersal area. He then saw and recognised the dummies, and flew across South Eastern extension of airfield to see a JU.88 being serviced in a hanger. This aircraft was held by the nose and exposed its dark sea blue underside camouflage. Hits were scored and strikes seen. This suggests that the Squadron has at least seen and partially damaged one of the aircraft of 3/123 which it has lately so often chased.	

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Angle. Pembs.	June	-	Pilot Officer Blackshaw also fired a short accurate burst at the flak post East by South of the one fired at by Squadron Leader Woodward. Flight Sergeant Pilot Muirhead who was number four in the attack flew on to the unvisited Northern dispersal area and scored hits on two blister hangers.	
			On the same day four Whirlwinds (Blue section) led by Flight Lieutenant Warnes took off from Predannack at 1515 hours escorted by a flight of 130 Squadron to attack Morlaix aerodrome. They flew precisely on a course given by operations at the last moment. Landfall was made some 12 miles too far West, and after investigating three inlets in their coast Flight Lieutenant Warnes decided that the element of surprise had been lost and accordingly all four Whirlwinds returned to base.	
	6 th		Ordinary Convoy Patrol.	
	7 th		Ordinary Convoy Patrol. Sergeant Pilot Meredith posted to 175 Squadron.	
	8 th - 14 th		Ordinary Convoy Patrols. Pilot Officer Kennedy posted to 421 Squadron.	
	15 th		Pilot Officer Walker of "B" Flight whilst flying the Group Captain's "Master" was given a green landing safety light at Fairwood Common. He landed to find that his undercarriage was retracted.	
	16 th - 17 th		Ordinary Convoy Patrols.	
	18 th		Flight Lieutenant Pierard who is Port LiaiSON Officer at Milford Haven paid the Squadron a visit today, his object being to promote more fully the mutual understanding between pilots and merchantmen of their respective tasks.	
	19 th		A day of Scrambles. The first gave chase to a Bandit who eventually was found to be out of range to far West. The second developed into a Liberator whilst the plots of a third chase faded. The fourth scramble was eventually chased by aircraft from R.A.F. Station, Valley. Again the fifth scramble reiterated the experience of the first for the bandit was out of range.	

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	June			
Angle, Pembs.	20 th		The Squadron was honoured by the courtesy visit of the Commander in Chief, Naval Base, Milford Haven. Rear Admiral Fairbairn.	
	21 st		This day saw the tactical exercise by "B" Flight in which Carmarthen was "beaten up". Carried out in liaison with the area Home Guard, the Squadron received a congratulatory message from the Officer Commanding, Home Guard, Carmarthen Area.	
	22 nd		Ordinary Convoy Patrols.	
	23 rd		Flight Lieutenant Warnes had the misfortune to damage the tail wheel of his Whirlwind on landing. The accident was traced to Hydraulic failure. Thus the longest accident free period in the history of the Whirlwinds of 263 Squadron came to an end. From 30 th April until 23 rd June Whirlwinds of 263 Squadron had flown 1263 hours 50 minutes without accident, a record which will probably prove difficult of emulation.	
	24 th		Ordinary Convoy Patrols. Pilot Officer Latham posted to 263 Squadron from 59 O.T.U. Sergeant Pilot Curtis posted to 263 Squadron from 59 O.T.U.	
	25 th		A further visit from Flight Lieutenant Pierard.	
	26 th		Two scrambles on this day developed into:- (i) a Beaufighter from R.A.F., Valley. and (ii) a Wellington of Coastal Command.	
			The Squadron was visited by Commander Hughes White who came to arrange for the passage of Squadron Leader Woodward, DFC, in H.M.S. Destroyer "TYNWALD". Squadron Leader Woodward, DFC, undertook this three day trip from Milford Haven to Belfast and back in order to report on the present system of plotting and vectoring to enable our aircraft to intercept enemy aircraft attacking or threatening convoys. A "Shadow" exercise took place during the voyage, in which	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	June			
Angle, Pembs.			a Beaufighter provided the "Shadow" and two Whirlwinds of 263 Squadron provided the interception	
			Much valuable data was gained and transmitted by Squadron Leader Woodward, DFC, in his official	
			report.	
	27 th		Ordinary Convoy Patrols.	
	28 th		At 05.30 hours this morning Whirlwinds as a tactical (Army Co-operation) exercise attacked and	
			"beat-up" R.A.F. Station, Manorbier.	
	29 th - 30 th		Ordinary Convoy Patrols.	
			DAILY AVERAGE	
			Aircraft on Charge - 19. 77%	
			Aircraft Serviceable - 15. 73%	

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para. 2349, and War Manual, Pt. II., chapter XX., and
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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Angle, Pembs.	JULY	1942	This month was marked by a double tragedy. On the twenty-third Pilot Officers Currie and Walker whilst engaged in a combined Rhubarb operation against North-West France were shot down by enemy aircraft and must be presumed dead. Both were keen skilled pilots and were held in general high regard.	
			These were the first losses suffered by the squadron since Sgt. Pilot Prior was killed whilst on a Searchlight Co-operation flight on 21 st December, 1941.	
	1 st		Although the squadron is still at Angle, "A" Flight was detailed from the 1 st to the 8 th to Portreath. "A" and "B" Flights together held down the whole of the operational commitment of both Fairwood Common and Portreath sectors during this week. There were many convoy patrols and scrambles at both stations. Unfortunately these were quite uneventful, although enemy aircraft were plotted with regularity.	
	3 rd		Sergeant Pilot Muirhead, while taxiing near dispersal at Portreath was violently wind-swung and smashed into another unoccupied Whirlwind. Both were damaged Cat "AC".	
	1 st - 8 th		Convoy patrols only represent the Squadrons activities at both Angle and Portreath.	
	13 th		H.R.H. the Duke of Kent was to visit the station on this date. Unfortunately the weather proved unsuitable and the visit was cancelled. An escort from "B" Flight, however, took the air in preparation for His Highnesses arrival.	
	13 th - 20 th		The usual round of convoy patrols seasoned with a dash of unfruitful scrambles.	
	20 th		A lecture on Escape by Flight Sergeant McCairns was unanimously voted excellent by all pilots.	
	23 rd		Combined Rhubarb Operation against N.W. France. Full details are contained in current 541.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Angle	26 th		Air Commodore Gallehawk, A.L.O. to the Welsh Regional Commissioner paid a courtesy visit to the Squadron.	
			In the afternoon a lecture on flak was given by Major King.	
			In the evening the considerable hospitality which the squadron has received from H.M. ships was somewhat repaid when Lt Commander Bumphrey, DSO, DSC. and other officers of H.M. Destroyers Brocklebank were entertained in the Mess. The Squadron Intelligence Officer was absent for three weeks attached to the Intelligence Course A at Harrow. Flying Officer Yorath of Secotr Intelligence, Fairwood Common "stood in" for part of that time.	
	28 th - 31 st		Captain Cunningham of the Royal Marines liaised with the squadron during these three days.	
			ATTACHMENT. 7 th /14 th July. Flight Lieutenant Davie of R.A.E. was attached to the Squadron for experimental purposes, and duly reported to Group and Fighter Command on the result of his experiences with Whirlwind aircraft.	

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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Angle - Colerne	August, 1942		In the month of August the squadron moved from Angle to Colerne and at Colerne bomb-racks were fitted to the Whirlwinds. The squadron had been at Angle since April 1 st and in the Fairwood Common Sector since February 10th. In that time the number of convoy patrols was very great and the operational hours flown by the squadron were consistently the highest in the Group. But, except on three offensive operations conducted from Predannack, there was no visual contact with the enemy, and, though there were compensations in the country sports of shooting, sailing and bathing, which could be found at Angle, the place was altogether too remote for a stay as long as ours to be continuously enjoyable.	
			The fitting of bombs to Whirlwind aircraft was first suggested by S/Ldr T. Pugh, DFC. in September 1941 and the suggestion was formally rejected later on in that year. However, on 21 st July 1942 a letter was received from Headquarters, No. 10 Group stating that the Squadron's Whirlwinds were to be modified to take two 250lb bombs; later it was found that two 500lb bombs were practicable. Accordingly on August 15 th the squadron returned to Colerne on order to fit bomb-racks. By the end of the month eight aircraft were so fitted and the completion of the job is expected shortly.	
Angle	7 th - 11 th		Frontal weather with high winds during low cloud and rain; Intermittent flying.	
	11 th		Sergeant Pilot Small attached to No. 2 Delivery Flight, Colerne.	
	9 th		PIlot Officer D. Gill demonstrated a Whirlwind at St Andries Camp.	
	14 th		Sergeant Pilot P.A. Jardine ppsted back after refresher course at 54 O.T.U.	
	15 th		Sergeant Pilot F.R. Hicks attached to A/A.E.E. at Boscombe Down.	
			The Squadron moved by air, train and motor transport to R.A.F. Station, Colerne. at which a fortnight had been spent in January-February 1942.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	16-31 st		During this period the squadron echelon was kept busy fitting bomb-racks. Only one section was kept at readiness. Accordingly nearly all the members first of "B" and then of "A" Flight were able to take a weeks leave	
	21 st		Sergeant Pilot D.J. Williams posted to 263 Squadron from 56 O.T.U.	
	30 th		Pilot Officer P. Harvey posted to Headquarters, Fighter Command for Liaison duties.	
	23 rd		Flight Lieutenant C.P. Rudland DFC flew the first Whirlwind to be fitted with two 500lb practice bombs. Flight Lieutenant Rudland's report is reproduced below as Appendix "A".	
			24 th August, 1942.	
			<u>FITTING OF BOMBS TO WHIRLWIND AIRCRAFT.</u>	
			The following report is submitted:-	
			<u>Normal.</u> <u>With racks only</u> <u>With two 500lb bombs.</u>	
			Maximum speed indicated, 304 mph. 278 mph. 270 mph.	
			(Zero feet).	
			Minus 1 boost, 2150 revs. 219 mph 212 mph. 199 mph.	
			Minus 3 boost, 2150 revs. 200 mph. 196 mph. 179 mph.	
			Climbing, plus 2 boost, 2400 revs, 180 mph., 1550 feet 1300 feet per 1050 feet per under 5,000 feet. per min. minute. minute.	
			<u>General Remarks.</u>	
			Generally speaking I found the performance of the Whirlwind not greatly impaired by the addition of bombs or racks, with the exception of the maximum speed.	
			With two 500lb bombs from take-off the aircraft climbed to 15,000 feet at plus 2 boost, 2400 revs., in 16.5 minutes.	
			When diving at 310 miles per hour indicated, at 15,000 feet there is a rather disconcerting aileron flutter. This also became apparent at slower speeds nearer the ground on occasions.	
			With two 500lb bombs loaded the take-off appears to be approximately 125 yards greater, and landing 100 yards greater.	
			(Sgd) C.P. RUDLAND, F/Lt.	
			<u>No. 263 Squadron, R.A.F.</u>	

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Of (Unit or Formation) 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
SEPTEMBER, 1942.			This was an eventful month for the squadron. First bombing operations, one of which was extremely successful, followed hard upon the first dropping of practice bombs:-	
Colerne	4 th		S/Ldr R.S. Woodward, DFC, and two other pilots flew to Warmwell and dropped practice bombs (8 x 11 ½ lbs) for the first time, on the Chesil Bank Range.	
Warmwell	7 th	(Morning)	The pilots and about ninety of the ground staff moved from Colerne by air and railway, on attachment to Group Practice Camp, Warmwell. Pilot's Dispersals was a tent on the South side of the aerodrome. Fortunately the weather was fine and warm during the first ten days	
		(Afternoon)	As Nos. 174 and 175 Hurri-bomber squadrons had been released from operations, 263 Squadron at Group Practice Camp was found to be the only fighter-bomber squadron in 10 Group which could be brought to readiness. And so, when enemy shipping was reported in the Channel Island area during this first afternoon at the Practice Camp, S/Ldr. R.S. Woodward, DFC was asked if he could possibly bring four Whirli-bombers to readiness. The request was complied with and at 1700 hours the C.O. and three other pilots moved to Bolt Head. After a great deal of telephoning 250lb three-second delay bombs were brought from Exeter to Bolt Head and the Whirlwinds were bombed up	
	8 th		Roadstead Operation (See Form 541). On this day and on every other fine day during the month practice bombing was carried out regularly and continually on the Chesil Bank Range. A summary of pilots' scores is given as Appendix "A".	
	9 th		Roadstead Operation (See Form 541).	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	Sept. 10 th		Roadstead Operation (See Form 541)	
			F/Sgt C.P. King was commissioned as Pilot Officer	
	11 th		Telegrams of congratulation upon the successful operation of Sept. 10 th which was fully reported in the newspapers (see squadron scrap-book) were received from F/Lt E.C. Owens, the squadron's adjutant at Colerne, and from HUMBUG, the call sign of Fairwood Common Sector Ops. 1, and from S/Ldr. H.J. Coghlan, DFC, officer commanding the daughter Whirlwind squadron, No. 137. Letters were also received from the Manager of Westland Aircraft Ltd and from Mr. H. Penrose, the test pilot.	
			His Majesty the King was graciously pleased to honour F/Sgt, (now Pilot Officer) C.P. King by conferring upon him the Distinguished Flying Medal, in recognition of his many and varied exploits against the enemy and of the steady example he had given to the other pilots of the squadron.	
	13 th		The squadron moved formally from Colerne to Warmwell. The orderly room staff and the remainder of the ground crews and No.3055, the squadron servicing echelon, made the journey to Warmwell in train and transport.	
	13/14 th		Little flying in hazy weather with low cloud.	
	15/16 th		More fine weather. Air/Sea Rescue patrols near French coast (See Form 541).	
	17/20 th		Broken weather with equinoctial gales. On 17 th "B" Flight moved to a dispersal vacated by 175 Squadron in the wood at the West of the aerodrome. "A" Flight remained in the tent until the 20 th when it blew down. Then they moved into a neighbouring Nissen hut.	
	20/21 st		Fighter readiness, or rather advanced readiness in cockpits.	
	23/24 th		Night flying practice. It is hoped to get as many pilots as possible operational at night, so that night bombing attacks can be carried out.	
	21 st		Sergeant Pilot P.A. Jardine crashed fatally from cloud during the afternoon. After about forty minutes of Sector Recco, P/O. King, who was leading Sgt. Jardine, turned to avoid a rain cloud and thereafter saw and heard nothing more of him. He	

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Of (Unit or Formation) 263 SQUADRON

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	Sept.			
Warmwell	21 st		was seen by the occupants of an army lorry to dive out of cloud between Wool and Wareham. He was killed instantly. Sergeant Jardine, a South African by birth, had been with the squadron since January 20th, 1942. Of quiet but good humoured disposition, he was very well liked.	
	26 th		S/Ldr R.S. Woodward, DFC, led three other pilots in a bombing display (2 x 250lb lbs bombs, 11 seconds delay) at West Lulworth A.F.V. Camp.	
			Sergeant Jardine was buried at Warmwell Village Church with full Royal Air Force honours.	
	29 th		Abortive shipping recco. (See Form 541).	
			<u>PERSONNEL.</u>	
	1 st		F/Lt C.P. Rudland, DFC, posted to No. 19 Squadron. F/Lt Rudland had been with the squadron since July 31st, 1940. Commissioned ten months later, he took over the command of "A" Flight in September 1941. He was the second pilot to be awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross for work done with Whirlwind aircraft.	
			Pilot Officer H.J. Blackshaw was promoted Flight Lieutenant and took over the command of "A" Flight.	
	3 rd		F/t A.N.W. Johnstone, DFC posted supernumerary to the squadron, attached to "A" Flight.	
	19 th		Sergeant Pilot D.F. Small posted to No. 2 Delivery Flight, Colerne.	
	28 th		F/Sgt Pilot H.D. Muirhead posted to 286 Squadron, Colerne.	
	29 th		P/O N. Crabtree, P/O W.A. Lovell and F/Sgt Pilot R.I. Reed, all of them citizens of the U.S.A. who joined the Royal Air Force about two years ago and who were posted to this squadron in October, 1941, were honourably discharged from the R.A.F. on taking up appointments in the U.S.A. Army Air Force.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Warmwell	Sept. 42.		It is believed that they will be posted to No. 94 A.A.A.F. Squadron (P. 38 Lightning) at Ibsley.	
			Before they left, F/O. Crabtree and P/O. Lovell entertained the officers and sergeant pilots of	
			263 Squadron at a party at the Somerset Arms in Weymouth.	
			<u>APPENDIX "A" - Summary of Bombing Exercises and Scores.</u>	
			No. of Average	No. of Average
			<u>Pilot.</u> <u>Exercises.</u> <u>Score.</u>	<u>Pilot.</u> <u>Exercises.</u> <u>Score.</u>
			S/Ldr. Woodward. 5 20 yds.	P/O King. 9 31 yds
			F/Lt Blackshaw. 5 41 yds.	P/O Gill 13 40.8 yds
			F/Lt Warnes. 6 25 yds	F/Sgt. Read 8 26.3 yds
			F/Lt Johnstone. 7 37.7 yds	F/Sgt. Muirhead 13 43 yds
			F/O. Crabtree. 6 35 yds.	Sgt. Wright 3 65 yds
			P/O. W.A. Lovell 11 27.6 yds.	Sgt. Cotton 13 18.5 yds
			P/O Coyne. 12 22.7 yds	Sgt. Ridley 15 28 yds
			P/O S.J. Lovell 6 37.5 yds	Sgt. Yates 6 30.5 yds
			P/O. Van Zeller. 3 57 yds	Sgt. Abrams 6 23 yds
			P/O. Harvey 1 23 yds	Sgt. Simpson 3 46 yds
			P/O. Brearley 9 26 yds	Sgt. McAulay 2 35 yds

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Of (Unit or Formation) 263 Squadron (WHIRLIBOMBERS)

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Warmwell/Bolt Head	Oct. 42			
	1 st		Unsuccessful Roadstead Operation from Bolt Head	
	1-3 rd		Fine, warm days. Much practice flying	
	3 rd		Roadstead operation to attack 3,000 ton ship in Alderney Harbour. All four Whirlwinds returned safely after meting extremely intense flak.	
	4-7 th		Rain, low cloud and mist. A shipping recco on the 6 th was forced to return by bad weather	
	8 th		Shipping recco abandoned through lack of cloud cover.	
	9 th		Shipping recco, no incident. The Commanding Officer with F/Lt Warnes, P/O S.J. Lovell, P/O P. Harvey, P/O D.R.Gill, P/O C.P. King and F/O Wordsworth attended a dance given by Mssrs. Westlands - makers of the Whirlwind - at the Boden Street Social Club, Chard. There was first class organization, plenty to eat and drink and lovely partners. The party was very greatly enjoyed.	
	10 th		More foul weather. All pilots completed an aircraft recognition test with generally good results	
			Afternoon: two shipping reccos.	
	11 th .		Bright day. Much formation flying.	
	12 th		Shipping recco heavily engaged by flak from Alderney.	
	13 th		Shipping recco returned through lack of cloud cover.	
	14 th		Shipping Recco.	
	15 th		Fine blue morning, and all day	
		1040 - 1150	P/O J.P. Coyne led a section in 10 Group Exercise 108 to attack a landing party in a launch and jolly boat off Lulworth Cove. At zero hour, 1050, nothing was found in the indicated position	
			The section then orbitted between St Aldhelin's Head and Weymouth and then found the naval unit off Ringstead, where dummy attacks were	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Warmwell	Oct. 1942		carried out.	
	16 th		Overcast again. Much formation flying.	
	17 th		The squadron again flew convoy patrols.	
	18 th		Thick weather. Zeals non-operational so that cockpit readiness was maintained by the squadron at Warmwell.	
	19 th		More thick weather. First night of moon period but mist prevented flying.	
	20 th		Overcast, rain. No night flying.	
	21 st		More convoy patrols. Weather became worse in evening - no night flying.	
	22-23 rd		Night flying cancelled again through mist, rain and strong wind.	
	24 th		Fine day but windy. Much "Formers". Night operations - armed reccos of Channel Island and Barfleur areas - were laid on but cancelled owing to the imposition of a restriction upon attacks on surface vessels. Night flying practice was cancelled after a weather test at 1930 hours	
	25 th		Fair morning turned to wet afternoon and evening. To-day the squadron learned with much pleasure that the BELLOWS CLUB has added to its gift of eight Whirlwinds to the squadron, another most generous gift to the whole personnel of the squadron. It appears that this gift reciprocated the autographed greeting-card which was sent to the Bellows Club, together with photographs of the squadron's aircraft and pilots.	
	26 th		Wet day. No night flying.	
	27 th		Fine cold, blue morning. Ratification was received from Headquarters, Fighter Command of the claim that two ships were sunk on 9/9/42. The tonnage was, however, reduced from 1000 tons to 500. Ten pilots stood by for night flying practice and for armed recco operations. But at 2245 a weather test by the C.O showed fog bands piling up	
	28 th		Fine day. Night operations were cancelled owing to another S.V. restriction and the weather was not good enough for night flying practice. Thus the moon period came to an end. It coincided with much frontal thick weather, or if the night were fine,	

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Of (Unit or Formation) 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	1942			
Warmwell	Oct. 28 th		with local ground fog. On two or three nights it became fine after it was too late for night flying tests.	
	29-30 th		Foul weather.	
	31 st		Successful Rhubarb Operation by four aircraft. The railway junction N.W. of La Hague du Puits was attacked and the track was probably destroyed in two or three places. In the afternoon the Secretary of State for Air, the Rt. Hon. Sir Archibald Sinclair visited Warmwell. He spent a few minutes in "A" Flight Dispersal Hut and spoke to S/Ldr R.S. Woodward, DFC., F/Lt A.N.W Johnstone, DFC., F/Lt. H.J. Blackshaw, F/O P. Harvey, P/O J.P. Coyne and P/O C.P. King, DFM. He congratulated the squadron on the operation of September 9th, and on the present day's work. Sir Archibald Sinclair, flying in a Flamingoe, was escorted back from Warmwell to Andover by /P. J.P. Coyne and P/O C.P. King, DFM, flying Whirlwinds.	
			<u>PERSONNEL</u>	
Addendum for Sept. 18th, 1942			P/O. J.W.E Holmes was posted as a Flight Lieutenant to our daughter Whirlwind squadron, No. 137. P/O Holmes had been in this squadron since March, 1941. Commissioned a year ago, he became deputy flight commander of "B" Flight. Of steady good temper, a fine athlete and a good companion, Joe Holmes will be missed in this squadron. He took part in nine offensive operations.	
	Oct 7		F/Sgt D.F. Tebbit reposted to the squadron after a sojourn of fifteen months with 10 Group Flight and 286 Squadron.	
	9-10 th		P/O D.A. Samant and W/O D.B. McPhail and Sgt. J.M. Barclay were posted from No. 137 squadron.	
	13 th		P/O A. Lee-White was posted from No. 59 O.T.U.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Warmwell	Oct. 42			
	14 th		P/O. C.P. van Zeller was posted to No. 1 RAF Depot, Uxbridge.	
	20 th		Sgt. Pilot S.D. Thyagarajan was posted from No. 56 O.T.U.	
	31 st		F/Sgt E. Matthews, Elect.I, who had been with the squadron since 21/2/41 and i/c the Electrical Section for the past year was posted to RAF Station, Valley.	
			Sergeant Pilot F.L. Hicks reported to the squadron from A. & A.E.E., Boscombe Down, where he had been on attachment	
			<u>FLYING TIMES</u>	
			During the month of October, 1942 the squadron flew 391 hours of which 46 were operational and 345 were non-operational. Upon average, the weather was overcast, wet and misty.	
			<u>APPENDIX "A"</u>	
			The Commanding Officer's report on Bombing Activities by No.263 Squadron is included as Appendix "A".	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Warmwell	Nov: 1942			
	1 st - 5 th		Frontal weather with low cloud, rain and mist. Occasional flying only. No first solos or operations.	
	4 th		Two British Movietone News camera-men arrived to photograph the Squadron's activities, ostensibly for South American ("Bellows Club") consumption. Their Beaufort photographic aircraft did not arrive so they had to be content with photographing the line of Whirlwinds and Squadron personnel, shot from the back of "A" Flight van. It was a murky, cold afternoon.	
			S/Idr Alcott of 10 Group acted as liaison officer, the arrangement for the photographing of the Squadron having been made by the Air Ministry.	
	5 th		Pouring wet day.	
	6 th		Aerodrome u/s for practice flying.	
	7 th		Grey, becoming suddenly fine as back of front passed overhead at 1040.	
			The operation, in which Pilot Officer D. Gill, RCAF, is missing under mysterious circumstances, is recorded on Form 541. Pilot Officer Gill joined the Squadron in October 1941. Efficient, hard working, and of great integrity, he will be greatly missed in the Squadron.	
	8 th - 11 th		Very fine mild blue days, with some haze. Convoy patrols which comprised the escort of some important units were extensively flown on the 8 th and 10th.	
	11 th		Flawless blue day. Some excellent-looking low attacks and formation were flown in the morning by F/Lt Warnes, F/O Lovell, F/Sgt Abrams and Sgt Wright, for Movietone News. However, even after the weeks postponement the camera Beaufort had not yet arrived.	
			A security lecture by Squadron Leader Wallich of Fighter Command was attended by 25% of the Squadron's personnel.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
			In the afternoon A.V.M., W.F. Dickson, CB, DSO, OBE, AFC, who has recently been appointed Air Officer Commanding No. 10 Group, paid his first official visit to R.A.F. Warmwell. The A.O.C. honoured "A" and "B" Flights of this Squadron by a visit to their dispersals.	
	12 th		A cold front covered up the morning mist and produced some non-operational weather.	
	13 th - 14 th		Mild misty days. Little flying.	
	14 th		Four Whirlibombers went to Harrowbeer in order to release 175 Squadron. To-day the camera-Beaufort did arrive but permission to use it had now been withdrawn by Air Ministry. It is regretted by the Squadron that the cinema-film programme could not be completed by the making of air-to-air photographs.	
	15 th		Calm day with very low cloud. Squadron released at 1500 hours.	
	16 th		Fair day, much flying. "A" Flight did extensive formation flying and "B" Flight got in much practice bombing.	
			In the evening Pilot Officer Brearley and Sergeant Yates (this was his first offensive operation) flew a most successful Rhubarb Operation, recorded on Form 541.	
	17 th		Fine day, much flying. On this and on several other days during the month, extensive endurance tests were carried out. The results, in the present state of Whirlwind experience, were evidently confirmatory rather than surprising. The rates for most economical cruising may be summarised in the following table:-	
			Weak Mixture	
			R.P.M. - 1800 ---- 2000	
			Boost - -2 0 +2	
			M.P.H. - 200 ---- 230	
	19 th		At mid-day Squadron Leader R.S. Woodward, DFC, led four Whirlwinds antiflak and four Whirlibombers (F/Lt Warnes) in the first all-Whirlwind Roadstead Operation. An extensive patrol off the Contentin was, however, fruitless.	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	November 1942			
Warmwell	20 th		The operation of the previous day was repeated at first light with the same results. This time "B" Flight were antifiak and "A" Flight bombers.	
	26 th		Pilot Officers Coyne and Samant (the latter's first offensive operation) were prevented by lack of cloud from penetrating to their Rhubarb target area, but found useful alternative targets. In the evening Flying Officer Harvey's two section Rhubarb was unable to cross the French coast for the same reason.	
	29 th		Advanced (Cockpit) Fighter Readiness while 266 Squadron were released for an Exercise. An enemy scramble provided an exciting but abortive chase, probably of a JU.88.	
	30 th		An "A" Flight section airborne on CCG dog-fighting practice was vectored after a Bandit. No luck.	
			<u>PERSONNEL</u>	
	4 th		Sgt Pilot W. Wright promoted T/Flight Sergeant w.e.f. 1/8/42	
			Sgt Pilot J. Barclay awarded 1 st G.C. Badge w.e.f. 19/10/42	
	7 th		Pilot Officer D.R. Gill, RCAF. Reported missing from active operations against the enemy.	
	20 th		F/Sergeant Pilot Abrams commissioned A/Pilot Officer, RAFVR, w.e.f. 27/9/42	
	24 th		Pilot Officer E. Brearley, RCAF, Promoted T/Flying Officer w.e.f. 27/9/42.	
			Pilot Officer J. Coyne, " " " " w.e.f. 27/9/42.	
			Pilot Officer D. Gill " (missing) " " " w.e.f. 27/9/42.	
			Pilot Officer P. Harvey, Promoted War Subs Flying Officer w.e.f. 28/6/42.	
	26 th		T/Flight Sergeant D. Tebbitt promoted T/Warrant Officer w.e.f. 1/8/42.	
			T/Sergeant J. Yates promoted T/Flight Sergeant w.e.f. 1/8/42.	
	29 th		Flight Lieutenant A. Johnstone awarded Czechoslovak Air Force Pilot's Badge as a mark of gratitude and appreciation. Air Ministry letter 12/10/42.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
			The Squadron has noted with admiration and affection the awards of D.S.O and Bar to D.F.C which	
			have been gained recently in Malta by Wing Commander A.H. Donaldson, D.S.O, D.F.C, A.F.C.	
			Wing Commander Donaldson was of course, the brother of this squadron's first Commanding Officer,	
			Squadron Leader "Baldy" Donaldson of Norway fame. And he was himself Commanding Officer of the	
			Squadron in the summer of 1941 and continued to be closely associated with the Squadron as Wing	
			Commander Flying, Colerne Section.	
			<u>Flying Times Summary for November 1942</u>	
			Operational 92 hours 15 minutes	
			Non-Operational 319 " 40 "	
			Total 411 hours 55 minutes	
			A. Wordsworth F/O	
			263 Squadron I.O.	

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

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
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Of (Unit or Formation) 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Warmwell	December 1942		<u>ADDENDUM FOR NOVEMBER 1942</u>	
			The month of November was the second during 1942 in the Squadron was totally free from accidents of any kind.	
			<u>DECEMBER 1942</u>	
	1 st		Large scale Shipping Recco. No incident to this Squadron but see Form 541.	
	3 rd		Zeals was non-op so that "A" Flight flew a hungry breakfast-time Convoy Patrol, mainly without incident.	
	5/6		Crimson Sunset and Scarlet Dawn led to a fortnight's frontal weather in which a mild Southerly wind blew at a strong or half-gale force. Actually Nov. 12 th to December 6 th were an astonishing succession of mild, sunny, grey-blue days. The weather which followed was windy and wet and either non-op for flying or rendered the aerodrome waterlogged and so u/s.	
	7 th		Grey day of wind and low cloud. A day of triumph and tragedy for the Squadron. In Roadstead 45, one ship was probably sunk, two seriously damaged and one probably damaged. But Warrant Officer D. MacPhail (R.C.A.F.) is missing presumed killed in action, and Squadron Leader R.S. Woodward, DFC. is missing, in circumstances which lead to the hope that he may be a prisoner-of-war. Squadron Leader Woodward was awarded his DFC for his night-fighting exploits with 600 Squadron. He commanded this Squadron since February 10th, 1942. Something of his record may be gleaned from the foregoing pages in this book - The months of May and November without accidents. The full and effective programme of operational training set alongside the intense Convoy activity of the Spring of this year. The development of the Whirlibomber, and finally the offensive activity of the past three months. In operations, Squadron Leader Woodward showed his keen-ness both in persuading	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
			Group to lay them on, and in his own leadership. He personally led the Squadron in eleven	
			offensive operations. And his own exploits were both gallant and successful. Warrant Officer	
			D.B. MacPhail (RCAF) came to us two months ago from 137 Squadron. Of sober habits, he was very	
			well liked. An excellent amateur photographer, his productions were in great demand and as	
			Warrant Officer i/c Squadron Photographic Records he greatly enriched the Squadron scrap-book. (q.v.)	
			A point about to-day's operation which may be of future interest. 66 Squadron led in the line	
			abreast formation which has recently been developed in the defence of Malta. It was probably	
			to-day used probably for the first time by 10 Group aircraft.	
	8 th		Telegrams of congratulations and regret were received from the A.O.C. 10 Group and 118 and	
			66 Squadrons.	
	9 th		Flight Lieutenant G.B. Warnes posted to command the Squadron and promoted to Squadron Leader.	
			Flight Lieutenant Warnes learnt to fly with the Yorkshire Aero-plane Club, but was rejected by	
			the Air Crew Selection Board for defective eye-sight. Commissioned in the R.A.F.V.R. in April	
			1940 he served as an Equipment Officer in France. He then managed to make his way into a Flying	
			Refresher Course and so to become a Flying Instructor in Training Command. After serving in	
			Training Command for several months there came a shaky time when the local M.O. observed that he	
			always wore glasses. During a fortnights leave he got himself fitted with contact lenses and at	
			a subsequent medical board he came before Group Captain (now Air Commodore) Livingstone. With his	
			help, a conversion course at Upavon was arranged, and so to O.T.U. and to 263 Squadron in	
			September 1941. He was promoted to Flight Lieutenant in command of "B" Flight in November 1941.	
			On this day (December 9 th , 1942) the officers of the Squadron celebrated in a memorable party at	
			Stafford House the double event of his promotion to Command the Squadron and of his forthcoming	
			marriage.	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	December 1942			
Warmwell	10 th		Stormy Day. Rhubarb section recalled from S. of St Aldhelms Head.	
			Flight Lieutenant D.B. Ogilvie posted to command "B" Flight. This is Flight Lieutenant Ogilvie's	
			second tour of operations. He fought in the Battle of Britain with 601 Squadron, and has taken	
			part in a great many offensive operations.	
	11-13 th		Aerodrome u/s for practice flying. No operations.	
	14 th		The Squadron stood in for Fighter Readiness while 266 Squadron were released. This led to the	
			first 263 Squadron combat, or even visual, from a defensive patrol since March 1941, the first	
			Whirlwind combat with a F.W.190 of this war, and the first enemy aircraft to be damaged in air	
			combat since Pilot Officer King shot down an Me.109 just over a year ago.	
	15 th		Aerodrome u/s for practice flying. Fighter Readiness and routine patrols.	
			To-day the range of Whirlibombers on offensive operations was reduced to 135 miles from 165	
			miles, at which figure it had stood for the past four weeks only. The reason for the temporary	
			increase, which was wholly impracticable, has not been disclosed.	
	16-21		Southerly gales and rain. Aerodrome u/s for practice flying. No operations.	
	18 th		Flight Lieutenant Blackshaw gave and hour's lecture, with epidiascope pictures, on the tactics	
			of Army Co-operation.	
	23-24		Very fine mild blue days. Much practice flying.	
	25 th		Christmas day. Morning Good-Will Flight by four Whirlwinds to Middle Wallop, (Sector H.Q. and	
			Facta Control) and to Bath. Thereafter the day was celebrated by all ranks together in	
			traditional unstinted R.A.F. fashion.	
	26-28		Overcast and poor visibility. No flying of any xxxxxx sort.	
	29 th		Fine, sunny day. Practice flying.	

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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron, R.A.F.

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	January, 1943			
Warmwell	1 st		Frontal day of rain and low cloud. No flying although Rhubarb Operations were laid on and cancelled. A telegram was received from 23 rd Light A.A. thanking the Squadron for "Superb co-operation on December 31st."	
	2 nd		Fine, mild day. Flying Officer E. Brearley, Flight Sergeant K. Ridley, Pilot Officer A. Lee-White and Sergeant M. Cotton were detached to Predannack to harass enemy mine-sweepers expected off Ile Vierge.	
	3 rd		Fine day. Much practice flying..	
	5 th		Warm front occluding with heavy rain. Aerodrome u/s.	
Predannack	6 th		Eleven airmen detached to Predannack to maintain the Whirlwinds detached there. The hard and efficient work of these airmen, under Sergeant Taylor, was commended both by the authorities at Predannack and by the two Squadron officers who were successively in command of the detachment.	
	7 th		Uneventful Roadstead Operation from Predannack.	
Warmwell	8 th		Aerodrome u/s except for emergency flying. One convoy patrol.	
	9 th		Strong cross-wind from the South. No flying.	
	10 th		Uneventful Roadstead Operation from Predannack. Warmwell aerodrome u/s.	
	11-13 th		Warmwell aerodrome u/s.	
	14 th		Flying Officer S. Lovell, Pilot Officer C. King, Flight Sergeant P. Yates and Sergeant D. Williams replaced the four pilots who were previously at Predannack.	
			Squadron Leader G.B. Warnes experimented with the dropping of two parachute containers, such as might contain food-supply or arms. His report is attached as Appendix "A".	
	15 th		A day of Air Sea Rescue sorties, unfortunately unsuccessful.	
			First 263 Night Operations: Flying Officer E. Brearley bombed a train.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	17-26 th		Warmwell aerodrome u/s. It should be understood that on most of these, and nearly all the other similar days during the month, the aerodrome was counted as serviceable for emergency flying, and the squadron maintained its normal state of thirty minutes available. On the 17 th a Roadstead eight Whirlibombers was only cancelled when the Ibsley wing had become airborne. The large ships reported by the Tangmere Recco off Cap Levy were recognised by a 10 Group recco as rocks. Night Operations were fully laid on for three or four nights but weather caused them to be cancelled. There were several excellent flying days during the month in which the waterlogged aerodrome caused the squadron to be grounded while the air hummed with aircraft from more fortunate bases.	
	17 th		Roadstead Operation from Predannack. Formation attacked by F.W.190s. No Whirlwind combats or casualties.	
	21 st		Roadstead from Predannack recalled after seven minutes.	
	24 th		Pilots and ground crews returned to Warmwell from Predannack.	
	27 th		Practice flying was possible from 1400 till 1700 hours, and this xxx concluded flying for the month.	
	27-31		Aerodrome u/s with further very heavy gales and rains.	
			During the month of January only 123 hours 10 minutes were flown by the Squadron, of which 41 hours were operational. It was the third month in succession to be entirely free from accidents.	
			The lack of flying gave time for a good deal of ground training, much of which was in hopeful anticipation of operations upon another front. Squadron Leader G.B. Warnes attended an Army Co-operation course at Old Sarum from January 17 th till January 21 st and was in a position to pass on something of what he learnt there to the rest of the squadron. All pilots practised Morse intensively and learnt or	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
			brushed up the elements of Daily Inspection, and rearming, both cannon and bombs, of Whirlwinds.	
			Besides the more informal talks of the Flight Commanders and the Squadron Intelligence Officer,	
			there were lectures on Interrogation and Evasion by Flight Lieutenant Ricketts and Flight	
			Lieutenant Frost, both of Middle Wallop; also a number of film shows dealing with tactics, ship	
			recognition, etc. Full use was made of the Link trainer.	
			<u>PERSONNEL</u>	
	17-21		Squadron Leader G.B. Warnes attached R.A.F. Old Sarum for No.12 Senior Officers Course.	
	18 th		Pilot Officer D. Samant posted to No. 116 Squadron.	
	19 th		Flying Officer C. Thornton posted from 535 Squadron.	
	25 th		Flight Sergeant J. Yates commissioned as a Pilot Officer on probation.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
			<u>APPENDIX "A"</u>	
			From:- Officer Commanding, No. 263 Squadron, R.A.F.	
			To:_ Headquarters, No. 10 Group.	
			Date:- 15th. January 1943.	
			Ref:-263S/S.46/Air	
			<u>PARACHUTE CONTAINERS</u>	
			Two of the containers sent to us were loaded up to 120 lbs with sandbags. No difficulty was	
			found in attaching them to the bomb racks and the container did not interfere with the flap. A	
			rather long run than usual was necessary for take-off, but the machine handled as usual in	
			the air and the stalling speed was the same as when carrying two 250-lb bombs. The containers	
			were dropped from a height of five hundred feet, the parachute opening practically	
			instantaneously and there will be no difficulty in dropping these containers in a very small	
			space.	
			(Sgd) G.B. Warnes	
			Squadron Leader, Commanding	
			No. 263 Squadron, R.A.F.	

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Of (Unit or Formation) 263 Squadron.

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	<u>February 1943</u>		<i>The month of February proved to be the most eventful in the Squadron's history. The Distinguished Flying Cross was conferred upon S/Ldr Warnes and F/Lt Blackshaw on February 17th.</i>	
			<i>Operationally, the month included five Rhubarb Operations, six Night Offensive Operations and four dive-bombing attacks by Flights on MAUPERTUS aerodrome. Geographically, "B" Flight moved to Fairwood Common on Feb 10th and there acted as defensive fighter aircraft, while "A" Flight and the Squadron Orderly Room and Intelligence section moved to Harrowbeer on Feb 20th, from which aerodrome no operational flying took place. No. 3055 Echelon remained at Warmwell. Both flights moved forward to Ibsley and Warmwell respectively to take part in the attacks on Maupertus. Sadly, the fatal crash of F/Sgt Hicks during an exercise, and the fact that Sgt Williams did not return from a Rhubarb Operations, are recorded in due place below. There were notable changes in personnel: F/Lt Joe Holmes, a squadron veteran who had been temporarily exiled to 137 Squadron, returned to command "B" Flight, vice F/Lt Ogivie. And no less than 8 new pilots were posted to the squadron.</i>	
			<i>Total Flying Time: 352 hours, 25 minutes, of which 107 hrs 05 and 8 hrs 45 were operational and 223 hrs 40 and 12 hrs 55 non-operational, by day and night respectively.</i>	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Warmwell	Feb 1 st to	1943	Despite four days of fine spring weather the aerodrome remained waterlogged until Feb 5th.	
	Feb 4 th			
	5 th		Overcast and showery but practice flying resumed after seven days grounding. A Rhubarb Operation returned from Ile Marcouf owing to lack of cloud cover. A Squadron Dance, held in the N.A.A.F.I. was greatly enjoyed by all ranks.	
	6 th		Aerodrome U/S after wet night	
	7 th		Aerodrome S. at 1800. Much practice flying, including squadron formation followed by practice dive-bombing attacks from 15000 to 9000 feet.	
	8 th		Overcast and unusually cold. Beat-Up Exercise with a Sunderland off Bournemouth. 1600, the C.O. and two others dropped timing and parachute containers in a demonstration at Netheravon. Good accurate flying were warmly commended.	
	9 th		Morning, Aerodrome U/S after wet night. Afternoon, practice flying, Sgt MacAulay's port engine cut in take off. He managed to maintain a few feet of height for nearly two miles, just avoiding H.T. cables, and made a good crash landing in a field West of the aerodrome. The accident was categorised as a technical failure. A letter on the subject from A.V.M W.F. Dickson CB DSO DFC AFC A.O.C. 10 Group reads: "The A.O.C. directs that the above-named pilot be commended for putting up a creditable performance when his starboard engine cut when taking off"	
	10 th		Departure of "B" Flight by Rail and Air to Fairwood Common	
		1000	Arrival of Movietone News Photographers escorted by S.Ldr Allcoft, P.A.O. 10 Group, also A.M. Photographic Beaufort from PRU Benson.	

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Of (Unit or Formation) 263 Squadron.

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Warmwell	Feb 10 th	(Continued)	However cloud was too low for filming on this day.	
			Security talks in connection with squadron movements given to all available personnel, on this and the previous day.	
	11 th		Overcast morning, too dark for air-to-air filming. But more ground-to-air film was turned. In this afternoon these extensive photographic efforts at last came to a successful culmination. Air-to-air film was turned over Lyme Bay and of formation, bomb-dropping and fighter attacks. We have heard since that the filming was altogether successful.	
	12 th	0830-09530	F/O Harvey and Sgt Dai Williams carried out a successful attack on the La Haye du Puits railway triangle. Unfortunately Sgt Williams did not return (See 541). F/O Harvey followed up in a gallant attempt to rescue Sgt Williams from the sea off Cap de Carteret by acting as navigator for the A.S.R. Walrus.	
	13 th		Fine mild sunny day. Much air-to-air firing. The new Martinet T.T. a/c is found to have a useful turn of speed which improves the semblance of operational conditions. Two army officers from A.F.V. School Lulworth were given flights in the Magister in order to test the possibilities of A.F.V. air-to-ground recognition. It is understood that they concurred with the squadron's views that this is extremely difficult. Fighter readiness during the period of 10 G Ramrod.	
	14 th		Rhubarb operation abandoned N of Cherbourg. No cloud cover.	
	15 th		" " " " " " " "	
			Sgt Max Cotton flew as hostile bomber in an interception exercise.	

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Of (Unit or Formation) *263 Squadron.*

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Harrowbeer	21 st		Settling in at Harrowbeer in conditions which, while no doubt not unreasonable as "on Active Service", are very much less comfortable than the particularly good facilities of dispersal and messing which the Squadron enjoyed at Warmwell.	
			Some local flying. Night flying tests were carried out with the hope of attacking an important target. But the weather after dark was too hazy.	
	22 nd - 23 rd		Foggy, Cold and Duff. No flying.	
	24 th		Some local flying. N.F. Tests. Night weather spoilt by low cloud.	
	26 th - 27 th - 28 th		On these three days, "A" & "B" Flights were employed three times each once, respectively, in a form of bombing-tactics which this squadron, at any rate, had not used before. Soon after he took command of the squadron, S/Ldr Warnes suggested to Group authorities that the squadron might practice and use a form of dive-bombing and that, so, it might take part in Circus Operations.	
			Practices were carried out, and the operations of these three days were laid on. Judgement about their absolute success, whether in the form of damage to aerodrome installations and/or morale at MAUPERTUS, on in the bringing to battle of enemy fighters, must evidently be the concern of higher authorities and of more complete information. However, let it be recorded here that these operations were intensely enjoyed by all who took part in them	
			OVER	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
			<i>A detailed report on the operations will be found in the Intelligence Final Report – Form F - which is included as Appendix A.</i>	<i>Appendix “A”</i>
1943			<u>PERSONNEL</u>	
Feb. 2nd.	F/O J.P. SLATTER		Posted to No. 2 Delivery Flight	
9 th	P/O A. LEE-WHITE		Posted to H.Q.F.C. for liaison duties with U.S.A.A.F. at Coxhill	
17 th	F/Lt D.B. OGILVIE		Posted to RAF Station, Millfield.	
17 th	F/Lt J.T.R. HOLMES		Posted from 137 Squadron to command “B” Flight.	
22 nd	F/O C.B. THORNTON		Posted to No.141 Squadron	
24 th	Sgt Pilot G. WOOD		Posted from No. 61 O.T.U. for flying duties.	
	Sgt Pilot J. THOULD			
	Sgt Pilot W. WATKINS			
25 th	P/O P.T.R. MERCER		Posted from No. 56 O.T.U. for flying duties.	
	Sgt Pilot PROCTOR			
	Sgt Pilot N. BLACKLOCK			
	Sgt Pilot PURKIS			

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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
WARMWELL	March	1943	March opened with mild hazy weather and the Squadron divided, "A" Flight and S.H.Q. at	
HARROWBEER			Harrowbeer, "B" Flight at Fairwood Common and No. 3055 S. Echelon at Warmwell.	
and				
FAIRWOOD	1 st -13 th		A succession of fine, warm hazy days. "A" Flight put in some local flying and some occasional	
COMMON			mornings or afternoons of fighter or bomber readiness, but there was no operational flying at	
			Harrowbeer. "B" Flight flew some convoy patrols, and got in several hours of Light Series Bombing	
			Practice.	
WARMWELL	14 th		On this fine Sunday the Squadron's exile from Warmwell was precipitately ended by a Form	
			D. Both flights returned to Warmwell and divebombed MAUPERTUS aerodrome again, in two waves.	
	15 th		S.H.Q. moved back to Warmwell by train. 8 a/c moved from Warmwell to Bolt Head; they stayed	
BOLT HEAD			there for three days but the weather was consistently too hazy for the operation which was	
			planned. These 8 a/c were serviced by the four ground staff who were transported in the Oxford.	
			They worked manfully.	
	19 th		47 Ground crew moved from Warmwell to Predannack. 6 a/c flew to Bolt Head for a last bid for	
			10 Group Ramrod 59, but the weather was still too hazy. They returned to Warmwell. In the	
			evening 12 a/c took off to bomb a convoy South of Guernsey. But thick black haze forced them	
			back from the Channel Island area.	
	20 th		10 9 a/c moved to Predannack for the full moon period, and at midnight bombed Morlaix Viaduct,	
			successfully.	
PREDANNACK	21 st		Morlaix Viaduct bombed again, with even greater success.	
PREDANNACK	22 nd		To-nights target was PONTTHOU Viaduct but only three a/c located it in thick haze. A feature	
			of these three night operations was that the same nine pilots that took part in the same order	
			in each operation. A telegram of congratulations	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
			on these operations was received from A.O.C. 10 Group.	
	23 rd		All 10 9 aircraft returned safely (and fairly serviceable) to Warmwell.	
	24 th		The weather has broken. However, a Rhubarb operation found no cloud cover at the Casquets.	
	25 th		Duff day of low cloud, wind and rain. No flying.	
	26 th		Four Rhubarb operations, of which one found no cloud cover, one found no useful target, one was very successful and one brilliantly successful.	
	27-31 st		There were no more operations in the month. The twelve new pilots got in a good deal of flying experience in Whirlwinds, despite the broken weather.	
			There were no accidents of any kind during the month.	
			The mobility of the squadron during the past six weeks is accounted for by the fact that this has been the only fighter-bomber squadron in 10 Group.	
			A total of 313 hours was flown during the month, of which 53.20 were operational by day and 34.20 were operational by night. Practice flying hours were restricted by the necessity of conserving aircraft, during detachments.	
<u>PERSONALIA</u>		20 th	Flight Sergeant K. Ridley detached to No. 1 S.L.A.I.S., Millfield.	
		16 th	Sergeant Ramamoorthy posted from 58 O.T.U.	
		24 th	Corporal Loughlin posted from 537 Squadron as Orderly Room corporal.	
		31 st	Sergeant N. Turner posted to R.A.F. Colerne. Sergeant Turner was posted to the squadron on March 16th, 1940 and was thus one of its oldest members. As orderly room Sergeant he came as near to absolute perfection as is given to human beings in the Royal Air Force. He will be very greatly missed by all ranks as a friend and counsellor.	

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Of (Unit or Formation)				
Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	Sub Form 540			
			SECRET	
			OPERATIONS RECORD	
			Of (Unit or Formation) Satellite Aerodrome, R.A.F. CHARNY DOWN	
	Date	Time	Summary of Events	
	11.3.43		Col. Hargreaves, Group Defence Officer, inspected R.A.F Regiment. Inspection closed with a march past.	
	17.3.43	11.15 hours	Brigd. Gen. Wyatt 3 rd Western Area Commander, visited station and was met by Col. Hargreaves, G.D.O., Col. Harris L.D.A. Colerne and Camp Commandant S/Ldr. John F. Mead.	
			The new defence scheme was discussed.	
	23.3.43		No. 4. Fighter Leader Course completed training. Group Captain Hamilton and Group Captain Pearson H.Q.F.C. visited Officers' Mess.	
			Wing Commander Woodhouse promoted to the rank of Group Captain and posted to command R.A.F. Station Annan.	
	28.3.43		Combined Church Parade in Commemoration of the 25 th Anniversary of the R.A.F.	
			(signed)	
			Squadron Leader Commandant,	
			R.A.F. Station, Charny Down.	

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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron, R.A.F.

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Warmwell	April, 1943		April was to prove the most dramatic month in the history of the squadron since it's return from Norway nearly three years ago.	
	1-3 rd		The month opened quietly with three fine days in which there was a good deal of practice flying and firing. Influenza struck down five members of the squadron but most of them recovered fairly rapidly.	
	4 th		Uneventful Roadstead Operation.	
Tangmere	6 th		Ten aircraft went to TANGMERE and took off from there to bomb CAEN/CAIPIQET aerodrome. But the operation was abandoned in thick cloud.	
	7 th		Gale and low cloud. No flying.	
	8 th		Windy, some local flying.	
Harrowbeer	9 th		Seven aircraft flew an uneventful Roadstead from Harrowbeer. They then returned to Warmwell.	
	10 th		Squadron Readiness all day: it seems that considerable shipping movements have been observed off BREST and CHERBOURG.	
Exeter	11 th		Six aircraft taxied out to fly to Exeter but were recalled by Verey signals and told to Predannack. However, they were called down (in error) at Exeter and only got to Predannack in the evening when the weather cleared.	
Predannack				
Warmwell-Predannack	12 th		Hazy, little flying.	
	13th-19 th		April 13 th -19 th were all days of bright, hot sun, little wind and clear visibility. In these seven days the Squadron flew fourteen offensive operations which involved seventy offensive sorties. Considerable damage was inflicted on enemy targets by sea and land. Five pilots and three Whirlwinds are missing.	
Exeter	13 th		The rest of the Squadron's aircraft were summoned to PREDANNACK in quest of the Shipping reported off BREST. These were again called down at EXETER	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Perranporth			and flew an uneventful Roadstead from there. Squadron Leader G.B. WARNES, DFC went on to	
Predannack			PERRANPORTH for briefing while the other aircraft joined those already at PREDANNACK. In the	
			evening, after a hasty but adequate briefing and a good deal of "rush" 10 aircraft took off on	
			Circus 22 to bomb BREST/GUIPAVAS aerodrome. This was the first time GUIPAVAS has been attacked	
			by the Squadron. It is clear that the bombing was carried out effectively and satisfactorily.	
			Five aircraft returned to Warmwell after the operation, leaving the original six at Predannack.	
			Cpl. MATTHEWS and twelve ground crew, who were also detached there worked extremely hard and	
			long and effectively to keep these aircraft serviceable.	
	14 th		Armed shipping reccos were flown at first light from both Warmwell and PREDANNACK to look for	
			"E" boats which had attacked a convoy off Falmouth. The WARMWELL recco found nothing, but from	
			Predannack they were successful in gaining the A.S./R. of the crew of seven of a Lancaster	
			which came down in the sea.	
Predannack	14 th		In the evening the third of the day and the most successful operation of the month was flown,	
			a Roadstead against ships in the BREST-USHANT area. Sergeant J. MACAULAY did not return, in	
			circumstances which give some hope that he may be alive. The aircraft then returned to WARMWELL	
			from PREDANNACK, F/O A. LEE-WHITE later than the others, in full darkness. The ground crews	
Warmwell	15 th		returned to WARMWELL. An uneventful Roadstead was flown in the CHANNEL ISLAND area.	
	16 th		The day was spent in quietly re-establishing aircraft serviceability, which had declined in the	
			peregrinations recorded above. 15 of 18 aircraft were serviceable by 1800 hours. At 2045 four	
			aircraft made a dusk recco of the CHANNEL ISLAND area but found no ships.	
	16/17 th		Eight aircraft went on night operations with CAEN/MONDEVILLE Industries as the primary target.	
			Flying Officer EDGAR BREARLEY did not return. A Vichy radio report which is still under	
			investigation makes it seem likely that he was shot down and killed while attacking a train at	
			ST. LO. EDGAR had been with the Squadron	

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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron, R.A.F.

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
			for nineteen months and was so competent a pilot and so likeable a person that to write briefly of him here would scarcely do him justice.	
	17/18 th		At night, nine aircraft sought out targets in almost the whole seaward and landward occupied area which is within the Squadron's range from WARMWELL.	
			Flying Officer Philip HARVEY, Flying Officer Percy King, D.F.M, and Flying Officer Basil Courtney ABRAMS did not return. KING was very much the oldest member of the Squadron having been in it for twenty-five months (a rather long single tour of operations). ABRAMS and HARVEY had been, like BREARLEY, with us for nineteen months. These four seemed the backbone of the Squadron.	
			Flying Officer HARVEY and Flying BREARLEY were the Deputy Flight Commanders of "A" and "B" Flights respectively. Nothing more is known of the three beyond what is stated on Form 541.	
			Again it is not a all possible to set down here in brief what we felt about them. HARVEY, the son of the Bishop of Cashel, was a person of rare charm and goodness. He had been married for five weeks. KING and ABRAMS were close friends of each other, but they were equally the boon companions of the rest of the Squadron. The four were typical of the varied origins of our pilots. They came from CANADA, EIRE, BRITISH GUIANA and SOUTH AFRICA respectively.	
	18 th		Six aircraft flew an escorted last light Recco. of the CHANNEL ISLANDS area.	
	18/19 th		Night recco's of two aircraft to the CHANNEL ISLAND and ILE MARCOUF areas, followed by four aircraft on a Night Roadstead of the CHANNEL ISLANDS. Ships not found.	
	19/20 th		Flying Officer COYNE and Flying Officer LEE-WHITE both found ships in these night reccos and, at a guess quite probably sunk them. It is difficult to see damage at night and the ships could only be claimed Cat. 4 and Cat. 3. A Roadstead of four aircraft was laid on later in the night, but no more ships were found.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Warmwell	20 th		Fine day, local and practice flying. No night programmes.	
	21 st /25 th		The fine weather broke at last. Frontal days succeeded with continuous high wind or gales, and often with rain and low cloud. Some practice flying only.	
	27 th		Finer weather. Much bombing practice in the morning. In the afternoon six aircraft in Roadstead 59 successfully attacked five ships and probably sank three of them. This was no doubt the most successful of all the Squadron's operations to the present date.	
	28 th		The same six pilots as above flew to Exeter a 08:15 and from there in 10G Roadstead 60 they attacked the large convoy which had already been mauled (5 ships sunk) by H.M. Destroyers GOATHLAND and ALBRIGHTON, not without casualties to themselves. Our Whirlibombers found 8 ships and it is believed that (subject to further categorisation) they sank 2 M Class Minesweepers and an armed trawler. The serviceable aircraft returned to WARMWELL and in the afternoon the same six who were the only pilots operational for shipping attacks searched for the depleted convoy South of Jersey. It was not found there (10G Roadstead 62).	
	29 th		Morning spent in collecting aircraft from Exeter and Yeovilton. Perhaps this is the place to mention the frequent journeys taken by small parties of our ground crews in the Squadron Oxford. Whirlwinds can only be serviced by Whirlwind-trained crews. During this month our ground crews have serviced Whirlwinds at WARMWELL, EXETER, HARROWBEER, PREDANNACK, MIDDLE WALLOP and IBSLEY. At 13:10 six aircraft were got airborne in a great hurry and in Roadstead 63. They found the ships reported off ISIGNY. After successfully attacking a patrol boat the rest were recognised to be fishing vessels.	
	30 th		Seven bombed up aircraft took off for PREDANNACK. From there four of these took off escorted by the PORTREATH WING to attack shipping off USHANT. No shipping sighted. Later four aircraft stood by at EXETER, and three at our Parent Station, to be prepared to bomb shipping in the event of the "Recco" (which was out) finding any. Nothing found.	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Warmwell	May,	1943	It had been evident since the middle of April that it was no longer possible to obtain from Westlands or from the M.U.s, replacement for more than one or two of the several Whirlwinds which were written off in operations or which were U/S during major inspections. Further, the number of pilots operational at night and by day for anti-shipping attacks had fallen rather low by the beginning of May. Accordingly the Commanding Officer obtained a directive from Group that the Squadron was to maintain at the normal "30 minutes available" by day (and by night in the moon period) as many pilots and aircraft as was possible in the circumstances.	
	May,	1 st	H.M. the King has been graciously pleased to confer the Distinguished Flying Cross upon F/O P. Harvey, who was missing from Night Intruder Operations on the night of 17 th /18 th April.	
		2 nd	Dull, cold E. wind. Uneventful Channel Islands Recco.	
		3 rd	Fine, strong E. wind. Recco from Exeter to I de Batz area. See form 541.	
		5 th	Fronts passed over and wind dropped. Local flying etc. Roadstead from Warmwell of 105 minutes, to Brehat - Sept Iles area. The French Fishing Fleet found again.	
		6 th	Rainy morning. Another uneventful evening Roadstead in the Channel Islands area.	
		7 th	Strong West wind, Cloudy. Sgt Thould coming in to land, held off at 30 feet and wrote off a Whirlwind near the Watch Office. This was the first accident to be ascribed to carelessness, for ten months. Sgt Thould was detached forthwith to the Air Crew Refresher Course at Brighton.	
		8 th - 9 th	Very little flying between S.W. gales.	
		10 th	No flying in gales and rainstorms. Mr S Rostron of Westlands and Mr T Penrose, the chief test pilot, came form Yeovil to present the Squadron a large and handsome silver cigarette box. This box is inscribed:-	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
		10 th	WHIRLWIND / NO. 263 (F) SQUADRON / FROM / WESTLAND AIRCRAFT / AS AN APPRECIATION OF /	
		(Cont)	GALLANT WORK DONE / 1943	
		11 th	Fine, but still unsettled. Mid-day uneventful Channel Islands Recco.	
		12 th -13 th	No flying in strong crosswinds	
		14 th	Extremely hot, close day. Roadstead 67, an attack on two Destroyers, or alternatively a 4000 ton M/V, probably the Squadron's old enemy the Solmglint, in Cherbourg Docks was laid on, and finally took place as a dive-bombing attack upon the latter.	
		15 th	Fine day. Little flying in expectation of another shipping attack in the evening (this didn't take place) and in preparation for the moon period. 1400Hrs, F/Lt Rickett of AI5 Middle Wallop gave an instructive, and amusing, talk to all pilots on "Enemy Interogation". 1800 hrs Air Marshall Lord Trenchard visited the Squadron and spoke to all pilots in "A" Flight dispersal. He stressed the importance of inter-command and inter-service cooperation and the ultimate mercifulness, because of the relatively few lives lost, of large-scale aerial bombardment.	
			<u>Night</u> . See 541. F/O Lee-White probably sunk a 2000 ton M/V in convoy of Barfleur. F/Lt Blackshaw D.F.C. who set out later to attack this convoy returned to crash fatally in mysterious circumstances, near Exeter. He had orbitted Exeter, Harrowbeer then Exeter again, without lights and without R/T, and finally seems to have left his A/C a few seconds before it crashed, after being airborne for 2 hrs 12 minutes - that is for 12 minutes longer than the accepted maximum operational flight of a Whirlwind. Without prejudice to the finding of the Court of Enquiry, it is most probable that F/Lt Blackshaw, who had somewhere dropped his bombs, had been concussed by flak from the convoy. The loss of "Blackie" as a friend leader and counsellor in every matter concerned with the Squadron's activities, was extremely severe. He came to the Squadron as a Sgt Pilot	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices	
		15 th	in March 1941. Commissioned in November 1941 he took over the Command of "A" Flight in September		
		(Cont)	1942. He completed forty-three offensive operations in Whirlwinds and Whirlibombers. A careful		
			and clever pilot, he was shrewd, witty and gentle as a person.		
		16 th	In the second of two otherwise uneventful morning reccos F/Os Coyne and Lee White damaged 2		
			F W 190s which attacked our escorted formation.		
			<u>Night</u> Two uneventful reccos of Channel Island - Isigny Ship Lanes		
		17 th	<u>Night</u> " " " " " " " " " "		
		18 th	Uneventful Roadstead. Minesweepers not found S. of Jersey.		
			<u>Night</u> : A repetition of the previous reccos.		
		19 th	A repetition of the previous days Roadstead. Sgt Watkin's first operation.		
		20 th	F/O J.P. Coyne R.C.A.F. was promoted A/F/Lt. and posted to command "A" Flight.		
			In the afternoon the funeral of F/Lt H. Blackshaw D.F.C. took place at R.A.F. Warmwell and		
			Warmwell Village Church, with full Royal Air Force Honours.		
			In the evening it was learned that the body of F/O E. Brearly R.A.C.F. who had been missing		
			since the Night Intruder Operations of 16 th - 17 th April had been washed ashore near Swanage		
			The body was brought to Warmwell but gave no evidence of what had happened. It is likely that		
			he too was shot down by flak from a ship.		
		21 st	Warm front. In the evening an informal dinner in Mess was given by the officers of the squadron		
			to a number of officers of S.H.Q. Warmwell and of the R.N. Air Firing Unit.		
			<u>Night</u> . The most successful and spectacularly exciting of the squadron's night operations,		
			10 Group Night Roadstead 2, was flown. Two ships were sunk and a third probably damaged		
			Two of our pilots had remarkable escapes from disaster. A running commentary on this operation		
			was broadcast by S/Ldr Warnes, D.F.C. and relayed to the Squadron Intelligence Office by Middle		

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
		21 st	Wallop Operations. See Forms 541, and Newspaper cuttings in the squadron scrap book.	
		(Cont)		
		22 nd	Today only five Whirlibombers in the squadron were serviceable. Four were being dismantled to be returned to Westlands (Cat B - Flak). Two were under repair for minor flak damage. Two were at normal inspections in 3055 Echelon.	
		23 rd	The four available Whirlibombers were enough for an effective Roadstead. One ship was sunk, another damaged. P/O Cotton for the third time brought back his aircraft Cat B - Flak. His starboard tank was holed by an unexploded 20mm shell. Thirty gallons flowed out, then the tank sealed itself, remarkably.	
			In the afternoon, Air Vice Marshall C.R. Steele, D.F.C. who has lately been appointed Air Officer Commanding No. 10 Group, visited the Squadron and was introduced to the Officer Commanding. He spoke a few words to the pilots assembled in "A" Flight Dispersal.	
		24 th	Congratulatory Signals on the last two operations were received from the A.O.C. 10 Group, the C. in C. Plymouth and the Group Captain Commanding Middle Wallop Sector. The congratulatory signal from A.O.C. 10 Group on Roadsteads 59 and 60, receive on 28 th April, was not recorded last month. It reads: "For S/Ldr Warnes from A.O.C. Hearty congratulations on your shows of yesterday and today. I realise full well your present difficulties over aircraft and pilots." These signals may be read in the Squadron Scrap-book.	
			The funeral of F/O E. Brearly R.C.A.F. took place in the afternoon with full R.A.F. Honours.	
		25 th - 26 th	Five Whirlwinds serviceable	
		26 th	Sgt Simpson was dangerously wounded by a revolved bullet discharged accidentally by Sgt Thould. F/Sgt Simpson was taken to Bovington hospital where he underwent a complex and successful operation.	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
		27 th	Some local flying. Sgt Thould posted to R.A.F. Station Warmwell.	
		28 th	Very fine sunny morning. Practice flying. A cypher message was received which ordered the immediate re-equipment of the squadron with an unexpected type of aircraft. It was received with more feigned than real enthusiasm.	
		29 th	Very fine hot day with mild E. wind. Six Whirlibombers got off in the afternoon (in the midst of very large preparations at Warmwell for the Dispatch of 36 Spit XIs as part of Ramod 67) to attack what was reported as a 15-ship convoy off Barfleur. There were 15 ships there, the French fishing fleet again. They were not attacked. In the evening three sections stood in at Standby at Fighter Readiness. Two sections were scrambled to patrol base in precautionary defence - the airfield was thought to have been photographed by an enemy aircraft at 13.00 hrs when it was abnormally crowded with aircraft, and these were now refuelling after concluding their operation.	
			The Cypher message of the previous day was cancelled by a teleprinted signal. Plans then emerged for obtaining the Whirlibombers - fourteen it is believed - now on charge to 137 Squadron, our daughter unit now to be re-equipped with another type of aircraft. Thus, to the great satisfaction of this unit, 263 Squadron which flew the first Whirlwind in July 1940, and first used the Whirlwinds in defensive and offensive operations in 1941, and flew the first Whirlibomber operations in September 1942, will also have the privilege of using, profitably as we may reasonably hope, the last two dozen Whirlwinds that remain.	
		30 th	An escorted armed shipping recco which had been laid on for first light and then 11.00 hrs, was flown uneventfully at 1845 hrs. This operation completed 400 offensive sorties with Whirlibombers.	
		31 st	Mixed day. Sunny with low cloud. Some local flying.	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Warmwell	June	1943	June brought nineteen days of frontal weather. Rain, cloud, wind, low cloud & sea-fog followed each other with only a few bright and not very sunny intervals.	
			The same nineteen days brought high honours and far reaching changes to the Squadron.	
	1 st - 5 th		Rain, low cloud and cold southerly winds. Very little flying.	
	2 nd		His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to confer the Distinguished Flying Cross on Flight Lieutenants J.W.E. Holmes and J.P. Coyne R.C.A.F.) in recognition of gallant and successful work accomplished with Whirlibombers.	
	6 th		Finer afternoon. Roadstead 72 abandoned in 10/10 cloud over Cherbourg.	
	7 th		Curious mixed morning of bright sun and patches of very low cloud. Ground vis: 20 miles in some directions, nil in others. Afternoon: some local flying and first solos.	
	8 th		Duff day. No flying.	
	9 th - 11 th		Some formation and practice bombing.	
	12 th		Some convoy patrols and fighter readiness followed by Bomber readiness but this too led to nothing.	
	13 th		His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to confer the Distinguished Service Order on S/Ldr G.B. Warnes DFC and the Distinguished Flying Cross on Flying Officer A Lee White and Pilot Officer M.T. Cotton R.A.A.F. S/Ldr Warnes' D.S.O. is the second to be awarded for work accomplished entirely with 263 Squadron. The first was awarded posthumously to S/Ldr "Baldy" Donaldson in July 1940. These two D.F.C.'s bring the number awarded to members of this Squadron at Warmwell, during past nine months, to seven.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Warmwell	13 th		F/Sgt R.A. Hollamby who has been for nearly a year i/c "A" Flight ground-crews and F/Sgt H.O.J. Watts who is i/c the Armament Section, have been honoured, and the Squadron with them, by being mentioned in dispatches.	
			In the evening the Squadron Oxford T1064 an old and useful Chariot which has hitherto proved inviolable, was rendered Cat "B" at Ibsley by a Spitfire which taxied into it while it was stationary before take-off. The fuselage was severed behind the cockpit. The pilot Flying Officer A Lee-White and his pupil were uninjured. T.1064 was soon replaced by a newer and faster Oxford T.1058.	
			Later a Squadron party was held in the Golden Lion at Weymouth. It was given by the four Officers who have been recently decorated, to all Officers and aircrew of the Squadron and to three members of the Warmwell S.H.Q. who have been specially friendly and helpful to the Squadron, S/Ldr Marshal S.M.O. F/Lt Ken Baker Equipment Officer, and F/O Buchan Sports Officer. It was a magnificent party, magnificently enjoyed.	
	14 th		Duff day, no flying.	
	15 th		First light Shipping Recco found a convoy of four enemy Warships. P/O M.T. Cotton D.F.C. was shot down by flak and is believed to have been killed immediately. First Two minesweepers were probably seriously damaged (See F.541)	
			P/O "Max" Cotton came to the Squadron in July 1942. From the first he proved himself to have an extraordinary flare for accurate bombing. Both in practice and in action he rarely missed his direct hit. As a pilot and a leader his matter-of-fact calmness before, during, and after operations made him invaluable to the Squadron. As a person, his courtesy and frank and open nature and constant good-humour endeared him to all who knew him.	
			S/L G.B. Warnes D.S.O. D.F.C. was posted to 10 Group. S/Ldr E.R. Baker DFC was posted from 182 Squadron to Command 263 Squadron.	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Warmwell	15 th	1943	S/Ldr G.B. Warnes DSO DFC had commanded the Squadron since September Dec 1942. During that time the work of the Squadron at Warmwell, which has been summarised in Appendix "A" was largely the personal creation of S/Ldr G.B. Warnes DSO DFC. Briefly he was a strict disciplinarian who combined a fierce and forthright matter with personal kindness; a Commander who never left the least doubt about what he wanted and who consistently obtained these qualities because he himself consistently displayed them: he himself did even more than he required of others. As a tactician S/Ldr Warnes may have some place in the history of the War, as the creator of medium-level divebombing by fighter-bombers (see previous forms 540(541)). His notes on shipping attacks, included herewith as Appendix "B" have been adopted as a Fighter Command Tactical Memorandum. S/Ldr E.R. Baker DFC comes to the Squadron in his third tour of operations. He has fought and flown in aircraft of many designations in almost every theatre of the war, other than the far East. It is felt that the Squadron has again been most fortunate in his appointment.	
		1000 hrs	Squadron parade. Address by S/Ldr G.B. Warnes DSO DFC	
		1015 hrs	Squadron photograph. A copy will be found in the Squadron Scrap-Book.	
		1045 hrs	Showing (at last) of the Movitone News Film of the Squadron's activities. This version lasted For 25 minutes and is unedited. It is clear that an interesting film can be made of this material	
	16 th		Much local flying. A move to Zeals has been arranged for 19 th June.	
	17 th		The British Women's Patriotic Committee in the Argentine Republic have sent a large consignment of Woolen Comforts for the Squadron - doubtless a Corollary of Bellows Affairs.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Warmwell	18 th		Pouring wet day. Preparations for move.	
	19 th		Fine day. Squadron move to Zeals very easily accomplished in 24 3 ton lorries brought by Zeals R.A.F. Commando Units. 10 Whirlwinds and the Majester by air. 1 Whirlwind left at Warmwell	
			u/s Spare Radiator.	
Zeals	20 th		Settling in at Zeals. A place in very beautiful country. A station which has been without a flying Squadron since 1942, on the whole determined now to be cooperative. It is understood that the Squadron will remain for three weeks and Zeals for intensive training. It will be non-operational. The Squadron now consists very largely of new pilots. F/Lt J.E. McClure was posted vice F/Lt J.W.E. Holmes DFC who is at the end of his tour of operations. It is understood that F/O A. Lee-White DFC and F/Sgt K. Ridley are in the same position. After making a successful landing on his first Whirlwind solo, Sgt R.J. Hughes selected wheels up instead of flaps up. This Whirlwind became Cat "B"	
	21 st		Visit of F/Lt Teeling of Air Ministry to discuss Bellows Affairs. It appears that political considerations make it necessary for the Squadron to continue and to increase the publicity given to the Bellows Club activities on behalf of the R.A.F. Much local flying etc., Afternoon in an Army Co-operation exercise near Stoney Cross. Sgt Watkins hit a tree. He managed to land his Whirlwind at Stoney Cross A/D, but it is Cat "B".	
	22 nd - 25 th		Very fine June days. Much practice flying. More army co-op. The eight Whirlwinds put up three hours or more, each! Collection of 5 Whirlwinds from No 137 Squadron which is now re-equipped with Hurricane IV's. Unfortunately these Whirlwinds are all overdue for inspection. 263 is thus again the only Whirlwind Squadron.	
	26 th		4 Whirlwinds, led by F/Lts J.P Coyne DFC and F/L J.E. McClure dropped live bombs 250lb at an Army demonstration at Lulworth.	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Zeals	27 th - 28 th		Very much practice flying.	
	28 th - 29 th		Very few a/c serviceable during intensive 40 hour inspections. Pilots attended Intelligence Lectures on Ship Recognition, S.D.158, offensive operations etc., and did dinghy drill in the lakes in Stourton Park.	
	29 th		Flying Officer A. Lee-White proceeded to the Air Ministry for an audition for Broadcast in Spanish to South America. F/Lt J.W.E. Holmes DFC posted to No 29 Pilot Gunnery Instructors Course Sutton Bridge, F/O A. Lee-White DFC ad F/Sgt K. Ridley posted to A.F.D.U. Wittering A nominal roll of Officers and Air Crew is included as Appendix "C"	
	30 th		F/O A Wordsworth proceeded to A.F.V. School Lulworth for Recognition Instructors Course.	
			<i>E.R. Baker</i>	
			Squadron Leader, Commanding	
			<u>No 263 Squadron, R.A.F. Zeals.</u>	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
ZEALS	1 st	July	July opened with the Squadron non-operational at ZEALS, to which aerodrome it had moved in June in order to train some twenty new pilots in Whirlwind flying and in bombing practice and tactics.	
	1 st , 2 nd	"	Local flying including some formation flying, practice divebombing and dummy attacks on aerodrome gunposts.	
	3 rd , 4 th		Practice air-firing programmes completed at Warmwell.	
	5 th , 6 th		Local flying at ZEALS and practice bombing from WARMWELL.	
	6 th		H.M. The King has been graciously pleased to confer the Distinguished Flying Cross on F/Lt J.E. McCLURE R.C.A.F. in recognition of his gallant and successful offensive operations with 137 Squadron.	
	7 th , 8 th		Sgt G.A.WOOD successfully carried out Exercise Driver. He succeeded in making five dummy attacks on a destroyer off the Needles, without being intercepted by Spitfires.	
	7 th		More practice bombing at Warmwell. Night flying with dusk and dawn landings.	
	9 th		Dawn flying. Air firing at WARMWELL	
	10 th , 11 th		Rain and low cloud. No flying.	
	12 th		Squadron moved by lorry and air to Warmwell. The Squadron is again accomodated in the comfortable and convenient dispersal huts in KNIGHTON WOOD with 3055 Echelon alongside it. There are now for the first time three operational Squadrons at WARMWELL.	
WARMWELL	13 th		Fine day. Local flying etc. At 2010 hours SGT L.J. KNOTT in coming in to land on the N.E. - S.W. runway stalled from about eighty feet and crashed in the field North of the Watch Office. His aircraft disintegrated completely and caught fire over a wide area, but as had happened before the cockpit remained in one piece and was not telescoped. SGT L.J. KNOT was rather badly burned but now (at the end of the month) is well on the road to complete recovery. Uneventful armed shipping recco in the evening.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
WARMWELL	14 th	July	H.M. The King has been graciously pleased to confer the Distinguished Flying Medal on F/SGT K.C. RIDLEY in recognition of his many gallant and successful offensive operations with this Squadron. F/SGT K.C. RIDLEY had been posted to A.F.D.U. last June.	
	15 th , 17 th		Cold grey weather. Some local flying.	
	18 th		Uneventful armed shipping recco in the evening.	
	19 th		Little flying in continued unserviceable weather.	
	20 th		1055-1210. Uneventful armed recco.	
	21 st , 22 nd		No flying in rain, low cloud and fog. These conditions lasted throughout the July moon period, during which no flying was possible at night.	
	23 rd		1230 - 1311 Uneventful recco.	
	24 th , 25 th		Duff weather: no flying.	
	26 th		The weather cleared at last about midday some formation flying, Practice bombing, same against a target towed by an M.T.B. through courtesy of N.A.L.O.	
	27 th - 31 st		Fine hot, hazy July days. Much formation flying, practice bombing, some against a target towed by an M.T.B. through courtesy of N.A.L.O.	
	30 th		Squadron Balbo of 12 a/c. Squadron Dance in the N.A.A.F.I.	
WARMWELL	July	1943	Thus July ended without any contact with the enemy other than the four reviews of the Channel Islands and rocks and occasional and not inaccurate bursts of flak which are a commonplace of these reconnaissance operations.	
			It seems that the enemy now very seldom moves any shipping by day between Brest and Le Harve.	
			164 Squadron of Hurricanes IV have been at WARMWELL since the Squadron moved to ZEALS in June, and have not yet had even one strike. Moreover the presence of a new squadron of Typhoon bombers in the Portreath Sector removes the possibility of a good deal of offensive work in the far South-West which formally fell to detachments of this Squadron. The work of the Squadron has therefore tended to become a kind of anti-convoy patrol whose success is measurable by the absence of enemy shipping in the Channel Island area and	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
WARMWELL	July	1943	off the coasts of the COTENTIN. It is possible that the historian of the future will observe that the air mastery together with a negative control of shipping movements by day over those areas of enemy occupied waters which are, so to say, in the MIDDLE WALLOP SECTOR was established and strengthened during 1942 & 1943 by the Spitfires of the Ibsley Wing with the cooperation successively of the Hurribombers and Whirlibombers of 175 and 263 Squadrons.	
			F/O A. LEE WHITE D.F.C. until recently a member of this Squadron broadcast to the South American States in Spanish, on the recent exploits of the Squadron and in particular the Squadron's attacks on Enemy Shipping.	
			F/O A. WORDSWORTH attended a course on Tank Recognition at Lulworth School (A.F.V.U.) and successfully passed the necessary tests in Tank Recognition.	
			F/O P.R. GREEN was posted to the Squadron as Squadron M.O.	
			<u>POSTINGS DURING THE MONTH FROM AND TO THE SQUADRON:-</u> The following officers were posted to the Squadron, F/O R.B. TUFF from 59 O.T.U. F/O L.M. PARSONS, Canadian, from 3 P.R.C., F/O V.K. MOODY (R.C.A.F.) and F/O S.J. SHEWELL (R.C.A.F.) from 610 Squadron A.F.D.U., F/Lt D.G. ROSS from 55 O.T.U. P/O's D.W. STURGEON, R.C. HUNTER, and K.F.J. FUNNELL from 55 O.T.U., P/O D.E.G. MOGG from 53 O.T.U., all for flying duties.	
			The following Officers have been posted away from the Squadron:- F/O V.K. MOODY (R.C.A.F.) and F/O S.J. SHEWELL to 610 Squadron, SGT C. FOES posted to 66 Squadron.	
			SGT H.P. BLACKLOCK was appointed to a commissioned rank.	
			E.R. Baker	
			Squadron Leader, Commanding	
			No 263 Squadron, R.A.F. WARMWELL	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Warmwell	August	1943	The month of August proved that the "New Squadron" led by S/Ldr E.R. BAKER DFC is in no way less in stature that the squadron was under S/Ldr G.B. WARNES D.S.O D.F.C. before the period of retraining at Zeals.	
	1 st		A fine sunny day but a strong Southerly crosswind. Sgt Cooper bounced on landing, dipped a wing, cartwheeled twice on the wings, shedding both engines, and finally stopped upright and on fire. Sgt Cooper got out unbruised and the remains of the aircraft were foam-extinguished.	
	2 nd		Local flying and bombing practice at Chesil Ranges.	
	3 rd		Uneventful Channel, Island recco. 12 a/c flew to Predannack, from there 8 a/c struck the "new squadron's" first blow at the enemy by successfully dive-bombing Brest-Guipavas.	
	4 th		The Squadron returned from Predannack through low cloud over the sea after 8 a/c had made a long but uneventful recco beyond Brest.	
	5 th		It was reported that the "Solmglint" was about to quit Cherbourg. S/Ldr E.R. BAKER DFC obtained leave to bomb it in the harbour from low level. The whole squadron volunteered to accompany him. He briefed three pilots but the operation was cancelled at the last minute, by the Air Ministry	
	5-10 th		Mild, moist weather much cloud, caused by a succession of small fronts. Local flying, much formation flying including four squadron Balbos, and bombing practice.	
	11 th		10 a/c flew to Predannack and from there in the afternoon 8 a/c accomplished the Squadron's most uniformly sucessful operation, "The Massacre at the Aber Vrach River". All the six ships which were attacked received direct hits - an armed trawler and four E Boats were sunk and one E Boat left on fire.	
	12 th		The Squadron again flew to Predannack. But the dive-bombing of Brest/Guipavas was impossible in 10/10 cloud. Congratulatory signals on the Aber Vrach operation were received from the C. in C., Sir Trafford Leigh Mallory, from the Secretary	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
WARMWELL	12 th	(continued)	of state for Air, Sir Archibald Sinclair and from the Board of Admiralty.	
			The moon period started with two uneventful night shipping reccos; and eight pilots on local flying.	
	13 th		First light uneventful shipping recco. The eight pilots who took part in the Aber Vrach operation, together with the Adjutant and the Intelligence Officer were filmed by British Movietone News S/Ldr E.R. BAKER DFC described the operation for sound-recording.	
			Night flying cancelled because of low cloud	
	14 th		No day flying in frontal weather. In the afternoon an evasion exercise was held. Pilots in mufti were dropped from M.T. five miles from the aerodrome and had to make their way into it without being captured by Police, Home Guard, or R.A.F Regiment. This was very successful as twelve of the twenty pilots returned without being apprehended.	
	14 th - 15 th		An extensive programme of night flying practice was carried out and the routine operational reccos were flown. S/Ldr E.R. BAKER DFC returned from one of these having sunk an E. Boat and destroyed an H.E. 111. This was, quite simply, the most remarkable individual achievement up to the present time, of any member of the Squadron since the return from Norway in 1940.	
	15 th		Fighter readiness all day. Bomb racks were removed from six Whirlwinds in order to cope.	
	15 th - 16 th	Night	Two night reccos. SGT R.C. BEAUMONT bombed ship (cat 4) in the entrance to Cherbourg Harbour. This was the first time that a Whirlwind has bearded the Cherbourg flak at low level.	
	16 th		Fighter readiness again	
	16 th - 17 th	Night	An extensive practice flying and operational night programme was severely cut in order to obtain 14 a/c to fly to Predannack at first light. The ground crews worked all night; the complete repainting at night of a Whirlwind is worth a special mention. The 2 night reccos were mainly uneventful.	
	17 th		First light 12 A/C flew to predannack. They were a fine sight in	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
WARMWELL	formation		formation with their Nav:lights burning in the still clear twilight before dawn. From Predannack the Squadron provided the bombing element of the five Squadron operation, 10 Group Ramrod 74.	
			The target was again Guipavas aerodrome. For the second time in sucession the target was covered with 10/10 cloud, and on this occasion it was evident from five miles from the French coast that no part of the operation could be successful. 11 a/c then returned to Warmwell. The Oxford carried a spare wheel to Predannack and the 12 th a/c came back later. There are now twenty pilots in the Squadron operational both by day and by night	
	17-18 th	Night	Four night shipping reccos were mainly uneventful	
	18 th		Some practice flying. Night flying cancelled in low cloud.	
	19 th		4 a/c beat up 20 MTB's in Weymouth Bay. The Navy expressed themselves as "alarmed and satisfied"	
	20 th - 21 st		No flying in frontal weather.	
	21 st		F/Lt "Jimmy" Coyne DFC who had recently concluded his tour of operations with the Squadron - he came to the Squadron as a Sergeant Pilot in Sept 1941 - left Warmwell for Warrington en route for some leave in Canada. A form D was received ordering Whirlwinds to be prepared for convoy duties in 10 Group, in lieu of Spitfires.	
	21 st - 22 nd		S/Ldr E.R. BAKER DFC having obtained a three day extension of the moon period bombed and probably sunk a trawler off Cherbourg.	
	24 th		Captain Meade of the Royal Irish Fusiliers was attached to the Squadron for two days as instructor in combined Operations. His lectures and informal conversations were interesting and informative.	
	25 th		Convoy patrols. Squadron Balbo.	
	26 th		Squadron Balbo. It should be noted that correct formation flying is of absolute importance in divebombing operations, and that rapid and precise changes of formation are an important factor in low level bombing of ships.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
WARMWELL	29 th		Convoy patrols in unpleasant flying weather	
	30 th		Little flying in low cloud and cross-wind	
	31 st		Convoy patrols	
			During the month the Squadron has twice been honoured by a visit from the A.O.C 10 Group	
			A.V.M. STEELE DFC	
			It was a curious error of judgement which caused the statement in the July record that Typhoon	
			Bombers in the Portreath Sector "removed the possibility of offensive work in the	
			far South-West". During August the Squadron operated five times from Predannack and it was from	
			these that the extremely successful battle at Aber Vrack took place and that Guipavas was divebombed.	
			The moon period from Warmwell was distinguished by the remarkable personal success of	
			S/Ldr E.R. BAKER DFC who destroyed an E. Boat and an H.E. 111 in one sortie and probably sunk	
			an armed trawler in another. Both S/Ldr BAKER and SGT. R.C. BEAUMONT penetrated the outer ring	
			of the Cherbourg defences in their pursuit of the enemy. F/Lt D.G. ROSS supernumerary to the	
			Squadron was reposted to Flight Commander post on the 11 th August 1943.	
			F/Lt J.P. COYNE DFC who joined the Squadron as Sergeant and rose to the rank of Flight	
			Lieutenant and became Flight Commander left the Squadron for a well earned rest. He took part in	
			nearly all the Squadron's operational work and by his gallantry and leadership earned the award	
			of the D.F.C. on the 2 nd June 1943.	
			<i>E.R. Baker</i>	
			Squadron Leader, Commanding	
			<u>No 263 Squadron R.A.F. WARMWELL</u>	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
WARMWELL	SEPTEMBER 1943		The month of September was remarkable for the variety of the operations conducted in it and for the peregrinations of the Squadron between Manston and Predannack, the most South-Easterly and the most South-Westerly aerodromes of England.	
		1 st	Frontal day of low cloud and rain. No flying.	
		2 nd	C.O. and F.C.O. Warmwell to Bolt Head to investigate possibilities of night operations based there.	
		3 rd	Much bombing practice at Chesil Bank Range	
		4 th	Not many a/c hours available for non-Op flying	
		5 th	Considerable activity to arrange Squadron detachment to Manston tomorrow. All pilots were recalled from leave.	
		6 th	44 Ground crew and F/O Mercer proceeded by train to Manston.	
		7 th	14 Whirlwinds and Oxford with I.O. to Manston by 1200. This is the Squadron's first detachment to 11 Group since the famous "escort of bombers to Doel" on the occasion of the Knapsack Raid of 12 August 1941. C.O. to Hornchurch for conference.	
MANSTON		8	Two more Whirlwinds arrived at Manston making 16 serviceable there. Fine bright day. Briefing for low level attack on Naval and heavy flak positions at HARDELOT. However, at the last minute tactics were changed by 11 Group to the standard dive-bombing attack. This attack was carried out in the evening by 7 a/c. Unfortunately 5 a/c returned early.	
		9 th	Briefing at 0500 hours for further dive-bombing of HARDELOT gun-positions. The operation was then successfully carried out and the a/c were quickly refuelled and re-armed for further sorties. But these were not called for. The Squadron was briefed for a dive-bombing of St OMER aerodrome and taxied out at 1710 to take off. But this operation was cancelled in thick and gathering haze.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
			These three days at Manston under the auspices of operation "STARKEY" were very greatly enjoyed	
			by all who took part in the detachment. It may be that the results of the operation were not	
			those which were hoped for by higher commands. Nevertheless the sense of having an important	
			part to play in a very large operation lent a dramatic excitement to squadron sorties which were	
			in themselves less eventful than our normal dive-bombing operations in 10 Group. What is desired	
			to suggest here that, whatever the other results of the operation may have been, there should	
			also be added on the credit side the roaring good spirits ("excellent morale is the official	
			phrase") which were engendered in the pilots of this squadron by the privilege of playing a part	
			in the drama of the preparation and execution of this operation.	
		10 th	Squadron detachment returned to Warmwell by air and railway. Night operations cancelled in	
			electrical storm and rain.	
		11 th	Convoy patrols by "B" Flight. A shipping strike was laid on for 1200 hours but cancelled in	
			favour of naval operations.	
		12 th	First light to afternoon convoy patrols. Night operations cancelled in fog.	
		13 th	Misty morning. No flying. 1845 10 a/c moved to Predannack so that perfect moonlight night was	
			wasted.	
		14 th	Operation cancelled at Predannack. I.O, M.O, & F.C.O to Bolt Head by car. Extremely heavy	
			rainstorm.	
		15 th	25 ground crew arrived at Bolt Head at 0200 having travelled in a lorry which broke down near	
			Exeter. The air party returned from Predannack to Bolt Head but did not land there as they	
			received R/T instructions to fly on to Warmwell. I.O., M.O., & F.C.O. returned by car.	
			Detachment ground party remained. Night ops cancelled in 10/10 low cloud, rain, gale, etc.	
		16 th	Weather duff in morning. Afternoon, 13 Whirlwinds to Bolt Head but they were again ordered back	
			to Warmwell, without landing. M.O., F.C.O., and I.O. in Oxford landed at Bolt Head and returned.	
			Night reccos, and one in which F/Lt J.E. McCLURE DFC R.C.A.F. attacked an E. Boat, and one in	
			which S/Ldr BAKER attacked an E. Boat.	

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Of (Unit or Formation) WARMWELL

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
WARMWELL		17 th	After another duff morning 14 Whirlwinds moved to and landed at Bolt Head. M.O., F.C.O., & I.O. moved there in the Oxford. As Met had foretold this time correctly, the weather cleared in the morning and the extensive Ranger Operations which had been carefully planned and briefed for, were carried out. This was the largest night operation ever undertaken by the Squadron. 13 a/c took off from Bolt Head, twelve bombed their targets, and all 13 landed safely at Exeter, to which the I.O. had moved on by Oxford.	
		18 th	The Air party moved from Exeter to Bolt Head to take part in a circus operation but weather prevented this and the Squadron detachment returned from Bolt Head to Warmwell by air and lorry. Night; two reccos in rather bad weather.	
		19 th	News was received that the bombing of HARDELOT guns (shared with other squadrons) was remarkably successful.	
		21 st	9 a/c flew to Predannack and back for an operation which was cancelled in thick weather.	
		22 nd	Fighter readiness and stand-by at Warmwell. In the afternoon 9 a/c flew to Bolt Head for a shipping strike but it was too late and too dark to take off. They returned for a night landing at Warmwell.	
		23 rd	9 a/c to Bolt Head, from which eight dive-bombed MORLAIX aerodrome. Bombing results were good. An R/T message was intercepted warning German aircraft not to land back at MORLAIX. Unfortunately F/SGT G.A. WOOD was shot down by flak during the dive and was believed to have been killed instantly. F/SGT WOOD was posted to the Squadron on the 24 th February 1943. He was a skilful and gallant pilot who had taken part in seven offensive operations. He had recently been accepted for commissioned rank. Gay and light-hearted in his manner, handsome in appearance, he was very like the popular notion of typical pilot. His age was 21.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
WARMWELL		24 th	The squadron was roused before dawn and preparations were made for a departure to the west at first light. But it then appeared that someone had blundered. Fighter readiness and a scramble in the morning. 9 a/c to Predannack Air firing practice in the afternoon.	
		25 th	This was the forth day of fine clear September weather. Bombing practice in the morning. 9 a/c to Predannack at 1330. They took off to attack LANNION but 10/10 cloud over the target prevented dive-bombing. Returned to a dusk lading at Warmwell.	
		26 th	Fine day. Air firing.	
		27 th	Air firing and bombing practice	
		28 th	Unfavourable weather.	
		29 th	9 a/c took of at 1st light for and landed at Predannack. Operation abandoned on account of weather. a/c returned to Warmwell.	
		30 th	Flying training. AIR/GROUND firing during the day.	
			<u>ESTABLISHMENT</u> : The squadron has been converted to the new establishment under Fighter Command reorganisation scheme. The total establishment being 32 which included 11 Officers and 7 Airmen pilots. All surplus airmen have been transferred to 3055 Echelon.	
			<u>PERSONNEL</u> : Officers; S/Dr E.R. BAKER awarded bar to D.F.C. and F/O J.I. SIMPSON awarded D.F.M. S/Ldr E.R. BAKER attended No 3 Intermediate Course Army Co-operation at Old Suram. F/SGT HUGHES posted to 616 Squadron. The following pilots were posted to the Squadron during the month F/Lt F.D. SNALAM Supernumerary from 616 Squadron and attached to "B" Flight. F/O L.A. UNWIN R.C.A.F., P/O A. BARR R.C.A.F. from 55 O.T.U., and SGT A.J. RYAN from 56 O.T.U. W/O D.F.J. TEBBIT and F/SGT W.W. HEATON granted commissions with the Squadron.	
			<i>E.R. Baker</i>	
			Squadron Leader, Commanding	
			<u>No 263 Squadron R.A.F. WARMWELL</u>	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
WARMWELL	October, 1943		The month opened with non-operational flying for the first three days until the:-	
	4 th		when an armed recco went to LEZARDRIEUX uneventfully.	
	5 th - 6 th		Weather raining and windy, no flying. The moon period approaching, briefing for "CHUPPER PRANG" took place.	
	7 th		Finer day. Armed recco round Channel Is. Uneventful. First light of moon period. Unsuccessful two reccos.	
	8 th		Fighter readiness. Nil.	
	9 th		Night. S/Ldr E.R. BAKER DFC & Bar attacked E. Boat, zero feet, Cat 4. P/O W.E. HEATON shot up off Cherbourg by M/V. Shipping strike laid on for this ship. Only S/Ldr BAKER attacked and ordered others to return to TANGMERE. Unfortunately, P/O J.I. SIMPSON had double engine failure in circuit and crashed fatally. P/O SIMPSON had been with the Squadron for 15 months and was an experienced Whirlwind pilot. He had recently been awarded the DFM. Simmy was well liked by all the squadron and is a great loss to the squadron as a pilot and a friend.	
	10 th		Fog cleared in the morning to a fine day but came in at night around dusk cancelling night flying	
	11 th		No night operations; similar weather to yesterday.	
	to 14 th		Night and day readiness and searched from Predannack for 6,000 ton M/V. All reccos proved uneventful.	
	15 th		Fine hazy day. Practice Practice flying and Air/Air Firing. Four A/C to Predannack to continue night special reccos. F/Lt D.G. ROSS managed to get off, but due to duff weather, ops were, after a succession of flaps, cancelled here.	
	16 th		Predannack ship search. 4 Whirlwinds searched unsuccessfully in bad weather	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	17 th		Front passed. Night ops extremely successful. One train (Munition) Cat A, fell to S/Ldr	
			BAKER, two trains in AIREL Station to P/O N.P. BLACKLOCK, One locomotive Cat C to S/Ldr BAKER,	
			One locomotive Cat C to F/O P.T.R. MERCER, One launch Cat 4 to P/O BLACKLOCK, Rail Bridge	
			damaged by F/Lt ROSS, F/SGT TODD, F/SGT COOPER. Track damaged at various places by F/SGT	
			BEAUMONT, F/SGT PROCTOR, P/O BLACKLOCK	
	18 th		4 A/C to Predannack for yet more reccos for the M/V, afterwards identified as the blockade	
			runner Munster-land inward bound from Japan. The night was non-op, in a gale.	
	19 th		Rhubarb operations in thick weather and a strong crosswind, reaching 45 miles p.h. The night	
			operations of the 17 th produced an excellent concentration of rolling stock and in the four	
			following days 263 and our neighbours 257 (Typhoons) showed seventeen successful attacks on	
			locomotives and goods waggons in the Cherbourg Peninsula and on the main line between CAEN and	
			AIREL. Night ops cancelled in crosswind.	
	20 th		No operations in crosswind and rain.	
	21 st		Fronts reported by the Met from Iceland to VIRGINIA, and indeed they lasted for three days.	
			More successful Rhubarb operations.	
	22 nd		Aerodrome S.Op only, after heavy rain. More successful Rhubarbs	
	23 rd		Aerodrome S.Op only, after heavy rain. All Officers and Air Crew of the squadron have been made	
			(For mutual services to the Bellows Club) honorary members of the Argentine Club in London.	
			Night, despite moonless darkness the squadron were brought to readiness to attack the	
			Munsterland, which was being searched for by Albacores.	
	24 th		After a fine dawn we were informed by 10 Group that WARMWELL weather was non-op. After an hour	
			spent explaining that it wasn't, the squadron took off, 6	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	24 th	continued	Whirlwinds and - for the first time - 6 Whirlwinds anti-flak, to recco the Cherbourg Shipping Lanes. Soon after this the Munsterland was photographed lying at the DIGUE DU HOMET in Cherbourg Inner Harbour and 10 Group Roadstead 77 was laid on. This was the first time that this squadron (and we think that any squadron) has made a low-level attack on Cherbourg Docks. The Munsterland was damaged by our attack and by that of the 183 Squadron Bomphoons, and was shifted to No 5 dry dock. F/SGT GRAY is missing under circumstances which give hope that he may still be alive. F/O MERCER is believed to have been killed. Paul Mercer has been with the squadron for eight months and was a skilful and gallant pilot and very well liked as a person. He had recently married S/O ANDERSON of 10 Group. This operation reduced the number of immediately serviceable Whirlwinds to fourteen or fifteen. Thus the re-equipment of the squadron with some other type of a/c - which has been expected consistently to be more or less immediate during the past two, and perhaps three years - has become truly inevitable in the not distant future. It is felt that these two low level attack on shipping in the Cherbourg Inner Harbour by 263 and 183 squadrons deserve to be remembered among the exploits of true gallantry in this bloody war.	
	25 th		Our 4 a/c were brought to Fighter Readiness and stand-bye.	
	26 th		S/Ldr BAKER talked to all pilots on the tactical lessons of Roadstead 77	
	27 th		Some Air to Air practice firing	
	28 th		A forth mild autumn day. The Munsterland now in No 5 dry dock brought a third "first time" to the squadron - the use of 500lb bombs in divebombing. In fact the Munsterland brought four "first-times" if the ship reccos of the 13th - 20th October <u>without bombs</u> are added in. This time the Mitchells caught the flak and none of our a/c was touched. Bombing results were remarkably good.	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
WARMWELL NOVEMBER 1943			The month of November proved to be a fitting climax to the work of the squadron with	
			Whirlibombers, in the sense that operations were intensive, successful, and entirely typical of	
			what had gone before. The month was, in fact, an epitome of the squadron's history during the	
			last fifteen months. Eighty-eight offensive sorties were flown in operations which included	
			typical low level shipping attacks by day and by night. There were a number of shipping reccos	
			uneventful except for the routine flak from the Channel Islands and Cap de la Hague. But the	
			uneventful ship reccos must not be thought of as strategically abortive. The function of the	
			squadron at Warmwell has been primarily that of a central Channel stop. Its work has been to	
			prevent as far as possible the enemy from making use of the coastal waters from Ile Brehet to	
			Isigny. Consequently it is arguable that the presence at varying hours of light and darkness of	
			armed Whirlibombers and the absence of enemy shipping in these waters is as complete a	
			strategical victory as it is a tactical blank. Furthermore, there were more squadron dive-bombing	
			operations conducted in the now classical manner which was invented by this squadron early in	
			the present year. The S.S. Munsterland, which has replaced the S.S. Solmglint as No 1 Static	
			sea borne enemy, was twice divebombed in Cherbourg Docks, and a new secret target was also	
			attacked. During the month weve flow 201 hours 35 minutes of which 61 hours 10 minutes were	
			operational by day and 34 hours 10 minutes operational by night. There were no operational	
			flying casualties to pilots during the month, but contrarily extremely good news about two	
			pilots who had been missing:-	
	1 st	NOV:	Reported by telephone from 10 Group that F/SGT George Wood, who was reported missing believed	
			killed when his a/c was disintegrated by flak during the dive on MORLAIX a/d on 23 September	
			1943, arrived in good health at Plymouth yesterday. F/SGT WOOD is the squadron's first evader.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	2 nd		Rainy day. Rhubarb operation, abortive through lack of cloud cover.	
	4 th		48 hours rain ended. Ramrod 101 was finally cancelled after many preparations and exercise	
			"Dicky" a beat up of Portland gun positions was laid on instead for the 8 aircraft. Despite the	
			black night there was night readiness for a shipping strike of a novel plan. This readiness was	
			repeated the next night but no a/c were called to operate.	
	5 th		Mild sunny day. D/B of Munsterland abortive in 10/10 cloud.	
	6 th		Night, first of moon period. Fine and cold. 4 reccos uneventful except for the sight of an a/c	
			caught in flak without jinking at 2500 feet over Maupertus and Cherbourg. It seems to have been	
			an O.T.U. a/c of B.C. off course.	
	7 th		Convoy patrols and A.S.R. uneventful and unsuccessful, night operations uneventful.	
	8 th		Little flying. Mist after 1030.	
	9 th		Uneventful night ops from Warmwell and Predannack	
	10 th	1035	4 a/c got three small ships Cat 3 off Guernsey.	
		Night	Night ops. 6 sorties, got a trawler Cat 3 and another Cat 4.	
	11 th	Night	4 sorties. 1 Tug Cat 4	
	12 th		No flying in thick weather.	
	13 th		Army co-op exercise, beat-up of tanks at Lulworth	
	14 th		No flying at Warmwell. 1 Night sortie from Predannack.	
	15 th		7 a/c moved for night ops from Ibsley, which weather prevented. 2 uneventful night sorties	
			from Predannack.	
	16 th		Back to Warmwell from Ibsley.	
	17 th - 22 nd		No flying in thick and rainy weather. Aerodrome Serviceable only for ops.	
	23 rd		Squadron Balbo	
	24 th		Channel Islands recco abortive in thick haze	
	25 th		Three day operations. Armed recco to the north of St Malo. D/B of Munsterland abortive	

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Of (Unit or Formation) 263 SQUADRON

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
			in 10/10 cloud. D/B of Munsterland through gap in 9/10 cloud, good bombing.	
	26 th		Two more d/b operations. The bombing of the Munsterland was good, and of a secret target quite good. Intense flak damaged all a/c.	
	27 th /28 th		No flying in wet weather.	
	29 th		Operation "Hound" off Cherbourg was uneventful.	
	30 th		Cross wind. No flying. It is reported that F/SGT L.S. GRAY who was missing after the low level attack on the Munsterland in Cherbourg Docks, is a prisoner of war.	
	ADDENDUM 19 th		F/O HOLMAN took the M.O. F/O GREEN and CPL HAMER in the Oxford to Biggin Hill. The aircraft swung violently at touch down in a cross-wind and F/O HOLMAN attempted to take off again. Unfortunately the propeller of a Typhoon impacted the port flap and tore it off. The Oxford then flew into the top of a building and crashed outside the M.I. Room, and burnt. The three occupants were removed immediately, unburnt but severely injured. At the moment of writing 6 th December, all three are recovering satisfactorily. The A.O.C. Headquarters 10 Group visited this squadron twice during the month.	
			G.B. Warnes	
			Squadron Leader, Commanding	
			No 263 Squadron R.A.F.	

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Of (Unit or Formation) 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
WARMWELL	1 st	December 1943		
			The month opened with the Squadron operational at Warmwell with Whirlibombers of which a dozen were now serviceable.	
	2 nd		6 Typhoons 1B were delivered. There was some local flying with Whirlwinds.	
	3 rd		Frosty bright morning, haze in the afternoon. In the evening Messrs Westlands gave a party to all members of the Squadron and a number of faithful adherents of 3055 Echelon. The party consisted of an excellent dinner at the Manor Hotel Yeovil, followed by a dance in the Assembly Rooms. Thus was marked the ending of the Squadrons association with Messrs Westlands of Yeovil, a liaison which has constantly been maintained with good will and personal friendship. In one of the speeches at the dinner S/Ldr Baker DFC paid tribute to the Whirlwind drawing on material which may be found in these pages.	
			The writer would like here to state plainly that all the pilots of 263 Squadron who flew Whirlwinds in operations against the enemy had absolute confidence in and affection for their aircraft. It is worth noting that all XXXXXX the 114 Whirlwind built were known to the squadron and the echelon by their individual numbers, and the particular idiosyncrasies and the excellences of each were noted and repeated respected.	
	4 th		Twelve Whirlwinds demonstrated in Squadron formation over Yeovil.	
	5 th		S/Ldr Baker DFC posted to W/Cdr Flying Colerne. S/Ldr Warnes DSO DFC attached as C.O. The Squadron. Squadron moved by road and air to Ibsley.	
			The Oxford took S/Ldr Baker to Fighter Leaders Course Ashton Down. Returning in haze and poor light to Ibsley, F/O Unwin lost his way near Poole and finally made a successful landing in gathering darkness near Worth Matravers.	
	6 th - 10 th		Swttling in at Ibsley. The weather was cold, overcast with low cloud, and foggy. The Typhoons were to be flown over by members of 257 Squadron from Warmwell. But the weather was entirely u/s during these five days.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	11 th		6 Typhoons arrived in a snow storm from Warmwell.	
	12 th		F/Lt Ross and others flew a first solo in a Typhoon but visibility was very poor and little flying was possible.	
	13 th		Cold and overcast with poor vis; Nevertheless there was much flying and nearly all first solos were completed.	
	14 th /15 th		Continuing poor weather but much flying. First formation flights. Living conditions at Ibsley for both Officers and Sergeants are very much less comfortable than at Warmwell. However it has been possible to get in a great many hours of flying here on days in which Warmwell has been suffering its winter waterlogged unserviceability. And liberty runs to Bournemouth and to the St Leonard's Hotel have compensated for the poor standard of the messes.	
	16 th		No flying in very poor visibility	
	17 th		The weather cleared to a fine and warmer afternoon. Much flying with some dusk landings.	
	18 th		West wind and rain. Only one flight - a weather test.	
	19 th		Overcast. Much flying all day in poor weather. In the afternoon 7 Typhoons were delivered by woman pilots of the ATA making 19 Typhoons on charge to the Squadron. The six Whirlwinds which were brought to Ibsley to maintain night readiness during the moon period (There were no operations however) were put up for disposal. The squadron is now entirely non-operational during training.	
	20 th		Fine mild sunny day. Flying all day with dusk landings.	
	21 st		Low cloud, gale and rain stopped flying after lunch	
	22 nd		Flying all day	
	23 rd		Misty-moisty. No flying till afternoon. Distribution of 113 10lb parcels and 55,000 cigarettes sent to the squadron and 3055 Echelon by the River Plate committee, sent as suggested no doubt, by the Bellows Club.	
	24 th		Very fine mild blue day. Much flying. Unfortunately F/O Funnell, while dogfighting at 12,000 feet went into a spiral dive, then into a spin and crashed fatally.	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
24 th December continued			He baled out at about 100 feet and was killed instantly Smoke and flame came from the engine in the air, but it was not known what was the cause of them, or of the crash.	
	25 th		Overcast. No flying. A traditional R.A.F. Christmas day.	
	26 th		Overcast with poor visibility. The only flight was in the afternoon by four a/c on a formation practice. The sections split into two. Then F/SGT Handley led F/O Mogg who was following at about 400 yards, into conditions of low cloud and high ground. F/SGT Handley pulled up onto cloud and received vectors back to base. Nothing more was seen or heard of F/O Mogg until midday	
	27 th		of the following day, when his body was found still in the cockpit of the crashed a/c near Melbray-Abbas south of Shaftesbury.	
	28 th		Overcast poor visibility. Some flying	
	29 th		Overcast poor visibility. No flying	
	30 th		Fine morning. Much flying	
	31 st		Fine day. Much flying. The funerals of F/O Mogg and FO Funnell were held at Parkstone and Ilford respectively and were attended by representatives of the Squadron. In the evening all Officers and Sergeant Pilots went to a New Year's Eve Party at the Officers and Sergeants Messes at Warmwell, where the hospitality was unstinted and very much enjoyed.	
			Despite the many days unsuitable for flying, flying times for the month were good:	
			Typhoons 308 hours 50 minutes. Whirlwinds 21 hours 45 minutes.	
			Hurricanes (Of which we now have two on charge) 19 hours 05 minutes.	
			Oxford 4 hours 30 minutes Magister 1 hour 30 minutes. Total 355 hours 40 minutes. There was no operational flying.	
			A summary of offensive operations with Whirlwinds is included as an appendix.	
			<i>G.B. Warnes</i>	
			Squadron Leader, Commanding	
			<u>No 263 Squadron R.A.F.</u>	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Ibsley	January	1944	In the first month of 1944 the squadron remained non-operational and continued the re-training of pilots and ground crews on the Typhoon aircraft. It was a month of two moves and of wet weather with gales and low clouds and it is found more difficult to maintain serviceability in Typhoons than in Whirlwinds. However, 227 hours were flown, and with the help of the Armament Practice Camp at Fairwood Common, good use was made of them.	
	1 st		Much practice flying when weather cleared in the afternoon.	
	2 nd /3 rd		Overcast. Practice flying. Air to Sea firing in Christchurch Bay. F/SGT Wood, who has now returned to the Squadron after his remarkable evasion and escape from France after being shot down over Morlaix Airfield on 23 rd September 1943, tells us that he heard "from a reliable source" that as a result of the Squadrons attack on the night of 17 th 18 th Sept (and probably of the bombs dropped by P/O J.I. SIMPSON DFM) a goods locomotive and train fell into a hole made in the embankment W. of Lambelle, and that a reserve locomotive then followed down into the dive.	
	4 th		Overcast poor visibility. No flying	
Fairwood Common	5 th		The squadrons aircraft flew to Fairwood Common for a fortnight's Course at the Armament Practice Camp. The rest of the Squadron and eighty members of 3055 Servicing Echelon moved to Fairwood by train. The remainder of 3055 Echelon stayed at Ibsley	
	6 th		Settling in at Fairwood Common. The weather during the Practice Camp was unfavourable. As a complete record of the Squadron's activities at the Practice Camp can be included in Appendix "A" a day to day record of the stay at Fairwood, which was quite uneventful apart from the work which was accomplished there has not been made here.	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
BEAULIEU	1 st February 1944		On this day the Squadron first became operational with Typhoon a/c. Fighter readiness. But overcast with low cloud. No flying.	
	2 nd		Standby and readiness. Afternoon, first Typhoon operation, ship recco abortive in thick weather.	
	3 rd		Three dive-bombing operations were laid on to attack Military objectives, in the Cherbourg Peninsula. One was cancelled owing to the weather the other two did not reach their objective in cloudy conditions, but Maupertus Airfield was bombed as an alternative target.	
	4 th		An abortive d/b operation was followed by a weather recco to the Cherbourg area and further operations were cancelled.	
	5 th		Six operations involving 29 sorties were flown during the day. Noball targets were twice dive-bombed with fair results. At night F/O Blacklock is missing after an attack on shipping off Cap de la Hague. F/Sgt Cooper xx also attacked the ships.	
	6 th		A/S/R patrols were flown in the Cherbourg - Alderney area to search for F/O Blacklock. In the afternoon the C.O. and P/O Heaton in an Army Co-op exercise beat up gun posts and M.T. near Yaunbury Castle.	
	7 th		Overcast. Milder weather. Standby and readiness. Night 13 sorties as target in exercise Bulleye. Each a/c made two runs between 6000 and 10,000 from 20 north of Cherbourg to 30 miles north of Weymouth. They were constantly held by S/L's and intercepted by Mosquitoes and Beaufighters.	
	8 th		Standby etc., In the afternoon F/SGT Todd had his engine cut while on his down wind leg in the circuit and made a commendable crash landing near the perimeter track receiving only a slight cut on his nose. a/c Cat "B". Night repeat with 11	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
8 th continued			a/c of Exercise Bullseye.	
	9 th		Operations cancelled in duff weather in the afternoon. No night flying. F/Lt Ross is posted as S/Ldr O.C. 193 Squadron this Squadron has now provided all the C.O.'s of the Harrowbeer Wing, since W/Cdr E.R. Baker DFC and Bar is the W/Cdr Flying and S/Ldr J. Holmes DFC is the O.C. 266 Squadron.	
	10 th		Cloudless bright day with north wind. The C.O. led the Squadron on its first long range operation but no e/a were encountered.	
	11 th		Some local flying. Afternoon uneventful scramble south of Portland.	
	12 th		Fine bright day seven a/c in Rodeo 81. S/Ldr G.B. Warnes DSO DFC destroyed a D.o. 217 near Gael. This was the first e/a to be encountered by the Squadron flying Typhoon a/c it was the fortieth to be destroyed by the Squadron.	
	13 th		Overcast and cold. Afternoon, Rodeo 82. The C.O. destroyed an M.E. 109 F at Chartres and F/Lt G.G. Racine destroyed 3 more on the ground. Unfortunately F/Sgt G. Williams was shot down by flak at Etamps/Mondesir Airfield, he must have been killed instantly. P/O W.E. Watkins' a/c was also hit by flak he pulled up successfully to bale out at 1500 feet.	
	14 th		The Squadron was released in the afternoon and nearly all the pilots went to Bournemouth for Dinghy drill in the swimming bath before an evening of various pleasures.	
	15 th		Fine day. Local flying with readiness etc. An L.R. Operation was laid on and cancelled	
	16 th		Heavy rain cleared to an overcast afternoon. Standby etc.	
	17 th		L.R. Range Operation cancelled after 8 a/c had taken off for Exeter in increasing mist.	
	18 th - 21 st		Overcast with strong northerly wind bitterly cold operations were laid on but cancelled. Local flying with readiness, etc.	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
BEAULIEU	22 nd	February	Nine a/c flew to Harrowbeer at first light. From there they took off for a sweep but, owing to cloud made a brief shipping recco, west of the Channel Islands. This operation proved disastrous to the Squadron. S/Ldr G.B. Warnes DSO DFC ditched his a/c (not due to e/action) and was seen swimming towards what looked like an uninflated dinghy. F/O. R.B. Tuff R.A.A.F. then said that he would bale out to help the C.O. F/Lt G.G. Racine told him not to do this but it seems that he did bale out. F/O. R.C. Hunter was simply not seen or heard of after the C.O. went in. Extensive A/S/R searches, using every available resource, were laid on and continue, but nothing has been seen of these three officers who are missing in circumstances which give little hope. The weather was bitterly cold. S/Ldr Warnes came to the Squadron as a Pilot Officer in September 1941. He took command of "B" Flight in Oct 1941 and of the Squadron in December 1942. The development of divebombing and the success obtained by the Squadron as an anti shipping unit owe very much to the leadership and tactical brilliance of Squadron Leader Warnes. He obtained the D.F.C early in 1943 and the D.S.O at the conclusion of his first operation tour in June 1943, after five months "rest" as operations 2 at No 10 Group, he returned to the Squadron in December 1943, and supervised its re-equipment with Typhoons, and then the operations of the past three weeks. As a leader he was absolutely trusted - F/O Tuff's tribute to him leaves no more to be said. He was regarded, and admired, as a friend of all ranks throughout No 10 Group. In the hearts of many intimate friends he leaves a place which cannot possibly be filled.	
	23 rd		A/S/R searches W of Guernsey.	
	24 th		First sun for twelve days, but cold north east wing continues. Local flying	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
24 th continued			and readiness	
25 th			Fine cold readiness etc.	
26 th			Overcast misty, no flying	
27 th			Readiness, local flying.	
28 th			Morning patrols to protect Exercise Rush - Albermarles and gliders flying over the coast	
29 th			Frosty bright morning. Standby etc. It is to be noted that these days, and probably next week, are being used for the maximum of practice flying, in order to get all pilots of the Squadron operational on Typhoons. The Squadron is therefore not used for offensive operations.	
			<u>Personella</u>	
18 th			F/Lt L.W.F. Stark posted from 609 Squadron to command "A" Flight. F/Lt Stark is highly experienced in Long Range Typhoon operations he has destroyed 5 ½ e/a besides a commensurate score against ground targets	
27 th			S/Ldr H.A.C Gonay (Belgium) is posted to Command the Squadron. S/Ldr Gonay has a long and distinguished career of operational flying in both France and in this Country.	
28 th			His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to confer the Distinguished Flying Cross on F/Lt Stark in recognition of gallant work accomplished with 609 Squadron.	
			<i>Gonay S/L</i>	
			Squadron Leader, Commanding	
			<u>No 263 Squadron R.A.F.</u>	

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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Beaulieu	March 1944			
	1 st		Practice flying, readiness etc. S/Ldr Gonay spoke to the assembled squadron and 3055 Echelon. He promised very much operational work in the not distant future and stressed the security aspect of what would soon be seen and heard; but for the next few days the squadron would be mainly confined to a defensive role and would be busied with the training of the newer and non-operational pilots	
		2 nd	Fine bright blue day. Rodeo 95 and a defensive patrol.	
		3 rd	Much low level bombing practice on the A/F range.	
		4 th	Very fine day. Afternoon, C.O led 9 aircraft in Balbo, low beat up etc.	
		5 th	Showery, overcast. Packing for move to Warmwell. Arrival of 80 Thunderbolts at Beaulieu.	
WARMWELL	6 th / 8 th		Fine blue dusty days. The N.E wind has continued for a month. The squadron & Echelon moved by air, road and rail to Warmwell where it is a lodged unit upon the U.S.A.A.F. We have the commodious dispersals and billets which we occupied for 15 months. A rather heavier state of readiness is being maintained. One section at stand-bye, one section at readiness, and 2 sections at 30 mins. A number of defensive scrambles and patrols proved quite uneventful.	
		9 th	Overcast, continuing N.E wind.	
		10 th	Overcast, poor vis. No flying	
		11 th	Clear day, warmer with N.W wind. Four sections at standby and readiness for Exercise Fox. An amphibious show off Slapton sands	
		12 th	Very fine mild day with west wind, the 1 st day after 34 during which a northerly wind prevailed. 3 patrols and a scramble for Exercise Fox, but no contacts with the enemy. At 15.05 hours P/O Smith, R.A.A.F is beating up the aerodrome at Warmwell, attempting a slow upward roll at low height. His engine cut while he	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
			was inverted and he was unable to right his A/C before he crashed fatally, In the field S.W of	
			Knighton Wood. P/O Smith or "Smudger" was a person of quiet voice and genial ways. He was very	
			well liked by all who knew him.	
		13 th	Whistling S.W wind. Frontal day. Little flying.	
		14 th	Ten aircraft flew to Predanack at 1 st light; Taking off from there for Rodeo - They were recalled	
			to Warmwell where they landed in thick weather.	
		15 th	Fine day. Uneventful ship recco.	
		16 th	Overcast. Uneventful ship recco.	
		17 th	Very fine day. Rodeo 98.	
		18 th	Duff misty day. Packing for tomorrow's move to Harrowbeer.	
Harrowbeer		19 th	Fine bright Sunday. Squadron move by air, road and rail to RAF Harrowbeer. 16 Typhoons	
			(out of the 18 on charge) flew in four boxes of 4 aircraft, also the Hurricane.	
		20 th	Settling in at Harrowbeer where conditions xxx of every sort have remarkably improved since the	
			squadron were here a year ago.	
		21 st	Overcast N.W wind. Aircraft were brought to bomber available for ships found in Morlaix estuary	
			and Goulet de Brest but the weather was unsuitable for a strike. Evening recco off Cherbourg Harbour.	
		22 nd	Overcast, low cloud, no flying	
		23 rd	Mist	
		24 th	Fine bright mild day. Valley haze. Uneventful Rodeo to Kenlin Bastard etc.	
		25 th	Continued fine weather. A squadron Balbo in the evening.	
		26 th	Remarkably hot day. Early Rodeo to Rennes and Gael.	
		27 th	Still fine. Much practice flying.	
		28 th	Still fine. Much practice flying and firing.	
		29 th	Very hazy. Little flying.	
		30 th	East N.E wind, coldish. Some practice flying.	

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Of (Unit or Formation)				
Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Harrowbeer	31 st		An evening Rodeo to Kerlin Bastard and Vannes was mainly uneventful but resulted in a crash landing at base for P/O Purkis. A last light Rodeo of the Ile de Groix found no enemy aircraft. Unfortunately it seems that F/Lt Racine, R.C.A.F was hit by Lorient flak. He is missing. Jerry Racine came to the squadron in October 1943 and took command of B Flight in February, 1944. We very much hope to hear that he is safe.	
			Flying times for March.	
			Operational hours - 82 hours 15 mins	
			Non-Operational " - 173 hours 55 mins	
			Gonay.....S/Ldr	
			Commanding, No. 263 Squadron.	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	1944			
Harrowbeer	April		This month of April was one of the luckiest in the Squadron's history. We flew 21 offensive operations involving 117 offensive sorties and including the destruction of two enemy aircraft and the damaging of enemy shipping, as well as of many ground targets - without any serious casualties. But more that that, two missing pilots returned to us, one after only a fortnight's absence, the other on April the 30 th after more than 2 and a half months.	
	1 st April		Air Sea Rescue for Flight Lieutenant RACINE. Evidently unsuccessful	
	2 nd April		Evasion exercise across Tavy Valley profitably enjoyed.	
	3 rd and 4 th		Fog and low cloud.	
	5 th		Weather cleared for enemy ship recco.	
	6 th		Aircraft to Predannack. Op cancelled but Flight Sergeant Cooper collided with F/Lt Stark on runway in landing and wrote off two Typhoons. Squadron Leader Gonay to Milfield for Fighter Leader Course.	
	7 th to 10 th		Duff weather. Some practice flying and night flying from Exeter.	
	11 th		Flight Sergeant Todd returning from Exeter in bad weather lost his formation and landed at Roborough, overshot and pulled up under carriage. Typhoon Cat C.	
	12 th		Fine. Much practice flying. Marshal of the R.A.F Sir Trafford Leigh Mallory, C in C A.E.A.F spoke to all office pilots at Harrowbeer. He spoke of his confidence in the plan and forces designed for the Invasion of Europe and recalled the splendid record of No. 263 Squadron which he thought would be well enhanced in the next 6 months.	
	13 th		Sunny and cloudy. Two Uneventful Channel Islands reccos.	
	14 th - 15 th		Little flying. Low cloud and rain.	
	16 th		Cleared for much practice flying. In the evening we heard that Flight Lieutenant "Gerry" Racine R.C.A.F had returned to London after being shot down near Morlaix on the night of 31 st March. Later, we learnt from him that he had been attacked by a M.E.410, had then got on its tail and destroyed it with one long true burst, then had found his controls jammed and had to bale out.	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Harrowbeer	May	1944	May opened with the first cloudy day for a fortnight. For once the ship reccos were empty-handed and the day was spent in re-establishing serviceability	
	2 nd		D/B of shipping in Lezardrieux.	
	3 rd		PRU. has at last established that there are two beached ships "opposite", one in Abervrach, and the destroyer near KERLOUAN. An immediate PRU of our evening D/B of the latter proved eminently satisfactory	
	4 th - 5 th		Rainy with low cloud and strong W. wind. Practice flying and fitting of R.P. One flight is to be released for intensive training in this weapon. The A.O.C. 10 Group Air Vice Marshal Steele visited Harrowbeer and was introduced to pilots in Dispersal. He did not mention the Second Front.	
	6 th		Cold E. wind, sun and cloud. Pilots to Bolt Head to see S/Ldr Gonay, F/O Heaton, F/Sgt Thould (who have practised at S.L.A.I.S Millfield) demonstrate R.P successfully against a rock and tanks. But unfortunately the Typhoons which demonstrated showed marked signs of strain in their wings - rivets pulled out, etc - and R.P was removed from the other a/c which were fitted, pending an investigation.	
	7 th		Variable wind and weather. Practise flying.	
	8 th		Sunny with cloud and haze. D/B of Dinard - Plourttuit and dusk ship recco.	
	9 th		Practise flying and Night flying	
	10 th		Hot sun. Exercise Driver with H.M.S Glasgow also 263/1 with Plymouth guns. Eight uneventful patrols till dusk, and a scramble. 21 hours defensive operational flying. Night practise flying.	
	11 th		Hot sun. Exercise 263/1 again and Exercise Driver. Evening practise D/B at Bolt Head. Two of our a/c were hotly but inaccurately engaged by H.A.A	
	12 th		Two Roadsteads to St Marlo secured one pair of direct hits on a medium M/V.	
	13 th		Local flying in haze	
	14 th		E wind fairly warm. Long almost uneventful Rodeo around Paris. Defensive patrols.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Harrowbeer	May 15 th	1944	D/B of ships in Abervrach, poor results.	
	16 th		Fighter affiliation with three Liberators from Dunkswell. Recognition test. (Defensive patrols). Ship recognition lectures, tactical lectures from S/Ldr Gonay.	
	17 th		E. wind. Cold rainy morning	
	18 th		First light and evening reccos by other squadrons found no ships. Our normal state has now been established as the aristocratic state we enjoyed with Whirlibombers. Eight a/c and pilots at 60 minutes availability for bombs or L.R.	
	19 th		Afternoon 12 pilots and I.O to Mountbatten for pleasant and useful cruise in pinnace around Plymouth Harbour to Devonport for ship recognition. Meanwhile 4 a/c brought to readiness at Harrowbeer and Predannack 2 uneventful patrols.	
	20 th		Hazy. Cold day. In the late evening the Squadron flew its first low level ship strike with Typhoons.	
	20 th		F/Lt Bell who has been supernumerary with the Squadron for three months is missing in not very hopeful circumstances. "Tinkle" Bell was very well liked by us all. He was one of those who had served steadily and well in Training Command without ever losing sight of his ambition to fly on ops. Hazy. Evening patrols landed with Mortar fire, canopy, etc. in duff last light.	
	23 rd		Three squadron Roadstead operations, divebombing ships off Brest and in Lezardrieux Estuary. Some good results. The Squadron has now completed 60 offensive operations and 354 offensive sorties with Typhoons a/c (Since 2 nd February 1944)	
	24 th		Fighter readiness during Portreath Operations. Quiet.	
	25 th / 26 th		Frontal days with low cloud. Little flying	
	27 th		Mixed morning of sun and pearly low cloud or mist. Afternoon fighter affiliation.	
	28 th		Hot Bright Day. Morning air to air firing, practise bombing. All 1155 while taking off for this, F/SGT Pringle hit the top of Yelverton Church, and crashed fatally. "Paddie Pringle" was a keen and able pilot and an excellent friend. Evening armed shipping recco found poor targets and missed them.	
	29 th		The last three days of the month were extremely hot.	
	29 th		Squadron released 1600-0800 for Squadron party in the N.A.A.F.I. Beer drinking and dancing was enjoyed	

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Of (Unit or Formation) 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Harrowbeer	May 29 th	1944	by all. F/O Sandy Barr, the Master of Ceremonies, achieved perfect timing in an unrehearsed act. He concluded a display of aerobatics on a cross-bar by falling head-first into a brimming fire bucket.	
	30 th		Two Roadsteads from Predannack, the second disappointing, but the first with quite excellent D/B results	
	31 st		Hazy day. Reccos found no ships. Local flying.	
			<u>MAY 1944</u>	
			16 Offensive Operations involving 120 sorties were flown, in the course of which considerable damage (still subject to assessment) was done to enemy shipping. A great improvement in the accuracy of D/B which has been made as the result of constant practise, has been noticeable.	
			PERSONALIA...F/Lt Owens who has been adjutant to the Squadron since November 1941, was posted to S/Ldr Post Predannack. "Bish" seemed the immemorial figure-head of the squadron. Despite his years, which trebled those of most members of the squadron, he was an excellent companion and inimitable raconteur. It goes without saying that he was an adept able to penetrate and control all the mysteries of the squadron's 'bumph'. As a man of the law and an inveterate weigher up of sporting chances, he was particularly helpful to anyone involved in any sort of sticky or delicate situation. He will be greatly missed by us all and we wish him the best of luck.	
			F/O R.C. Beaumont was posted to RAF Harrowbeer en route to marriage and some non-op flying after a gallant and successful first tour of Ops. We hope to have him back with us soon.	
			F/Lt G.G. Racine was posted back to Canada after his brilliant evasion.	
			F/O Chalmers, who has flown Whirlwinds with 137 Squadron, joined the Squadron.	
			Gonay	
			Squadron Leader, Commanding	
			<u>No 263 Squadron R.A.F.</u>	

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Of (Unit or Formation) 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Harrowbeer.	June 1944.			
	1 st		June like May, opened frontally and cool, and in fact the weather continued unsettled until the seventeenth. Some practice bombing at Bolt Head Ham Stone during the afternoon.	
	2 nd		A day of flaps, first for Dol marshalling yards, then for Goulet U-Boats but both evaporated after wasting the day.	
	3 rd		First light reccos by 41 found nothing. Much R.P. Ham Stone, till a warn front clamped down.	
	4 th		Some R.P. Practice in poor weather. Somebody is in a hurry for something?	
	5 th		Cloud was too low for R.P. Those that did fly to Bolt Head saw a noble pride of warships steaming slowly east and F/Lt Stark D.F.C. who visited Manston to collect R.P. spares was lucky enough to have to fly below cloud along the South Coast and thus to see "so many ships in the Solent you could walk from the I.O.W. to Southampton across their decks".	
	6 th		After a midnight flap for twelve aircraft, 8 flew a Goulet recco in duff weather and returned to find it "D" Day. Thus what has been demanded for three years, expected for two years and hourly awaited for three months arrived more or less unheralded in 10 Group while the Squadron was doing an armed ship recco, and continued while we did R.P. practice at Bolt Head - and bound in the dispersal. However, as so often, things were far better than they seemed, and the next hours and days were very much our busiest since Norway. That evening saw the Squadron's first R.P. Operation a damaging attack upon a 500 ton M/V off Granville, and the start of 121 offensive sorties in five days:-	
	7 th		A double, mixed squadron of 8 Typhoon Bombers and 8 Typhoon R.P. (8 X 60lb H.E.) was now bricked up; a state which was to be "phenomenally" maintained - the words are the A.O.C.'s Thus two "Squadron" operations became possible sinultaneously either in two waves with the same objective or with different targets. Todays 32 sorties are fully reported in Appendix "A". We were much hope to see F/O Joe Parent again - but the Huns shooting at him in his parachute will not be forgotten.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Harrowbeer.	8 th		Despite yesterday's activity, all the 19 Aircraft on charge to the Squadron were serviceable 1000 hours. F/Lt Wannop and the ground crews of 6263 (Ex 3055) and of the Squadron had worked all night on them, as they did not infrequently during this and other months. One successful Roadstead during the afternoon.	
	9 th		A night and first light Hun Destroyer flap ended in a clamp, which also affected the Beach Head the Squadron (8 R.P. and 8 Bombers) were briefed to attack gun positions S. of St Male Lo, but failed to get through 10/10 at 0 feet at the Cotentin Coast. F/O Bill Heaton is missing in circumstances which offer nothing but guess work. We hope to see him again but... A second double attack got near the target area but A/c were recalled. Out a/c were believed to be the first over Hun lines on that day.	
	10 th		Out first light recco of 8 R.P. damaged 3 M.M/s off St Helier. Two double squadron shows followed during the day. 3 were abortive (weather) but 8 X 64lb R.P. pranged the huts of the Radar Station at Jersey Rouge Nez. 40 offensive sorties and 51 hours operational flying was most certainly an all time squadron record for one day.	
	11 th		Sunday 11 th June remained obstinately clamped all day. Everyone got up (as usual) at 0345 but went back to bed and slept till lunch time (except the C.O. and F/Lt Wannop and all ground crews) Much work was done on a/c, but there was no need to re-establish serviceability. We had it already.	
	12 th		Another 40 sorties and 58 hours 45 minutes operational flying. Soon after 1 st light the Bomber command dive bombed 4 TTA's off Jersey. Then 32 Sorties in which 128 X 60lb R.P.H.E and 32 X 500lb .MC. .025 were hurled into the railway viaduct S. of Yffiniac with excellent concentration, but it is a bloody awful target	
	13 th		All up at 0345 to find another clamp which held up ops. At 1500 hrs the Bomber Command of the Squadron was released and (perhaps only for the time being) wound up. Ground crews set to work to convert all of them to R.P.	
	14 th		A day of four R.P. Shipping strikes, mainly highly successful. See Surfart reports 263/44-52. The Squadron's first attack (and prang too we believe) of a U.Boat is notable. But the loss of S/Ldr Gonay who is missing	

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Of (Unit or Formation)				
Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
14 th continued.			from an earlier attack off Jersey Corbieu Point in not too hopeful circumstances, is a sad blow.	
			Arriving three months ago, quite new to the squadron and never before flown a Typhoon, S/Ldr	
			Gonay very quickly proved himself master of every situation. As a leader he was absolutely	
			trusted; he was admired and loved as a friend. F/Lt Stark's effort in flying back from St. Peter	
			Port and safely landing a Typhoon which had several of its control wires cut by flak and others	
			shredded, isnt mentioned in Surfata 263/52. F/Sgt Ryans petrol system "fell to pieces" when he landed.	
15 th			F/Lt R.D. Rutter, Flight Commander of B Flight, is posted Squadron Leader to Command the Squadron.	
			To St Peter's Port again in the morning (Surfata 263/53). The flak here struck its third Typhoon	
			Cat B, but every one got home safely. At 12.20 hours F/O Windeler, R.C.A.F. who had only been	
			with the squadron for six days crashed fatally near Launceston. It is believed that he had engine	
			trouble and attempted a forced landing.	
16 th			Secret sources indicate that the squadrons attacks in St. Peters Port damaged a 50 ton U Boat	
			and sank a trawler, type Auxiliary. We were also told that the squadron's job of harrying the	
			ships between Cherbourg and Brest is of great importance in the Normandy Beach Head, since our	
			parachute troops have succeeded in destroying nearly all road and rail communications between	
			Cotentin and N.W. France. The following letter from the C.inC. A.O.C. A.D.G.B., A.M. Sir	
			Roderic Hill was received today, alas, not by S/Ldr Gonay.	
			Copy:- Tel. Watford 9241.	H.Q. A.D.G.B.
				R.A.F. Stanmore. Middx.
				June 13 th 1944
			Dear Gonay,	
			Please accept my congratulations in the fine work you and your Squadron did	
			yesterday and last Saturday. Your attacks have been splendid and show both	
			skill and magnificent spirit. I would be glad if you would convey my	
			appreciation to your pilots.	
				(Sgd) Roderic Hill.

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
17 th June			First fine day of the month. A nil ship recco followed by a very successful R.P. attack in St Malo. The L.97 M/V passenger Packet of 975 tons was confirmed sunk Cat 1 and a T.L.C. was seen sinking by the escort.	
18 th			Two early expeditions to the channel islands. No claim in the first but C.C.G. shows what looks like a D.11 in a T.T.A. In the second a 1200 ton M/V and a T.L.C. were damaged by R.P. Afternoon flap for an immediate move to Bolt Head - all 10 Group squadrons are being re-sorted mainly to release advanced Marks of Spitfires for Anti-Diver activities in "Southern England". Note:- The Huns have sunk the old Whirlwind target ship, SOLMGLINT, Whale Oil ship, 10,000 tons as a blockship in Cherbourg. She has not left port for three years - but she wont lie quiet for long now.	
19 th			Fine day. Aircraft moved to Bolt Head. The rest of the Squadron and 6263 Echelon followed at intervals during the next four days, in an insufficient number of M.T. vehicles which broke down more or less regularly - and then it was too windy to erect tents for those of No. 6263 for whom no other billets were available. Bolt Head has often been visited by the Squadron as a forward base. As a permanent base it suffices from its establishment as an Advanced Landing Ground and its actual use as a two Squadron attack station (263 and ½ 406 and ½ 276) and also as an A.L.G. for the departure and arrival of a great many operations by other squadrons for which, as a further point of fact, the day fighter squadron has to provide re-fuelling. But these things sort themselves or are sorted. As a base from which this squadron can conveniently get at the enemy between Cherbourg and Brest at sea or inland, it could not be bettered. And from the officers point of view, the mess at the Cottage Hotel, Hope Cove with its attendant sea-pleasure, is a remarkable good thing.	
20 th			Good evening R.P. prang of huts and buildings of Ploumanack Radar, followed at last light by the first many reccos and continuous flaps in quest of the supposed intention of the Hun to evacuate troops (but more especially technicians and other suitable High-Ups) from Cherbourg by sea. If he ever did, this squadron did not catch him. The burning of Cherbourg was an awful sight, producing a pall of black smoke cloud for miles to seaward.	
21 st			1 st light Cherbourg recco. Afternoon Ramrod abortive in 10/10 cloud.	
22 nd			1 st light recco cancelled in dull weather. Evening Ramrod to Ploumanack a great success	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Bolt Head	June 22 nd	Continued	The evening and night were enlivened by a more remarkable flow of contradictory orders than were before. It is believed that these originated very high up and were caused by contradictory reports from different sources about what the Hun was doing or was going to do in Cherbourg - but all evaporated.	
23 rd			Two highly successful R.P attacks on Radar Stations and a last light Cherbourg Recco. These 24 sorties seem routine stuff now.	
24 th			Two R.P. shipping strikes in St. Malo damaged M/V M.70 twice and M/V M.65 (for the third time by the squadron) and the 800 ton Schooner (for the first time) and more by luck than management, did not damage the Huxton Hospital Ship. Flak was intense and accurate. W/O "Buck" Ryan R.C.A.F. and F/Sgt "Charlie" Charlton are missing (from the first and second attacks) in not at all hopeful circumstances.	
25 th			Duff, Hazy. No flying.	
26 th			Duff. Mist. Low cloud. News:- Good news that M/V L.97 Passenger Packet of 1000 tons was sunk (Cat 1). by R.P. attack in St. Malo on 17 th June and a T.T.A. sunk in St. Peter Port on 14th/15 th June. Sad news that W/Cmdr Reggie Baker D.F.C. and S/Ldr Dave Ross D.F.C. are both missing and believed killed from the T.A.F. in France.	
27 th			The C.O. and F/Lt Stark D.F.C. reccod St. IVY College Pontiry and afterwards led 6 R.P. and L.R. Typhoons (The first time this combination, suggested by F/Lt Stark, has been used in 10 Group) to prang the Telephone Exchange Building in the Courtyard. A later R.P. L.R. Ramrod was abortive through failure of the L.R. Tanks to jettison.	
28 th - 29 th			Duff, low cloud, rain etc., only air tests.	
30 th			Still cloudy, but brighter. No flying.	
			<i>R.D. Rutter</i>	
			Squadron Leader, Commanding	
			<u>No. 263 Squadron,</u> <u>R.A.F.</u>	

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July, 1944 Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron, R.A.F.

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	July			
Bolt Head	1 st , 2 nd		Clamp of rain, low cloud, sea mist. No flying.	
"	3 rd		Some blue sky again. R.P. practice and a good Ramrod to Mar de Bretagne. The "loss" of	
			F/Lt. Stark DFC would be a serious blow if we did not hope to see him again soon. Visit of	
			W/Cdr Kilby Jones Armament Officer, A.D.G.B.	
	4 th		An abortive 8 aircraft Rhubarb. The A.O.C. 10 Group C.R. Steele DSO DFC, visited with the Sector	
"			Commander G/Capt. Sir John Hope, and G/Capt. Baker-Carr (Armt) of Air Ministry The A.O.C. addressed	
			pilots and congratulated the Squadron on the intrepidity and accuracy of these attacks. W/Cdr	
			Smallwood of Ops 1 10 Group telephoned to say that A.M. Coningham and A.M. Sir Roderic Hill had	
			commented at a conference, on the excellence of this Squadron's attacks. These remarkable	
			strawberries were received by the Squadron with pleasure, but with a certain diffidence.	
			"Well..Well", as F3Lt. Pinkie Stark would say if he could hear of them.	
"	5 th		Clearer weather, but the Rhubarb operation again abortive due to cloud.	
"	6 th		A signal from A.M. Sir Trafford Leigh Mallory congratulating S/Ldr Gonay on the award of the	
			D.F.C. The Rhubarb to Bois de Maulanay oil dump got there this time, but the results were	
			not spectaclar.	
"	7 th		Two Roadsteads to a small convoy North of Lanmeur. F/O Hodson is missing in not very hopeful	
			circumstances from the second. One T.T.A. claimed probably damaged, Cat. 4.	
			Inoculations for everyone. Suggests a probable move.	
"	8 th		The Squadron is to move to Hurn and the T.A.F. on July 10th. This is the first time the	
			Squadron has been posted away from 10 Group since it arrived at Exeter nearly four years	
			ago on the 29 th November, 1940. Signals of congratulation and good wishes were received from	
			the A.O.C. 10 Group (and F/Lt "Bish" Owens).	
"	9 th		Packing and Picking for move - the latter because 6263 Echelon has to be reduced to TAF strength.	
"	10 th		Squadron move by air (including 6 Dakotas) and rail to Hurn.	
Hurn	11 th		Settling in at Hurn in a rather unsettled fashion. It seems that the Squadron has certainly	
			been posted to T.A.F. and to Hurn, but at Hurn No. 20 Sector of 84 Group, and No. 136 Airfield	
			are in a state of being reorganised, so that it is not yet known what is the particular destination	
			of the Squadron. F/Sgt S.D. Thyagarajan appointed to a commission as Pilot Officer.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	July			
Hurn	12 th		Squadron is definitely joining No. 136 Airfield T.A.F. Squadron personnel introduced to W/C Dring DFC (W/C Flying), and to several A.L.O's one of whom gave a lecture, after which the Squadron carried out some practice R/P firing.	
"	13 th		More practice flying in the morning. After lunch the weather was too poor for flying so lectures were given on tanks, army signals etc. F/Lt R.V. Williams posted to 183 Squadron. F/Lt E.W. Hewett AFC DFM posted from 164 Squadron to 263 Squadron <i>to command "B" Flight.</i>	
"	14 th		More R/P practice. Results rather good. more lectures on beach head etc.	
"	15 th		Still further practice flying, including low level cross country. Visited Stores for field service kit e.g. Camp Kit. P/O W.E. Watkins returns from a refresher course <i>on Typhoons.</i>	
"	16 th		Still practice flying, mainly R/P, but some cross country <i>low level flying.</i>	
"	17 th		Bad visibility prevents flying, so lecture arranged and given by A.L.O's. F/Lt J.B. Purkis takes over "A" Flight. F/O R.A.B. Stephens A&S.D. arrives on the scene, posted as Squadron Adjutant. <i>w.e.f. 19th</i>	
"	18 th		Welcome news of the return of F/Lt Stark from enemy territory in 11 days (record for Squadron). Training flying consisting of battle formations and being bounced by single aircraft.	
"	19 th /22 nd		Weather too poor for flying, in fact these four days are conspicuous by their lack of activity as far as flying is concerned. A few hours put in with revolver practice.	
Eastchurch	23 rd		Squadron packs up and moves to R.A.F. Eastchurch for a course in R/P firing. The range is, however, still occupied by 183 Squadron and will not be available until Wednesday, so two days occupied in resting.	
"	26 th		Visit to range in the morning, and lectures, and start of R/P course in the afternoon with 30 deg. dives.	
"	27 th		A really good days flying, and every one gets in 2 or 3 trips of mostly low level and 15 deg attacks. Rather more difficult than 30 deg. dives. Several inoculations with resultant absences.	
"	28 th		F/O W.J. Fowler overshoots but gets away with slight damage to aircraft. Another good day of R/P practice, and all pilots managed to get in 2 or 3 trips.	
"	29 th		Very little flying and only in the morning, as weather unsuitable after lunch. Signal received announcing award of DFC to S/Ldr R.D. Rutter also to F/Lt J.B. Purkis and F/O H.M. Proctor. A very good day indeed for the Squadron	

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July, 1944 **Of (Unit or Formation)** No. 263 Squadron, R.A.F.

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	July			
Eastchurch	30 th		Weather is still very poor for flying, and only managed to fly three sorties.	
"	31 st		No flying again in the morning due to weather, but one of two air to ground sorties flown in the afternoon.	
			<i>R.D. Rutter</i>	
			Squadron Leader, Commanding	
			<u>No. 263 Squadron, R.A.F.</u>	

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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron, R.A.F., c/o B.L.A.

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	August, 1944			
Eastchurch	1 st		Weather clamp so no flying all day. In the evening the Squadron officially celebrates the award of DFC to S/Ldr R.D. Rutter, F/Lt E.W. Hewett J.B. Purkis and F/O H.M. Proctor.	
	2 nd		Weather still too poor for flying all day	
	3 rd to 5 th		Weather xxxxxxxx considerably improved so that it was possible to get in some more R/P firing including section attacks.	
Eastchurch				
to B.3 France	6 th		The Squadron moves to France to join 146 Airfield at B.3 in Normandy. Most of the day is spent in settling in and making ourselves as comfortable as living under canvas will permit. F/Lt J. Arkle was posted supernumerary to the Squadron from No. 84 G.S.U.	
B.3 France	7 th		The Squadron carried out its first operation from France, in fact it was the first operation after a lapse of 1 month almost to the day. This is rather different to the type of operations we were used to in A.D.G.B., but the last few weeks practice have not been wasted and the results were satisfactory.	
			(i) The first target a defence post was well plastered with R/P and cannon, and plenty of smoke and dust observed.	
			(ii) The second target was some tanks and M.T. in the Montain area as a result of which 3 flamers were claimed.	
			(iii) The third was a Recco in Fleurs-Briese-Falaise area where 3 M.T. (trucks) were attacked and one direct hit claimed.	
	8 th		Further operations were carried out.	
			(i) The first show was an attack on a gun position at a cross road just outside the village of Potigny. The target area was well plastered but no definite results could be observed.	
			(ii) The second show was a Recco in Lisieuz-Argentan-Flers area. No movement was observed so all R/P fired into a wood possibly covering enemy concentrations (<i>the alternative target</i>).	
			(iii) The third, an evening show, was against infantry and mortar positions S.W. of Bretteville. All R/P fired in target area but no results observed.	
	9 th		(i) Squadron set out to attack six tanks but they had vanished so attacked 10 transport S.E. of Petigny with R/P and cannon with moderate results.	
			(ii) Second show was an armed Recco of Falaise-Villy area. Scattered M.T. seen and attacked and claims of 2 flamers and 2 probables made.	
			(iii) The target for this operation was the village of Bouvres where there were reported to be a number of tanks and M.T. Dark brown smoke followed by a big explosion observed.	
			(iv) Further armed Recco with little results.	
	10 th		(i) An armed Recco around Falaise-Argentan area. Ten tenths cloud covered most of area but further east and south the sky was clear so wandered that way and shot up a few staff cars and fired R/P at tanks, M.T. etc with good results.	
			(ii) The target was a chateau H.Q. at Soumont-St-Quentin. The results were highly satisfactory as the chateau was still burning fiercely two hours later (see iii).	
			(iii) A return, 2 hours later, to just east of the chateau to attack hutments also flak positions to the north. All R/P in target area.	
	11 th		Heavy morning mist delayed flying for some time.	
			(i) First target was gun positions west of Petigny in the afternoon. R/P all fired in target area.	
			(ii) Took part in a four Squadron attack on a Radar station at Beauvais. 263 were the second Squadron to attack, and all R/P landed in target area.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	August	1944		
B.3 France	11 th		(iii) Another four Squadron attack on infantry and mortar positions south of Villars Breage. All R/P in target area and fires and explosions observed.	
	12 th		(i) Armed recco in Marteaux-Crevesseur area with claims 1 armed troop carrier overturned, 2 M.T. damaged, 1 lorry flamer. F/Sgt Todd was hit by flak but got back OK.	
			(ii) Recco on possible tanks but no tanks seen and little movement on road. 1 tank transporter, 1 large lorry with trailer and 3 M.T. attacked but with moderate results.	
			(iii) This was intended as an Army support effort but was changed when aircraft were airborne to an armed Recco towards the Seine area. A little M.T. was seen and attacked, and a barge on the Seine was hit.	
	13 th		(i) A very successful armed Recco around the Falaise area with a result of 3 tank flamers and 1 M.T. flamer claimed.	
			No further shows this day.	
	14 th		(i) Took off on armed Recco in Falaise area. Only one AFV or stationary M.T. was seen and attacked but results not observed.	
			(ii) The target was guns and a defense post. R/P fired by no results observed.	
			(iii) The target was troops and guns. Direct hits were seen on houses and probably hits on four 88mm. guns.	
	15 th		(i) Armed Recco of roads south and west of Lisieux. This yielded a good profit with claims of 3 M.T. flamers and a staff car damaged M.T. exploded suggesting it was loaded with ammunition.	
			(ii) An uneventful Recco on which ambulances only were seen.	
			(iii) A four Squadron attack on roads east of Falaise where there were reported 150+ tanks. 263 are second Squadron to attack. Smoke and flames only were seen as a result, although the Army reported later that the attack had been very successful.	
			(iv) More tanks were reported heading east from Fleurs but weather and smoke made conditions impossible for Recco and no attacks were made.	
	16 th		F/O E.R. Bickerstaff arrived from R.A.F. Filey Camp to take up the duties of Squadron Doc.	
			(i) An armed Recco east of Falaise but a bad haze restricted visibility and no targets were seen, except one small car which was damaged.	
			(ii) Another armed Recco in Livaret-Vimoutiers area. 4 tanks and 8 M.T. were seen and attacked also a bridge already damaged. No definite results observed. From this operation the Squadron had its first loss when F/Lt J.B. Purkis was reported missing. There is a very good chance that he will return as the last heard of him was when he called over the R/T that he had been hit and was returning home. It is felt that he probably baled out and it is hoped that he made friendly territory before doing so.	
			(iii) After tea a 3 Squadron show to attack a chateau H.Q. which received a number of direct hits and was left burning.	
	17 th		(i) Poor weather prevented any flying until the afternoon when barges on the Seine, Les Audelys to Quille Boeuf were attacked. Results were good and claims included 1 barge flamer, 1 dredger flamer, 2 barges smokers, 2 barges damaged.	
			(ii) XXX XX	
			(ii) A further armed Recco and claims 1 tank destroyed, 5 M.T. damaged destroyed, 1 M.T. damaged.	

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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron, R.A.F., c/o B.L.A.

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
B.3 France	August 18 th	1944	(iii) Also an Armed Recco in Trun area. Claims 1 tank flamer, 4 M.T. flamers, 6 probables and 5 damaged. F/O A.R.S. Proctor was seen to be hit and made a forced landing, and it is believed he was in friendly territory behind our lines.	
			(iv)&(v) Two more armed Reccos with good results and claims included 14 M.T. flamers and many M.T Damaged.	
	19 th		F/O H.M. Proctor officially took charge of "A" Flight and was granted rank of A/F/Lt.	
			(i) Armed Recco of Orbec-Beaumont area. Many burnt out M.T. seen but few new targets. However, 2 M.T. were destroyed.	
			(ii) The target was M.T. east of Vimoutiers and claims made of 3 destroyed, 2 probables, 2 damaged. F/O A.R.S. Proctor calmly walked in on us after a night of wandering in No Mans Land and was very little the worse for his experiences.	
	20 th		(i) The first operation, an armed Recco was abortive owing to bad weather.	
			(ii) The original target as abortive and the operation diverted to an armed Recco of Orbec area with claims of 1 M.T. destroyed and 1 staff car damaged.	
	21 st		No flying on this day.	
	22 nd		One armed Recco only without any results.	
	23 rd		The Squadron was released for the day. The C.O.-S/Ldr Rutter with F/Lt Hewett and F/L Proctor paid a visit by road to the battle area and in the vicinity of Cabourg ran over a land mine with a result that F/Lt Hewett received multiple injuries and was taken to a Military Hospital. He sustained a fractured leg as well as other very bad wounds. S/Ldr Rutter and F/Lt Proctor sustained slight cuts and abrasions. The car in which they were travelling was a complete write off.	
	24 th		(i) M.T. and tanks were the target for the first operation of this day. The weather was obstructive and only hour aircraft were able to deliver an attack with claims of 2 M.T. damaged and 1 flamer. (ii) An armed Recco around the northern end of the Seine was carried out. A paddle ferry boat was discovered in mid stream and was attacked. It was left on fire, but it is greatly regretted that F/Lt H.M. Proctor was hit by flak and went "straight in" on the far bank of the river. This meant a very grave loss to the Squadron, as Proc.I was a grand fellow very popular with all the 263 pilots and was an excellent Flight Commander.	
	25 th		Seven operations in all were carried out today along the Seine, primarily with the object of keeping a constant patrol to prevent enemy troops and transport from crossing. Each patrol consisted of 2 R/P carrying aircraft suported by 2 bombers from 193 Squadron. Various claims were made including several barges damaged and left smoking also M.T. destroyed. P/O S.D. Thyagarajan was hit by flak on one of these operations and announced over the R/T that he was going to force land in a nearby large field. Unfortunately he overshot, crashed into a wood and burst into flames almost immediately leaving very little chance of his getting out alive. The Squadron also sustained another loss on the last operation of the day. F/O Campbell was hit by flak at a height of 7,000 ft. and was xxxxxx followed by his No.1 down to 4,000ft. and was seen to start a steep dive but from then on his No.1 lost sight of him so it can only be hoped that F/O Campbell managed to bale out in time. These losses were offset in part by the return, bright and cheery, of F/Lt Purkis DFC. He had baled out but as soon as he landed he was pounced upon by S.S. troops and after interrogation was thrust into the civil prison in Bernay. A few days later the Germans hurriedly left and must have overlooked F/Lt Purkis in all the panic as he was later discovered and released by the advancing British troops. He is now off for a 10 days well earned rest in the U.K. and it is hoped will return to carry on his good work with the Squadron.	

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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron, R.A.F.

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	September,	1944		
B.3 France	1 st		At 60 minutes all the morning but brought to 15 minutes at lunch time and 13.30 hours 7 aircraft under F/Lt J. Arkle took off on an armed recce round Abbeville-Amiens area. The Squadron split into 2 sections at Bernaville. One section found horse drawn transport, M.T. and several tanks parked in a village and claimed several destroyed and damaged. The other section were not so successful. W/O P.J. McNinley ran short of petrol and landed on a new aerodrome near Bernay.	
			The days second operation was originally briefed as in the St. Pol - Arras area but when airborne was changed to Auxi, 15 miles NE of Abbeville. The Squadron split into 2 sections. One section led by F/Lt L. Unwin found some M.T. near the Feret de Crecy and claim several flamers and damaged. The other section were also successful in finding some M.T. in the region of Auxi and claim several damaged. in fact, a fairly successful show all round.	
"	2 nd		No operations at all today partly due to bad weather and partly owing to the long distance to the bomb line.	
"	3 rd		Again no operations but plenty of rumour of a move in the near future to try and catch up with the forward line.	
			The promotion to W/O rank F/Sgt D.C. Todd, F/Sgt W.A. Handley, and F/Sgt I.D.M. Dunlop is officially notified. Hearty congratulations to them.	
"	4 th		The battle is now well out of our range so again no operations. The station Commander, confirms by tannoy to all personnel, a move to a new location in the immediate future.	
			The C.O. S/Ldr R.D. Rutter DFC flies off to Aston Down for the day.	
"	5 th		Rains xxxxxxxx heavily nearly the whole day so still no operations.	
"	6 th		16 aircraft took off for Manston in order to be nearer the front line and to enable operations to be reopened, but weather changes and Squadron is released.	
Manston	7 th		Heavy rain all day and Squadron again released.	
Manston	8 th		Remaining aircraft and pilots left in France join the Squadron at Manston. No operations carried out owing to inclement weather.	
Manston	9 th		Back on Ops again with 2 shows both shipping recces. On the first, around the Dutch Isles an ammo ship is sunk and one or two smaller ships damaged, but in the second round the Channel Isles nothing was seen and the aircraft returned to Tangmere.	
"	10 th		Another shipping recce around the Dutch Isles where two barges were attacked and damaged. From this operation F/O F.S. Le Gear is reported missing. He was No. 2 to the leader of the formation W/Cdr J. Baldwin DSO DFC. A medium sized motor vessel was sighted in a channel between two islands and was duly attacked. F/O Le Gear was seen to attack and break away but did not rejoin the formation. It is hoped he may have force landed on Dutch soil although it is strange he did not call over the R/T.	
B.51 France	11 th		The Squadron move back to France again and join the Wing at Vendeville Aerodrome near Lille.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	September,	1944		
B. 51 France	11 th		(Continued). "A" Flight on the way from Manston attacked a German strong point near Boulogne with R/P and the target was left burning. "A" Flight then landed at Vendeville. "B"	
			"B" Flight who had already arrived then took off to attack the same target and all R/P were	
			well on the target area.	
"	12 th		Five vessels were sighted near the Dutch Isles, 1 dredger and 4 barges. The weather was very hazy but attacks were successful as many direct hits were observed on all vessels and a barge was sunk. Cannon attacks were also made on 2 other barges nearby. There was no flak opposition and attacks were pressed home.	
"	13 th		One show only today, an enemy strong point near Boulogne. There was quite a lot of light flak. No definite results were observed.	
"	14 th		The weather was again very hazy and only one operation was carried out on some shipping at Flualging. Five (5) large power driven barges were attacked but visibility was so poor that only near misses were scored. There was intense light flak opposition.	
"	15 th		The weather clamped right down and no operations were possible.	
"	16 th		This was a record day for the Wing with 170 sorties to its credit. 263 did their fair share with XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX 4 operations involving 35 sorties.	
			(i) The target for the first operation was 4 medium guns and two 155 mm. guns near Dunkirk. An ammo dump was exploded in the centre of the guns and judging from the force of the explosion considerable damage must have been done to the target. The location of the two 155 mm. guns was well plastered with R/P but earthworks only could be seen.	
			(2) This operation was an attack on a church at Zeebrugge which was being used as an observation post. Unfortunately although the body of the church was destroyed the tower was left standing. This was later destroyed by another Squadron.	
			(3) 12 aircraft took part in this operation to attack a harbour at Terneugen where 4 or 5 ships were lying. Many near misses were observed and claims of a "flamer" and others probably damaged were made. There was intense light flak opposition.	
			(4) This target was a lighthouse on Cap Gris Nez. Several possible direct hits with R/P were claimed by results could not definitely be assured. The lighthouse was however, still standing.	
"	17 th		A Church Parade was held this morning in commemoration of the Battle of Britain. Weather very hazy but 8 aircraft took off in pairs at 30 minute intervals to patrol Schouen Island where V2 activity was suspected. A number of claims were made of direct hits on trucks and railway, also on concrete buildings west of Haamstrode. Direct hits were also scored on several hutments which were left smoking.	
"	18 th / 19 th		Poor weather prevents any operations on these two days.	
"	20 th		Weather still very indifferent but attempted a couple of shows.	
			(1) The target was 4 guns just north of Calais. No guns were seen but emplacements in the area were well straddled with R/P and cannon strafed.	
			(2) this second target was a H.Q. at Walcheron but the operation was abortive due to weather.	
"	21 st		No operations at all today owing to weather.	

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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
Vendeville, near Lille.	October, 1944	1 st	The day opens up with very poor weather but cleared a little in the afternoon, sufficient to enable 8 aircraft to take off to attack barges near Yerseken-Dam. 50 barges were found in a small harbour and several bombs fell right among them. A second attack was made with cannon and they were well and truly strafed. It is officially announced that the Wing is moving to new quarters at Antwerp tomorrow.	
"	2 nd		We all rise at 6 o'clock to pack kit, strike tents in order to move off for Antwerp by 9 o'clock. Only 14 out of 18 aircraft, however, were able to get away on time owing to difficulties in starting one or two of the aircraft. The remainder followed an hour later.	
Antwerp B.70			At midday we carried out our first operation from Antwerp. The target was a railway junction south of Amersfoort which was located and several direct hits scored. The line was well broken at one point. Later in the afternoon a further attack was made on the same target and further direct hits scored.	
			We are all billeted in empty houses, a welcome change from tents. In between shows and the rest of the day is spent in making our billets habitable and ourselves comfortable.	
"	3 rd		Weather clamp prevented any flying today but gave a good opportunity to further organise our billets, and much ingenuity was displayed by all. The Squadron welcomed into its midst two new arrivals namely, W/O Bury, C.A. and F/Sgt Ainsley, R.W.	
"	4 th		The day starts off with very poor weather but clears up a little about midday and 12 aircraft take off to do a low level attack on railway lines near Amersfoort. 8 of the aircraft successfully located and attacked one point but the other 4 aircraft could not locate their target owing to poor visibility, so they turned their attention to the railway line near Utrecht and several direct hits on trucks and waggons with claims of 1 flamer and 2 smokers.	
"	5 th		In the morning the weather is extremely misty on the deck but is reasonably clear at 3,000 ft. At about 11.15 hrs. 8 aircraft took off to attack a railway bridge near yesterday's target, but the pinpoint when located was a level crossing. 1 direct hit and several near misses are claimed. Two further attacks on railway lines and bridges were made in the afternoon but no exceptional claims were made.	
			F/Ox. M.T. Rumbold DFC was transferred from 197 Squadron to 263 to take over 'A' Flight and was accordingly granted the rank of F/Lt.	
"	6 th		Quite a busy day with four operations. The first was a building which was dive bombed and cannon strafed with fair results. The next 2 operations were railway targets with good results. The last show of the day was led by W/C Baldwin, and the target was a chateau reported to be a German H.Q. just about 5 miles north of Antwerp. The building was located, attacked and destroyed. The whole area was cannon strafed and when the aircraft eventually departed, the building and surrounds were obscured by smoke.	
"	7 th		This day marked by quite an event in the history of the Squadron, as for the first time in this war an operation was carried out over German soil. The target being railway lines and train activity in the Rhur district. Two direct hits were scored on a railway bridge and lines cut. An earlier operation was abortive due to weather. A third operation was on a railway bridge over a stream at Nijverdal in Holland. It was a low level attack and bombs were seen to burst all round the target, two of which cut the lines west of the bridge. A rather thick haze prevented accurate observation of results.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	October, 1944			
Antwerp B.70	8, 9, 10 th		These were days of rest as indifferent weather prevented any flying other than a weather recce by two aircraft.	
"	11 th		Plenty of activity developed on this day after the 3 days rest as the weather improved greatly. Four operations were carried out, all against the village of Oostburg, an inoffensive looking place on the western side of the Scheldt. Apparently enemy troops were firmly ensconced in the village and the army were having difficulty in dislodging them, so naturally the Typhies are called in to remove the obstacle. This the Squadron carried out with great enthusiasm and with excellent results. This was a record day for the Wing with just under 200 sorties, 41 of which were flown by 263 Squadron	
"	12 th		The first operation of the day was at 07.30 hrs. by 10 aircraft. The target was 6 A.A. guns just west of Breskens. Two of the aircraft each carried 2 x 1000 lb bombs. Many direct hits were claimed, and an ammunition dump was seen to blow up. The area was also strafed by cannon. The second operation was a close support target but was abortive as no red smoke was observed, and no attack therefore was made. The last two operations were on railway lines near Roermond and results were fair only.	
"	13 th		Two shows only carried out today both close army support targets - some guns just south of Bergen op Zoom and another batch of guns near a wood about 20 miles north east of base. On the latter operation the Squadron lost one of its oldest and most stalwart members - Johnny Thould. He was flying No. 2 to S/Ldr Rutter the C.O. and was hit by flak whilst in the dive. His aircraft burst into flames and spiralled straight in. According to eye witness accounts Johnny had very little chance of baling out. A great loss to the Squadron. In the morning at 11.15 hrs, the Wing was honoured by a visit of H.M. the King accompanied by Field Marshall Montgomery, Air Chief Marshal Conningham and several other high ranking officers. All pilots not flying were paraded and His Majesty inspected and chatted to them.	
"	14 th		The weather is pretty grim today and only one operation could be carried out and this a disastrous one as we lost Dave Evans and Sandy Barr who collided on forming up after the attack. Both were killed instantaneously. Another tragic loss to the Squadron.	
"	15 th		Whilst on a weather recce in the Venlo Wesel area F/Lt Arkle and F/O Reilly discovered 3 M.T. and a horse drawn transport on a minor road. They left the 3 M.T. badly damaged and the horse drawn transport destroyed. Two operations were carried out against railway targets in the Rhine Valley with fair results, including plenty of hits with cannon on a train.	
"	16 th		The army are still having trouble with Oostburg, so we step in again to give a hand and although all bombs fell in the target area unfortunately one or two failed to explode. The second show was a strong point near the same village which was well pranged with several 1000 lb bombs as well as 500 lb bombs.	
"	17 th		Weather clamp so no operations this day. A visit was paid to the Station cinema to see some combat films. A really quiet restful day.	
"	18 th		Four operations carried out today, mainly on railways, and lines were cut at several points. One operation however was in close support of the army with an attack by 12 aircraft on 3 gun positions just south of Bergen-op-Zoom but results were only middling.	

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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	October, 1944			
Antwerp B.70	19 th		Low cloud and rain all day prevented flying although a weather recce was carried out at dawn.	
"	20 th		Today we gave some really close support for the army who were making an advance up the road from Antwerp to Esschen. At 07.30 hours 8 aircraft attacked with bombs and cannon any houses or strong points they could see on either side of the road. The attack was carried out at low level. Later in the day, at 15.00 hours another 8 aircraft carried out the same operation this time using dive bomb tactics. Bombing was good, nearly all falling on selected targets by the road side. A message was received later from Army H.Q. to say the attack was very successful as many enemy strongpoints had been wiped out, and they had been able to advance to within one mile of Esschen.	
"	21 st		The first operation was a railway bridge between Lochtenburg and Breda, which was bombed to such effect that it can be considered a complete write off. The target on the second operation was an enemy H.Q. at a cross roads just south of Breskens. Bombing was good and well within the target area. Plenty of fire and smoke was seen after the attack. The target for the third and last operation of the day was a barge concentration in the harbour at Yerseke. Ten bombs fell in and amongst the barges but failing light made observation difficult	
"	22 nd		XXXXXX Weather clamp all day, so no operations possible.	
"	23 rd		Low cloud and haze all day, so again no operations.	
"	24 th		The weather cleared for a period in the morning enabling a Wing show to be laid on to attack a German 15 th Army H.Q. in the centre of Dordrecht in Holland 263 Squadron led the attack by carrying out a feint attack on a railway bridge thus drawing the flak away from following Squadrons carrying out R/P and low level bombing attacks on the target itself. The target was in a small park in the centre of the town and a high percentage of bombs fell in the target area. After one orbit of the area 263 went into attack the real target and dropped all bombs in the target area. An intelligence report received at a later date proved this operation as having been highly successful in that the casualties alone sustained by the enemy included 2 Generals, 15 Staff Officers, 50 other officers and 200 other ranks. Later in the afternoon 8 aircraft attacked a railway junction but no results observed, although the line was probably cut. F/Lt Stooke Hallett is missing from this operation but it is known he baled out over enemy territory so it is hope he got down safely and was either able to go into hiding and will escape or is now a P.O.W.	
"	25, 26 ,27 th		Bad weather prevents any flying on these days.	
"	28 th		Two new pilots join the Squadron, namely W/O Barrie, H. and F/Sgt Quigley, J., the latter an Australian. The weather has improved considerably and about midday 10 aircraft in three sections (4+3+3_ are briefed to carry out attacks on targets in close support of the army. The 1 st section attacked a railway station just south of Kapelle. The main buildings were missed but other buildings were hit and the line was cut. The road running west from Kapelle was strafed. The second section were under the control of a V.C.P. over the battle area and the target given was a road junction. This was missed with bombs but well strafed and 1 M.T. smoker claimed. The third section attacked the railway in the same area as the first section and a direct hit was scored on some buildings.	

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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	November, 1944			
B.70 Antwerp	1 st		The weather was not so good, but a show was laid on in the late afternoon to bomb 4 gun positions on the sea wall near Westkapelle north of Flushing. Cloud base was only 4000 ft. but attacks were pressed home and results were very good. All bombs dropped in the target area and was well strafed with cannon fire.	
"	2 nd		The weather was against any flying in the morning but cleared sufficiently to enable 2 shows to be laid on after lunch. The first operation was to bomb a road going NW from Breda and just north of the River Mark. A low level attack was made and direct hits scored on some station buildings and on the road. The road was also well strafed with cannon. Later in the afternoon at about 17.00 hours, 15 aircraft took off on close support targets near Steinbergen, where strongpoints by the roadside were attacked. Good results were observed. Visibility dropped as the aircraft returned to base, but all got down O.K. The C.O. S/Ldr. R.D. Rutter went off on a well earned leave and F/Lt. M.T. Rumbold assumed command of the Squadron until the C.O's return.	
"	3 rd		The weather is still very poor and only one operation could be carried out. This was a close army support target with an attack on a strong point on the road from Zevenbergen to Breda. Guns and troops were concentrated in two houses in an orchard, so the area was well plastered with bombs and cannon fire. Low cloud kept the aircraft down to 4000 ft.	
"	4 th		The weather improved considerably enabling the Squadron to carry out 4 operations. The first at 09.10 hours was an attack with bombs on a sugar factory at Zevenbergen which was suspected to be and ammunition dump. Only one direct hit was claimed, but all others were very near misses. The target was also well strafed with cannon. The next show at approximately 11.15 hours was an armed recce in the Veere-Middleburg area. No movement was seen, however, so they attacked 4 heavy guns in a small village just south of Veere. Practically all the area was flooded but this strongpoint stood out on high ground and all bombs fell within the target area with three direct hits. There was intense light flak opposition and F/Lt. J. Arkle's aircraft was hit but managed to make home. The 3 rd operation was carried out at 13.00 hours and was a repeat attack on the sugar factory at Zevenbergen, this time with really good results. 4 x 1000 lb. and 12 x 500 lb. bombs were dropped and 4 direct hits were scored on the factory and 10 very near misses. Debris was thrown up to a height of 3000 feet. Outbuildings were seen to be on fire. The last show of the day at 15.30 hours was to attack a Gestapo H.Q. on the edge of Rotterdam - 4 aircraft from 263 combined with 4 aircraft from 266 Squadron. Our aircraft were to attack gun positions while the 266 aircraft with rockets attacked the H.Q. buildings. There were several near misses and the target was well strafed with cannon.	
"	5 th		The weather is still poor and at approximately 07.30 hours two aircraft took off on a weather recce of Utrecht-Zwolle area, as a result of which, later in the morning 7 aircraft attacked the railway and cut the line south of Zwolle. Afterwards a suspected V2 site was discovered near the line between Wexep and the River Ijssel. A heavily defended train was located but was not attacked as the low cloud base prevented the aircraft getting sufficient height.	
"	6 th		Two aircraft took off on a weather recce at 12.20 hours to Zwolle and Deventer, and on their return 8 aircraft took off to cut the railway line just north of Deventer. This was successfully carried out in spite of a heavy rain storm. Later in the afternoon at 15.50 hours a further 8 aircraft attacked the Zwolle-Utrecht railway line and cut the line. A train was located which was well alight from an attack by Spitfires. We helped to spread the conflagration by a good strafing with cannon.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	November, 1944			
B.70 Antwerp	7 th		Only one operation was possible owing to inclement weather and this was at 15.02 hours to attack a rail road crossing just south of Nijkerk. 1 direct hit was scored and the line seen to be cut.	
			Some trucks on the line were also attacked and several left smoking. There was intense light flak and F/O A.G. Davies was hit and had to force land a few miles south of Zwolle. He called over the R/T and said he was alright and he was then seen to leave his aircraft and run for shelter.	
"	8 th		Again the weather is duff, but we managed to get in one operation at 14.43 hours. An interdiction at Amersfoort. The weather made the attack difficult, but the line was successfully cut in several places. There was a fair amount of flak.	
"	9 th		A weather recco only carried out today at 08.20 hours. Operations impossible owing to poor weather and Squadron released at midday.	
			2 new pilots, W/O M. Luck and F/Sgt J. Irvine arrived to join the Squadron.	
"	10 th		Again the poor weather only permitted one operation to be carried out at 15.40 hours. An interdiction in the Rhur valley to cur the Goch-Kanten line. Several direct hits were scored on buildings adjacent to the line and one possible direct hit on the line.	
			W/O R.A. Richardson arrives to join the Squadron.	
"	11 th		Two operations were carried out today, the first at approximately 13.20 hours. Out of 8 aircraft that should have taken off on the 1 st operation, an interdiction, only 5 became airborne, the other 3 having to turn back due to mechanical trouble, etc. The five, however, gave a good account of themselves by blowing up an ammunition train. They scored 4 direct hits which started fires, and they left the train well alight and several explosions were observed. F/O W.G. Kemp was hit by debris blown up from the train. The 2 nd operation, also an interdiction, was to cut the railway between Amersfoort and Zwolle. The line was cut in three places, also several stationary coaches were attacked and direct hits scored. There was a cloud of smoke from a direct hit on a station. The train attacked on the first operation was seen still to be burning and exploding. Official notification was received of the appointment of W/O W.A. Handley to a commission.	
"	12 th		Weather clamp all day making operations impossible.	
"	13 th		The day opens up with good weather for flying enabling a early recce to be carried out, also some air tests, but before any operations had been initiated the weather closed in and prevented any further flying.	
"	14 th		Weather clamp all day so decide to move dispersal from its present very muddy situation to firmer ground near the taxying track.	
"	15 th		It snowed a little first thing today, and the weather remained too bad for any operations to be carried out.	
"	16 th		Weather clamp again but lifted a little to enable 4 aircraft to take off on a weather recce and interdiction to cut the railway just east of Amersfoort, but were unsuccessful owing to poor visibility. No further operations were possible owing to weather clamping right down.	
"	17 th		Rained hard all day so operations impossible.	

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

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) No. 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
B.70 Antwerp	November, 18 th	1944	An early start was made and at 08.45 hours 8 aircraft took off to attack a road bridge just N.E. of Heineberg, but could only claim several near misses and the bridge was still intact when the aircraft left for base. At about 12.30 hours a further 10 aircraft left to make another attack on his bridge, but only one direct hit was scored, making a fair size hole in the western side. B Flight Commander, F/Lt. J. Arkle was hit by flak and had to force land in or near our lines, so it is hoped he will get back safe and fairly soon.	
"	"		The first operation today at 09.06 hours was an interdiction to attack marshalling yards at Maarne. An attack was made at low level and the line cut in 2 places. At midday 8 aircraft take off to attack a wireless station in a chateau just east of Lachen. 4 aircraft carried 1000 lb bombs and the other 4 aircraft carried incendiaries. Several direct hits were scored both with bombs and incendiaries, and the chateau was left destroyed and burning fiercely.	
"	20 th		Weather clamp and operations impossible.	
"	21 st		The weather is still very poor , but at 15.25 hours 4 aircraft take off on an interdiction at Amersfoort to cut the railway line. A clear area was found west of Arnhem on the Arnhem-Utrecht line and it was believed cut at Klemp. 2 lots of 10 stationary railway trucks were also attacked and near misses claimed. The Wing was honoured with the visit by Sit Charles Portal, Marshal of the Royal Air Force.	
"	22 nd /24 th		A real weather clamp on these three days prevents operations of any kind.	
"	25 th		F/Lt. R.E.G. Sheward is posted to this Squadron from 266 Squadron to take over command of 'B' Flight as there is still no news of F/Lt. J. Arkle. At 08.00 hours approximately 2 aircraft take off on a weather recce to Waal. At 12.20 hours an interdiction is laid on but is abortive due to weather. Later at 15.50 hours another attempt is made and the railway line is cut in 2 places in the Amersfoort area.	
"	26 th		The first operation at 10.06hours is to attack the railway line east of Lachen, but it is doubtful if the line was actually cut as only a near miss could be claimed. The second operation at 12.45 hours was a concentrated effort by 4 Squadrons, Nos. 266, 193, 197 and this Squadron to attack a Gestapo H.Q. at Amsterdam. Our effort was highly successful. We were assigned the main buildings and four direct hits with 1000 lb bombs were scored. The third and last operation of the day at 16.25 hours was cancelled by G.C.C. after the aircraft were airborne.	
"	27 th /28 th		Weather clamp and no operations possible on these days.	
"	29 th		The first operation at approximately 11.00 hours was a Wing Show and 193, 266 and 257 Squadrons as well as ours own Squadron took part. The whole formation was led by W/Cdr. Wells and the target was a Gestapo H.Q. in Rotterdam. We were assigned the job of silencing some flak guns and a direct hit was scored on one gun position. In the afternoon at 14.30 hours, 8 aircraft took of on an interdiction, the target being a KXXXXX a railway bridge over a road bear Raalte and 2 direct hits and 1 probable were scored on the line 50 yards SE of the bridge, and the line claimed to be cut in 3 places.	
"	30 th		The weather was decidedly poor but an interdiction was laid on at 11.20 hours, and the target was a railway line near Hardwerijk. Several direct hits were scored and the line was cut. Several near misses were also scored.	
			<i>R.D. Rutter</i> Squadron Leader, Commanding <u>No. 263 Squadron, R.A.F.</u>	

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

R.A.F. Form 540
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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
December, 1944				
B.70 Belgium	1 st		The first day of December opens up with weather very poor, with the result that no operations are possible. 2 aircraft take off about 10.30 hours on a weather recce of Nijmegen-Zwolle area. News is received that F/Lt A.L.S. Hallett who was reported missing on 24.10.44 is a P.O.W.	
"	2 nd		No operations again due to bad weather. W/O M. Luck and F/Sgt. J.J. Morgan take up 2 aircraft on air test and during the flight a V1 is sighted. Both attacked and F/Sgt Morgan scored a direct hit. The V1 fell in an open field and exploded. This is the first V1 to be shot down by 263 Sqdn.	
"	3 rd		Fine weather before lunch gave some hope of a busy day, but only one operation was carried out as it started to rain at midday and never ceased for the rest of the day. The target for this was an interdiction, and 8 aircraft took off to cut railway lines in the Zwolle area in which they were quite successful.	
"	4 th		At 08.10 hours a weather recce by 2 aircraft carried out in Utrecht-Hensels area. No attack was made. Later at 11.40 hours a further weather recce and interdiction was carried out by 4 aircraft in the Utrecht-Amersfoort-Zwolle area. Bombs were dropped on a railway road crossing near Xxxxxx Maarne and 1 direct hit and 2 near misses were claimed. F/O F. Green and F/O M.S.M. Hamilon visit the Polish Army to give talks on air support for the army.	
"	5 th		Slight improvement in the weather allows for 2 operations on this day. The first at 09.30 hours was to attack a railway line between Utrecht-Alphen but could only claim 2 near misses and the line cut. The second operation was of a similar nature and again with little success owing to poor weather, low cloud etc.	
"	6 th		Weather clamp and only a few air tests could be carried out.	
"	7 th		P/O W.A. Handley and F/Sgt J. Irvine take off on a weather recce at 08.00 hours and attacked a train with cannon. Many strikes were seen and a yellow flash was observed from the engine. In the afternoon at 15.00 hours a further weather recce was made in the Amersfoort-Apeldoorn area. No attack was made.	
"	8 th		The weather is still very poor and only one operation as possible. This was an interdiction and 8 aircraft took off at 10.20 hours to attack the railway line just north of Deventer, but only near misses could be claimed.	
"	9 th		Rained all day so operations out of the question.	
"	10 th		Two weather recces only carried out and reports of poor weather over target area prevented any operations being carried out.	
"	11 th		Slight improvement in weather permits 2 operations again V2 storage depot at Lieden. The first had little success but the second gave better results as 3 direct hits were scored on the sidings where the V2's were suspected and an orange flash and plenty of flying debris was observed.	
"	12 th		The weather was too poor for any operations this day. A V1 fell very close to the dispersal but caused very little damage.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	December, 1944			
B.70 Antwerp	13 th		Still no flying due to weather clamp.	
"	14 th /22 nd		The weather clamps down and prevents all flying for these 9 days.	
			F/O T. Berry, the engineering officer is posted to No. 145 Wing on 15 th December to a F/Lt post.	
			F/O F. Green and F/O P.F. Cooper both proceed to the U.K. on rest on 22 nd December. The Squadron will miss them a lot. F/O W.J. Fowler is attached to Sheffield for a 3 week's course w.e.f. 22nd.	
"	23 rd		The weather improves slightly today and at 13.40 hours 8 aircraft took off to attack a barracks and airfield at Saesterberg near Amersfoort. Hits were claimed on the barracks, but there were not any aircraft to be seen on the airfield.	
"	24 th		It is very cold and frosty but good weather for flying, and at 13.40 hours 4 aircraft take off on a long range fighter sweep of the Rhur area in company with some aircraft of 257 Squadron. They encountered some intense heavy flak over the Rhur, also some German jet planes but never got close enough to the latter to make an attack. Later at 15.20 hours another 4 aircraft take off, with some of 197 Squadron, on an armed recce east and west of Utrecht. 3 enemy M.T. were seen and strafed and 1 claimed damaged. F/Lt L. Unwin who has been with the Squadron since 18.9.43 was hit by flak after this attack and blew up. It is fairly definite that he was killed. A very sad loss to the Squadron.	
"	25 th		Xmas Day turns out a very fine day for operations. The first at 10.45 hours was an interdiction target just N.W. of Arnheim. An attack was made on a train consisting of engine and 25 waggons. 3 direct hits were scored with bombs and several waggons were destroyed and the line cut. A further attack was made with cannon and the engine and waggons were well strafed. A second show was laid on at 15.15. hours, and the target was the marshalling yards at Amersfoort. Claims of 4 direct hits on sheds and junction were made. The rest of the day was spent in the usual festive style.	
"	26 th		Only one operation was carried out today, and in this 12 aircraft took part. It was an armed recce and interdiction in the Zwolle area. 8 of the aircraft were carrying bombs and the other four long range tanks as fighter escort. An attack was made on the Zwolle-Deventer railway but only near misses could be claimed, but it is thought that the line was probably cut. We lose another pilot on this operation as F/Lt D.J. Turner's aircraft exploded at about 500 feet and he must have been killed instantly. F/Lt Turner had only been with the Squadron a short while and will be sadly missed.	
"	27 th /28 th		The bad weather on these two days prevents any flying. The Squadron is informed that they are going back on R/P and all aircraft are fitted with rocket rails.	
"	29 th		The weather clears sufficiently for to allow 6 aircraft to take off to attack shipping off Overflakhee Island. A large barge was seen and sunk.	
"	30 th		Thick fog again prevents any operations today.	

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

R.A.F. Form 540
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Of (Unit or Formation) No . 263 Squadron

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para. 2349, and War Manual, Pt. II., chapter XX., and
notes in R.A.F. Pocket Book.

Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
			<u>A P P E N D I X</u>	
			SUMMARY OF EVENTS AND RECORDS OF OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS OF NO.263 SQUADRON WITH TYPHOONS	
			<u>FROM 1st JANUARY 1944 TO 31st DECEMBER 1944</u>	
			The Squadron having been equipped with Typhoon aircraft in December, 1943, the first month of 1944 was spent entirely on training of pilots and ground crews on this type of aircraft with the help of the Armament Practice Camp at Fairwood Common. It was not until the 1 st February 1944, that the Squadron first became operational with Typhoons, and the first actual operation was carried out on February 2nd. From that date until they joined T.A.F. on July 10 th 1944, the Squadron were employed attacking shipping in the English Channel, harbours particularly on the Cherbourg and Brest Peninsulas, and aerodromes in France, also radar stations and V1 launching sites in France.	
			For the first few weeks 2 x 250 lb bombs, H.E. and A.P. were carried on each aircraft, but later this increased to 2 x 500 lb. bombs, and then in May, 50% of the Squadron aircraft were fitted with R/P.	
			On June 6 th the first operation with R/P was carried out. As only 50% of the Squadron aircraft had been fitted with R/P rails, attacks were often made with a mixed squadron of bombers and R/P with considerable success. Two flights were thus often employed simultaneously either in two waves with the same objective or with different targets.	
			On July 10 th , 1944, the Squadron was transferred to T.A.F. after having been No. 10 Group for nearly four years. The Squadron first joins No. 136 Wing at R.A.F. Hurn, but only for a few days, as under a reorganisation scheme this Wing is disbanded and the Squadron is transferred to No. 146 Wing also at Hurn.	
			All the aircraft were now fitted with R/P and from July 23 rd to August 6 th , 1944, the Squadron are stationed at R.A.F. Eastchurch with the Armament Practice Camp there, and the next 14 days are well spent practicing air to air and air to ground with cannon and R/P respectively.	
			In the meantime No. 146 Wing had moved to France. August 6 th , 1944, was a memorable day, as on this day the Squadron set foot in France and joined No. 146 Wing at B.3 in Normandy. On August 7 th . the first operation from France was carried out, and from that date the Squadron took part in attacks of every kind of fighter bomber targets with both bombs and rockets, but mainly with the latter. The targets included many close support of the army, interdictions, enemy Headquarters housed in large buildings, enemy strong points, V1 and V2 launching sites. October 7 th was marked by an event in the history of the Squadron, as on this day for the first time in this war an operation was carried out over German soil. On October 12 th ., for the first time a proportion of the aircraft used carried 2 x 1000 lb. bombs, and from this day to the end of the year 70 x 1000 lb bombs had been used on a variety of targets	
			The following is a brief summary of the various movement of the Squadron.	
			January 5 th , 1944. R.A.F. Ibsley to A.P.C. Fairwood Common.	
			" 24 th , 1944. A.P.C. Fairwood Common. to T.A.F. Beaulieu.	
			March 6 th , 1944 R.A.F. Beaulieu to R.A.F. Warmwell.	
			" 19 th , 1944. R.A.F. Warmwell to R.A.F. Harrowbeer.	
			June 19 th , 1944. R.A.F. Harrowbeer to R.A.F. Bolt Head.	
			July 10 th , 1944. R.A.F. Bolt Head to R.A.F. Hurn and T.A.F.	
			July 23 rd , 1944. R.A.F. Hurn to A.P.C. Eastchurch	
			August 6 th , 1944. A.P.C. Eastchurch to B.3 Normandy, France.	
			September 6 th , 1944. B.3 Normandy to R.A.F. Manston.	
			September 11 th , 1944 R.A.F. Manston to B.51 Lille, France.	
			October 2 nd , 1944. B.51 Lille to B.70 Antwerp to the end of year 1944	
			(See over)	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
			<u>APPENDIX (Cont'd)</u>	
			<u>The following figures are for offensive operations carried out from 1st January, 1944 to 31st December, 1944</u>	
			334 Offensive Operations. 2202 Offensive Sorties.	
			4496 Rocket Projectiles, mainly 60 lb. H.E. heads	
			2543 x 500 lb. bombs H.E. 55 x 250 lb. bombs H.E.	
			14 x 500 lb. bombs A/P. 8 x 500 lb. bombs incendiaries	
			70 x 1000 lb. bombs H.S.	
			Total weight of bombs 1,366,250 lbs. = Approx. 609 tons 18 cwts.	
			" " " R/P <u>26,976 lbs.</u> = Approx <u>12 tons 1 cwt.</u>	
			<u>1,393,226 lbs.</u> = Approx <u>621 tons 19 cwts.</u>	
			Approximately threequarters of the above total weight of bombs and R/P were expended from the	
			6 th August, the day the Squadron arrived in France to 31 st December, 1944.	
			Ammunition (all types), 117,780 rounds, of which approximately 7/8 of this were expended from	
			'D' Day to 31 st December, 1944.	
			<u>Honours and Awards.</u>	
			142445 F/Lt. L.F.W. Stark awarded D.F.C	
			81635 S/Ldr. H.A.C. Gonay " D.F.C.	
			42574 S/Ldr. R.D. Rutter " D.F.C	
			158700 F/Lt. J.B. Purkis " D.F.C.	
			159873 F/O. H.M. Proctor " D.F.C.	

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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	January, 1945			
B.70 Antwerp	1 st		The New Year opened up with an attack on the aerodrome, at approximately 10.00 hours by 20+ 109's and 190's, but very little damage was inflicted although all squadrons were grounded owing to ice on the runway. We heard later than many of the T.A.F. airfields had been attacked that morning and several had suffered considerable damage to aircraft of the ground. Out of the 300 enemy planes that took part, 193 were reported destroyed.	
			Later in the morning the runway was made serviceable and at 11.32 hours 8 aircraft took off to attack a concentration of barges east of Dordrecht. These were located and 56 direct hits were scored with R/P on 20+ barges, many being left smoking and 2 flamers. The latter were believed to be oil fires. At approximately 14.00 hours 8 aircraft took off to eliminate an observation post located in a church spire at Hedel, north side of R. Maas. causing considerable embarrassment to the army. The operation was entirely successful as 16 direct hits with R/P were scored and the spire was believed destroyed, although smoke and debris hindered observation. A signal was later received from the army confirming that this was so.	
			Hearty congratulations to F/Lt. Rumbold who today takes over command of the Squadron. The late C.O., S/Ldr Rutter having been sent on a much deserved and well earned rest. S/Ldr. Rumbold has already proved himself a capable leader as A Flight Commander, and the whole Squadron welcomes his appointment to command the Squadron.	
	2n			
	2 nd		No operations possible on this day owing to bad weather.	
	3 rd		The weather is again too bad for operations, but 2 aircraft took off on a weather recce to Schouwen Island to confirm that the whole area was 10/10 cloud at 3000 ft.	
	4 th		The weather did not clear until the afternoon, and at 15.47 hours 8 aircraft led by S/Ldr Rumbold took off to attack a factory near Sliedrecht. Several direct hits were scored with R/P also on a large building nearby, but accurate observation was not possible owing to smoke and debris covering the area. 12 barges in an adjacent basin were attacked and direct hits scored on 2 which were seen to sink.	
			P/O D.E. Morgan and W/O C.J. Points joined this Squadron having been transferred from 266 Sqdn.	
	5 th		The weather improved considerably today and enabled the Squadron to carry out 3 operations. The first was to attack an army H.Q. post on Schouwen Island, and 3 salvoes of R/P were claimed to be direct hits on a building in the target area and it was left burning. The second target was a built up area occupied by the enemy. 4 direct hits with R/P were scored on several houses which were also strafed with cannon. The third operation was an interdiction with R/P, and to judge if R/P were of any use to cut railway lines. 2 direct hits and 2 near misses were claimed with salvoes of R/P, and the line was cut at Stolwijk on the Gouda-Schoonhoven railway. This was originally intended as an 8 aircraft show, but only 4 were airborne as, just as 4 aircraft were taxiing out to the runway another aircraft, of 257 Squadron, jettisoned a 1000 lb bomb near to them which exploded and the 4 aircraft were hit by shrapnel. Luckily there were not any casualties, although there were several near misses.	
	6 th		No operations today due to weather clamp. F/O. G.A. Wood and F/O. W.E. Watkins are posted on a much deserved rest.	
	7 th /12 th		Weather clamp with heavy fall of snow prevents any operations on these days.	

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

R.A.F. Form 540
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para. 2349, and War Manual, Pt. II., chapter XX., and
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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron, B.L.A.

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	February, 1945			
No. 18 A.P.C.	1 st /8 th		The Squadron is still at No. 18 A.P.C. Fairwood Common carrying out R/P and cannon practice flying.	
			The weather during the three weeks at the Practice Camp was very bad, but in spite of unfavourable	
			conditions the results were very good and equalled the best of any previous squadrons. A higher	
			average than any other Squadron on the Wing was recorded, which reflects well on the keenness and	
			efficiency of the Squadron as a whole.	
	9 th		The Squadron flew from Fairwood Common to Manston en route to the Continent.	
	10 th		The Squadron flew from R.A.F. Manston to B.77 (B.L.A.) and from this aerodrome eight aircraft carried	
			out an interdiction. The railway line west of Utrecht was successfully cut in several places. The	
			aircraft then landed at B.89 in Holland to join up once again with the Wing, which in the meantime	
			moved from B.70.	
B.89	11 th		Eight aircraft took off on an operation but owing to 10/10 cloud over the target area the attack	
Holland			could not be made and the operation was abortive.	
	12 th		Weather clamp all day so no operations could be carried out.	
	13 th		Twelve aircraft took off about 11.15 hours to carry out a Winkle along the northern edge of a small	
			forest east of the Reichwald Forest. In spite of poor visibility and a cloud base of 2000 ft. the	
			attack is pressed home. Apparently the operation had been watched by the Corps Commander as he	
			sent a signal congratulating the Squadron on its fine work. Another twelve aircraft took off later	
			on an armed recce but owing to bad weather the operation was abortive.	
	14 th		The day dawns bright and clear and remained so throughout enabling 4 operations to be carried out.	
			The first three shows were army support targets and the attacks were well pressed home. On one	
			of these the Squadron had been detailed to attack a German Divisional Headquarters at Wetten	
			and on this particular operation W/O Points was hit by flak, and although he called up on the	
			R/T to say he was baling out. He was not seen to leave the aircraft and later his body was found	
			quite close to the remains of his aircraft. He was buried by soldiers of the 156 156 Brigade.	
			W/O C.G. Points came to us from 266 Squadron, and although he had only been with 263 Squadron for	
			a short time he was a popular and well liked member of the Squadron.	
			A strong cross wind sprang up during the afternoon causing a lull in operations but the wind	
			dropped in the early evening and at 17.25 hours eight aircraft took off to attack barges in the	
			canal east of Zutphen. The targets were located and appeared to be heavily laden but dusk and	
			falling and visibility was poor so that results of the attack could not be accurately assessed.	
			It was thought that some direct hits were scored.	
	15 th		Weather clamp all day.	
	16 th		In the afternoon two separate attacks were made on the village of Asperden which was causing the	
			army some trouble. All R/P fell in the target area and considerable damage to houses and buildings	
			was claimed. The attack was very successful, as the army, soon after, captured the village with	
			little trouble.	
	17 th /20 th		Weather clamp during the whole of these days. No operations possible.	

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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	March, 1945			
B.89 Holland	1 st		The weather was not too good but two pairs took off early morning at 07.00 hours and 07.40 hours respectively on ferry patrol on the Rhine an weather recce. The 1 st pair saw no moment at all and returned without any attack being made. The 2 nd pair were a little more successful, and attacked 3 barges south of Rees, but owing to haze it was difficult to assess results. The third operation by 4 aircraft to attack an enemy battery was abortive due to bad weather, and for the same reason no more operations were possible for the rest of the day.	
"	2 nd		Weather clamp all day.	
"	3 rd		Four pairs took off at intervals between 07.00 hours and 10.30 hours on armed recces, but observations were restricted to cloud gaps and although attacks were made on several barges, results could not be assessed. It was claimed that strikes were scored with R/P on at least three barges.	
"	4 th		Weather clamp all day.	
"	5 th		Five pairs took off on armed recces over the Rhine at intervals during the day, but weather again was not helpful, and three of these were abortive. The other 2 pairs attacked various targets including stationary railway trucks, and a barge. A direct hit was claimed on the latter. No. 257 Squadron is disbanded and five of their pilots, namely F/O R. Logan, F/O E.J. Whitfield, F/O J.A. Smith, F/S.W.H. Ramsey, and W/O A. Bales are posted to 263 Squadron. This Squadron also receives 5 of their aircraft, making our total strength 26 pilots and 19 aircraft.	
"	6 th /11 th		Weather clamped throughout these 6 days but the time is well spent in cleaning aircraft, lectures, and a practice Balbo on the 10 th with 12 aircraft. F/Lt. R.E.G. Sheward leaves us to take over command of No. 266 Squadron. Our loss is their gain, and S/Ldr. Sheward obtains a well deserved promotion. F/Lt. G.E Cassie from No. 193 Squadron is posted to No. 263 Squadron to take over "B" Flight.	
"	12 th		One operation only was possible on this day owing to indifferent weather. 4 aircraft took off at 15.00 hours to search for 4 submarines which had been reported south of Schouen Island. Th area was searched but no submarines were located. A 200 ton vessel was seen marked with a red cross and was not attacked.	
"	13 th		Weather clamp again. The morning was spent viewing combat films.	
"	14 th		8 aircraft took off at 14.40 hours to attack a 5/600 ton ship reported at Nijerk. The vessel was not located so an attack was made on 5 drifter type vessels in a lock near the same point. The leading aircraft scored a direct hit among the vessels causing smoke and flames. The remaining aircraft fired into the smoke but results could not be assessed.	
"	15 th /17 th		There were no operations on these days due to bad weather, but the pilots were briefed for an attack on an important target - a generals' H.Q. at Deeventer	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	March, 1945			
B.89 Holland	18 th		In the afternoon a weather recce was carried out by 2 aircraft in the Deventer area and reported thin layers of cumulus over target area 2/10 from 5/6660 ft. Visibility good.	
			As a result of the above an attack was made immediately afterwards on a generals' H.Q. just south of Deventer in which all Squadrons too part. There were five distinct targets in the area and 263 Squadron were assigned Nos. 3 and 4. 2 aircraft attacked No. 3 and believed they scored a direct hit as a cloud of red brick dust was seen. The remaining 6 aircraft attacked No. 4 target, a church, and scored direct hits with 2 salvoes of R/P. The church was left burning. The H.Q.s were of General Student and General Blaskowitz and the results were highly satisfactory.	
"	19 th		Another Wing show with al Squadrons attacking a repair factory N. of Emmerich, reported to contain armoured vehicles. 8 aircraft from this Squadron took off at 08.00 hours and attacked a rectangular building at the eastern end of the target. Claims of at least 4 direct hits with R/P were made and the target area was soon covered with smoke and haze. Later in the morning at 10.50 hours, a further 8 aircraft took off to attack 80+ barges reported on the Deventer-Raalte canal but they were not located. A single barge and 3/4 small boats were attacked with claims of 2 direct hits on the barge. Other than these no other traffic was seen on the canal. It is regretted that W/O R.A. Richardson is missing from this operation. His aircraft was hit by flak, but he baled out so there is every hope that he landed safe and will get back eventually.	
"	20 th		No operations this day due to very strong cross wind over the runway. Otherwise weather was perfect.	
"	21 st		The day opened up fine and clear and at 07.30 hours an operation was laid on to attack the 25 th German Army H.Q. at Bussum, all 4 Squadrons taking part. 263 Squadron attacked with R/P and at least 16 salvoes were seen to be direct hits resulting in a lot of smoke and fire. It is fairly certain that the target was totally destroyed judging from the claims of the Squadrons. The second operation of the day at 16.00 hours was also a Wing show with all Squadrons partaking. The target was P.O.L. depot near Deventer. This Squadron attacked with R/P and scored direct hits in the target area including a school and a garage and cannon strafed a guard room.	
"	22 nd		Weather was reasonable but no operations carried out due to lack of targets.	
"	23 rd		Nothing at all until early evening at 18.30 hours when 8 aircraft took off to attack a H.Q. at Halle. This was however, abortive due to haze and failing light. The same target was laid on for early the following morning. All pilots were briefed for a big push over the Rhine to take place this night. No. 146 Wing are to carry out anti flak attacks in support of the airborne troops.	
"	24 th		At 06.16 hours 9 aircraft take off to attack last night's target - the H.Q. at Halle - and were able to press home the attack with good results. Several buildings destroyed and there was a violent explosion from one. Many of the buildings were left burning. Later in the morning at approximately 10.50 hours and anti flak patrol by 12 aircraft is laid on over Dunsten area. 12+ M.T. moving towards Dunsten were attacked with R/P and cannon but no results observed. A further 4/5 M.T. moving N.W. were also attacked and claimed 1 destroyed. A direct hit was scored on a light flak position and a small wood was cannon strafed. A further anti flak patrol was carried out at 13.04 hours along both sides of a road E. of Wesel where flak was experienced on last attack. The woods adjoining the road were rippled with R/P and cannon but no movement was seen.	

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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	March, 1945			
B.89 Holland	24 th		Later towards the evening the whole battle area was covered with haze and dust so thick that operations were brought to a minimum. The battle, according to unofficial reports is going very well and a good foothold on the east bank of the Rhine.	
	(cont'd)			
"	25 th		An early show was carried out at 08.00 hours, the target being a H.Q. in a house at Driel, W. of Arnhem. Many direct hits were scored and there was a huge mushroom of flame as the last rockets went in. The H.Q.s. was claimed destroyed. There were no further operations until late afternoon when 12 aircraft went off in fours on armed recces. The 1 st section attacked 10+ M.T. and a tank well camouflaged along the edge of a road south of Raalte. An attack was made but no results observed. The 2 nd section reced Duesburg Zilhen Rurle-Groenle area. 2 barges E. of Deventer were seen and attacked and 1 claimed damaged. The 3 rd section attacked 10+ barges in the Zutphen-Lochem canal and 4 were damaged. 3 M.T. and 1 tracked vehicle were also sighted nearby and attacked with cannon. The 4 vehicles were damaged.	
"	26 th		An early morning show at 06.40 hours to attack a small factory use as billets S.W. of Arnhem. 197 Squadron also took part with 12 bombers. 11 aircraft from 263 Squadron with R/P attacked first and many direct hits were scored. The target was left covered with smoke and the southern portion of the building was destroyed. The remainder of the building was badly damaged but still standing. The 2 nd operation on this day was carried out by 12 aircraft at 12.30 hours in sections of 4 to attack barges and shipping in the Zwolle-Deventer-Rysen area. The claims included 11+ barges damaged and 1 destroyed and a paddle steamer or dredger damaged. 2 M.T. were destroyed. Another 2 sections of 4 aircraft took off late afternoon. The 1 st Section to search for tanks at Zutphen Isselburg area but none seen. The 2 nd Section attacked 4 barges on the Zutphen-Raalte canal and damaged 2 of them. A further 3 barges were located on the Deventer-Raalte canal and all were damaged	
"	27 th /30 th		Weather clamp on these days.	
"	31 st		4 pairs of aircraft took off on armed recces at various times during the afternoon and claims of 9 M.T. damaged were made.	
			<i>M.T.S. Rumbold</i>	
			Squadron Leader, Commanding	
			<u>No. 263 Squadron, R.A.F.</u>	

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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
April, 1945				
B.89 Holland	1 st		The days operation consisted of two armed recces. The aircraft took off in pairs, the first at 12.30 hours, on a recce of Enschede-Almelo-Coervoden area. They located 5 barges south of Lingen which they attacked, claiming one damaged. The second pair were airborne at 13.35 hours and attacked 3 stationary M.T., of which they claim to have destroyed destroyed 2 and damaged 1. Official notification is received that F/Sgt J. Quigley has been appointed to a commission.	
"	2 nd		A big show is laid on to attack a telephone exchange south east of Utrecht. 197 Squadron also takes part in the attack, the whole formation being led by W/C Deall. The target consisted of several buildings, 2 of them being allotted to 263 Squadron. Direct hits by salvoes of rockets were scored on both buildings and were soon obscured by smoke making it difficult to accurately judge results. It was the general belief that they had been severely damaged. Three new pilots joined the Squadron, namely, W/O L. Saunders, F/Sgt W.R. Williams and Sgt G.T. Carter.	
"	3 rd /6 th		There was not any flying on these four days due to bad weather.	
"	7 th		There were two operations carried out on this day, the weather having improved considerably. The first target was a train that had been brought to a standstill by 266 Squadron. The attack was pressed home by 8 aircraft and 40 direct hits with R/P were scored and then well strafed with cannon. There was an explosion and 5 out of the 8 aircraft were hit and damaged by debris. They all got back without mishap. The second target was strong points, guns and troops south east of Amsterdam. Another 8 aircraft took part in this operation and were airborne at 15.15 hours. Several attacks were made in the target area with R/P and cannon, but no movement was seen. There was some light flak and W/O R.W. Ainsley was hit and baled out well inside our lines. He returned unhurt later in the evening.	
"	8 th		Early in the day the weather again prevented any operational flying but it cleared later enabling 8 aircraft to take off at 18.25 hours to attack a factory near Deventer. Several direct hits with salvoes of rockets were scored. F/O E.J. Whitfield was hit by flak over the target and had to bale out but landed safely in our lines and later returned to the Squadron.	
"	9 th		Again the day opened up with very poor weather and no operations were carried out. In the afternoon however, 4 aircraft were detailed to carry out a demonstration attack with rockets on a dummy Japanese type of pillbox which consisted of a pit or dugout, size approx. 10' x 3'. The shooting was good despite poor visibility and several very near misses were scored, but as there were not any direct hits the demonstration was not a success.	
"	10 th		The weather improved considerably enabling 4 operations to be carried out. The first was to attack water transport near Texel. A barge of about 400 tons was seen and attacked with R/P and cannon strafed. It was left smoking and beached with its bows out of the water. The second show was to attack a battalion H.Q. in Arnhem. 12 aircraft took off at 15.40 hours led. by W/C. Deall. Many direct hits by salvoes of rockets were claimed and the target was seen obscured by smoke and brick dust which prevented detailed observation at the time. Photographs taken a few hours later, however, revealed that the whole building had been gutted. The last two operation for the day each by 4 aircraft were on gun positions south west of Deveter. All R/P were in target area and afterwards well strafed.	

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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
April, 1945				
B.105 Germany	18 th		Another very hectic day with plenty of targets. The first 2 operations were against shipping in the Borkum area. 2 vessels of approx. 3000 tons were attacked and direct hits scored with R/P	
			salvoes. One was believed to be sinking. A tug was also severely damaged. The third operation was	
			army support, and the target was 2 x 80 mm S.E. of Amersfoort. Attacks were made with R/P and	
			cannon all well within the target area, but no movement was seen and no results could be observed.	
			F/O W.H. Ramsey was admitted to Sick Quarters as a result of injuries sustained in a motor	
			accident which occurred when he was proceeding to the 25 th British Hospital to visit F/O Devey.	
			The extent of his injuries, although not serious, will entail his absence from the Squadron for at	
			least 2 or 3 months.	
B.105	19 th		The Squadron was kept busy all day with 5 operations of which three were in close support of the	
			army. The first, at 10.00 hours, was to attack dug in positions S. of Pappenburg. 8 aircraft took	
			part and rippled the target area with R/P also cannon strafed. Later, at 12.00 hours, 8 aircraft	
			working in pairs winkled two roads from Dewecht to the Zwischenahner Late with R/P and cannon.	
			Several buildings were damaged and left burning. The third operation was to attack coastal vessels	
			S.E. of Wargeerooge. 8 aircraft took xxxx off at 14.25 hours and located 17+ vessels stationary	
			inshore in the region N.W. of Wilhemshaven. They varied in size from 200 tons to one of 4000 tons	
			in the centre and at least 5 of them were flak ships. An attack was made on the south end of the	
			convoy with R/P and cannon, damaging one ship of 1500 tons which was thought to be left sinking,	
			and another which was left smoking. There was intense flak opposition. At 17.05 hours a further 6	
			aircraft took off to attack hips off the island of Terschelling. Hits with R/P were scored on 2 of	
			approx. 1000 tons, one of which exploded throwing debris to a height of 2000' slightly damaging	
			one aircraft. The other ship was left sinking. The last target for the day was in close support of	
			the army, to attack a strong point in the Pappenburg area. The target was well rippled with R/P,	
			also strafed with cannon. Several buildings received direct hits, one of which was followed by a	
			sheet of yellow flame.	
"	20 th		Only one operation today and that was to attack 8/9 coastal vessels at Cuxshaven. 7 aircraft took	
			off at 12.15 hours, the target was located and an attack made. One cargo ship of approx. 1800/2000	
			tons received a direct hit by a salvo of rockets and was left burning furiously. Two minesweepers	
			were severely damaged and what was thought to be an oil tanker received 2 direct hits with R/P	
			and was well strafed with cannon. Official notification was received of W/O J.J. Morgan's	
			appointment to a commission. W/O D. Coles joined the Squadron on posting from 193 Sqdn.	
"	21 st		The day opened with pouring rain and low cloud and this kept up during the whole day and no	
			operations were possible.	
"	22 nd		Weather still duff so operations again impossible. The Squadron received the very good news that	
			W/O R.A. Richardson reported missing on 19 th March, 1945, had returned to U.K. He had been rather	
			badly burned and the Germans had placed him in Zwolle hospital which was later overrun by our	
			troop, and he was evacuated to the U.K. The whole Squadron wish him a speedy recovery.	
"	23 rd		Only one operation was laid on and this was abortive due to weather.	
"	24 th		Two sections of 4 took off at 13.40 hours on a train strike. The first section returned owing to	
			bad weather. The second section attacked 2 Ju.88's on the ground at Andorf but could only claim	
			very near misses with 4 R/P.	

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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	May, 1945			
B.111 Germany	1 st		The weather continues too poor for operations and most of the day is spent in making ourselves comfortable in the new quarters. News comes through that Hitler is dead resulting in much celebrating.	
"	2 nd		Still no flying owing to weather.	
"	3 rd		The weather is still poor by 8 aircraft take off at 11.35 hours to attack shipping in Lubeck Bay. The operation was abortive due to weather. Better results attended the next attempt by 8 aircraft that took off at 15.16 hours to attack shipping in Neustadt Bay. A 10.000 ton motor vessel was hit amidships and left smoking. Another motor vessel of 12,000 tons was seen to be on fire from stem to stern.	
"	4 th		At 04.30 hours this morning the C.O and eleven others were called to go to B.150 to operate from there. On arrival they found an assembly of the majority of 84 Group and a large percentage of 83 Group, all awaiting the "kick-off". However, the weather proved unfit for Ops, so our aircraft returned to base at 11.00 hours. Later in the day an interesting diversion was created when a German light aircraft - a Bucker 181 - containing 2 Jerry pilots landed at our base to give themselves up. The Huns fighting against the British and Canadian Forces asked to surrender tonight giving a good cause for a few drinks to be had by most of the station personnel.	
"	5 th		The Hun in N.W. Germany, Holland and Denmark surrendered unconditionally to Field Marshall Montgomery and the cease fire was given at 08.00 hours this morning. Apart from a few airtests there was no flying. One of our N.C.O. pilots, W/O. "Archie" Bury is to be married on the 8 th . inst. and a lot of the pilots spent some time in composing "congratulatory" telegrams to him.	
"	6 th		P/O. Morgan ("Dave"), returned to base this morning after having spent a few days as a P.O.W. He was surrounded and plied with questions, akward and otherwise, regarding his "lot". He had quite a lot of interesting information to divulge which was quickly "lapped" up by the "boys". Apart from that event nothing else of importance occurred for the rest of the day.	
"	7 th		Twelve aircraft were sent out in formation over the old front line to display our "might" to a general who was rather reluctant to surrender. The desired effect was obtained! P/O D.E. Morgan went home on leave - "ggod show".	
"	8 th		<u>"V E" DAY.</u> The war for all practical purposes is now over. Cessation of hostilities being w.e.f. 23.59 hours tonight. The officers waited upon the airmen at lunch, and wound up the day with a champagne dinner in their own mess. A good time was had by all. "Archie" Bury picked the proper day to get married!	
"	9 th		No work today, being an official day off. Two pilots and the Squadron E.O. played football for the Squadron in the afternoon, very hot and very tiring work.	
"	10 th		This Squadron led the Wing on a big practice fly past to prepare for the Victory Fly Past. 12 of our aircraft took part. Nothing doing for the rest of the day.	

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
	May, 1945			
B.111 Germany	10 th		A Squadron formation (12 aircraft) took off, but due to the very bad visibility was compelled to return to base immediately.	
			The N.C.Os held a birthday part in their Mess in the evening and several officers were invited.	
			The celebrations were long and cheery.	
"	12 th		The officers played the S.N.C.Os. at soccer today. The score was just as it should be after a very fair game - 3-3.	
			P/O J. Quigley appointed Sports Officer and already is proving very keen.	
"	13 th		General Thanksgiving Day. All pilots attended the service at the station church to listen to a good sermon by the Reverend Davies our C. of E. Padre.	
"	14 th		A few air tests were carried out, but very little flying done generally.	
			F/Sgt J. Irvine promoted to rank of W/O w.e.f. 5.5.45.	
"	15 th	Twelve aircraft in formation assisted in the display given by the Group. The whole gaggle flew over Linggen, Utrecht, Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Zwolle. Apart from this magnificent show there was little more doing for the day.		
			F/O W.H. Ramsey and F.O. C.J. Devey posted non-effective sick 10.5.45. Bad luck. Hope they return.	
"	16 th		Yesterday's formation flying repeated today. This time over Hanover, Bremen, Wilhelmshaven and Emden. A few pilots XXX partook in sports this afternoon, but the majority sun-bathed.	
"	17 th		Pilots started doing Orderly Officer duty today. The first lucky gentleman, P/O J.J. Morgan, kicks off for "A" Flight.	
"	18 th		No flying at all today some of the pilots returned from a good run to Amsterdam and had a lot of interesting things to say.	
"	19 th		The Wing did two practice fly pasts. One in the morning and the other this afternoon. The lucky people to have a grand stand view of the whole thing were G.C.C.	
			F/Lt W.J. Fowler fell into the water when the yacht he was sailing capsized on Dummer Lake. He swam for his life until he found that he was thrashing madly in 3 feet of water!	
"	20 th		Another practice fly past to prepare for the show tomorrow. No further flying.	
"	21 st		The big show did not materialise due to low cloud and occasional cloud. Hard luck!	
			No flying today.	
"	22 nd		"A" Flight carried out a practice show in the morning. Apart from that and a few air tests there was no further flying. The N.C.Os. think that we may be staying here because hot water has been "laid on" in the officers' quarters!	
"	23 rd		We were called for briefing three times today for a fly past, but it did not come off, so there was nothing doing all day.	

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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
B.111 Germany	May, 1945 24 th		All the Squadron was called at 06.30 hours. The proposed formation was scrubbed however, about 07.30 hours, so again nothing doing.	
"	25 th		No flying. No nothing. F/O R. Logan promoted F/Lt. w.e.f. 2.4.45 and P/O D.E. Morgan promoted F/O w.e.f. 14.3.45. Good show.	
"	26 th		Nothing doing today.	
"	27 th		We were called at 05.30 hours for another sort of formation flying. We flew over Celle to herald the arrival of 84 Group H.Q. Released for the rest of the day.	
"	28 th		A low level cross country flight was laid on led by F/Lt. E.A. Tennant, and they completed the course in fine style. No other flying for the day.	
"	29 th		Another 8 aircraft on a cross country today. One flew on high level and the other section low level Two accidents on landing. One aircraft came in and collapsed an oleo leg, the other one bent a prop blade tip. W/O M. Luck posted to P.R.C. Brighton to await the boat New Zealand bound. Good luck, Lucky.	
"	30 th		No flying. A few pilots were allowed to go to Amsterdam to study the bombing of the 83 Corps H.Q.	
"	31 st		No flying due to "duff" weather again.	
			See appendix for summary of movements and operations.	
			M.T.S. RumboId	
			Squadron Leader, Commanding	
			No. 263 Squadron, R.A.F.	

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Of (Unit or Formation) No. 263 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
			A P P E N D I X	
			The following is a brief summary of the movements of the Squadron from 1 st January, 1945, to	
			31 st May, 145.	
			February 8 th , 1945 B.70 Antwerp to B.89 Mill, Holland.	
			April 16th, 1945 B.89 to B.105 Drope, Germany.	
			April 30th, 1945 B.105 to B.111 Ahlhorn, Germany	
			The following figures are for offensive operations carried out from 1 st January, 1945, to	
			"VE" Day 8 th May, 1945.	
			120 Offensive Operations. 546 Offensive Sorties.	
			4242 Rocket Projectiles	
			112 Fragmentation Rocket Projectiles	
			19 Incendiary " "	
			Total weight of R/P. 267,960 lbs. Approx. 117 tons.	