

move overseas as a complete unit. This hope was frustrated chiefly by the formation of two new Squadrons, the consequent posting of crews, and the introduction of a rotation scheme in the Pacific. During this period individual crews were posted on an average of one per week.

In April 1942 S/L. (now G/Capt. J.J. Busch) took over the command of the Squadron from S/L. Cohen.

In June 1942 a patrol which later became known as the "Oyster Patrol" was flown round the southern portions of the South Island with a landing at Taieri.

About the same time the Squadron participated in the U.S. Marine Corp's invasion exercises around the Wellington coastline and later escorted the convoy on the first stage of its journey to Guadalcanal.

In November of the same year practically the whole Squadron was temporarily detached at Whenuapai for the now famous "Battle of Auckland" which was waged by most of the operational Squadrons in New Zealand.

During Xmas 1942 and early January 1943 when the N.Z. Third division was moving to New Caledonia, many well known ships including the Mauretania, Aquatania, Ile de France and Westpoint were escorted.

Operations were continued from Nelson until 26th. April when the whole Squadron moved to Ohakea. Prior to this S/L. (now W/C.) E. Moen was Officer Commanding for a short period but at the time of the move S/L. R.J.K. Hogg D.F.C. was in command.

The move was completed without incident and the Squadron was built up to full strength, chiefly from crews returning from their first tour in the Pacific under the rotation scheme.

In August 1943 S/L. Hogg was posted back to England and command of the Squadron was taken over by S/L. (now W/C.) A. B. Greenaway.

Early September saw the arrival of the first Ventura aircraft and conversion of the pilots proceeded speedily. After crewing up an intensive training programme was embarked upon, while a few Hudsons were retained for operations.

During the period the Squadron was stationed at Ohakea its personnel was accommodated at "Siberia" where the Squadron's morale was fostered and brought to a really high standard by the many enjoyable functions held from time to time.

With training completed, final leave over, and many fond farewells taken, the Squadron left in mid November on its first overseas tour..

Commanded by S/L. A.B. Greenaway, it comprised eighteen aircraft with F/L. D.G. Collie and F/L. "Spanky" MacFarlane D.F.C. and Bar, as flight commanders. The crews ferried their aircraft in three echelons of six at two day intervals.

"A" Flight was kept at Santos while "B" was temporarily detached at Guadalcanal and from both bases the Squadron provided daily shipping escorts.

When returning to Santos from detachment at Guadalcanal on 19th. January 1944 the Squadron suffered its first loss when F/L. P. Wood, with a full crew and five passengers was seen to crash into the sea approximately thirty miles from Santos. This loss