

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

of (Unit or formation)

NO. 216 SQUADRON, R.A.F., I.R.C.

Place	Date	Time	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
			<u>APRIL 1943.</u> The total of 480 cases safely evacuated by air from a position in close proximity to the enemy, and virtually behind his lines, would appear to be the largest undertaking of its kind so far in this theatre of war. By cutting out a journey of 180 miles over rough desert tracks it must have saved many lives and spared our wounded a great deal of suffering and so contributed to their earlier recovery. The work of the pilots in landing all types of planes on improvised field under extremely bad weather conditions was most praiseworthy. May I also express my gratitude to you for the immediate response to all requests for assistance with supplies of blood and other stores, which contributed greatly to the solving of our difficulties. I have the honour to be Sir, Your obedient servant, Signed:- P. PARKETT. The actual letter was placed in the Squadron records. Our Squadron was honoured by the awards of D.F.C.'s to F/Lt. J.G.C. Hepburn and F/Lt. D.C. Ruston and a D.F.M. to F/Sgt. J. Robb, following are accounts of the reasons for the awards :- <u>particulars of Meritorious Service-F/Lt. J.G.C. Hepburn.</u> F/Lt. J.G.C. Hepburn joined 216 Squadron in 1940 as an Air Gunner, since when he has flown 1200 hours of which over 400 have been operational. In the early part of 1941 as rear gunner he made three flights to Greece. In May 1941 as rear gunner he made eight flights to Habbaniya with reinforcements	

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			during the Irak revolt and took part in operations involving landing troops behind the enemy lines. In December 1940, as rear gunner he carried out bombing operations against targets in Libya in Bombay aircraft and one against Rhodes Island in a Wellington. As Navigator he took ^{part} in supply dropping to forces isolated near Tobrouk in November 1941 and in 1942 in a landing behind the enemy lines refuelling Albiocres. He acted as Navigator in parachute operations over Fuka and Siva Oasis. In addition he has continuously flown in the forward areas of the Western Desert and Libya on all normal Squadron activities. <u>Particulars of Meritorious Service of F/Lt. D. C. Ruxton.</u> This officer has been in the Squadron for nearly two years. During this time he has carried out 900 hours flying of which over 500 have been operational and has proved himself to be a most keen and efficient pilot. During September 1942 whilst with a detached flight at KUFRA, a request was made for a Bombay to collect casualties from L.G. 125 after a L.R.D.G. raid on BARGE. This L.G. was far inside enemy territory and involved a journey of 400 miles over waterless desert. The casualties were safely evacuated to KUFRA and the following day to CAIRO. In October F/Lt. Ruxton was captain of another Bombay dispatched at night with urgent supplies to a pin-point in the desert for the S.A.S. Brigade. This point was some 100 miles behind the enemy lines, but this officer found the flare path laid out for him, landed the supplies and took off again in darkness with a load of twenty casualties and escaped prisoners of war. Although his base aerodrome was fog covered he skillfully found another in the vicinity and landed safely. He also flew in the operations during the Irak revolt and at SIWA.	

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			<u>APRIL 1943.</u> <u>Particulars of Meritorious Service of P/Sgt. J. Hobb.</u> P/Sgt. Hobb joined 216 Squadron in May 1941 and has since flown over 800 hours as W/Op. Ac. Over 350 of his Squadron hours have been operational during which time he has taken part in the following activities; two flights into TOBRUK while isolated in November and December 1941; parachute operations over SIRA and GURA in September and October 1942; in addition he has continuously flown in advanced areas of the Western Desert and Cyrenaica. On the domestic side an airman's canteen was opened on the camp which has fulfilled a long needed want. The opening was most successful.	
			<i>E. H. Morris</i> (E. H. MORRIS) Wing Commander, Commanding, <u>No. 216 Squadron, R. A. F.</u>	