

September 1945 Form 540

203 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of events
Kankesanturai			I. Operations
			The ferrying of Red Cross and other material to the Cocos Island continued with every available aircraft. The aircraft stage to Minneriya for loading, and the crews spent the night there, taking off at first light the following morning. The return flight was normally made direct to base unless passengers or mail for Ratmalana were carried back.
			This commitment (Operation Mastiff) lasted until September 5th. and in the course of the month fifteen aircraft made the flight to Cocos Island.
	26th Sept.		Commencing on September 26th. the ferrying commitments were switched to Singapore. The first aircraft made the flight via Minneriya after which the loads were brought up to Kankesanturai by road, and flown direct from base. At Singapore the Kallang Airfield was used, and at this early stage in the occupation the living conditions there were found to be very primitive. Ground crews had to be flown down in the aircraft, and worked under difficulties.
			Up to the end of the month four aircraft flew to Singapore, (S/Ldr. Stewart, F/Lt. Bowler, F/O. Stewart and F/O. Webster) carrying loads amounting to 18,000 lbs.
			Flying Times.
			Cocos Flights including transit to Minneriya 340 hrs.
			Singapore do. 37 ½ hrs.
			Non-Operational Flying.
			Flying training was very much curtailed owing to the heavy ferrying commitments from Cocos and later Singapore.
			Technical
			The Cocos run finished and the Sqdn. had a very brief respite from the Servicing point of view. Efforts were made to get up to scratch, but the ferrying commitments were quickly switched to Singapore.
			When those trips started the Sqdn. was asked to produce five aircraft on successive days. Two were stranded at Singapore with minor faults but spares flown out enabled them to be serviced by the crew who flew them in.
			Main and Auxiliary Fuel Cell leaks caused delay at this time, owing to the considerable time needed to change these units.
			II. Administration.
			With the switch to 7203 Servicing Echelon the newness caused a little difficulty at first but now things are running smoothly.
			The Sqdn. Orderly Room is still working at full pressure.
			III. Personnel.
			In 7203 Servicing Echelon releases and repatriation tended to denude the Echelon of manpower. Several very good Senior N.C.O.'s Cpls. and A.C.'s went on the way, and no replacements have arrived to fill the gaps.
			Movements.
	6th. Sept.		Two new crews arrived the captains of which are F/Lt. Varlow and F/Lt. Catling 55052.
			F/Lt. Catling was originally with the Sqdn. as a second pilot.
	6th. Sept.		S/Ldr. C. L. Fletcher 14552 Flight Commander was succeeded by S/Ldr. Alexander 60337.
	17th.		F/Lt. McDowell Sqdn. Medical Officer was posted to S.H.Q. prior to return to

	Sept.		U.K. He has been with the Sqdn. for three years.
			Casualties.
			There were no casualties this month.
			Wing Commander Commanding
			No. 203 Squadron R.A.F.