

April 1945: Form 540

357 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of events
Jessore	April	1945	Part I – Operations
			The month of April 1945 was not such a heavy one as March but with only 5 less operations it proved to be a very good one. The total of sorties being 144 giving some 1500 hrs flying time. Of these only 35 were unsuccessful, being 25.9%. This was a slight improvement & was due largely to the still increasing No of Dawn & dusk drops. The sorties during the middle of the month met very bad weather & it was here most of the Unsuccessful flights were made. The weather on the whole was hazy with visibility down to 4 to 5 miles in places. Heavy Cu clouds are becoming more prominent as the Monsoon comes hear. On 1.4.45 in KH323 Liberator Piloted by F/O. L. S. Stockwell (Can) J39146 crashed whilst on a dropping operation over Burma. All members of the crew were killed including 6 Force 136 personnel. This was the only casualty for April.
			In F.I.C. only one sortie was unsuccessful due to weather three being the total flown.
			Over Malaya only 2 sorties were unsuccessful due to no reception being found as briefed. The weather being generally bad in the South, but operations were carried out as usual.
			The Character area has had the biggest show for a/c were over the Dropping Area almost every night for the month, the Daks taking the greater weight but with more success than the Liberators. Again due to the fact that almost all the Libs flew in the middle of the month.
			The month started on an even tempo that seemed to carry? urgency of the Burma campaign, the weight of men & material being dropped to Character force.
			On the Heavy DZs in the north most of the operations were successful, but haze & Src? all very prevalent, making actual Pin Pointing very difficult. This only stopped 2 Libs however so the crews must have been on their toes.
			Several new areas were used this month mostly in F.I.C. but also some in Burma & Malaya.
			The most important feature of the month was the capture by the 14th Army of Mandalay and the subsequent race down the Salween & Irrawaddy. This stepping up of the war in Burma seems t indicate the Pre Monsoon race for Singapore. This feeling is supported by the weight of men & material dropped to the South. The Libs as usual found several of the Pin-Points hard to drop on, due to their smallness & situation, the Daks being slower & more manoeuvrable seemed to get in alright though. But even to the ruggedness of the terrain meant a considerable risk to low flying a/c.
			As regard to F.I.C. it appears that many of the groups of resistance have been eliminated which accounts for the drop in these sorties. The Liberators found the weather very unsuitable for navigation but succeeded in dropping
			There were not many a/c on the Malaya sorties though no reason is apparent for the fall off, unless the weather has effected the Policy of the Forcers down there. Carpenter was the busiest, but none of the trips succeeded in breaking the record set up last month. Though all these flights raise much speculation as to whether they will manage to do it.
			A detailed synopsis of the operations carried out by the Squadron's a/c during this month are inlisted below.

		Operations – Synopsis							
Code Name	Country	Area	Liberators		Dakotas		Total Sorties	Remarks	
			S	U	S	U			
Character	Burma	Kemapyn	18	6	43	12	79	Bad weather during middle of month.	
Heavy	"	Kentung	1	2	6	--	9	Bad vis due to low Stc at start of month	
Nation	"	Pegu	7	2	1	--	10	2 Libs got no reception	
Dilwyn	"	Hsenwy	--	--	3	--	3		
Bloodhound	"	W.A. States	--	--	3	1	4		
Conifer	"	Hsenwy	--	--	2	1	3		
Nutshell	"	W.A. States	--	--	1	2	3	Bad weather.	
Burgular	"		1	--	--	--	1		
Leveret	"		--	--	2	--	2		
Wineglass	"		--	--	1	--	1	Blind Drop.	
Vogue	"		--	--	1	--	1		
Conclavis	"		--	--	1	--	1		
Ramrose	"	Yenang	--	--	1	--			
Peacock	"		--	--	--	1	1		
	F.I.C.								
Saterist	"	Vihn	2	1	--	--	3		
Bazaar	"		3	2	--	--	5		
	Malaya								
Barnowl	"		1	--	--	--	1		
Carpenter	"		4	2	--	--	6		
Mint	"		2	--	--	--	2		
Multple	"		2	--	--	--	2		
Pirate	"		1	1	--	--	2		
	Burma								
Holder	"		--	--	--	1	1	Weather	
Chutney	"		1	--	--	--	1		
	F.I.C.								
Avenge	"		--	1	--	--	1	Weather	
							144		
			Total Liberator sorties for April					62.	
			Total Dakota sorties for April					82	
Aircraft on Sqd. as at 31.4.45			Liberators			Dakotas		Lysanders	Harvards
			KH160			LN?304		V9818	FS794
			KH166			KJ180		V9815	FS989
			KH216			KJ889			
			KH257			KJ913			
			KH313			KJ914			
			KH325			KJ919			
			KH326			KJ920			
			KH395			KJ922			
			KH162			KJ924			
			KH114			KJ925			
						KJ926			
Jessore	April	1945	Part II Administration						
	Apr 22		Only on visit of interest was noted here this month, being that of the Technical						

		"Loran" Advisors F/Lt. Bellringer who was accompanied by a Radar Officer F/O. Goodfellow and a Navigation Officer F/O. rocket. They are conducting a tour of the Command.
	Apr 12	A Squadron Commanders Conference was held to discuss:- Operations, Planning & Policy.
	Apr 7	An Order of the Day was received from the Prime Minister Mr. Wilson Churchill:- begins:- I send you & your gallantry congratulations on the recapture & liberation of Mandalay. This important success is due in part to the very hard fighting last year at Imphal and Kohima & for the rest of the audacious & vigorous movements of the British, Indian, & African troops under your Command, constantly supported & sustained by the untiring efforts of the British & American bomber & Transport Air Forces as well as to the movements of the American & Chinese Forces in the North. All this has been aided & supported by the Royal & Royal Indian Navies. 2. The favourable progress of operations in the Burma Theatre has been achieved by you & those under your command in spit of the grievous disappointments you have had to sustain in regard to the approval of the strong reinforcements from Europe for which you had been let to hope. These were detained as diverted by the prolongation of the German resistance in Europe & by other causes. It is all the more creditable that the results achieved should be far ahead of the schedule proposed on the basis of these large reinforcements. (Ends)
		The Supreme allied Commander has replied as follows:- (Begins) For Prime Minister from Mountbatten. I have just returned from Mandalay & received your telegram of congratulations on its fall. Thank you very much indeed, your message has given the greatest pleasure to all of us out here. 2. We have all realized that Germany must be finished first, but we have never suggested that as an excuse for not carrying the fight to the enemy. 3. We are delighted to know that our success in the face of our many disappointments has been fully appreciated & we look forward to having all of Burma in the near future. (Ends)
	Apr 9	F/O. W. M. Caron Can J24042 F/O. R. D. Lidster and F/O Lawrence were detailed to attend a General Court Marshal to be held a R.A.F. Station Jessore at 1000 hrs 10th April 1945.
	Apr 9	F/O. Lidster, R. D. assumes duties of National Savings Officer, W.E.F. 9th April 1945.
	Apr 21st	S/Ldr. T. P. O'Brien assumes duties of Command of 357 (SD) Sqdn. W.E.F. 20th April 1945, vice W/Commander L. M. Hodges, DSO. DFC. (N/E Sick)
	Apr 29	F/Lt. F. Barlogie Aus420912 F/O. Poulton, J, assume duties as officers i/c Santola Aircrew Mess.
		Welfare
		As usual the Beer Ration evinced real joy in most hearts on the Sqd plus a few sore heads.
		Recreation
		All Football & Hockey fixtures were played with great keenness.
	Apr 6	The Music Club gave a program of Gramophone Records of (Beethoven's) "Pastoral Symphony".
	Apr 14	The "Cloak & Dagger" (P.S.I.) Canteen is branching out in special lines "Parker pen sets" to begin with.
	Apr 16	To be followed by "Vacuum Flasks & Alarm Clocks".
	Apr. 29	"Tombola" to be played this evening at 2100-2200 hrs.
	Apr. 29	The Grand Final Cup match was played today. Of course the A.E.I.'s won (from a competent commentator) of course.

			The Ensa Show "Riding-High" in the R.A.F. Canteen was received with open arms, & minds.
			Ecclesiastical
			A staff Chaplin for Jewish Personnel has been established in the Command.
			Part III Personnel
			R.A.F.
			Postings
			164774 F/O. R. R. Housby GD(?)
			164804 F/O. R. D. Butler GD(N)
			164670 F/O. B. A? Haynes GD(N)
			156478 F/O. L. Nelson Tech/E
			116726 F/Lt. G. A. Turner GD(P)
			108042 F/Lt. E. F. French GD(N)
			46672 F/Lt. H. G. A. Scilley Tech/E
			88608 F/Lt. A/S/Ldr. K. P. Jones DFC GD(P)
			159404 F/O. P. C. Gane GD(P)
			147845 F/O. A/F/Lt. J. H. Copley A&SD
			108042 F/Lt. E. F. French GD(N)
			190065 P/O. B. E. Payton GD(N)
			Medals
			187363 P/O. F. C. Cook GS(P) W.E.F. 3.4.45
			186420 P/O. J. M. Newbury GD(N) W.E.F. 13.4.45
			186412 P/O. F. W. Pearce GD(?) W.E.F. 13.4.45
			88089 F/Lt. A/S/Ldr. T. P. O'Brien GD(P) W.E.F. 24.4.45
			The above mentioned officers were awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.
			There were no Promotions this month.
			R.C.A.F.
			Postings
			J6644 F/Lt. T. R. Lee GD(P)
			J46521 P/O. E. Sinclair GD(N)
			J10334 F/Lt. B. G. Henson GD(P)
			J12694 F/Lt. J. O. Blinkhorn GD(P)
			J45823 P/O. G. A. MacKey GD(N)
			J45944 P/O. J. A. Tarzwell GD(N)
			J46764 P/O. R. Pomozan GD(WG)
			J46787 P/O. F. B. Spence GD(WG)
			Promotions
			J45768 P/O. D. A. Blad GD(N)
			J45210 P/O. D. M. Heller GD(N)
			J46064 P/O. S. V. Hillia GD(WG)

		J22139 F/O. J. F. Cooper GD(N)	"	F/Lt.	"	30.12.44
		J44512 P/O. K.M. Oddson GD(P)	"	F/O.	"	21.10.44
		J44392 P/O. E.H. Mercer GD(P)	"	F/O.	"	21.10.44
		J44466 P/O. R. F. Jorgenson GD(P)	"	F/O.	"	21.10.44
		J24042 F/O. W.M. Caron GD(N)	"	F/Lt.	"	19.2.45
		Causalities				
		J39146 F/O. L. S. Stockwell GD(P)	Killed whilst on active service 1.4.45			
		J44516 P/O. J. B. Millar GD(P)				
		J45945 P/O. J. N. Friesen GD(N)				
		J45989 P/O. K. M. Merriam GD(AB)				
		Decorations				
		His Majesty conferred the D.F.C. on this Officer.				
		J11769 F/Lt. K. G. Booth GD(N) 2.4.45.				
		R.A.A.F.				
		Postings				
		A.412910 F/O. E. G. Coulin GD(P)	Posted to 357 (DS) Sqdn from Ranchi W.E.F. 12.2.45.			
		A.428579 F/O. T. C. Seabrook GD(P)				
		A.409912 F/O. A. E. Graham GD(P)				
		A.422785 F/O. V. E. Willing GD(P)				
		A.427494 F/O. W. R. Anderson GD(P)				
		Promotions				
		A.409912 F/O. A. E. Graham GD(P)	Promoted to F/Lt. W.E.F. 4.12.44.			
		A.412910 F/O. E. G. Coulin GD(P)				
		Decorations				
		A.14407 F/Lt. P. W. Bonles GD(P)	Are authorised to wear the 1939-43 Star			
		A.420912 F/O. A. E. Barlogie GD(P)				
		Personnel Strength Statement				
			Officers	Airmen	Total	
		RAF	33	598	631	
		RCAF	48	28	76	
		RAAF	13	9	22	
		RNZAF	1	2	3	
					732	
		W/Command.				
		Commanding. No 357 (SD) Sqdn.				