

August 1945: Form 540

358 Squadron

(Note: Initial, as typed draft transcription)

Place	Date	Time	Summary of events
R.A.F. Station	August 1945		
Jessore			I – Operations
	1		Operation Order No. 111
	3		Operation Order No. 112
	5		Operation Order No. 113
	7		Operation Order No. 114
	8		Operation Order No. 115
	11		Operation Order No. 116
			Liberator 'O' HB/VI(S.D) KG877 (Capt. F/O. A. H. Duff) airborne at 06.30 hours, failed to return to base. Message received from aircraft at 14.to hours gave E.T.A. base 17.00 hours. No further news was received. Crew members are:-
			Capt. 182369 F/O. A. H. Duff GD(P) 166544 F/O. J. W. B. Simon GD(P) 2nd Pilot.
			167414 P/O. B. J. C. Griffiths GD(Nav) 167426 P/O. J. A. Merriman GD(A/Bmr)
			1586121 Sgt. E. W. Baker WOP/Air 1294384 Sgt. W. T. Adams WOP/A
			1674864 Sgt. D. Tuffnell A/Gnr 1626326 Sgt. I. K. Aldridge A/Gnr (Despatcher)
			1013215 Sgt. R. H. Davison A/Gnr(Engineer)
	12		Two aircraft of 1348 Flight detailed to carry out sea search for 358 Squadron Aircraft 'O' missing on the 11th.
	14		Operation Order No. 117
			Telephone message received via Flying Control to the effect that Aircraft 'O' missing on the 11th August 1945. Message read the A/c 'O' was seen to crash approximately 1500 hours on 11th in the region of Rathedaung (Map Ref. 2025N 9243E). Aircraft completely burnt out.
			Information received that A/c 'P' EW171 had landed Meiktil airstrip due to engine failure, at 15.58 hours. All crew were uninjured and aircraft undamaged.
	15		Operation Order No. 118
	20		Operation Order No. 119
	22		Operation Order No. 120
	24		Operation Order No. 121
			At 23.19 hours Aircraft KH257 (Capt. W/O. Room) returning from operations, landed at base and on landing the port Oleo leg did not lock down. After running to approximately half way along the runway, the leg collapsed and the aircraft swung off the runway onto the grass verge, damaging the port wing tip and No. 1 engine (Category A.C). All the crew were uninjured. The cause of the accident is not known and an investigation is being ordered.
	25		Returning from operations aircraft EW242 (Capt. F/O. P. R. Sanders) landed at base at 01.45 hours. On landing the nose wheel collapsed, doing extensive damage to the nose compartment (Category A.C). There were no casualties to the crew. The cause of the accident is not known and an investigation is being ordered.
	26		Operation Order No. 122
	28		Operation Order No. 123
	29		F/O. W. N. Cook (166005) G.D. (Gunner) previously reported missing on 2nd July 1945, but later classified "Safe" returned to the Squadron.
	30		Operation Order No. 124

	31		Operation Order No. 125
			Operational Summary
			Monsoon conditions continue during the month, which have often been particularly strong over hills en route to D.Z. areas, and produced cloud in valleys which have prevented drops being made.
			Nevertheless the Squadron has been able to show a substantial proportion of successes which do great credit to the persistence and flying ability of crews.
			The figures stand at 72 sorties, 45 completed, 62.5% successful; as compared to 51 sorties, 38 ½ completed, 75.9% successful for the previous month.
			One crew was lost during the month. F/O. Duff failed to return from his operation on August 11th. A few days later a ground report which reached the Squadron verbally stated that his aircraft had been seen to crash in the hills near Akyab, that the aircraft had burnt out, and it was presumed that all members of the crew had lost their lives. This report has not yet been confirmed officially.
			Squadron life was greatly enlivened by news of the Japanese surrender, and the celebration of VJ days on August 15th and 16th. Operations subsequently gave increasing attention to P.O.W. camps, leaflets bearing instructions and crews bringing back much useful information concerning conditions which they had observed.
			By the end of the month operations were concentrated on dropping urgent supplies to the Camps.
			Also at the end of the month, F/O. Cook, despatcher of F/O. Outram's crew, who baled out of his aircraft during an attack by enemy aircraft in June, returned safely to the Squadron. His report is not yet available.
			The Squadron met with no enemy opposition throughout the month.
			III – Personnel
	1		F/O. T. Reader (111596) assumed the duties of Squadron Adjutant.
			F/Lt. W. H. Coast (49035) assumed the duties of Squadron Engineer Officer.
	2		F/O. E. G. Cocks (J.44890) G.D. (Nav) arrived on the Squadron.
	3		F/O. J. S. Stewart (186340) G.D. (P) and W/O. G. Tucker (1554259) Pilot. Both Liberator Captains, arrived from Kolar.
	4		F/Lt. W. S. Wood (A&SD(Ad) and F/Lt. C. G. Moore (Tech/E) departed from the Squadron on repatriation.
			Four liberator crews arrived from Kolar of which the following officers were included.
			F/Lt. W. Whithouse (134144) G.D.(P) P/O. K. Firth (197844) G.D.(Nav)
			F/O. C. G. Newton (136667) G.D.(P) F/O. J. J. Smith (150792) G.D.(P)
			F/O. J. A. McMillan (164816) G.D.(Nav) F/O. J. Benyon (164515) G.D.(P)
			F/O. A. ? Page (165870) G.D.(Nav) F/O. K. J. Dallison (87178) G.D.(G)
			F/O. C. R. Ellinor (J.20131) G.D.(P) promoted to Temporary Flight Lieutenant wef. 4.8.45.
			S/Ldr. B. R. Ker (70353) G.D.(P) arrived on the Squadron.
			F/Lt. D. B. Clulow (138234) A&SD(Int) arrived on the Squadron to take over the duties of Intelligence officer.
			Posted Strength at end of month:
			Officers. S.N.C.Os. B.O.Rs. I.O.Rs E/Fs.
			109 241 409 2 68
			V – General
	11		Air Marshal Saunders visited the Station, to confer with Squadron Commanders.
			The Commanding Officer (W/Cdr. E. C. Badcoe) and Adjutant (F/O. T. Reader) proceeded to H.Qs R.A.F. Burma on duty. Returned same day.

	15		Information received of the Japanese surrender, and all personnel other than those on essential duty, "stood down" during the afternoon and also the whole of the 16th August.
	16		Squadron "Stood down" except for personnel required for the days operational tasks.
	19		All ranks, except those on essential duty, attended a Church Parade in commendation of the VJ day. The parade formed up and marched into one of the hangers. The Station Padre took the service.
	23		The airmen held their 'VJ' dinner, in their dining room, during the evening in 2 sittings. Officers of the Squadron attended and everyone had an enjoyable time. The cooks put up a fine show and laid out a very appetising meal.
	31		Summaries from 'B' Flight, Bombing leader, Navigation officer, Signals officer, Signals Leader. Appendices 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.