

February 1946: Form 540

159 Squadron

Place	Date	Summary of Events
		Part I. – Operations.
		February, 1945.
	1.2.46	The Rice Dropping assignment begun in the last week of January continued throughout this month. Aircraft flew daily from Pegu, four Per day being the target & 3 Sorties Per aircraft Per day. Crews were customarily relieved after about two weeks detachment to Pegu. Relieving crews flew to Pegu on the dates indicated here under.
	5.2.46	F/O. Justham.
	8.2.46	F/O. Craig.
	11.2.46	F/O. Allsopp.
	12.2.46	F/O. Caird.
	14.2.46	F/L. Hoult.
	19.2.46	F/L. Barlow.
	22.2.46	Three aircraft & the crews of F/L. Bowen, F/O. Craig, & P/O. Abercrombie, were ordered to Santa Cruz. They were to land at Nagpur & each aircraft was to be loaded with ten 500lb. S.A.P. bombs; nose & tail turrets were armed with 3000 rounds. The mission was the unpleasant one of attacking & sinking ships of the Royal Indian Navy in Bombay harbour, which were in the hands of mutineers, if the latter did not surrender. Fortunately they did so, & bombing had not to be resorted to.
	24.2.46	F/O. Craig returned direct to Base from Santa Cruz. One undercarriage tyre of his Liberator was worn & might burst on landing, so the risk of going U/S. at Nagpur was not taken. Bombs from this aircraft were left at Santa Cruz. P/O. Abercrombie landed at Nagpur, unloaded his bombs & continued to Base. F/L. Bowen unloaded & returned to Santa Cruz.
	25.2.46	F/L. Bowen returned to Base having landed at Nagpur with the bombs from F/O. Craig's aircraft.
	26.2.46	F/O. Hedley & crew went to Pegu on detachment. On this date the last drops were made at Patado D.Z. Approx. 500,000 lbs. of Rice had been dropped in this zone. Dropping at Kyowaing & Metharoot continued.
	27.2.46	F/O. Justham & crew, with one extra W/Op. & two W/Mechs., flew to Sookerating in Assam on detachment. This former U.S.A.A.F. base was in use by Dakotas which were dropping Rice & supplies to villagers & frontier posts in Northern Burma; the Liberator was needed as a Flying Control Unit.
		During February 159 Liberators flew from Pegu on Rice Dropping Operations on 24 days, making 257 Sorties.
		Total Flying Time : 285.15 hours.
		Total Weight of Rice Dropped : 755,000 lbs.
		Part II. – Administration.
	12.2.46	S/L. R.W. Williams assumed Command of 159 Squadron on the posting to 228 Group of W/C. R.L. Bowes, D.F.C. & Bar.
	15.2.46	Because of serious civil riots in Calcutta & elsewhere, & the possibility of disturbances at Salboni, Officers were ordered to carry revolvers at all times away from quarters, from this date. All defence Precautions were taken under the Station Defence Scheme. No disturbances occurred, & with the improvement in the situation in Calcutta, the order to carry arms was rescinded.
	27.2.46	Action Release Signal received for Aircrew Officers in Groups up to & including 34, & Group 36 for Airmen Aircrew.
		The Station Commander's decision that a maximum of 10 hours flying daily be allowed to the Squadron, in view of the strain imposed on ground crew Personnel, reduced flying to the essential minimum this month, & little air training could be done. Ground training was hampered by crew detachments to Pegu & elsewhere. Defence training was similarly disrupted, but Drill Parades and Range Practice continued.
		Part III. – Personnel.
		Special Postings.
		To No. 3 R.E.C. Worli on Class "B" Release, w.e.f. 9.2.46: F/L. L. Marsh 153591 G.D. (P).
		To No. 3 R.E.C. Worli on Class "A" Release, w.e.f. 11.2.46:

Place	Date	Summary of Events
		P/O. W. Coles 198622 G.D. (W/AG).
		To B.R.D. Worli pending Repatriation, w.e.f. 22.2.46: F/O. G.I. Chapman 174421 G.D. (P).
		To H.Q.R.A.F. Base Bombay, pending Medical Repatriation, w.e.f. 22.2.46: F/O. J. Whitcutt 179062 G.D. (P).
		To A.B.C. Karachi pending Compassionate Posting to U.K., w.e.f. 25.2.46: F/O. C.T. Taylor 186135 G.D. (P).
		To H.Q.R.A.F. Hong Kong, Air Staff Posting, w.e.f. 22.2.46: F/O. P.W. Brown 163734 G.D. (AB). F/O. L.R. Tancock 163767 G.D. (AB).
		To No. 3 R.E.C. Worli on Class "A" Release, w.e.f. 6.2.46: F/L. Morgan L. 154152 A.S.D. Int.
		To 228 Group prior to U.K. Posting on Nav. Course, w.e.f. 28.2.46: F/L. R.S. Sanders 135043 G.D. (NAV).
		To 355 Squadron after Attachment to 159 Squadron, w.e.f. 23.2.46: F/O. E.T. Ashton 167886 G.D. (NAV).
		To 228 Group, Air Staff Posting, w.e.f. 13.2.46: W/C. R.L. Bowes, D.F.C. & Bar 70072 G.D. (P).
		Part IV – Honours & Awards.
		H.M. the King has approved the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross to the following Officers of 159 Squadron:
		S/Ldr. J.M. Stroud C.1495
		F/L. R. Mc. Borthwick J.12490
		F/L. C.F. Williams J.4867
		F/O. W.W. Drew J.44132
		Part V. – General.
		The month has been an active one, straining depleted aircrew strength & ground Personnel to the utmost, although only essential flying was authorised.
		The Squadron remains operational & its commitments continue, with no certain date for disbandment.
		(R.W. Williams) Squadron Leader, Commanding No. 159 Squadron, R.A.F.