

R.A.F. Form 540

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

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

Page No. _____

No. 515 (County of Surrey) Squadron.
of (Unit or Formation)

No. of pages used for day _____

Place	Date 1941	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
MANSTON.	1. Oct.		Dawn and dusk patrols each by two aircraft. The almost daily 'beatup' this time was an attack on eight 'E' boats off Dieppe which were successfully shot up. Several of them were stationary, and flame and smoke were seen coming from one of the boats as the Squadron left the scene. One section patrolled base but did not sight any enemy aircraft. Training included local formation flying by two sections of three. There were also two air tests.	
	2nd Oct.		Dawn and dusk patrols proceeded without incident as usual. The day's inactivity consisted only of one attack by four aircraft on a 80/100 foot armoured barge off Knocke. It was left well down in the water and smoking; one pilot saw a glow of fire coming from it. A gun emplacement on the shore was also attacked. There were two air tests, local formation flying by three aircraft, and a sector recon by two aircraft. One section patrolled base for 15 minutes and two sections patrolled from Remsgate to Deal for 55 minutes. Both patrols were uneventful. In the evening the Squadron went to Canterbury to see the news reel which included the Prime Minister's visit to the Squadron. The Commanding Officer was apparently quite the most potential film star.	
	3rd Oct.		The day's proceedings commenced with a most successful sweep up the French coast. It was intended to go from Calais up to Ostende but we went only as far as Gravelines where a nice target consisting of seven flakships and a 5/800 ton M/V presented itself. The first attack silenced the flakships and, for once there was no flak from the shore, and there was more time to really do a good job. Result, one 80 foot flakboat sunk, three 120 foot flakboats on fire; one 800 ton M/V on fire, three flakships damaged. The whole job took 30 minutes. Afterwards a good breakfast was had by all. Rounds fired: 14,710 m/g, 750 - 20 mm. Apart from the dusk patrol there was no further operational activity. Local formation flying was carried out by two aircraft, low firing cannon firing by two aircraft and there was one air test.	
	4th Oct.		Owing to weather there was only one operational flight - a shipping recon at 0700 hours to Dunkerque via Gris Nez during which nothing was seen. In the afternoon a football match at Deon House was organised.	
	5th Oct.		Weather again interfered with operations. Total flying for the day consisted of dawn patrol and a weather recon.	
	6th Oct.		The day opened with a weather test and was followed by an offensive patrol of four aircraft up the coast. At Ostende four camouflaged armed trawlers about 150 tons each, were sighted and effectively attacked. Owing to haze only three of our aircraft attacked, but in spite of that pieces of superstructure were seen to come away from one vessel which was smoking furiously and appeared to be sinking. This trawler was claimed as almost certainly sunk and two others as	
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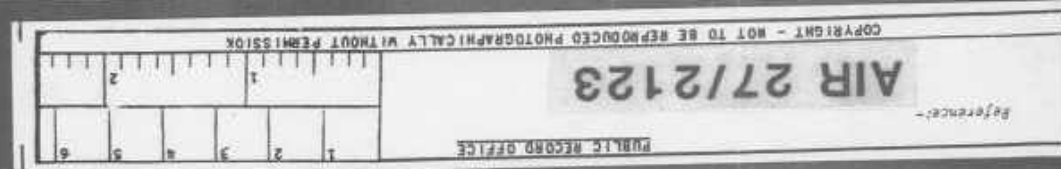
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WANSTON.	6th Oct.		damaged. Sergeant Chaloupka, a Czech, who had become very popular with us all in the short time he had been with us, was hit during the engagement and was heard to say that he might have to bail out. He was neither seen or heard again, but it is possible that he may have been picked up by the enemy as he was very close in shore. Three of our Hurricanes were flown to Sutton Bridge en route for Sealand and we pressed Russia. May they leave their 'Grenlines' behind. Local flying was carried out by five aircraft, and the day's flying was wound up with the usual dusk patrol.	
	7th Oct.		A completely blank day. A general knowledge paper presented by the Squadron Intelligence Officer on subjects connected with navigation, recognition, features of the Sector, R/T procedure etc., went over quite well - a barometer of everyone's high spirits. Pilot Officers Raabjeorn and Mollstad joined No. 615 Squadron from No. 881 Norwegian Squadron.	
	8th Oct.		Again no flying by the Squadron. Two more Norwegians arrived to join the Squadron: Pilot Officers Piltinrud and Frem, from No. 288 Squadron. Glad to have them. We now have personnel in the Squadron from South Africa, Rhodesia, Argentine, Australia, U.S.A., Canada, Malaya, N. Ireland, Norway, England, Scotland as well as six Free French pilots. Flying personnel come from 10 different lands.	
	9th Oct.		The day opened with two weather tests and then we got down to business, or rather began to look for it. The Squadron set out to sweep up the French and Belgian coasts and to see what could be seen apart from flak. Off Ostende they found a 140 foot barge, and 800 ton M/V and a 240 feet 1,500 ton M/V with a flakship and a BR boat for company. The C.O. climbed into cloud and from this cover dived onto the ships. When the attack had finished the 800 ton vessel which was attacked four times was left damaged and smoking, the 1,500 tonner attacked eight times was belching steam, black and white smoke and was burning. The flakship was shot up by four aircraft and was claimed as damaged. The A.A. battery on the harbour entrance was attacked once. Squadron Leader Gillan flew right up the harbour and shot up a 800 ton barge and then flew into the Nouveau Bassin and destroyed one and damaged another He 59 seaplane on the water. He then attacked a hangar and men running towards it. In all 8883 rounds of .303 rounds were fired and 645 of 20 mm. Local flying was carried out by six aircraft. Three convoy patrols were also flown. It was subsequently learned that the second He 59 was set on fire by Squadron Leader Gillan and has been given as an 'officially' destroyed.	
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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
MANSTON.	10th Oct.		Flying commenced with a shipping recon down the 'married men's' side, down to Dieppe, but the four aircraft by no means reached Fecamp owing to weather and returned. Blue section was scrambled to intercept but in spite of several vectors made no contact. Six aircraft went to look out for some small vessels reported off Gravelines, trawling East, but nothing was seen. Four aircraft carried out a dusk convey patrol. Other flying included a weather test and cannon firing practice each by one aircraft.	
	11 Oct.		Proceedings commenced with a before breakfast sweep up the 'single men's' side of the coast to Ostende with three Airacobras of No. 601 Squadron. Nothing of interest was seen except 'Flak'. Later practice attacks were carried out with the new Hurricane bombers of No. 607 Squadron, with whom we are looking forward to some good parties. Two Sections were scrambled to patrol base both uneventfully. There was one air test. Hope we shall get some brand new aircraft like No. 607 Squadron. Dusk patrol by two aircraft.	
	12 Oct.		Dawn patrol by two aircraft. Two practice flights, each with six aircraft were made with No. 607 Squadron and later a further practice was carried out with three of No. 615 Squadron aircraft. All very interesting. F/Lt. Hage flew one of the Hurricane bombers - and liked it immensely, especially bombing a wreck. Dusk patrol by two aircraft.	
	13 Oct.		Dawn patrol by two aircraft. A further practice by six aircraft with No. 607 Squadron. Two Lysander escorts were carried out by the Squadron, each by five aircraft. 'B' Flight patrol led by P/O Aldous, and found a dinghy and had the satisfaction of seeing the pilot fished out by an A.S.R. launch. 'A' Flight were not so lucky, were not so lucky, but they much admired the pluck of the Lysander pilot in going close inshore around the Gris Nez area. Flak meant nothing to him, it would seem. Two aircraft were despatched to bring 'A' Flight back as R/T reception between them and base was not good. Dusk patrol by two aircraft.	
	14 Oct.		Dawn patrol by two aircraft, followed by a shipping sweep up the coast to Ostende. The C.O. sighted a camouflaged guard ship which had the temerity to fire at the formation and then off Ostende, a He 59 was seen flying low in a S.W. direction off shore. Scitiaux and Marider got in two attacks before the pack arrived, by which time it had thought best to come down on the sea. It was bad judgement because it was underwater. It had over 6,000 rounds of M/G and 460 rounds of 20 mm squirted at it. That makes three He 59s in six days. Four aircraft carried out a practice with No. 607 Squadron and Green Section scrambled base, but did not get onto anything. Later eight aircraft toured the 'married' side down to Dieppe, and all pilots got in at least one burst at a 100 ton Guard Ship near Dieppe, which was left smoking. Nothing else was seen. P/O W. Hopkins (U.S.A.) posted to Biggin Hill.	
	15 Oct.		Before breakfast three aircraft went out with a view to escorting some of our bombers home, but instead when at 4,000 feet off Blankenberge, 4 Me 109 arrived. In the ensuing dog fight P/O McCormack probably destroyed a 109E. (Continued).	

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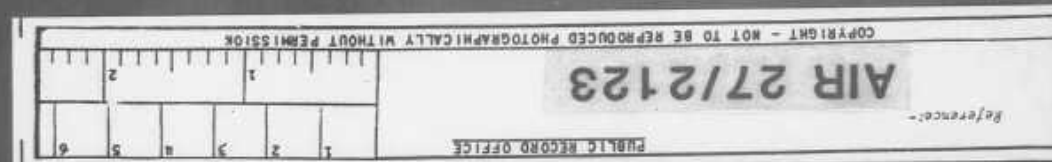
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15 MAN TON.	15 Oct	(Cont)	It was seen by P/O Piltingrud to go spiralling down, apparently out of control and pouring black smoke from 2,000 feet. Both McCormack's and Piltingrud's aircraft were shot up quite a bit, especially the former whose port wing was hit by cannon. Piltingrud lost most of his instrument and made a stout effort to land at Calais-Marck aerodrome, but in the end he thought Manston safer and arrived an hour and ten minutes after the other two aircraft. Two aircraft patrolled base undisturbed. Two aircraft were air tested, one carried out cannon practice and six aircraft did practice with No. 607 Squadron bombers. The C.O. went to Hawkinge and the dusk patrol wound up the day.	
	16 Oct.		Dawn patrol by two aircraft, and before breakfast a sweep to Ostende. Owing to high wind at sea level our eight aircraft arrived at Walcheren Island, South of Zeuteland, instead of Ostend. They preceded in land and shot up a barge. After visiting Vlissingen aerodrome, where there were no targets a petrol storage tank was set on fire, not a 3,000 ton ship being repaired. This was attacked by F/Lt. Hugs, and riveters fell off into the deck. South of Flushing a motor boat or minesweeper was attacked and left smoking and six flakships off Kneke were also set on; one is claimed as damaged. A searchlight post where there were seven men in white clothes was shot up by F/Lt. Scitivaux while F/O Meuchette shot up a gun position and silenced it. The formation encountered intense flak off Flushing and it is presumed that it was here that F/O Aldous, who did not return, was hit. Eric Aldous joined the Squadron a few weeks before we left Valley and during that time in his quiet unobtrusive way he had become extremely popular. His keenness was an example and an inspiration to all. Both the Squadron and the Service can ill-afford to lose him. Later six aircraft carried out a practice with No. 607 Squadron. Our aircraft practised cannon firing and the dusk patrol concluded the day's flying. F/Lt. Beaumont, 'B' Flight Commander posted to Hornchurch supernumerary, and P/O Slade of 'A' Flight put in charge of 'B' Flight.	
	17 Oct.		Dawn patrol by two aircraft followed by a practice run with No. 607 Sqdn bomber Hurricanes, in which 12 MW aircraft participated. Three aircraft carried out sector recon and one aircraft was air tested. In the afternoon the C.O. led eight aircraft to the Kneke area where four armed trawlers of 2/300 tons were sighted. Two, outside the mole, were attacked by at least four aircraft each and both were heavily damaged and on fire. A gun position on the mole was dealt with too. Peak of all kinds was intense and two of our aircraft were hit. S/Ldr. Gillam was wounded in the feet, but not, fortunately, seriously. The dusk patrol brought the day's flying to a close.	
	18 Oct.		On the 18th October, 1941 Sir Archibald Sinclair, the Secretary of State for Air, accompanied by his A.D.C. Group Captain Greig made a visit to our Dispersal Point in the afternoon. He was introduced to all the pilots	158
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MANSTON.	18 Oct. (Cont)		<p>/pilots by the C.O., and showed great interest in the many countries represented. After chatting with the lads, Sir Archibald made a short speech in which he expressed appreciation of our work here, and then stressed the value the work the Air Force was doing to compel the Hun to keep a large fighting force on the Western Front. After wishing us "good luck and good hunting", Sir Archibald and Group Capt. Greig went out to examine our aircraft.</p> <p>A before breakfast convoy patrol of two aircraft was made and the usual dusk patrol in the evening. P/O Milnes and Sgt. Miller posted to No. 258 Squadron, who are, we believe en route for Russia. Sorry to part with Ambrose (Milnes) who had been with us since Kenley days.</p>		
	19 Oct.		<p>Dawn patrol, as usual, by two aircraft and then at 1030 hours a patrol by four aircraft led by P/O McCormack which had a chase with a Ju 88 at 1,500 feet. Sighted between Berck and Le Touquet, it apparently did not sight our aircraft until just South of Boulogne when it promptly went in land. If only our Hurricanes had a little more speed. Blue Section were scrambled uneventfully and local flying carried out by two aircraft. Three aircraft were air tested and the C.O. and Sgt. Carrell flew to Hornchurch and back. Dusk patrol by two aircraft.</p>		
	20 Oct.		<p>Dawn patrol two aircraft, also carried out a search for a dinghy. Nothing of any consequence happened. Two shipping races, one by four and a second by two aircraft were made, but neither found a target. There were four air tests, one scramble and two aircraft were up on local flying. Dusk patrol by two aircraft.</p>		
	21 Oct.		<p>Dawn patrol by two aircraft, followed by a sweep up the French and Belgium coasts by eight aircraft. Again nothing seen. In the afternoon after an early lunch eleven aircraft led by the C.O. carried out an unsuccessful search off Le Touquet for a baled out pilot who had taken part in a sweep earlier in the day. He was picked up by a Naval launch after 615 Squadron had guided it to the scene. One aircraft was air tested, and dusk landings were practised by two aircraft. Dusk patrols by two aircraft. Sergeant Aulisch joined the Squadron from 258 Squadron at Dehden. He comes from New Zealand.</p>		
	22 Oct.		<p>Proceedings commenced with another shipping sweep to Ostend and once more there was no target. We are beginning to think that 'Jerry' is finding things a little too dangerous, or else he is short of aircraft. Another new pilot - P/Sgt Goodenham from the Heston C.T.U., he had an hours practice flying. The convoy 'Yekel' going South had three Section of 615 aircraft looking after it until dusk, and subsequently two aircraft carried out dusk patrols. There was some suggestion that some Ju 87's might be paying a call, but they didn't - unfortunately.</p>		
	23 Oct.		<p>Apart from the usual dusk patrol - no dawn patrol today - there was no operational activity. Much rain. An air test, a sector race by one aircraft and a sector race by five aircraft up to Kenley and back, was all that happened, apart from a trip to Hawkinge in the Maggie kindly lent by 807 to take Sgt. Finn to collect one of our aircraft.</p>		

aircraft and a motor recon by five aircraft up to Henley and back, as all that happened, apart from a trip to Hawkinge in the Maggie kindly lent by 607 to take Sgt. Finn to collect one of our aircraft.

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Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
MANSTON.	23 Oct (Cont)		It is unfortunate, to say the least, that we possess neither a tiger nor a 'Maggie'. We must be the only Squadron that does not possess one in No. 11 Group.	
	24 Oct.		Dawn patrol by two aircraft. Four aircraft carried out a shipping recon to Cap d'Antifer but sighted no shipping. The C.O. flew to Levenfield for a few days leave. One aircraft was up on local flying, and the day finished with the dusk patrol.	
	25 Oct.		Dawn patrol by two aircraft. In the afternoon eight aircraft led by F/Lt. Hugs covered by 611 Squadron went down the French coast as far as Pecamp in the hope of finding some ships to attack. Again nothing turned up. Dusk patrol by two aircraft. Sgt. Valentine from S.H.Q. Tangmere joined the Squadron.	
	26 Oct.		The dawn patrol by two aircraft was followed by a 'Jim Crow' by two aircraft who sighted a 7,000 ton tanker in the outer harbour at Boulogne. Later eight aircraft went out on an A.S.R. patrol with two Lynxanders, but after searching for an hour and 30 minutes did not see anything. Two aircraft were local flying, and one section was scrambled but no E/A were located. Dusk patrol by two aircraft.	
	27 Oct.		The usual dawn patrol gave place to an early morning rhubarb operation to the seaplane basin at Ostend, where two He 59's were destroyed on water and a third damaged on land. Several gun positions were attacked and the C.O.'s old friend on the hangar roof effectively dealt with. The ground defences put up a terrific amount of flak and unfortunately P/O Strickland and Sgt. Petts were both shot down. P/O Ford was also shot up, both his machine and his person being hit. We are all extremely sorry to lose Claude Strickland and Petts. Claude was tremendously popular and his keenness and pluck were a by word. Petts, too, in his quiet way was very well liked by us all. We only hope that they may have made safe crash landings. Ford put up a very good show in getting back to base with bad glycol trouble and shrapnel in both legs, his left elbow and his 'seat'. At one time he was making for France but he was seen by F/Lt Laurent who put him on the right course and then brought several other aircraft to the scene, who brought him back to base where he made a crash landing. Neither wheels or flaps would work. Ford is now recuperating in Margate Hospital. F/Lt Scitiaux after attacking the seaplanes and setting them on fire - these having previously been smashed up pretty well by F/Lt Hugs, Sgt. Carroll and P/O McCormack - then shot up a gasometer to the East of Ostend which blew up. P/O McCormack shot up a steel mill, which will be without tiles for at least a few days, some barges and a gun position. Afterwards four aircraft went up to search for the two missing pilots but saw nothing. An air test was carried out. S/Ldr. Gillen returned from leave went to Group. Dusk patrol by two aircraft Sgt. Taylor from Wilmslow joined the Squadron.	159

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MANSTON.	28th. October.		Dawn Patrol by two aircraft. Local flying carried out by three aircraft, airfiring by one aircraft and three aircraft airtested. Five aircraft did some local formation flying. Dusk Patrol by two aircraft. Pilot Officer B.T. Verry from No. 55 O.T.U. joined the Squadron.		
	29th. October.		Dawn shipping recon., which had nothing to report. One air test and a Dusk Patrol. The Squadron was very glad to welcome General De Gaulle who was accompanied by the Air Officer Commanding, Air-Vice-Marshal T.L. Leigh-Mallory, C.B., D.S.O. and a number of Free French Officers. General De Gaulle said how glad he was to see Free French pilots flying as "comrades-in-arms" with British pilots. He stayed to lunch at the Mess. While we are glad to know that a Free French Squadron is forming, we are sorry to lose four of our Free French pilots to it, particularly René Mouchotte who was with the Squadron at Northolt and Kenley. F/Lt Seltisaur, F/Lt. Duperier and F/O. De la Beuchère, who joined us from No. 242 Squadron when we came to Manston have also gone.		
	30th. October.		Dawn Patrol by two aircraft. Three aircraft carried out local flying and eight formation practice. One aircraft practised cannon firing and then at 18.00 hours we went out with our first shipping sortie with the Hurricane Bombers of No. 607 Squadron. Four ships had been reported off Gravelines going up the coast, one of them of 2,000 tons, but as luck would have it they could not be found, so what promised to be a good "party" fizzled out. Glad to record the arrival of a Magister for the Squadron's use.		
	31st. October.		The "Reared season opened in no uncertain manner today. Two of these operations were carried out with the 607 bombers and 605 & 611 Spitfire Squadron, who acted as cover. The 607 aircraft dropped their bombs on the target and it is believed scored direct hits. Our Hurricanes shot up anything of military importance they came upon. The target was a transformer station at Helque. These included two railway engines and trucks, various barges, a bridge on which were several soldiers, a factory building at Watem, a transformer substation, a camouflaged building which was set on fire, various gun emplacements and a searchlight. Altogether quite a glorious beat-up. In the late afternoon another trip was essayed with 607 to attack a concentration of barges seen in the morning in the canal at Bourbourg ville. Unfortunately, the formation, led by the bombers this time, with 4 aircraft of 615 immediately behind and two Spitfire Squadrons from the Kenley wing in the rear, went right up the coast to Dunkerque, where as it turned sharply inland, encountered rather frightening amount of flak. One 607 Hurricane was seen diving down with black smoke coming from it at this point. Our job was to shoot up flak posts and thus enable 607 to come out as unharmed as possible. The bombers dropped some of their bombs on the barges and on other objectives. Meanwhile 615 pilots were having an exciting time with the flak posts of which there were plenty. They shot up several, but two of our machines were hit and Pilot Officer McCormack wounded in the leg; all however, got back safely. In addition to these operations the Squadron also put up a convoy patrol of 4 aircraft before 0800 hours and also carried out two "Jin Crews" - one		

one by two aircraft down to Pecamp, the other also by two aircraft up to Blackenberge - before breakfast. There was also an airtest and a Dusk Patrol by two aircraft.

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FOR THE MONTH OF							19			
DATE	AIRCRAFT TYPE & NUMBER	CREW	DUTY	TIME UP	TIME DOWN	DETAILS OF SORTIE OR FLIGHT	REFERENCES			
1.10.41.	Hurricane IIB	Sgt. Finn.	Patrol	0800	0900					