

January 1945: Form 540

358 Squadron

Place	Date	Time	Summary of events
Kolar	1st.		II – Administration.
			Passenger stock arrived at 0100 hrs. All personnel & travelling kit entrained by 0930 hrs. Train departed at 0957 hrs as scheduled. Strength: Officers 21, S.N.C.Os 166, B.O.Rs. 232, I.O.Rs. 18, - Total 450.
	3		II – Administration.
			Air Party: Officers 26, W/Os, 16, SNCOs 51, BORs, 49, IORs 2, Total – 144. took off in 14 Liberators from Kolar at 1030 hrs arrived Digri, 1730 hrs. same day.
	4		II – Administration.
			Main Party – arrived at Chanorakuna Road at 1810 hrs. All personnel were transported to Digri in 20 minutes and provided with a hot meal. The journey lasting 4 days was quite enjoyable and was executed without incident All baggage had to be unloaded at night as rolling stock was required for another purpose elsewhere.
			F/O. J. Watson (53547) (Tech/Arm) arrived for duties as Squadron Armt. Officer at 185 Wing.
	5.		III – Personnel.
			The very acute shortage of cooks, of which the deficiency is 1 Sgt. 2 Cpls, and 5 A.Cs, made feeding arrangements in the Sergeants' Mess and airmens' Messes most difficult and lengthy. Some Enrolled Follower Cooks had providentially arrived and this eased the situation to a certain extent. It was impossible to open up the Officers' Mess as all three cooks on strength were needed to start the airmens' & N.CO's Messes. The officers of the Squadron were messed in H.Qs 185 Wing (Officers Mess) who were most accommodating and helpful in every respect.
			V – General.
			The Domestic Site into which the Squadron moved was found very untidy and short of furniture and electric light fittings. Ablutions were inadequate and the latrines in the N.C.O's and airmen's areas were most unsanitary. Steps were taken to remedy this position.
	6		III – Personnel:
			F/O. N. W. Pemberton (Aus.412230) arrived from No. 357 Sqdn on posting as Bombing Leader.
Digri	7		V – General.
			All sections settled in and functioning.
	8		III – Personnel.
			Officer Commanding, W/Cdr. P. G. D. Farr, DFC, flew to Calcutta for interview at H.Qs No. 231 Group.
	9		II – Administration.
			Squadron Equipment which could not be brought up on the Main Party Special Train arrived at Chandrakona Road in 4 C.G's.
	10		IV – Honours & Awards.
			508651 F/Sgt. Cockburn, J. (D.M.T) Mentioned in Despatches.
			F/O. M. R. Davison (54090) G.D.(P) Mentioned in Despatches.
	12		II – Administration.
			Four crews (2 Pilots, 1 Nav., 1 A/B, 1 WOP, 2 A.Gs) proceeded to Jessore in 2 Liberator Mk.VI aircraft for training in S.D. Work. Each crew will receive special instruction in dropping procedure and methods. Training to required

			standard is estimated to take two days for each batch of four crews.
	13	0911 hrs.	I. Operations.
			Operation Order No. 1. Eight aircraft and crews, detailed as per Appendix 4. to attack Mandalay. One aircraft became U/S and did not take off. See Sortie Report Appn. 5 & Form 541 (Appn.6) attached. Seven A/C attacked target and bombs fell well in area given to attack. Some & Dust from other A/c. bombing prevented accurate pinpointing of own results.
			10 x 3 ton Dodge trucks and drivers detailed to proceed to Panagarh (U.S.A.A.F) to collect special bombs for urgent operation to arrive here before 1000 hrs 14.1.45.
			II – Administration.
			A Change in the role of this Squadron notified by H.Qs, A.C.S.E.A. Operational Instruction No.1 (45) dated 6 Jan. 1945. The Squadron was originally trained for Daylight Operations, but has been selected for the role of S.D. Operations during moon periods. During non-moon periods the Squadron will revert to its normal bombing role.
	14		II – Administration.
			Squadron divided into 3 Sections for training in S.D. Supply dropping under the Tutelage of a representative from No. 357 Squadron. Captain J. L. M. Metcalfe (210693) attached from Force 136, as Army Liaison Officer. It was found more convenient to carry out training at Digri, rather than to send crews to Jessore each day and previous arrangements were amended. Dakotas from Jessore flew over training equipment and stores.
	15		II – Administration.
			Squadron on S.D. Training.
	16		II – Administration.
			Squadron on S.D. Training.
	17		II – Administration.
			Squadron on S.D. Training.
			V – General.
			G/Cpt. Cldwell, O.B.E, M.C., D.F.C., (R.N.Z.A.F. Representative) and W/Cdr D. C. Granstone visited the Squadron to interview all Royal New Zealand Air Force Personnel.
			Air Marshal W. N. Coryton, C.B., M.V.O., D.F.C., Air Commander, R.A.F. Bengal/Burma visited the Squadron during tour of Inspection.
	21		III – Personnel
			W/O. J. W. F. Tubb commissioned in the G.D. (Gunner.S) Branch.
	22		I. Operations.
			Operational Order No. 2. – 11 aircraft detailed for S.D. Operations over Indo-China, and took off at intervals from 1430 hours. A/c. 'T' 350 F/O. Robinson, and A/c. 'Q' 367 F/O. Murray landed at Jessore on return. Three aircraft, 'K' 215, F/Lt. K. H. Brailsford, 'Z' 277 S/L. A. S. M. Pim and 'W' 278 F/Lt. S. D. Mayhew, and crews did not return to base. Weather at Base was good but crews ran into adverse conditions, heavy rain and 10/10ths cloud over D.Zs. only 2 aircraft 'A' W/Cdr. Farr and 'G' F/O. Davison succeeded in locating targets and dropping their loads. Others brought back loads to base.
			III – Personnel.
			Missing Personnel.
			A/c. 'K' 215
			F/L. K. H. Brailsford. Capt. (139520)
			F/O. W. Russell. (J.27639) RCAF. 2nd P.
			W/O. G. A. O'Toole (1550901) Nav.
			P/O. L. Blick (178370) B/A.
			W/O. J. R. Swain (1183127) 1.WOP.

		Sgt. J. G?. Gibbs (1338318) 2.WOP.
		W/O. W. Lear (1339360) M.Up.Gnr.
		P/O. R. J. Wilson (54992) Rear Gnr.
		A/c. 'Z' 277
		A/S/Ldr. A. S. M. Pim (60566) Capt.
		F/Sgt. J. H. Holt (1522039) 2nd.P.
		F/Sgt. E. C. Hearn (1595199) Nav.
		F/O. W. J. Wallace (149990) B/A.
		F/O. E. Clarke (149915) 1.WOP.
		Sgt. G. Gittins (1458467) 2.WOP.
		F/S. S. E. Sadler (NZ.425047) M.Up.Gnr.
		Sgt. J. Robinson (976439) Rear Gnr.
		A/c. 'W' 278
		F/Lt. S. D. Mayhew (63404) Capt.
		W/O. N. C. Kames? (1385163) 2nd.P.
		F/Sgt. W. C. Roberts (656237) Nav.
		P/O. J. Hughes (164129) B/A.
		Sgt. V. Butt (1800854) 1.WOP.
		F/O. J. A. Schmidt (Aus.434671) (RAAF) 2.WOP.
		Sgt. J. R. Perry (1622796) M.Up.Gnr.
		Sgt. E. W. Moore (1699162) Rear Gnr.
24		I – Operations: Operation Order No. 3
		II – Administration.
		Information received from H.Qs. 231 Group that the Squadron would shortly be moved and that we should be ready at short notice to move to Jessore.
25		I – Operations: Operation Order No. 4
26		I – Operations: Operation Order No. 5
27		I – Operations: Operation Order No. 6
28		I – Operations: Operation Order No. 7
29		I – Operations: Operation Order No. 8
		IV – Honours & Awards.
		H.Qs 225 Group notify award of "Palestine" General Service Medal and clasp to F/L(A/S/L) S. A. Sharpe. (G.D.(P)) 45912 for service with No. 216 Squadron in M.E.
30		I – Operations: Operation Order No. 9
31		I – Operations: Operation Order No. 10.
		Summary
		Flying: During the month the Squadron flew 478 hours on training for S.D. Operations.
		Operations. during the month the Squadron flew 943 hrs on S.D. Operations & Daylight Formation Bombing.
		Total – 1421 hours.
		Number of sorties – Daylight bombing Formation - 7
		S.D. Operations – 66 – of which 33 (or 50%) were successful.
		Bombing Report – Bombs – 32,000 lbs.
		Incendiaries – 142 x M.30 and 14 M.47.
		S.D. Operations: Containers 315
		Packages 147
		Wastage of Aircraft – 3 missing from Ops. 22/23 January 1945.
		Wastage of Aircrew: 6 Pilots, 6 Navs & B/As, 6 WOP/Airs, 6 A.Gs. Total 24.

			Personnel Strength:
			Officers 52, S.N.C.Os 247, BORs 409, IORs 20, E/Fs 57 – Total 785.
			Medical, Signals, Bombing, and Engineer summaries for month of January 45 – Appendices 34, 35, 36, and 37.
			(P. G. D. Farr)
			Wing Commander, Commanding,
			No. 358 Squadron, R.A.F.