

Compiled by F/O. E.K. Broughton. (I.O.).

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W. 2042/1124 2004. 701 P.L. Ltd. 51-511

R.A.F. Form 540

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

Page No. 012.

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.

No. of pages used for day

of (Unit or Formation) 616 SQUADRON.

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
B.77.	1.4.45		17 Meteor Aircraft left Andrews Field on 31st March refuelling at Manston. One aircraft remained at Manston owing engine trouble, the remainder landing at Melsbroek Belgium where they remained overnight. By midday 9 aircraft landed at B.77, the pilots were W/Oir. A. McDowell DEM, S/Ldr. L.W. Watts DFC, F/Lt. G. Clegg, F/Lt. J.K. Rodger, F/O. A. Stodhart, F/Sgt. G. Amor, F/Sgt. E. Epps, F/Sgt. E. May and F/Sgt. B. Cartmel. Later the Spitfire V and Oxford landed with F/Lt. R.C. Gosling, F/O. H. Miller and F/O. I.T. Wilson respectively. Two Meteors remained at Melsbroek owing engine trouble.	
	2nd.		Easter Monday. Squadron settling down to life in Holland. Much artillery activity seen at night on enemy lines only 10 miles to the North. Much to be done today arranging flights and dispersals. Squadron teamed into two flights. "A" Flight: S/Ldr. L.W. Watts DFC, F/Lt. J.K. Rodger, F/Lt. T.G. Clegg, F/Lt. R.C. Gosling, F/Lt. A.G.P. Jennings, F/O. A. Stodhart, F/O. I.T. Wilson, F/O. H.J. Moon, W/O. T. Woodacre, W/O. F.G. Packer, F/Sgt. B. Cartmel, F/Sgt. G. Amor and F/Sgt. E. Epps. "B" Flight: S/Ldr. D.A. Barry, F/Lt. M. Cooper (Kenya) F/Lt. J. Kistruck, F/Lt. M.M. Mullenders (Belgium) F/Lt. G.H. Hobson, F/O. T.D. Dean, F/O. K.G. Ridley DEM, F/O. H. Miller, F/O. R. George, W/O. G. Wilkes, F/Sgt. R. Easy, F/Sgt. P. Watts.	
	3rd.		From 'first light' the Squadron took over duties of 'Pink Section' and had two aircraft at standby on runway. At 16.50 hours 2 Reds were fired from Flying Control and the first British Jet Aircraft "Scrambled" from European Theatre Operations. F/Lt. M. Cooper (Kenya) and F/O. T.D. Dean were pilots. Meteors were "vectored" to patrol Brussels area at 15,000 feet. Both aircraft landed 17.20 hours after uneventful Patrol. It was later confirmed by 84 Group G.C.O. the 'plane' were friendly. However the first "Scramble" keyed up the Squadron now anticipating plenty of action.	
	4th.	10.25/ 11.15/ 12.00/ 12.55.	Cloudy and cold. "Pink" Section were Scrambled at 10.25 hours. Pilots were W/O. G. Wilkes and F/Sgt. E. EASY who made uneventful Patrol of Brussels area at 15,000 feet. At 12.00 hours F/Lt. M. Cooper and F/Sgt. P. Watts flew on uneventful Scramble over Brussels at	

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
B.77.	4th.		10,000 feet. Some local flying during the afternoon, one section flying over Namajegan were fired at by the A.A. but Meteors were not damaged and made off before the gunners could fire again - the pilots now avoid the area as one would a plague.	
	5th.		Rain and low cloud greeted the day, later some local flying when the weather cleared.	
	6th.		No operational flying. Some local flying - again the Meteors were fired at while over Sindhoven, another spot to avoid until the A.A. aircraft recognition is 100%. A Dutchman (civilian) was seen wandering around the Meteor aircraft at "A" Flight dispersal. On being challenged to produce identity papers the Dutchman immediately began to show fight - a bad thing (for the Dutchman) a quick one two from the pilots and the Dutchman was taking a ride under escort to the nearest Police Centre.	
	7th.		One Scramble today. "Pink" Section (P/O. K. Ridley DEM) and P/O. R. George] took off at 15.20 and were vectored to Brussels area at 20,000 feet. Pilots returned with NIL report. The Squadron Operations Room started today - as 135 Wing left for B.91. Local flying during the day. The Officers Mess consisted of three small houses on main Breda/Tilberg road, one room being put aside as Mess and Bar. Some hard work by Pilots together with odd furniture, decorations and wall sketches by the I.O. completed a very cosy Bar - it was duly 'Christened' at night.	
	8th.		Heavy ground mist during the morning. State:- 1 Section 30 minutes. Soon after lunch the mist had lifted and weather was warm and with cloudless sky. P/Lt. T.G. Glegg and P/Sgt. B. Cartmel were Scrambled by 84 G.C.C. to Patrol Antwerp/Brussels area at 10,000 feet. P/Lt. T.G. Glegg returned after 15 minutes with mechanical trouble. P/Sgt. B. Cartmel landed at 14.50 hours with NIL report.	
	9th.		Morning ground mist clearing towards noon to fine and warm. W/Odr. A. McDowall flew to B.91 to prepare for Squadron move. Capt. Clarke (A.L.O. of 135 Wing) remains with 616 Squadron as A.L.O. "Pink Section" (P/Lt G.N. Hobson and P/O. R. George) were scrambled at 18.25 hours, unfortunately some aircraft of 149 Wing not cleared of runway delayed "Pink Section" taking off for a few minutes, about five minutes after being airborne P/O. R. George flying at 24,000 feet saw a single smoke	

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of (Unit or Formation) 616 SQUADRON. No. of pages used for day _____

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about five minutes after being airborne P/O. R. George flying at 24,000 feet saw a single smoke

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of (Unit or Formation) 616 SQUADRON.

No. of pages used for day

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	SECRET.	References to Appendices
B.77.	9th Ctd.		trail at 30,000 feet direction NE/SW. P/O. R. George was too far behind to see aircraft, later B4 Group reported that the smoke trail was thought to be enemy Jet aircraft. The four Meteors Mk.III White Camouflage were flown back to Colerne by F/Lt. R.C. Goaling, F/Lt. M. Cooper, F/Sgt. E. Easy and W/O. F.G. Packer.		
	10th.		Weather fine and warm with slight morning haze. Nothing to report.		
	11th.		Two uneventful Scrambles. Both Sections were vectored to Patrol Brussels/Antwerp area at 15,000 feet. Sate during the day: One section Readiness (on runway) One section 15 minutes.		
	12th.		News today of Squadron move - this time to B.91 (few miles south of Nijmegen). A busy day for all packing and preparing to move.		
B.91.	13th.		Weather overcast with some rain. At 10.30 hours 10 Meteors took off and led by W/Oir. A. McDowell DFM flew in formation to B.91. At 11.00 hours the convoy started off. By evening all tents had been pitched in Pine open woods surrounding the airfield. B.91 consisted of one metal strip of 1500 yards. Squadron took over "Pink" S section State immediately on arrival. Soon after dusk heavy gunfire was heard from direction of Nijmegen where Canadian First Army were attempting to break through to North of Holland. News received of death of President Roosevelt.		
	14th.		Weather overcast till late afternoon. One "Pink" section at readiness, one section at 15 minutes. Everybody working hard to clear space for tents. No operational flying. Dry weather favoured Squadron settling down to camp life. During the evening all pilots assembled to be briefed by Commanding Officer on possibility of Meteors being used in armed Recon flights over North Holland.		
	15th.		Weather overcast during whole day. No operational flying. W/Oir. A. McDowell DFM made one flight during the afternoon. Squadron Adjutant (F/Lt. R.P. Howell) briefed ground crew in readiness for yet another move. The Allied Front now moving hourly Eastward across Germany means that Fighter Squadrons soon find their Bases out of range of enemy targets.		
	16th.		Sections of Squadron today, make their debut in OPERATIONAL Area. An area of Western Holland bounded by Utrecht/Amsterdam/Meiden/Wageningen. First section: S/Ldr. L.W. Watts DFC, S/O. I.T. Wilson, W/O. F. Packer and		

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	SECRET.	References to Appendices
B,91	16th	Contd.	& r/Sgt. B. Cartwright. Second Section:- r/Lt. J.K. Rodger, r/Lt. A.G.P. Jennings, r/O. A. Stodhart and W/O. T. Woodacre. Apart from slight haze on ground perfect weather favoured the Jets on their first "show". no traffic or movement was observed on the roads. severe light flak was encountered by Second Section but all pilots made base without injury, no damage to aircraft.		
	17th.	14.15/18.45	Twent. three sorties flown today over Western Holland. r/Lt. M. Cooper (Sen.) triumphantly presented the Squadron first claim - first "Jet" pilot to spoil the area. in area, occupied Europe. r/Lt. M. Cooper attacked a large m/T near IJmuiden. Strikes were observed and the vehicle swung off the road and stopped. All the roads in area Rotterdam/IJmuiden/Amsterdam/Utrecht were carefully searched for any targets, but remainder of Section returned with all reports. At 19.30 hours Squadron reassess except "Pink" Section at readiness.		
	18th.		Weather continues fine and warm - making life under canvas very pleasant. Everybody looking very fit and suntanned. no flying until midday owing to ground haze. At 12.15 hours the first section led by W/Cdr. A. McDowell DFC took off for Base of Western Holland. Section covered the area at 6000 feet without observing any traffic movement. A further 20 sorties were flown and further claims were recorded. r/Lt. M. Cooper (Sen.) was m/T destroyed west of Woerden. W/O. G. Wilkes and Staff car destroyed at Woerden. r/Lt. J.K. Rodger and Staff car destroyed Utrecht. Again intense flak was encountered at 3 - 5000 feet. flak was reported bursting at same height as meteors but always well behind - "a good thing because the pilots", proving the meteors speed is forcing the glimmers. Today the B.S.C news bulletin included a reference to "British Jets in action in Holland".		
	19th.		fine weather continues - clear skies and warm. more success were said today - 16 sorties in all. This time in sections of two aircraft. Pilots flying today were W/Cdr. A. McDowell DFC, r/O. I.T. Wilson, r/Lt. M.M. Mullenders (Belgian), r/Lt. G.M. Hobson, r/Lt. M. Cooper (Sen.) W/O. Wilkes, G. S/Lt. D.A. Barr,		

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OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

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16 sorties in all. This time in sections of two aircraft. Pilots flying today were W/Cdr. A. McDowall DFC, F/O. I.T. Wilson, F/Lt. M.H. Mullenders (Belgian), F/Lt. G.S. Hobson, F/Lt. M. Cooper (Kenya) W/O. Wilkes, G, S/Ldr. D.A. Barr,

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(Unit or Formation) 616 Squadron. R.A.F. D.I.A.

No. of pages used for day

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	SECRET.	References to Appendices
B.91	19th Contd.		F/O. R. George, F/Sgt. Watts, P, F/O. T.D. Dean, F/O. H.J. soon, F/Lt. R.G. Gosling, W/O. Kacker, F.G. and F/Lt. J.F. Aistrack, were enemy targets were found and destroyed. Today's claims were:- F/Lt. M. Cooper (Kenya) on Armoured Car near Gouda with only two guns working. F/Lt. M. Cooper fired a long burst and saw the turret fly off. F/Lt. G.S. Hobson and F/Lt. J.F. Aistrack shared a W/T destroyed near Hoogwaard. Flak was again reported but no casualties to pilots or aircraft.		
B.109.	20th		At another Squadron move to catch up with the fast moving Allied line Eastwards. Early morning the convo, left for Quakenbrücke (Germany) some 45 miles S/W of Bremen. About 11.00 hours 13 aircraft led by W/Cdr. A. McDowall DFC, leading the Squadron in the Commanding Officer landed the first British Jet aircraft in Germany. The rest of the Sq. spent unloading and making ready. Ever had, thrilled to be in Germany, but strict instructions issued to remind all that fraternisation with Germans forbidden.		
	21st.		Cloud and rain. Ever thing fixed and settled. The airfield in good condition though airfield buildings demolished. All personnel carry arms on airfield.		
	22nd.		no operational flying. Weather overcast with cloud at 1000 feet. Later when weather cleared W/Cdr. A. McDowall DFC took off for local flying. - the first British Jet to take off from German Airfield. By night aircraft were read. for operations.		
	23rd.	10.45/ 11.45	At another mile stone in history of Meteors - for today 4 Meteors took off to make Hecco of 'Area -' bounded by Bremen, the Frisian Islands/Sandau/Oldenburger. S/Ldr. L.H. Watts DFC. led the section, other pilots taking part were F/O. A.H. Stodhart, F/Lt. M.C. Gosling and F/O. H.J. soon. The Hecco proved uneventful - pilots flying into 10/10 cloud at 2000 feet and under.		
	24th.	11.15/ 12.16	rise with cloud at 3000 feet. The Squadron briefed for Armed Hecco of Area and to "beat up" Nordholz Airfield a few miles south of Cuxhaven. First Section of 4 officers was led by W/Cdr. A. McDowall DFC. flying out of the		

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	SECRET.	References to Appendices
H.109.	24th	Contd.	and at 8000 feet the Commanding Officer led the section down to attack - result 1 Ju.88 damaged on the ground and 1 m/T to W/Cdr. A. McDowall DFC. Two petrol tankers and Airfield buildings to r/O. I.T. Wilson, 12 m/Ts, carriages were straddled, r/O. H.V. Moon who also silenced a gun post with one long burst. No doubt men, or the Luftwaffe were keen to see the first British Jet! r/O. T.G. Clegg found a large truck full of troops on the airfield, and diving in low gave them all a fine head on view. Unfortunately for the troops all four cannons were blazing, now the troops are not alive to benefit from their aircraft recognition. r/O. I.T. Wilson did a fine job coming back to base on one engine. Another section led by S/Ldr. L.W. Watts DFC flew to Nordholz in the afternoon with r/O. J.K. Rodger and r/O. G.H. Hobson. S/Ldr. L.W. Watts DFC, claimed one m/T and 1 airfield building while r/O. J.K. Rodger attacked a flak post. Intense flak from Nordholz and as one pilot said "I could have put my wheels down and taxied across". However no injuries were reported though 2 aircraft received slight damage. Two other sections made Beases in area '1'. S/Ldr. D.A. Carr, & r/O T.D. Dean damaged an m/T near Witmund. The other Beases proved uneventful.		
	14.15/				DFC
	15.00				
	25th		"A" part, moved off to H.152 Passburg travelling overnight, Squadron being attached to 122 Wing 83 Group for operational purposes.		
	26th		Aircraft arrived at H.152 without event.		
	27th		No flying today. Weather U/S.		
	28th	15.00/16.05	2 Beases flown covering Area "1" without event.		
	29th	13.20/14.45	Patrols were carried out in pairs during the day. S/Ldr. L.W. Watts DFC and r/Sgt. Cartmel. S., reported missing. Information received through G.C.C. that Spitfire pilots heard S/Ldr. L.W. Watts DFC calling r/Sgt. Cartmel S to come closer as he was going into cloud, shortly afterwards saw large explosion in air.		
	30th		Uneventful patrols.		

W.C. Carr
Wing Commander, Commanding.
516 Squadron, RAF, BA.

WD 25/10/45 2000 11/10 C.S.L. 11/700

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

DETAIL OF WORK CARRIED OUT
By 516 Squadron, RAF, BA.
For the Month of APRIL 1945.

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APPENDIX **RAF FORM 341**

PAGE No. ONE

(1478-211) W/ 2000-1111 for 811 Y.S. 700
(1478-211) W/ 2000-1111 for 811 Y.S. 700