

**These are first  
person accounts,  
and are in original  
format.**

**Some written  
passages offer  
imagery  
that may not  
suitable for all  
readers.**

& then dinner before catching the 10.0'clock train out to York. Arrived there at 3.00.am. & had a Wombaton transport waiting for us there to bring us back.

Tues. July 11. - went to bed this morning & slept till noon & then got down to the flights.

Things were in a terrible mix-up as I expected they would be with poor old vic Martin trying hard to cope with everything that happened.

Wed. July 12. I worked hard to-day to help sort things out & got everything back on a more or less even keel although the boys aren't pleased to see me go & may cause Martin some trouble after I've left. They would do a lot for me that they won't do for him, I'm afraid. Even Howie Walker wants to get posted now.

Went down to Betty's tonight & talked over our holidays - also went on a long walk.

Thur. July 13. - Took things easier to-day & found I'm to leave on Monday for #6 Drop H.Q. Bought a new lot & shoes thru stores & started to clean up the odder ends prior to moving.

Fri. July 14. - Rode down to East Moor to-day on the motor bike to see Bill Doone & stayed for dinner tonight - had a great old visit & met a lot of old friends. I guess I've got

friends on every station in the group now  
as I always seem to know someone wherever  
I go.

Sat. July. 15/44. Cleaned up everything at work  
to-day & started to get clearances signed.  
Went down to Betty's tonight.

Sun. July. 16/44. Was busy all day & went down  
to Betty's for the last time tonight to say  
good-bye - things are bad there - worse than  
Dummondville - lots of tears & goings-on so  
I guess it is high time I was moving also.  
I must say I'm sorry to be going myself since  
I did have a good time at Wombleson enjoying  
the work, the station & the diversions in Newton.  
Anyway I seem to have all kinds of invitations  
to go back any time I want.

Mon. July. 17/44. Got a transport after lunch & went  
first to Tynelyffe & then on down to Group where  
I am back into another Mission but again. Met  
lots of old pals here so I won't be a stranger at  
all. Charlie Seeger of the 14th entry is also here as  
a B.C. investigator on flak damage so we will  
be sticking pretty close together no doubt.

Tues. July. 18/44. Went up to the office to-day ready  
for work under W/C Smith as vice Group Engineer  
officer & also in charge of Eng. which is the

statistical analysis of all operational failures, & engine & airframe troubles, crashes etc. Spent a very quiet day reading up on files & getting organized to get in the picture on what is going on around here - I sure won't be over-worked by the load of things which somehow doesn't appeal to me much. I've been raring around so much for the past two years, this settling down to a routine office job is just a foretaste of what it is going to be like after the war. Bit of a mess party tonight which helped some.

Wed. July 19, 44. One thing about this being a Staff engineer's job, I know everything that goes on in the whole of the RCAF Bomber Group & thus get a larger picture of the actual operations & raids etc. we are doing. The poor old conversion units are practically forgotten down here. Another bit of a do in the mess tonight - this is too much.

Thurs. July 20/44. H.Q. itself is in Allerton Park manor - the whole estate belonging to Lord & Lady Mowbray. We have taken over the whole castle & I am just now getting so I don't get lost in the place - there must be at least 100 rooms in the place. Lord Mowbray is now living in the little house where his gardener - chauffeur used to live - how things have changed! Anyway, it is a

lovely old place. Went to an Eva show here tonight & when the entertainers came up to the Mess of the, we had quite a party at which, incidentally I was officially introduced to the A.O.C. - A/V/M Mr Evan - "Black Mike" for short. & also met & talked to Lord & Lady Mowbray for quite a while - very much like the story. Both sort of thing with very affected accent & manner - the only difference was there was no mouse.

Fri. July 21 - Went to a cinema tonight of the carrying on normally to-day - starting to carry out an investigation into all the engine changes in the group since the 1st of January - quite a job.

Sat. July 22 - "Tory" Smith was out all day so I had to look after things myself - I must say it is much easier than looking after my wing at Wombaton - the only difference being that the stakes are higher & the responsibility, much greater with 14 operational squadrons & 3000 units to worry about. & Halifax II's, III's, V's & VII's as well as Lancaster II's & Canadian built II's on the go - quite a business.

Tonight Wombaton held their second big officers mess party on the occasion of their taking over the name "Mohawk Unit" officially. Had an invitation of course as I ought to pick up

their white good old Pig got the girls down from Newton. It was a marvellous affair & one of the best arranged parties I've ever been to. All the kids waiting behind the bar were dressed as Indians & of course the Mess was liberally decorated with all manner of queer Indian signs & cut-outs. The last dance we built a fountain inside the Mess complete with rock garden but this time we already had a fountain & rock garden outside the front door of the Mess so they proceeded to erect a big circus tent around it. Had a real teepee made into a bar with lots of soft easy chairs around, bonfire, iron pots & all. It really was good. The food also was marvellous which of course tickled Betty no end. We finally arrived at Betty's about 3.30 am. got something to eat & got away again. I think it's time I called a halt up at Newton since things were definitely ungood when I left this time & I'm afraid she is pretty hard hit.

I slept back at the station tonight in a vacant room in my old hut.

Sun. July. 23. Finally arrived back to Group by easy stages after having lunch at Wombaton & dinner at Linton where I had a very odd experience - looked up to see good old Bob Penny down from

his ship to visit his brother George who is M.O. at Linton. We had a great old visit of course & I left late in the evening.

Mon. July 24. Got back to the job to-day & started sorting out the operational statistics - losses, no. off, early returns & non-starters etc. in preparation for the summary at the end of the month. It sure is interesting to get a broad picture of just how we are doing. Losses are sure coming down a lot.

Met Mr. Apperly to-day - our old school teacher who is now posted here & am hoping that he & I can get together with Bob Penney before he goes back to his ship.

Tues. July 25. Made a lot of friends here already with Charley Seegar of the 14th entry - the 6 Group battle damage inspector who goes around digging out bits of flack & 20 mm. cannon shells from any of our holes getting shot up - and then arranges a few these days with all the delights we are doing.

Wed. July 26. Found I couldn't arrange the meeting with Bob Penney so I guess we have had that - he was away all day to-day down at York with his brother & is leaving first thing in the morning.

Thu. July 27. Am beginning to find out what it's all about here now & have really started to dig into the statistics - very interesting work too. Went to the cinema on the camp tonight & then back for a little party in the Mess.

Fri. July 28. Things normal to-day - went for a walk to-day to a nearby pub for a few beers & managed to scrounge a fried egg sandwich & price too (for 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>6</sub> each what aint that!).

Sat. July 29. We are going hot & heavy with the operations these days getting as many as three attacks away some days. We are sure spending a lot of time giving support right at the battlefield & from all reports, our Army boys sure appreciate the heavies coming over & softening up the strong points. From the increased pace it is apparent that they will be starting a new drive soon.

Sun. July 30. Invited over to the AVM's house tonight for a little party: complete with the usual sing song - got roped in by the AVM himself to be one of a quartet to harmonize on a few old songs & we got a good hand at it anyway.

Mon. July 31. Started in the summary to-day as soon as details of the last op came in & found we did exceedingly well last month. Went to the cinema tonight on the camp.



Tues. Aug. 1st. Here it is August & low time is flying by - continued work on the summary all day to-day.

Wed. Aug. 2. Got down into the famous "operations" room to-day where all the big shots hang out when there is a raid on - it sure is nicely fixed up with huge boards etc all around showing the details of the "do".

Had another small party in the Mess tonight.

Thur. Aug. 3. Spent the whole day alone in the office with everyone else away.

Fri. Aug. 4. For a change we got a beautiful, warm sunshiny day to-day so the AOC called a stand-down this afternoon. Charley Segar & I went in to Harrogate to see the sights, went to a good show, had dinner in the Station Hotel where we met up with a couple of American soldiers just over from France with light wounds & got all the first hand accounts of the battles going on there. Then we went the rounds to a few pubs & caught the 100' clock bus back. When we arrived at the Mess, there was a party going on there & I met an old friend of mine - Elt/officer Jean Jones from Kingal. We all piled into a couple of cars & went down to a near by pub for a change of atmosphere. Then we back, stocked up with beer & had an impromptu dance in the Mess with Charley at the piano.

- quite a satisfactory afternoon & evening.

Sat. Aug 5. Charley & I had a trip laid on for to-day up to Croft & then back down to Leeming. I had to check up on a few things at Croft while Charley was looking at some flak holes. I met a lot of old friends there of course including Bill Pitt. We stayed for lunch & then got back down to Leeming in time to see the kites come back from the daylight do to-day. Watched the landings with Freddy Darlish from the control tower. Also inspected a kite which had been hit by some of our own bombs on the effort yesterday. Apparently a kite above released his bombs with the other had right below him. One 500 pounder went thru the port M/P just outside the P.O. and left a big gaping hole - also took the airbrake controls with it. Another 500 hit his port flap & a third one passed directly thru the centre of the fuselage from top to bottom just aft of the M/P turret leaving two huge gaping holes. If this one had not hit dead centre but had been 1' or so either way, it would have chopped thru the side of the fuselage & the tail would have been chopped right off, however he made his bombing run ok & got home safe & sound after a miraculous escape.

There was a formal party in the Mess

tonight & I'm afraid Charley & I got pretty tight -  
however we had a very good if quiet time.

Sun Aug. 6. Slept till noon to-day to sober up  
& felt fine - another beautiful day too making  
three in a row. Went down to a nearby mess  
house to-day which King Smith & two other men are  
renting & had a few beers & sing song.

Mc Hauquier was there too & related the story about  
the first 4000 pounder ever taken over while it was  
still an experimental job. He was pilot & they just  
narrowly staggered off the ground in the old Wimpys  
they were using. The target was right on the  
Baltic coast & they were making their run in  
from the sea when they discovered that the electrical  
bombing release had broken. They arranged that when  
the Bomb aimer called over the intercom, the Navigator  
would use the manual release & let it go that  
way. However, he didn't know how to work it  
so the bomb aimer went back to show him & pulled  
the prize boner of the year when he said "See -  
you just pull the handle like this" & proceeded  
to pull the thing, dropping the bomb out right  
through the closed bomb doors & plump in the  
middle of the Baltic Sea. - what a life!

Mon Aug. 7. Got back into the swing of things to-day  
after the high living of the last three days. Got

the story on a bad accident over the target yesterday when an a/c dropped his bombs on another a/c directly below him yesterday - this time the bombs knocked his stbd. m/p right off at the outer engine. The eyewitnesses were pretty badly shaken when it slowly turned over on its back & ploughed into a third a/c directly below it. They say it looked just like a Hollywood movie to see the two huge a/c locked together tumbling and overboard with hundreds of yards of flame & smoke shooting out behind them. They seemed to fall comparatively slowly & then about half way down both bomb loads went off & there was just nothing left but a cloud of smoke since they completely disintegrated. It sure is tough to feel that it wasn't enemy action that caused it either.

Tues. Aug. 8. The operations this month are increasing both in fact & fact & if it keeps on this way, we will be breaking all previous records. The best thing of all of course is the fact that losses are so low these days which certainly helps a lot. All the stations got a warning to-day to get everything nicely polished up & cleaned up since a certain mysterious Mr. M is coming around to visit all the stations - rumour has it that it is the King himself but of course they won't say definitely.

one even say exactly when to be ready for him - they have to be sort of indefinite about these things I guess

Wed. Aug. 9. Kept very busy all day to-day & spent a quiet domestic evening sewing on a few buttons & writing a couple of letters.

Thur Aug. 10. - This morning they broke the news suddenly that our Mr. "M." - otherwise the King, Queen & Princess Elizabeth would be over at Linton at 10.30 to hold an investiture this morning so there was great bustling around while we all got ready to go over for it. It was a very impressive spectacle when we arrived to see all the airmen & WOs lined up to form a hollow square - surrounded by a long corridor of Halifaxes with the small group who were to be decorated in the centre. We got up on the top of Flying Control office to watch & got a swell view. Pretty soon the King & Queen & Princess arrived by car & were welcomed by Air Marshall Breadner where they immediately started the investiture proceedings. Afterwards we went down to get a closer look while they inspected one of the parked aircraft & then went in to the Radar section & then over to Flying control. Several times I was right beside them & watched them & heard them talk & got a smile from the Queen at one time too so it was all very

interesting. They posed several times for all the folks standing around with cameras & I sure was cursing that I had left mine back at the billet. At one point the King cracked a joke when he was confronted with a bunch of camera enthusiasts - he said: "You look like the same ones who took our pictures at the other doorway, - must have got them developed in the meantime" at which everyone politely laughed - rather restrained though I thought. The King looked very jovial & was very healthy & tanned looking from his recent trip to Italy I guess. The Queen looked as nice as ever but everyone was amazed at how pretty Princess Elizabeth was - she is really very pretty which sure doesn't show up in her photographs - she's not very photogenic I guess. After this do, they departed with lots of lusty cheering & handwaves & left a very good impression with everyone.

We all returned & settled down to work again in the afternoon while the Royal party went on to Topcliffe & Middleton Bases.

Fri. Aug 11: Had a busy day catching up on all the things I didn't get time to do yesterday - these operational failures are the hardest thing to keep track of in my job & take a lot of tracing down.

Sat. Aug. 12. Spent another busy day to-day & then played a game of soft ball tonight.

Sun. Aug. 13. Charley Sagar got posted over to Linton to-day since John Bridger had an accident & got some acid blown in his face from one of these smoke bombs they use in daylight for forming up on the leader when returning from a target in formation. His eyes have been damaged slightly & it will take a few weeks to get them back in shape again. Howie Walker from Wombledon has now been posted down to be Battle Damage Inspector & informs me that poor old Wombledon has practically fallen apart - I'm not quite sure whether that is a compliment in that it is falling apart under the new management or a black-eye because that is the state I left it in - however, I don't think it is the latter.

Mon Aug 14. Heard a funny one to-day about the AVM - he apparently was up at Dishford to do a little flying & was getting fitted with a parachute harness by a spop P/O. Anyway he was sitting on a narrow bench when this P/O pulled up on the leg straps which tumbled him over on to the floor & hitting his head first on a locker & then on a radiator. He didn't know whether to be mad at first or not but nobody

could stop laughing seeing the AOC sprawled on the floor holding his head & the awe-stricken look on the poor P/O's face. However the AVM took it in good part & joined in the laughter after pondering a bit just how to handle the situation.

Thurs Aug. 15. We are dropping so many bombs these days it is keeping everyone pushed supplying the stations with enough of them & 11 kites had to be scrubbed from ops last night due to the bombs not arriving in time - gone are the days when we had so many bombs lying around we didn't know what to do with them all & were scratching for a place to store them - we are really "string" them in the right places these days.

Went up to Leeming this morning & saw 31 kites take off from good old 4274429, then went over to Skipton & on up to Criff in time to see their 34 kites come back - a few shabby landings including one which had to be sent over to the crash aerodrome at Carnaby with a damaged w/c - I heard afterwards he got down safely although wrote off the kite doing it.

Wed. Aug. 16. Counted 58 a/c flying back to Luton & Holbeche from my window in the castle to-day after their daylight do - it sure does look good to see the sky filled with our "overight"



Wanted a little party with the boys over to a neighbouring pub tonight & drank too much beer altho' I didn't get high at all

Mon. Aug. 17. Had quite a hangover this morning & went without breakfast & lunched to quell the butterflies. Was ok again this evening & heard from good old Ridley back at Wombles that he is leaving soon for the far East - also Betty has joined the A.T.S. & leaves next week so we are arranging a little party down in Harrogate this week-end for the four of us. They left it up to me to get accommodation for Sat. night of all nights at this late date so I went in to night to scout around. I went from one Hotel to another but there was no hope whatever since the place is filled to overflowing - particularly with evacuees from London & also the Air Ministry staff - thousands of them who have been moved up from London to escape the buzz-bombs. They are even conscripting rooms in every house in town. It was beginning to look hopeless for our party until I ~~grumbled~~ <sup>grumbled</sup> a private home address from one of the hotel managers & threw myself on the mercy of a kindly old lady who agreed to set up double bedrooms for the four of us. After arranging that I decided to spend a quiet evening in town - especially after last night &

intended just walking around & seeing the sights until bus time at 10 o'clock. However, I bumped into two of my old Flight-Sergeants who practically forced me to go with them to have a drink just for old times sake. Consequently, I finished up by drinking alternate Brandy & Beans until 10 o'clock. Also bumped into Roy Henry there who had just been home & called in to see 'Ray & Trudy' the folks at '43 for me & he gave me all the first hand news about how things were - raving most of the time about how cute & affectionate Trudy was & how pretty & nice Roy was which sure made me feel good.

Fri. Aug. 18. Held the fort alone all day to-day & came to a momentous decision by going to see the dentist voluntarily to get a tooth filled which was just beginning to act up. He pretty near killed me & said I have about 3 more fillings plus one wisdom tooth to be yanked out so I don't know now whether it was such a good idea to go & see him or not. Spent the evening quietly playing table tennis & writing.

Sat. Aug. 19. Got a phone call from Rip this afternoon saying he couldn't get away for our party at Harrogate so had to phone up & cancel accommodation there at the last minute. Finally decided that I would

go up to Newton & we could have our party there. I raced around & got dressed in time to catch the 5.20 bus to York & the 6.30 train from there to Newton. Betty met me at the station & nothing would do but for me to stay at her place for the weekend. We had swell ham & eggs for dinner & Rip came down later with a bottle of Scotch for our party. We had a good time & finally got to bed about 1.00 am. Incidentally I was having a little trouble with Betty too since the more she drank, the more affectionate she got & a few bedtime came everybody else trooped off upstairs leaving Betty & I in adjoining rooms downstairs - most embarrassing to say the least. Being the good boy that I am I pretty near had to lock myself in my room & throw the key away in order to stay good. However I managed it ok.

Sunday Aug. 20. Slept till nearly noon & then loafed & dawdled around all afternoon since it was pouring rain out. Rip came down at night & we played knock rummy & finished off the Scotch. Finally said good-by to Rip who is off to India in a few days & then to Betty who joins the R.T.S. on Friday next - bags of hers etc. unfortunately & so to bed.

Mon. Aug. 21 Got up at 6.30 a.m. & caught the early train with Ruby - didn't wake Betty up which I guess was a dirty trick but made things much easier. Got to York at 9.00 am. - met Mr. or I should say David Apperley my old 3<sup>rd</sup> book school teacher from Model School - by chance on the street & got a ride back up to Allerton Pk. with him.

Had a CTO's conference from all stations this afternoon & picture taken with the AVM. - discussed a lot of snags common to all.

Tue. Aug. 22 to Thu. Aug. 31 Quite a gap here but nothing very exciting happened. We flew quite a few ops mostly on targets helping the spectacular advance of the boys in France & ended up the month with a grand total of 3767 sorties to beat out every other Group in Bomber Command - sure tickled everyone to show up the RAF. Anyway, it sure seems to be having an effect on the advance & things are looking quite rosy now with the new landings in South France from Italy. It won't be long now! Went to Harrogate a couple of times to shops & had one good Mass party & that's about all.

Fri. Sept. 1st. - Worked hard all day to get figures & calculations made for the Group Monthly Summary. Have enlarged on it considerably &

put in a few of my own innovations. Went to the dentist to-day for the last filling - next comes the wisdom tooth to be pulled. However, Dr. McEowan is very good & has done a good job on me.

Sat. Sept. 2. - W/c Smith left for HQBC to-day leaving me as acting Group E.O. - quite a responsibility to have to take on. Worked on summary all day. Weather very bad & also logging down the troops in France I hear.

Sun. Sept. 3. - Completely finished summary to-day & went in to Harrogate tonight for a few beers.

Mon. Sept. 4. W/c Smith called back in to-day just long enough to give me some news & then went away again on leave. 424 & 433 squadrons (the Tiger & the Porcupine squadrons respectively) at Skipton-on-Avon. Swale were the two worst squadrons in the Group last month. Had more accidents, crashes & operational failures than any others so I am posted there as C.T.O. to replace Can Brown who is coming here to Group to take my job. I seem to be getting a name for either starting up new stations or being a trouble-shooter so back I go into harness again. Oh well, it was a nice rest here at Group

while it lasted. I'm supposed to leave the day after tomorrow. However, I'm quite happy about the job & get back into the swing of ops again.

Tues. Sept. 5. Cleared up all the odds & ends to-day & got packed tonight - what a job. I sure seem to have accumulated an awful amount of stuff.

Wed. Sept. 6. Got away at 1100 am. this morning & drove up to 63 Base at Leeming to see the Air Commodore & W/C King, the Base P.O. Went on to Skipton this afternoon in the pouring rain & got here just in time to see the first take-off this month - bad weather up till now. They got 15 a/c away from each sqdn. & the target was Emden - they all got away & no early returns. Was very wet & cold tonight, slept in a spare room tonight with no sheets on the bed - cold & miserable. Another winter in these Nissen huts is going to be tough. Skipton is very much like Womblesley but not so well organized - yet. Batmen & hotwater are nil & living conditions pretty terrible.

Thurs. Sept. 7 Spent all day with Cam Brown going around & getting acquainted with the setups. It still poured rain so no ops.

Fri. Sept. 8. Went down with Cam to Group to-day & spent all day showing him my job at that end. Also took the opportunity of having my dental work

finished up. Got my teeth cleaned, filed smooth  
& the old wisdom tooth yanked out - went off the  
without much trouble.

Sat. Sept. 9 - Norm Cuke who was here as  
D.S.E.O. just got posted over to France so I got  
the Charley Seegan back with me again to fill  
in. <sup>the</sup> Norm Green is my R & L E.O. & <sup>the</sup> Herb Wilson  
my Tech Adj. <sup>the</sup> Ross Davidson is my elect. officer.  
<sup>the</sup> Burton Radon & <sup>the</sup> Mac Kenzie - ornament - all  
seem pretty good lads. Spent the day getting  
sorted out at the office. Meeting the NCO's among  
who I recognize quite a few I've had at other  
stations which should help some. Weather  
still cold & wet & no ops on. Moved into  
Sam Brown's room & generally getting settled.

Sun. Sept. 10. Well, we were "on" to-day at last  
with a big effort on - 20 from 433 & 16 from  
424. These daylight ops. are sure different from  
the night sorties we used to do when I was  
with 427 Sqdn. since we rarely lose any  
piles - these days nearly a year ago we  
lost anywhere up to four a night. However  
there are still plenty of flak holes etc. to  
patch up. We got all 36 a/c away of which  
was a good thing for my first effort here &  
had one early return with hydraulic trouble.

However, 5 a/c came back on 3 engines which wasn't so good. We finished interrogation at about 10 o'clock - target was Department & it got a good pranging from all accounts.

Mon. Sept. 11. News came through at 11.30 am that we were on a "gardening" or mining operation on Kiel Bay at 3.00 p.m. - not much time to load up mines & calculate up fuel loads, track miles & all-up. wts, safe landing wts., endurance & no. of gallons of petrol left for safe landing etc. which I have to do for every op. Things seemed to go badly right from the start with bits suddenly going 4/3 etc. We had 5 allotted from each squadron & had two non-starters due to various defects & failures. I can see I'm going to have to get cracking to cut down on these mad panics. Finished interrogation late again tonight.

Tues. Sept. 12. - On ops again to-day & worked hard all day to get some semblance of organization around here. We have 19 from 424 & 17 from 433 detailed with take off about 10.00 pm. in the dark. We did pretty well & only had one non-starter but there sure was a lot of scratching around in the dark shifting crews at the last minute from one bit to another. Tumbled in to bed cloths & all about midnight.



& got up at 3.00 a.m. for interrogation - then  
back to bed for another two hours. - It sure is  
a tough life but we must be giving old  
Jerry a real run for his money. Target  
tonight was Le Havre & we had one early  
return. However, almost all our aircraft  
were badly shot up with fleck & they took  
quite a beating - collected one lump of fleck  
for a souvenir. In France the Allies are  
right up to the Siegfried line now & are  
poking away at it - also have overrun Belgium  
& are into Holland - things are really  
approaching a climax.

Wed. Sept. 13. Wet & cold to-day - picked up  
a prang on the aerodrome when a lad on practice  
flying overshot the runway & wiped the port  
etc off on a gun mounted near the end of the  
runway. We used the lifting bags but I  
got soaked & cold doing the job & now have  
a swell cold. What a life!

Thurs. Sept. 14. Had a sudden call at 11.30 am  
this morning for 30 a/c - 15 pm opdn. for take  
off at 2.30 pm. Real scramble this time but  
got all the bombs up just in time - in  
fact we were just fitting the last 1000  
pounds with the aircrew standing

around waiting to take-off. However, we got them all away on time but unfortunately they were all recalled before reaching the enemy coast due to bad weather over the target. We always bring our bombs back these days rather than letting them get to any place as we used to since for one thing - bombs are scarcer than they used to be & for another - our own troops are so close to the targets we have to lay them right where they are supposed to be or not at all. As a matter of fact, about two weeks ago, the Pathfinders boobed in dropping their T.I. markers & we bombed our own men - made a good job of it too unfortunately - I had most of the senior man responsible for the boob got reduced in rank over it. It was too bad but is easily understandable with targets so hard to pick out through clouds & smoke etc.

Our hits being called back sure discouraged everybody - especially my boys after all their tremendous amt. of work. However, with the climate they have over on this side of the world it's a wonder it doesn't happen more often. If we had weather here like there is at home, this war would have been over long ago.

Fri. Sept. 15. We had 29 hits on again today with complicated split loads - gardening & HE bombs. The target was Nielt Nielt Bay. We had quite a few badly shot up too, but luckily enough, haven't lost a kite this month yet. Got up for interrogation about 3.00 am. & back to bed again at 6.00.

Sat. Sept. 16. - Couldn't manage to get up this morning after being up all night so slept in rental room & boy I needed it. Found out we had to be ready for a real early "do" tomorrow morning so got busy bombing & fueling up this afternoon & evening. Then a dull moment around here, had a Wellington try to make the aerodrome on one engine but would be crashed just off the edge - wrote the kite off completely, but didn't injure the crew luckily. I had to investigate it & saw & got the crash signal sent off. Went to the show tonight for a change & then went to bed early. Clocks were back an hour tonight coming off double daylight saving time.

Sun. Sept. 17. Got up at 6.00 am this morning for take off at 6.45. Fog & ground mist was terrific & it was touch &

go for awhile whether the whole op. was scrubbed or not. However they decided to take a chance & sent them away. We had 16 from 424 & 11 from 433 detailed & they started taking off in between fog swirls. It was really nerve-wracking since each & every one that tumbled off down the runway - everyone fully expected to crash & that isn't much fun either when we had a maximum capacity of bombs up - 11,324 lbs. of H.E. which is really something - 9x1000 & 4x500's. Finally 424 Sqdn. K. - LW.117 started to swing on its take off & as we were very near the field all up - wt. of 65000 lbs. - he couldn't hold it & crash he did giving us our one & only early return. However, luckily enough it didn't catch on fire & the bombs didn't go up. The target this time was Boulogne & they got back at 1100 am. I was waiting for them to come back in flying courted as usual when the "lt" message came in that the bomb-aimer of 424 - A for Able was a casualty & applied for priority landing. We had ambulances standing by but it was too late & the poor guy died with a big flak hole in his chest. I think he must have bled to death by the look of the gore in the white. It's funny

how little, sights like these affect me now  
to what it used to be before I came overseas.  
Several other bits were shot up so we had  
a busy time of it - especially with another  
4 a/c called out with 1 hour's notice this  
afternoon to go on an air-sea rescue  
search complete with Lindholme Dingley  
equipment in the Bomb bays. Tonight we  
had 10 a/c away on a Bomber Command  
Bulge & I hear them circling the drone  
overhead right now. Guess I'll quit &  
get some sleep.

Mon. Sept. 18. The weather was pretty duff  
to-day so didn't do much flying although  
we stood-by for ops just in case the weather  
cleared.

Tues. Sept. 19. The weather was really nice  
to-day but surprisingly enough, we had no  
ops on & only did some practice flying. However,  
last night we had 7 Lancasters arrive in  
here - diverted after an op from Middleton St.  
George. This morning the word came through  
that we were to operate them from here & there  
was a bit of panic getting the ready since very  
few of us knew anything about Lancaster II's  
(Canadian built). However, we managed it

ok + got them all away but one which had a bad mag. drop. However, MSG had a spare so they put it on + everything was ok.

Wed. Sept. 20. We were on to-day with 14 kits from each squadron + everything worked very smoothly. We had two a/c with trouble at the last minute but managed to get the crew over to the spares in time + thus got them all away. However, just after they left at 4:00 pm. this afternoon a heavy ground fog closed in + all the kits were diverted down south at Tangmere + Ford. <sup>MSG</sup> ~~MSG~~ of 433 squadron crash landed down there with a burst tyre but the crew were all ok. Now will come the struggle of getting them back here again in time if there are ops on again tomorrow.

Thurs. Sept. 21. - Sure enough, news came through at 11:00 am this morning that we were "on" again + so far no kits back. However, it didn't last long since it was postponed for 24 hours + so we didn't have to worry. All the a/c came back to-day from down south except S, M, & C, of 433 + W of 424. who had a few minor snags. Drove up to leaving tonight in my van + took some of the boys to a big party they were throwing there.

It wasn't too bad, although terribly crowded. Met a nursing sister there who was in the class behind me at Riverdale C.T. - Her name was Strongtharm & she knew all the gang that I did so we had a great old visit & generally enjoyed ourselves. Got back at 3.00 am. - cold, raining & foggy out. no joke driving with blackout dimmers on the car lights.

Fri. Sept. 22. - Had a stand-down to day with a heavy fog & steady drizzle all day - what a horrible climate in this country. I wouldn't stay here to kiss for all the money in the world. Have a beautiful bronchial cough again just on account of it. Went to the cinema on the camp tonight & came back to the Mess to find a party in full swing for a couple of boys who had just arrived back from the dead - went missing about 2 1/2 months ago when their boat was hit by flak. We got a first-hand account of all their experiences including the sensations of being out on enemy territory, spending two days & two nights in a swamp until they got up enough courage to speak to a Belgian farmer. He conducted them into the outskirts of Belgian Brussels where they were turned over to

members of Maguis who hid them in a single room for 9 weeks - weren't allowed to stir or even look out the window in all that time & pretty near went crazy. Then got civvy clothes & falsie or forged identity cards which I saw & was duly impressed with - a really perfect job - photo's all. By train they travelled thru to Paris & had several narrow escapes with Gestapo & SS men checking up on their cards occasionally. Finally they got picked up on the outskirts of Paris by the Americans & so finally, but their way back over here. They really did have some experiences & were sure better against the Germans - particularly the SS men who were always so laughy & cruel. However, they didn't act so important when they were surrounded by Yanks jabbing guns & knives into their stomachs.

Sat. Sept. 23. Just got back up to the belt tonight after a hard but satisfactory day. We were notified at 11:30 a.m. this morning that we were on ops at 1430 hrs. which one didn't give us much time to load up 9-1200 pounds & 4-500's along with 1320 gallons of petrol. Especially since 6 a/c were airborne at the time on practice flying & we had to recall them in a hurry. We had 17 in each squadron for a total of 34. I also managed to



che out two spares in each sqdn. which we didn't have to use ~~for~~ as it turned out. Anyway, everything worked very smoothly & they all got away fine with no troubles.

They all arrived back safely too about 1900 hrs. & it was a good slow all around. I got a nice compliment from the Air Commodore to-day for the effort which helped some too. The target was Walcharen near Amsterdam in a co-operation "do" with the Army. No a/c missing & very few flak holes although one guy had all his bombs fall out when he opened his bomb doors prior to making his bombing run. Some crossed wires no doubt which I'll have to check up tomorrow. Fortunately, they dropped into the sea & not on our own troops. Went to interrogation to see that things went all right & got back up to the Mess at 2100 hrs. Sat around reading until a few minutes ago & then came up with Charlie Searge. Collected a small parcel from Kay including canned food, cardy, Mom's strawberry jam & a little flask of Rye - all of which was very nice to receive.

Sunday, Sept. 24. Slept in until noon to-day since the weather was so diff this morning. Went down this afternoon to get sorted out for 18 a/c from 434 & 17 from

433 Spn. on at 8.00 a.m. Tomorrow morning. Had a lot of kite U's which had to be sorted out. We had our first conference to day on precautions to take when V day arrives - to protect his Majesty's equipment & a/c when the boys start to celebrate - apparently they are expecting it to be quite a slambler and I wouldn't be a bit surprised myself. I'm in charge of softening all the explosives & pyrotechnics & also the immobilizing of all a/c & M.T. vehicles - what a job! I guess I'll have to stay sober when Germany capitulates - but not for long!

Monday Sept. 25. Got up at 6.00 a.m. this morning to get things organized ahead of time for take-off at 7.45. Things didn't go too badly although two kites in 424 had last minute mag drops so we had to shift crews in a hurry to two spare a/c standing by. However we finally got the whole 35 away ok. Was busy all morning drawing up V day plans, grabbed a quick lunch & went down to flying control to watch them come in so I'd be down in case of any prangs or other troubles. Two of them came back on three engines and one was badly shot up & called for an emergency landing with two of the crew wounded. He landed ok & we had him taxi in to control where we unloaded the wounded right into the ambulance. The M/4

gunner had a nasty flesh wound on his rear end but not serious & the W/O had one hand cut by fragments. The AC however looked like a sieve & had over 100 holes in it - I made it a Cat AC & turned it over to the contractors to repair.

I called in to see how interrogations were going, went to a meeting at 2.00 o'clock on V day preparations & then kept busy all afternoon. Had a couple of beers tonight & then, since it looked like a drunken party developing, I went to the show & came right on up on my motor-bike to the billet so as not to get involved. I'm getting sick & tired of that sort of existence for some reason or other & don't enjoy it at all.

Thursday Sept. 26. There didn't seem to be much doing this morning but this afternoon warning came through that we were to "stand-by" for ops. There was a heavy training program in progress with about a dozen hits still in the air when finally the electrifying news came through that we were on for very early in the morning with an all-out effort - our first thirty month - one of these where you fly everything you can get your hands on - hangar doors & petrol bowers included. The only trouble was that by this time it was 1715 hrs & most of my loads had gone.

Anyway there was some great scrambling around & I just got up from the flights now at midnight with some of the boys still going strong & it looks like the poor old armourers will be bombing up all night. If we are lucky we should get twenty off in each squadron which is 100% of our I.E strength & I ~~am~~ sure would like to do it to shake the Base & Group a bit.

Wednesday Sept. 27. - Got up at 5:30 a.m & found take-off had been pushed on an hour to 7.00 am. target was Calais - which is just on the verge of falling to the Canadian Army. - the load was 16,500 pounders H.E. & should help the boys a lot. Everything went quite smoothly & we only used two of our four spares so we got the whole 40 away - the first time in the history of this station - lots of compliments received from all from the Air Commodore down so we were quite satisfied. Went back up & had a sleep for awhile & got back down in time to see one early return M- Mike of 433 with one prop feathered & the engine packed up. too bad it spoiled a perfect record & our first operational failure in the last four ops; however it couldn't be helped. Heard that the Group put off 285 alc from the 14 sqns which is an all-time record so far.

When all the bikes came back around 12.30 they flew in in formation & sure looked grand except that three were limping on three engines. It was also very windy on landing & there was lots of excitement until they all got in safely. Each of the 40 landings with the gusty cross-wind on the runway was a shaky do & our hearts were in our mouths half the time expecting anyone to prong any time since they were bouncing & bounding all over the place, out off the runways & dropping first <sup>one</sup> diving & then the other as they floated in. However, they all made it safely altho several bikes took quite a beating with their bounces etc. One bike veered off the runway & was heading directly for flying control, we in turn on the top floor were heading for the back stairs! However he straightened out just in time & missed us by a small margin. Kept the boys busy most of the day & then had a small party tonight in the Mess after the Cinema to celebrate the good effort.

Thursday. Sept. 28 - Was a little rocky this morning after the party last night & was trying to get some bikes organized after the 5 engine changes resulting from yesterday's do when bang at 10 o'clock. Another all out effort for 3.00 o'clock this afternoon.

-Two all-outs in a row was almost too much. Maybe we didn't work from then on. First we promised them 18 + 17 respectively from the two sedna & that looked almost impossible but by various tricks such as putting on two surplus aircraft which were in the process of being transferred to a committee & so forth we finally got them up to 19 apiece. They then pushed take off time on an hour & we got 2 spares for each sedna too & finally got them all away - used two of the spares too which we were fortunate to have ready. We had no early returns either & the target was Cap. Eric Neg. Finished interrogation about 10 pm., came up to the Mess for a few beers & came up here to bed very tired.

Friday Sept. 29. - Up at 8.00 this morning since I had been warned of eggs for breakfast. Then travelled down to Lanta to examine a new smoke-bomb rig, for formation flying back from the targets, which have to install on two of our a/c. Got back in time for a haircut & lunch & was busy all afternoon worked till after 9.00 pm. tonight cleaning out my in basket in the office which I haven't looked at for two days. Decided on no beer tonight so came up for a nice quiet domestic night here in the billet. Sewed on buttons &

clarned socks, wrote a letter & now am about to enjoy some hot Spaghetti, hot chocolate, toast & strawberry jam from home just to finish off right.

Sat. Sept. 30. - We stood by all day for ops & were all ready to go but for some reason or other, it was postponed for 24 hours - probably weather over on the other side although it wasn't too bad here & we did lots of flying training. At noon got a telegram from Ross Doubt saying he would be in York for the weekend & then later on got a phone call from him. It sure was good to hear his voice again after having given him up for dead way back last May when he was shot down in flames over Belgium. I decided I needed a day off anyway so got busy & rode my bike into Thirsk. Caught the train for York & met him at his hotel where a great party was in progress - it was about 9.00 pm by this time. We drank & talked for awhile until closing time & then the owner of the hotel knowing Ross before & knowing he was just back from France decided he would throw a party for the residents. We sure had a great time & finally rolled up to bed about 4.30 am.

Sun. Oct. 1. - I got up around noon, went down & had a beer to get straightened around & then had lunch but poor old Ross who hadn't tasted a drink

for five months was definitely #15 & didn't get up  
 until about 3:00 pm. I spent my time soaking in  
 a nice hot bath. When he got up he told me the  
 whole fantastic story of his experiences - the most  
 exciting & interesting I've ever heard outside of  
 Hollywood movies & spy story thrillers - They were  
 just making their run in on the target at Louvain  
 Belgium about 10 minutes past midnight when a  
 nightfighter caught up with them, blew up the  
 P.O. engine & set fire to the wing tanks. Old  
 Blackie the pilot immediately gave orders to bale out  
 & Ross was first out, the <sup>W/O</sup> ~~W/O~~ bomb aimer, pilot  
 & F/Jeng followed. The three remaining gunners  
 crashed with the plane & were killed, the bomb-  
 aimer's chute didn't open & he was killed & Black was  
 taken P.O.W. The other three escaped & Ross met the F/Jeng  
 etc. His chute broke a strap on one side & the  
 leg straps cut & bruised his legs quite badly. By  
 hanging on to the broken strap he could remain upright  
 up. But when he finally had to let go he turned up  
 side down & floated head downward all the  
 way down to the ground & landed that way too  
 what an experience! He apparently landed in a  
 ploughed field, bundled up his chute & started to  
 run when he heard a dog bark & the sound of voices.  
 He later threw off his shoe & spent the remainder



of the night in the bottom of a deep wet ditch.  
where he got very cold & wet. At dawn he lit his  
first smoke which he had been dying for & wormed  
his way thru a flux field on his stomach until  
he could look out on a road. He watched various  
farmers cycle & walk past to work & then decided  
that he or he was going to have to ask for help some  
time anyway, he might as well do it then so  
waited until he saw one old guy coming along  
alone. He popped up out of the field & went over to  
talk to him while the old guy seeing his uniform,  
immediately turned around with his eyes popping  
out & beatted back the way he had come. Ross thought  
then that everything was settled - the man had either  
gone off to get the soldiers or to get help. Before he  
could get back down in the field, two teen aged  
girls came along on cycles & seeing him turned back  
& raced into a near by farmhouse. Ross then settled  
down to await events & it wasn't long before the girls'  
brother, as he found out later, came into the field  
& found him & took him back up to the farm house.  
Then the old mother of the family swept all over him much to his  
embarrassment & then they hid him in their Air raid shelter  
since several patrols of Jerries were out on the prowl  
looking for members of the crew who they knew were in the  
vicinity. They got him to burn his clothes & shave etc.

I dressed him in some old farmer's overalls. In the meantime, one of the girls had gone to town & contacted the leader of the local "Armée Blanche" or underground movement. Within an hour or so he came out & visited Rose on a bicycle. Together they left the farmhouse since things were getting pretty hot & the Gestapo were searching all the homes in the neighbourhood. They walked about 5 miles & then the man hid Rose in a woods while he went on to contact the leader of the next town. This went on for about three more towns & then a bus ride into Brussels where he was taken to a house & bedded down for the night. From then on all his movements were controlled by the Underground. Apparently the Gestapo were hot on the trail of this particular organization since he was moved about 8 different times just half a jump ahead of raiding parties. Several of the people who handled him were picked up just after he had left and after about two months he was thinking very seriously about giving himself up since so many ~~more~~ of these people who were helping him were being caught & tortured & killed etc. & he felt himself more or less responsible. He had many varied experiences while staying there - got a chance to visit his "big" who was also being hidden by a different underground organization, got his photo taken for his ID forged

identification papers etc. He was getting a little jumpy living like this & all keyed up all the time never knowing from one minute to another what was going to happen next. The Germans had a vicious habit of putting a cordon systematically entirely around a city block & ransacking every house, apartment & hiding place in the whole area & he had several narrow escapes from these. Finally one night when things were approaching a climax, he heard a disturbing noise at about 4.00 a.m. At the time he was staying with a married couple in a third floor flat in a narrow street in Brussels. He jumped up & looked out of the window just in time to see a long black sedan pull up right in front of their door & about six S.S. men armed with sub-machine guns get out. He was making plans about jumping out the window (third floor and all) rather than be captured when they walked over & went in the house directly across the street instead of his own. There were a few screams & shots etc & they came out dragging three men & two women who were Polish refugees hiding out there. Nothing was ever heard of them again. They had been informed on by some traitorous Belgian woman who lived a few doors down the street. The Underground don't foolishly panic like this & 3 days later this woman's hand

was cut completely off and stuck on a table drawn  
 close up to the window & with the curtains drawn  
 back for all to see & as a warning to others  
 who might have similar ideas. By this time Ross  
 had been hiding in a single room for 8 weeks without  
 poking his nose out the door & was going nearly  
 crazy for something to do. Also the Gestapo were  
 getting closer & closer all the time so it was  
 decided he would be moved out to a chateau  
 in the country north of Mons. He had his false  
 papers by now, said good-bye to all the friends  
 he had made and set out for the big escape by  
 train. He was led through the streets by 3 agents  
 two walking at intervals in front & one walking  
 behind. They had a system of signals arranged  
 such as car screeching, hat lifting etc. to be  
 prepared in case they got stopped since occasionally  
 the Germans would stop everyone on a side street  
 & inspect papers & question the people etc. Ross  
 could speak French well enough by this time to get  
 along but had such a terrific accent that he was  
 done for if anyone talked to him. They finally  
 reached the station, had his ticket bought for him  
 & boarded the train & when it at last started to  
 move he was just starting to breathe easily again  
 when in walked a Gestapo officer on the carriage

& started inspecting identity cards & questioning the passengers. Ross couldn't decide what to do as the guard progressed nearer & nearer & was watching his Underground friends dispersed in different seats in the carriage for some sign as to what to do next. However, as luck would have it, when he came to Ross he just looked at his card, granted one & handed it back to him without saying a word for which everyone concerned was duly thankful. The rest of the journey was made without incident & Ross got settled down in the big Chateau with a man & his wife and their two children. He had a nice room of his own, could wander around the grounds at will & generally lived like a king. The Allies by this time were getting closer & closer & the Germans retreating in streams by the front door of the Chateau. One morning at breakfast there was loud pummeling on the door & on peaking out the door they beheld two or three German soldiers wanting in. Ross jumped out the window & hid in some bushes in the garden while there was frantic clearing of dishes etc. so that they wouldn't know there had been a fight at breakfast. It turned out that these soldiers were commandeering a room & office in the Chateau for a high German officer as his H.Q. & of all plums, they took Ross very

room & settled down. In the meantime Ross had moved to the granary in an adjacent <sup>wood</sup> house & stayed there for the next week with the German HQ operating right from the same building - all kinds of DR's & trucks dashing in & out & soldiers all over the place. By this time an American column was only a few miles away & they heard about Ross thru their intelligence service & sent four tanks, two jeeps & a couple of truck-loads of soldiers to gather him up. They did so in fine style, fought their way out again and took 50 prisoners into the bargain. Ross's experiences were not yet over however since the Americans were so busy advancing, they couldn't get time to send him back so he tagged along with them for a few days & went through a couple of battles. Finally he got a chance to get back with a truckload of prisoners to guard - the driver & Ross with a gun each & 70 German prisoners packed in the back like sardines. They travelled for 9 hours straight & since there were 70 prisoners with only himself as a guard he couldn't take a chance on letting them out even to relieve themselves so there they stood for the whole trip! He finally arrived back at his <sup>base</sup> & at last flew over in a Dakota to London & 14 days' leave - what an experience.

After this story I caught the train back to find we hadn't operated at all & so got to bed early  
Mon. Oct. 2. Things were very quiet to-day except for some training flying. Then ops came through at 5:00 pm.  
Tues. Oct. 3. - After all kinds of panic last night getting 30 aircraft ready - 15 from each squadron, take off was at 0430 hours this morning after most of us had worked most of the night. Somebody forgot to wake one of my '7's up in time & the whole 424 Sqn. ground crew were very late for take-off. Consequently we just made it & that's all with the aircrew having to start up their own engines etc. - what a life! We had one non-starter which ciled up at take-off & he made two false starts down the runway & finally gave up. There was also one early return when one pilot couldn't get his '4' up due to the emergency sock being left in the on position. I spent the rest of the day having a real blitz on everyone to ensure there would be no more happenings such as this.

Wed. Oct. 4. - Poured rain all day & very miserable & cold out but gives us time to repair a few flak holes obtained yesterday on the raid on the U boat pens at Bergen - Norway. - a very successful job by the way.

Mon. Oct. 5, 1944. 433 Squadron were on a mining or "gardening" effort to-day with 10 bites. Things went very smoothly & we got them all off in good time. The weather closed in here however later on & we couldn't get them back so 8 were diverted to Holhope & 2 went to Carnaby. - M - mine of 433 was badly shot up with a night fighter & is a cat B. The tail gunner had his head blown off with a 30 mm. cannon explosive shell. However, the M.U. gunner claimed the JU-88 as a "probable" so we hope he knocked it down ok. Heligoland was the garden.

Tue. Oct. 6, 1944. Our ten aircraft were still away at 11.30 this morning when news of an all-out effort came thru - 16 - 500 pounder HE's & long delays was the bomb load & 2000 gals. of petrol. Take off was provisionally set at 4.30 pm. & we started right in to get going. By 1.00 o'clock 9 of our 10 diverted a/c were back & at the same time the bomb load was changed, next HQ had the petrol load changed & finally take off time was moved up to 3.30 & a last minute window load came through. Maybe there wasn't some mad panics going on then. At take-off time, only about half the bites were serviceable, bombed up & fueled up & things looked pretty grim. However, the lads worked like mad & we finally got every bite airborne - 21 from



4248 20 from 433 to establish a new record for this station. A/c Bryans, G/c Kerr, G/c Miller, W/c Roy & myself went up to the CO's house for a few celebrating beers & things were very good for a while. However we had three early returns - one prop feathered by itself in the air, another had a prop seal broken & a bad oil leak resulting while all the guns in the rear turret of the third seized up so all this didn't make me any too happy. Then the weather closed in & all the rest of the a/c - 38 in all were diverted all over the south so its going to be a lot of fun getting them all back again. I had to interrupt writing this diary up just now as they were tannoying for me. O - oboe - one of our early returns overshot on landing & ended up deep in the mud about 150 yds. off the end of the runway. It took us two hours to get it out finally. What a life.

The army boys seem to be a little stalled these days & I'm afraid there isn't much hope of the war being over this year. Its hard to keep from getting a little dependant at times & some sure does seem a long ways away especially after I've been over here for 20 months now.

Sat. Oct. 7, 1944. Things went very quietly to-day while we more or less sat back & licked our wounds so to speak, after yesterday's large scale effort. The a/c kept drilling

back off and on all day except G of 433 which went missing last night - our first one in about a month and a half. Another site X of 433 landed down south at Woodbridge badly damaged by flak & night fighters. Then to make matters worse somebody dropped a load of incendiaries through the nose - seriously wounded the bomb aimer & made the site a Cat AC. At 30'clocks word came through of another all-out effort for early tomorrow morning & we suddenly had to make more preparations made to work all night to get the aircraft ready. However, it was scrubbed at about 2.30 to-night due to weather. Went to the show tonight for a change.

Sun. Oct. 8. - Word came through at about 10.30 for 15 a/c from 424 for take-off at 1330. & we started in to go again - never a dull moment around here. However we got them all ready, bombed up & ready to go when it was scrubbed due to weather again at about 12.30 - this bloody climate! We heard there was a stand down till morning so took it easy the rest of the day & went to another show tonight. After that about 10.30 another "doc" came thru. 6 aircraft from 433 to go on an Air-Sea Rescue search at 0830 hrs. tomorrow morning. I had to contact everybody & haul them out of bed & organize all the refuelling & Lindbergh equipment so that I can

at 100 a.m. finishing this up in a hurry so I can  
get to bed & get up for 6:30 in the morning.

Mon. Oct. 9, 1944. Good old Bill Boone called yesterday  
from East Moor & wants me to be best man at  
his wedding on Oct. 28th so of course I was happy  
to agree to it. Everyone seems to be doing it these  
days. He is marrying a Cpl. WAAF in the equipment  
section at East Moor - a very charming red-head by  
the way.

Slept in until noon to-day after all the kites  
got away ok this morning & found that when I  
got up, another op had come through with take-  
off at 4:30 this afternoon. We had lots of a/c  
available for this & half of them still bombed up  
from yesterday's do. which was scrubbed so got  
30 away - 15 from each squadron without much  
trouble. It is now about 10:30 & they are due  
back at 11:00 so I'll have to get busy & be there  
when they land in case of any trouble & then take  
in interrogation so this will be another late do.  
I've been sitting here writing letters & listening to  
kite drone by & hoping there were none of ours  
which would be early returns. None have  
landed yet anyway so I guess it is mostly  
Nageliff can wait a/c I am hearing - I hope.

Well, we had one early return tonight - the same old O - box of 433 with a new engine in it this time & I'll be darned if something didn't get jammed in the scavenge oil pump, burst the side out & he lost all his oil - 32 gallons of it. We waited & waited tonight until at least an hour after return time but the Winger of 424 - W/C Roy didn't show up in his life. George so I guess he has had it. Only the second bite were lost in over a month & a half too. It's too bad too since he was a pretty good commanding officer & was getting along fine. They are having a game on the W/C's of that squad series that is the 3rd one gone missing in 4 months.

I was just getting in to bed at 1:30 a.m. when they called me to the phone to set up on early take-off at break of dawn for another six bites to go on a sea search. I got everything organized at last & finally got to bed about 3:00 am. - lucky I had such a good sleep in this morning.

Sun. Oct. 10 1944. Got up at 6:30 am. this morning to finish up & get the a/c ready for take-off. However, there was a heavy ground mist rolled in & eventually about 9:00 a.m. the whole effort was scrubbed - all that work & lost sleep for nothing. No word at all of W/C Roy this morning so now he is officially reported as missing.

He's hoping they get a chance to bail out. At 11:00 clock ops came thru with 10 bikes for a gardening effort from 424. We worked hard & got them all ready to go for take-off at 5:30 pm. However the fog is still with us & that whole effort was scrubbed too.

Went to the show tonight to make myself.  
Wed. Oct. 11, 1944. Kept the mining bikes all mined up all day just in case, but no such luck since the weather was still bad.

Thurs. Oct. 12, 1944. When ops came thru this morning we had to de-mine in a hurry & got a load of bombs up for fifteen in each squadron with take off at 3:30 pm. However, it was suddenly scrubbed again due to weather - Now that winter is practically here I suppose we will be getting lots more of this sort of thing.

Fri. Oct. 13, 1944. Had a sudden flurry this morning to get 20 a/c ready in each squadron for a big do & we were pushed quite hard to get them ready by 1630 take off. However, we got a sort of break & it was postponed until dawn tomorrow morning.

Sat. Oct. 14, 1944. Got up at 5:00 a.m. this morning while we managed to get all 40 a/c away safely to Duisburg - this raid broke all previous records for Bomber Command with 4500 tons in fall on the

so it was a good show all right in spite of the fact that we had two early returns. The op just lended back at noon when news of another op came thru with take-off about 9.0'clock so we had lots of panic getting them DI's bombed up again - 16 with two spares from each squadron. We were pretty short of aircrew due to leaves etc. so most of the crews who flew this morning had to be wakened up at 3.00'clock again this afternoon to get ready for tonight's op. & they sure weren't very happy about it. We got the data ready ok on time but at take-off time, everything happened at once & so most of the crews didn't want to go, they proceeded to find all kinds of mag drops, broke troubles etc. There were 3 swings on take off & consequent false starts just due to the pilots being sleepy & tired out so it ended up with 3 non starters & 6 early returns out of the 32. Only two of them which could possibly be blamed on maintenance. Everyone was so mad they could hardly speak & it really was a terrible black eye for the squadron. I got a couple of hours sleep & then got up for interrogation again when the op returned about 3.00 am. target was Duisberg again 5000 tons this time & from all accounts that city

just doesn't exist any more.

Sun. Oct. 15. Well, I got up at noon today after the first real sleep I've had in over 48 hours & found out we were on again at 3.30 with 4.33 Spdn for ~~a~~ <sup>combing</sup> do, about 1/2 an hour later they came through with 4.24 on mining at about 6 pm & maybe we didn't have to scramble to get the ac ready & mined & bombed up. However they gave us a little more time & both take offs were around 6 o'clock which just gave us enough time & that's all. 14 o/c from 4.33 bombed Wilhelmshaven & 10 from 4.24 mined the Kattegat channel in the Baltic. They didn't get back till after midnight - had one early return from 4.24 with an over-revved engine due to C.S.V. failure & also lost one kite "N" then of 4.24 with one of my good pals F. J. J. Lee from London Ont. as navigator. I guess he's had it too since they don't very often turn up again after going missing on one of these mining do's. I finally got to bed about 3.00 am. & slept in till noon again to try & catch up a little.

Mon. Oct. 16. Got up to find things very quiet which was a good thing since there is a lot of work to be done in getting the kites back up to scratch again after these last few days. We have a problem still on our hands now too

since a 500 pound L.D. (long delay) fell off the bomb trolley  
 when it was being towed around to a pit. These L.D.'s are  
 very dangerous when jarr'd since they can't be safetied in  
 any way & they are liable to go off at any time afterwards.  
 The actone kept in a small delicate capsule breaks out  
 with a sufficient jar & starts to eat its way through  
 a cellulose plug which is made of varying thickness.  
 When it dissolves it, it releases a plunger, which sets the  
 bomb off & there is nothing anyone can do about it. We  
 towed this one way back in a field near the dome &  
 left it there & kept our fingers definitely crossed while  
 doing it. The day before yesterday a similar thing  
 happened at Croft only it went up when they started  
 to move it and killed one lad while maiming another.  
 Also McRonn got his hand blown off at Millthorpe over  
 the same thing so they save can't be monkeyed with.  
Mon Oct. 17. Nothing much happened to-day except  
 our bomb hasn't gone off yet. Shortly after 5.00 the  
 gun suddenly came through for an early morning  
 op. 18 from 424 & 17 from 433. with a bomb load of  
 94X1000 & 4X500 so I guess it's another do to help  
 out the troops who are starting a new offensive to  
 take Aachen & clear the peninsula in Holland in preparation  
 for the last (we hope) all-out offensive on Germany.  
 We worked very hard in the dark to get things ready  
 & I finally got to bed shortly after midnight.



Wed. Oct. 18. I got up about 4.45 am. to find that take-off had been postponed an hour & when 6.30, came it was scrubbed altogether, so went back to bed again until 10 o'clock. Ops came thru for late take-off & worst of all a change in bomb load & petrol load - a different target I guess. Anyway we added more petrol, took off a couple of bombs & then this do was scrubbed as well as anyone was quite disgusted.

Our bomb still hadn't gone off so we dug an 8 ft. deep hole in the ground, put it in with some gun-cotton & a detonator & covered it all over with sand bags. Then ran a 300 yd. wire back to a ditch, layed down it & let her go. What a wallop it had too with lots of splinters whistling overhead & a big 30' crater blown in the poor farmer's field. Now it was the safest thing to do with it under the circumstances.

Thurs. Oct. 19. We are still standing by with the kits all bombed up ready to go & awaiting some decent weather.

Fri. Oct. 20. Word came thru this morning for a further do with, of all things, another change in bomb & petrol load & everybody is sure pleased with all these changes. This one was scrubbed & later this afternoon

we had still another change which we carried out & then it was also scrubbed.

Shortly after 10 o'clock tonight another bomb load patrol load came thru for an early morning effort so I had to race around & get everybody up & out to work which is pretty tough to do at that hour of the ~~night~~ & we changed everything again. This is the worst stretch of unproductive work I have run across yet.

Sat. Oct. 21 - This morning as everyone fully expected, the op was scrubbed again & everyone is greatly disappointed since we all know that the Army could be using our help to a great advantage these days if the weather would only give us a break. At noon a new op came through with still another change in fuel & bomb load - this is really getting beyond a joke. Take off was scheduled for 4:30 so we had very little time. Two patrol bombers also went ~~4:15~~ at the last minute. We had lots of panic getting two off. Top off to come over & help wasn't just in the nick of time. However, it looked like this one was finally going to go through as the first batch taxiing ready to take off when suddenly news came through that call of 24 Squadron's 20 aircraft were cancelled. However the 16 from 4:33 took off & got away & so that

helped to raise our spirits a little. After they had been away about an hour, I'll be damned if news didn't come through that they were being recalled from the target & had to jettison their bomb load & come back. In afraid if much more of this goes on we will have a mutiny or something on our hands - it sure is tough sledding with nothing to show for it. The a/c were still in the circuit about to land when the news came thru about 8 o'clock tonight for the next try - at it first thing tomorrow morning with a complete change in bomb & petrol load - what a life!! It is now 1:00 am. & I've just come up from the flight deck it looks as if they will be working all night to get ready in time. Let's hope they really go through with it tomorrow.

Sun. Oct. 22. No luck to-day either & the cold war was scrubbed about 1/2 an hour before take-off.

We sure have been getting some tough breaks this week. The S/C spoke to the ground crew over the runway tonight to let them know he appreciated their efforts in getting the bikes ready even though the weather caused them to be scrubbed so often.

Spent a nice quiet evening - domestic in night really sewing on buttons, labor in probate, socked & blow

patches etc. I'm really getting experienced at it with all this practice.

Mon. Oct. 23. Ops came through early this morning with a nice big effort on Essen - 20 bites from each squadron & each carrying 1 X 2000 HE ; 5 X 1000 GP & 6 X 500 GP for a total of 10,350 lbs. per a/c.

We only had minor troubles in getting them away at about 4 o'clock & got them all off ok.

They got back around 10 pm. although many were short of petrol & landed at a diversion down south & they came trickling back one by one all night. We had one early return due to clogging of the oil radiator & another - T of 433 ran off the end of the runway on an overshoot and wiped off his fins; radiator & H<sub>2</sub>S blisters.

Tues Oct 24. Worked pretty well all day getting T out of the field adjacent to the runway & it was some job too. In the meantime ops came through again with 11 from each squadron on bombing and a further 6 from 433 on mining. For some reason or other, due to the very damp weather we had mag drops all over the place & fortunately for us, the 23 a/c on bombing were scrubbed at about 4.00 o'clock & it was ok by us too since they weren't nearly ready. The mining bites took off at 6.00 pm & we only got 4 of the 6 away due to the mag drops which were

a very poor show but couldn't be helped. V. Victor  
of 433 was also on early return with one bluff  
engine & they bobbed on letting him land in a fairly  
thick fog on 3 engines with 59000 A.W. - He ended  
into the same field that we had just pulled T out of  
was only worse & the whole "kit" hit a ditch & folded  
up, so it is out there flat on its belly with a  
whole load of mines on board. The other 3 a/c  
of the mining man Oslo were diverted up north in  
Scotland. Got to bed about 2.00 am. after all this.

Wed. Oct. 25/44. Ops came thru last night for a  
morning take-off & so we had the boys work all  
night last night. However it was put back a  
little & so take off was 15 a/c from 424 & 12  
from 433 at 1.00 pm. - & the attack was on Homburg.  
We got them all away of without too much trouble  
& got them all back again too which was a good  
thing. Norm London of 424 finished his tour on this  
trip so we were having a nice "screening"  
party for him last night when ops came  
through again for noon tomorrow. They are  
sure working us hard these days. Got to  
bed around 2.00 am. after getting everything  
organized all round.

Thu. Oct. 26/44. Slept in till 10.00 this morning