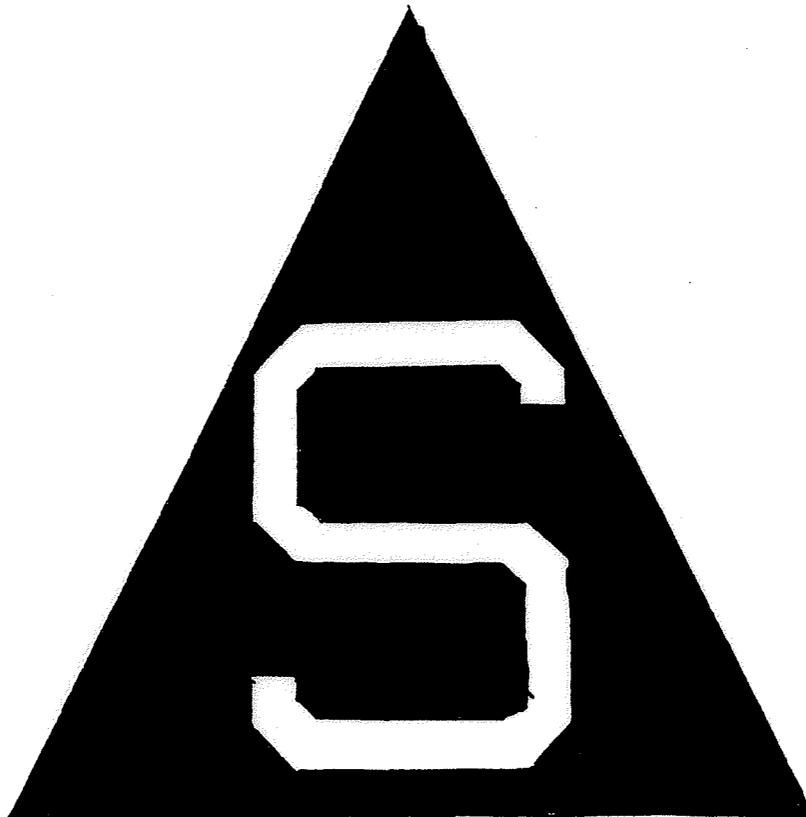
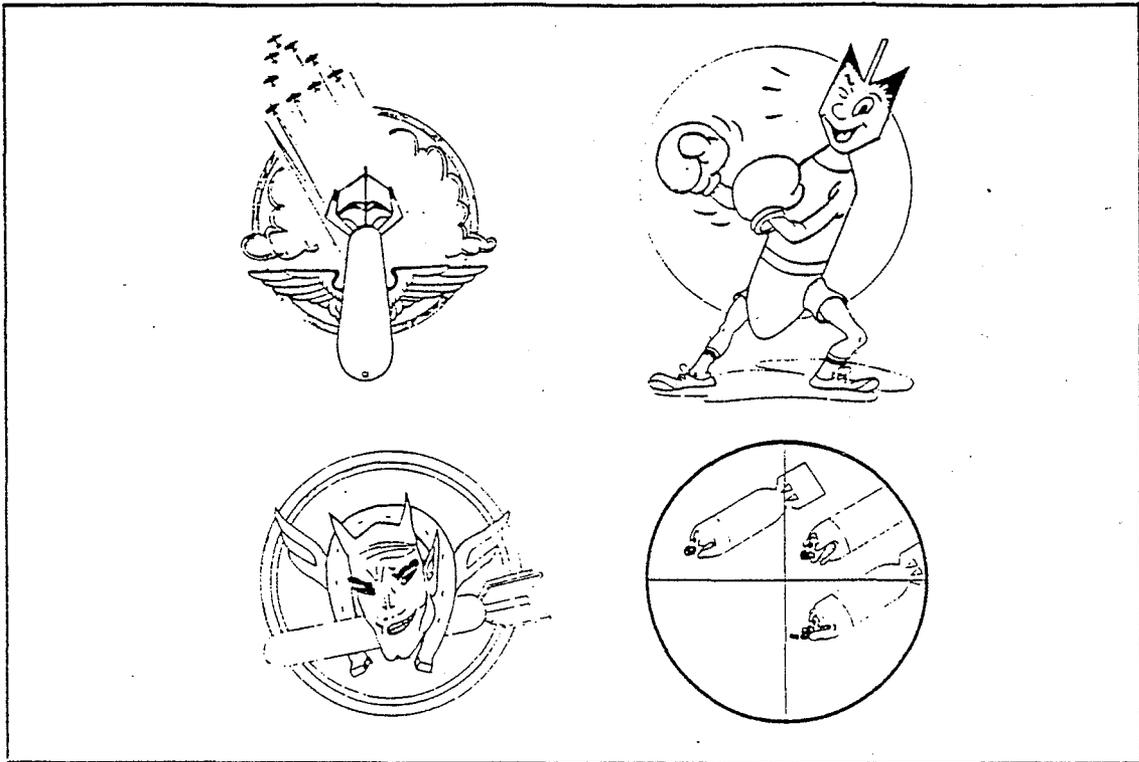


401ST BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)





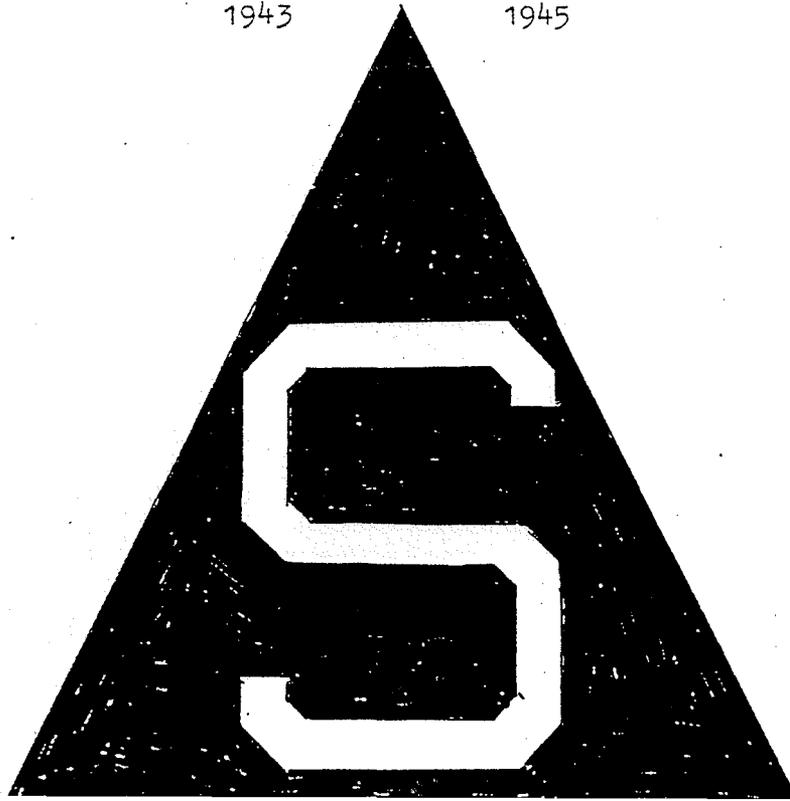
401ST BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)

DEENETHORPE - NORTHAMPTONSHIRE - ENGLAND

STATION 128

1943

1945



BOWMAN'S BOMBERS

BY

BRIG. GENERAL H.W. BOWMAN

USAF (Rtd.)

and

VIC MASLEN

Foreword

by

Brig. General H.W. Bowman

USAF (Rtd.)

Our good neighbour, good friend, and highly professional historian, Vic Maslen, has done it again. After having produced fascinating histories of our four Tactical Squadrons, he has now capped them with a roundup of the 401st Bombardment Group as a team. He has honored me with an invitation to add my bit.

While stationed in the Philippines, at Clark Field, in 1937, I read of the bomber pilot's dreamboat, the B-17, being produced, and promptly requested assignment to Langley Field, where the 2nd Bombardment Group was being equipped with the "Flying Fortress". My request was approved. There was lots of competition, I later learned, but there was still one vacancy. Unfortunately, the month-long trip back to the States on Army transport, was no way to beat the competition. I lost out by one day, and had to be satisfied with a ground job at the base, and watched with envy as the beautiful new planes tried their wings and set new records.

I became acquainted, however, with future air leaders. Robert Williams and Bob Travis both later became commanders of our 1st Division in the Eighth Air Force in England. Curtis LeMay took his 305th Bombardment Group over, early in the war, developed air tactics, and rose steadily, over the years, to become Air Force Chief of Staff. And there was my good friend, Chick Harding, who was the daddy of the 401st, when it was born in 1943, for a short time, before being sent to England to command the 100th Group, already in combat.

When I arrived as his replacement, at Geiger Field, I could feel the keen disappointment of the members, at the loss of their popular leader. But my loyal associates gave me their full support, in preparing the 401st to become the "Best Damned Outfit in the USAAF".

As personnel and aircraft arrived to fill our quotas, we were moved to four training fields in Montana. Although this wide separation of Squadrons made Group guidance difficult, it developed Squadron individual leadership to a high degree.

The term "best" was not only a rallying cry of loyal members, dedicated to winning the war, but it turned out to have a statistical reality. Our record of bombing accuracy was tops in the 1st Bombardment Division, first among B-17 Groups, and second in the entire 8th Air Force. We pride ourselves also on one of the lowest loss rates in the 8th Air Force. That was not only just plain good luck, but in my opinion, the direct result of the following factors:

1. Close formation flying, offering improved mutual support.
2. Top-notch leadership among commanders and individual crews.
3. A high state of training.

4. Skillful instrument flying.
5. A high state of moral.
6. Fighter escort, increasingly available.

Shortly before my assignment to the 401st, I met General Eaker in the hall of the Pentagon. He was on a brief visit from England. We discussed the air war, and our future assignment to his command. I asked for his guidance. He replied, "The most important aspect of flying in Europe, and the most neglected in the training back in the States, is instrument flying. The weather is terrible, and the success of our mission, even survival, depends on being able to fly in it."

In the U.S., Congress was appalled at the high accident rate caused by accelerated training requirements. The pressure to reduce the rates increased as it descended down through channels. Commanders were held responsible. So, in each phase of training, the hazards of instrument training were passed on to the following phases. Take no chances. Fly safe. Pass the accident rate on to the next phase. Let the next command take the blame. But in Montana, we were in the last phase. The buck stopped with us. We stressed instrument flying. Despite excellent autumn weather in Montana, I urged our people to seek foul weather and fly in it. Such a policy of "seeking danger", was not popular with my superiors. I was "inspected", and scolded for being so foolhardy as to seek out the "real stuff". But it paid off in the war zone.

My partner in the B-17 School at Lockbourne, Ohio, prior to my assignment to the 401st, was Lt. Col. Harris E. Rogner. We became close friends, and I developed great admiration for him. When I needed a new air deputy in the 401st, I sent a request, thru channels, for "Rog", and was delighted when he was made available. He was a great asset to the Group. His abilities were recognized in the Eighth Air Force, and when Col. Luper was lost in combat, "Rog" replaced him as C.O. of the 457th Bomb. Group.

During our training period in Montana, there developed a critical shortage of high octane gasoline for our B-17's. Regular gasoline was substituted, but technical orders were issued by higher headquarters, requiring reduced power settings, for safety. Emergency training procedures were a bit scary, with less power available. One pilot nearly cracked up because of his too conservative use of available power. An inspection team from 2nd Air Force Headquarters, composed mostly of personnel who had served against the Japs in the Pacific and gloried in their star rolls as experts among us freshmen, spent several days with the 613th Squadron at Cutbank. I received a phone call from Carl Hinkle. He and Ted Brown were upset because members of the team were telling our pilots to disregard the power limits, saying, "When you get into combat, you'll push your throttles wide open, regardless of the rule book". I told Hinkle to ground the team until further instructions. Then I phoned 2nd Air Force Hq., reported my unauthorized action, and asked for instructions. Within minutes, I had a call from our Bomber Commander, General Eubank, directing me to report to him at Lewistown, for a conference on the subject. I was given a "third degree" questioning, but was never told what happened - except that the inspectors left the base, and I had no more complaints from Ted Brown or Carl Hinkle on the subject.

Al Brooks, my Group Operations Officer, was an excellent B-17 pilot. We took a B-17 to all four of our bases, and took turns demonstrating emergency procedures on one, two and three engines, with the authorized low power settings.

We were finally ordered to England. Three train-loads of our ground echelon headed east, embarking on the Queen Mary. The air echelon, equipped with 65 brand new B-17G's, flew to Scott Field, St. Louis, Mo., for final inspections and "fittings" for the long trip over the Atlantic. The night before our scheduled departure from Scott, I received a shocking message from the Army's Inspector-General office in Washington. "The 401st Bombardment Group will return to their bases in Montana to correct training deficiencies". Since an inspection team from that same office had thoroughly tested us and pronounced us combat ready, such a message was beyond our understanding. Upon arrival back in Montana, I telephoned our Wing Commander, General Peck, who knew nothing about our strange order. The conversation went like this:

"Sir, we've returned, as ordered".

"What? Where the Hell are you?"

"Back to Montana, with orders to correct deficiencies. What do we do Now?"

"Well, er, correct deficiencies, I guess."

"I say we're ready. The Inspectors said we're ready. If there are deficiencies, whoever says so should tell us what they are, and we'll correct them."

"Stand By".

Next morning, Col. Wiley Gainey and his team of sixteen experts, arrived from the office from which the strange order was sent. Again we went thru the "readiness" test, and passed it with flying colors. Just before the team departed, I asked Gainey, an old friend, "What cooked?" He told me the story, confidentially.

A few days after I joined the Group, a Colonel from the Army's Inspector General office spent a week or so looking us over. Before he left, he came into my office and said that we were not "combat ready", because one co-pilot's record showed that he did not have the required number of hours as a co-pilot. The officer in question had just arrived, and, of course the deficiency was soon corrected. But the Colonel's brief note was on his desk, when he went off on another inspection trip, and a new, young captain reported for duty in the Colonel's office. He read the note, "Not combat ready" - no date". He panicked. End of Story, except to note that the badly needed services of an entire group was lost for nearly a month.

Next time we headed eastward, we made it. Airplanes went individually, routed and directed by the Ferry Command. My plane, with Rogner as co-pilot and Group Navigator Jim Egan as navigator, with other members of my Hq. staff, went via Iceland. We were stuck at Blue West 8, in Iceland, for eight days, because of low fog and heavy iceing conditions.

It speaks well for the Ferry Command, as well as our crews, that all of our planes made the transfer to England without accident, despite hazardous November weather.

There were several severe hazards at our new base at Deenethorpe, that couldn't be credited to the Germans:

1. Mud, mud, mud. The runways, buildings, and roads had been hurriedly set down in the muck, by necessity, and it took time to bring it under control.
2. English bicycles. Americans were not used to brakes on the handle bars. Pressure on the front wheel brake control effectively stopped the front wheel, as ordered. but the rear wheel kept on going - overhead. The result was non-combat injuries galore.
3. Weather. "Blind bombing", by electronic means, had not yet been fully implemented, when we arrived, so a clear view of the target was needed for good results. There was a great improvement in that regard, as time passed.
4. Inexperience. Our first efforts in assembling with hundreds of other planes, settling into assigned positions, and reassembling after "bombs away", in the long stream of heavies, took practice which could be gained only in the arena of combat. Our first mission effort was a failure. We never found the bomber mass, and returned to base, humiliated. (I was leading). But we learned fast, and were soon setting exemplary standards.
5. Intelligence. Big mouths, big ears. It seemed natural to discuss our missions openly. This is a democracy, isn't it? But if the enemy knows where we'll be coming, he'll be waiting for us, and some of us won't be coming back. It soon became obvious that there were enemy ears listening to us. "Lord Haw Haw", the English speaking German radio propagandist, (Note: Not only was "Lord Haw Haw" English speaking - he was, in fact, English, and was executed as a traitor after the end of the war. V.M.) took great pleasure in rubbing it in. On the day we completed our first mission, he gleefully announced, in his evening broadcast, "Congratulations to the 401st Bombardment Group, which flew its first mission today, led to Bremen by Colonel Harold W. Bowman, Commander, and returned to its home base at Deenethorpe." That shook us up, and was a great help in reminding us to keep our mouths shut.
6. Vulnerability to German fighters. The early planners had so admired the B-17, which, when first designed, could defend itself quite well, by its speed and altitude, that fighter escort was assumed to be unnecessary. They forgot that fighters could improve too. During the first year of combat, American bomber forces took tragic losses. Available fighters were too "short-legged" to follow the bombers all the way in to far away targets that had to be destroyed. The arrival of the P-51 Mustang saved the day. The 401st crews were lucky. We arrived about the same time as the Mustangs. I recall the first briefing we attended, as guests of the 351st Group at Polebrook. When the briefing officer uncovered the route map, revealing a deep penetration, there was deep silence. Long faces. Then he announced fighter escort all the way in and out. Pandemonium broke loose. The crews jumped to their feet and shouted their joyous relief.
7. Assembly problems. Fighter pilots could fly formation thru clouds. Bombers could not, safely, because they were more cumbersome, and too large. They were so big that pilots sat too far apart to see next door. So we had to climb individually thru the clouds, and assemble on top,

using radio locators. Altho surprisingly successful, it was complicated and time consuming, thus requiring more fuel consumption. And that reduced the payload and range.

8. Cold. Piloting, pounding radio keys, firing hand-held machine guns, dispensing first aid, repairing damage, and fingering sensitive bomb sights or navigation equipment, while encumbered with heavy clothing and oxygen lines, was extremely difficult. To make matters worse, bathroom facilities were a few hundred miles away. "Relief tubes" soon froze up. If time permitted, flak helmets, canteens, or condoms would serve. If not, the clothing itself would have to do. At 50 below zero? During the first few missions, we had more men in the hospital from frozen buttocks than from enemy action.

Vic has told our story well, so I'll skip over to December, 1944.

"Meanwhile, back at the ranch", meaning, in this case, the Pentagon, General Arnold wrote a strong letter to General Spaatz, his "point man" in the ETO, expressing frustration at the poor way the air war was being told to the world. Most Air Force public relations officers were newspaper men, given temporary commissions for the war effort - experts in journalistic skills, but unversed in what was going on up where we were, and why. What we needed, he suggested, was a career airman who had been in combat, had the feel of the air war, and spoke the language. He should move into Park House with General Spaatz (his residence near Paris), serve in USSTAF Deputy Chief of Staff for Public Relations, and operate closely with General Eisenhower's Public Relations Section in Paris.

Since I had, in the past, served as public relations officer for both Arnold and Spaatz, my fate was sealed. I flew to France and tried to beg off. General Doolittle, 8th Air Force Commander, and General Travis, Commander of the 1st Air Division, both said, "Not available". The answer was, "No hurry. Next Monday is soon enuf".

So, with deep regret, I left for Park House on December 1, 1944, after a year-and-a-half with "THE BEST DAMNED OUTFIT IN THE USAAF", proud of having been one of you. One of US.

September 1943

The 401st Bombardment Group (Heavy) had been formed on 1st April, 1943 and by September of that year they were completing their final training in Montana.

The Group entered the final phase of training with the Group strength nearing the following goal:

	<u>Crews</u>	<u>Aircraft</u>
612th Squadron	18	15
613th Squadron	18	15
614th Squadron	17	14
615th Squadron	<u>17</u>	<u>14</u>
Group	<u>70</u> total	<u>58</u>
Headquarters		<u>2</u>
		<u>60</u> total

On 2nd September, during a severe electrical storm, a B-17 from 612th Squadron, Great Falls, crashed on the side of a hill five miles east of Fort Benton. The cause of the crash was undetermined. All ten aboard were killed. They were Lt. H.L. Wonders, Lt. W.H. Maginn, Lt. J.Y. Fisk, Lt. A.J. Gardiner, Sgt. R.H. Hall, Sgt. J.T. Hough, Sgt. C.B. Lower, Sgt. C.W. Peko, Sgt. C.C. Toremonti and Pfc. P.M. Peterson.

On Tuesday evening, 7th September, a B-17 from 614th Squadron at Glasgow ran into some engine trouble approximately 50 miles northeast of Lewistown. A successful crash landing was made in a region known to the natives as the Bad Lands. The pilot, Lt. W.T. Fridmore and the co-pilot, Frank Cavanaugh, ordered the five crew members to jump and brought the plane down with little damage in a field of stubble. Not one of the crew of seven were injured. The five who bailed out were Lt. C. Pinner, Sgt. C.E. Cook, Sgt. P.A. Shinay, Sgt. W.F. Basar and Sgt. R. R. Galbreath.

The first practice Group mission was flown on 15th September when the four Squadrons engaged in a joint simulation of the real thing. Six B-17's from each Squadron were assembled on the morning of the 15th at the Great Falls Army Air Base.

At 1100 hrs they were given their Operations, Medical, Intelligence and Weather briefing by Major Brooks, Major Mulmed, Captain Fry and Lt. Street respectively. The base Theatre was used for the briefing. Large maps were placed on the screen showing routes, targets, enemy airfields, flak concentrations, balloon barrages, etc., while individual photos and drawings were exhibited which provided the crews with a picture of what lay in store for them on the mission.

Everything was arranged in order to approximate an actual bombing operation from a British base to a continental target. The names of French airports and localities were substituted for points in Montana and the same instructions were issued to the crews as were employed in the preliminaries to a bombing mission by the Eighth Air Force.

It was a five hour mission and the aircraft returned to their individual Squadrons, where they were interogated by Squadron Intelligence Officers. A Group report was made on the results of the mission. Two other Group missions were flown later in the month.

September also witnessed an all-out effort to qualify a majority of the personnel in marksmanship with the pistol, rifle, carbine and sub-machine gun. The records showed that 75% of the total personnel qualified in the use of a basic weapon. Camouflage discipline and chemical warfare were stressed in this phase of training. Everyone, officer and enlisted man alike, was put through the gas chamber at least once, and on Tuesday's of each week the carrying of a gasmask was made compulsory.

All enlisted men attended camouflage classes, and a feature of the work was the practice they obtained in concealing trucks, jeeps, etc., with homemade camouflage materials.

In the middle of the month, word came through that the first 401st B.G. Commander, Col. Niel Harding, had been awarded the D.F.C. for conspicuous gallantry in air combat over Germany while leading the 100th B.G.

Capt. W.B. Fry, Capt. E.W. Brown and Capt. W.T. Seawell were notified at this time of their promotion to the rank of major.

During the month Crew No. 24 of the 613th Squadron had a battlewise bombardier assigned to it. This bombardier, 1st Lt. Durward W. Fesmire had seen service in the South Pacific as a member of the famous 19th Bombardment Group as a bombardier on the famous ship "Suzy Q". He had flown 92 missions and already held the Silver Star, D.F.C., Air Medal and the 19th B.G. Special Award. He had returned home as a Master Sergeant and had then been commissioned a 1st Lieutenant.

October 1943

On October 1st, the 612th Squadron lost a Flying Fortress with nine men aboard in an accident over the Big Sandy bombing range. The Fortress was piloted by 2nd Lt. John McIlwain. The plane was flying in formation as they approached the bombing range when observers in other Fortresses saw it go out of control and spin in. All the crew were killed.

The Air Echelon, led by Col. Bowman, left for Scott Field, outside St Louis, on the 18th and 19th October, 1943. Major Fry and Lt. Kennard, the advance party, had left Great Falls to prepare the way for the movement of the entire Group. They had left on 6th October.

At Scott Field the Air Echelon crews were given their overseas physical check-up, and the last minute inspections of equipment and planes was carried out. From this point on the crews left for the ETO by different routes and at different times. The Group staff plane carrying Col. Bowman, Lt. Col. Rogner, Major Mulmed, Capt. Egan, Capt. Silver, Capt. Pickoff, Lt. Hunt, Lt. Broomhall, T/Sgt. Byles and M/Sgt. Caine, travelled a typical route. Details of their journey will give some indication of the way the Group travelled from Montana to England. A time when crossing the Atlantic was still an adventure.

The staff plane left Scott Field on October 24th, after a stay of five days. Their next stop was Youngstown, Ohio, the Syracuse, New York, which they left on October 25th. Then on to Presque Isle, Maine, for an overnight stop. The next day it was on to Goose Bay, Labrador and they were soon heading out over the Atlantic for Greenland, arriving on October 27th. The weather was fine on the following morning so they took off and headed for Iceland and landed at Meeks Field - and there they were forced to stay for the next eight stormy days.

The crews of the 401st forced to stay in Iceland for these eight days found it a very strange place. A ten dollar bill in American money literally required a wheelbarrow for transportation when converted into Icelandic coin. There was a great deal of animosity towards Americans, Iceland having been invaded by the American Army so that the Allies could set up bases there for aircraft crossing the Atlantic and as a naval base in the fight against the U-boat menace. There were no trees, just low shrubs; although there was great beauty to be found in the fjords and valleys they were only seen for the short periods that the B-17's took off and landed.

At the end of the eight days the Colonel's party were on their way to the ETO, by way of Prestwick, Scotland, where they landed on November 6th 1943. The next day they land at Polebrook, England, where they started immediately in acquiring the know-how and techniques required to become members of the 8th Air Force and the air war over Europe.

In seven short months the 401st Bombardment Group (Heavy) had been transformed from a small sheet of paper bearing their name to a 3,000 strong outfit ready to do combat with one of the best air forces in the world, the Luftwaffe, whose veterans had seen action since 1936 in the Spanish civil war. The 401st were going to have to learn their trade very quickly to survive the attacks by the Me 109's and the Fw 190's they were going to run into over Germany. The jets they would see later on were to arrive too late to stop the might of the 8th Air Force sweeping them away, destroying the factories that made them, and, more importantly, the oil refineries that kept them in the air.

The 401st had been activated on 1st April, 1943 by General Order No. 46, Headquarters Second Air Force, which, at the time, was located at Fort George Wright in Spokane, Washington. Officers and enlisted men from the 395th Bombardment Group, stationed at Ephrata, Washington Army Air Base and the 383rd Bombardment Group, a training unit at the Rapid City, South Dakota Army Air Base, formed the cadre from which the infant 401st was to grow to manhood. For the first month the Commanding Officer was Colonel Neil B. Harding who, as was mentioned earlier, was given the command of a combat unit in England.

Colonel H.W. Bowman then took the Group through training and through 175 missions and, on 5th December, 1944, was called to Headquarters U.S. Strategic Air Forces in Paris to become Deputy Chief of Staff to General Carl Spaatz. The third Commanding Officer of the Group was a 401st'er, Lt. Col. W.T. Seawell, one of the Group's original Squadron Commanders. He remained as Group Commander until the Group were deactivated. Both went on to serve at Headquarters U.S. Army Air Forces in Washington at the end of W.W. II.

The first Deputy Group Commander was Major Robert C. Killam with Lt. Col. Clayton A. Scott as ground executive. The first Group operations officer was Major Frank W. Frost with Capt. C.A. Brown as Adjutant.

The original Squadron Commanders were:- Capt. Malcolm K. Martin, 612th, Capt. Edwin W. Brown, 613th, Capt. Ivan W. Eveland, 614th and Capt. W. T. Seawell, 615th.

By 29th April, 1943, the air echelon were at the AAF School of Applied Tactics at Orlando, Florida, with a nearby satellite field at Brooksville being used for field work. Back at Ephrata 150 men and two officers were establishing a Group headquarters unit. The 401st B.G. were the fourth class to pass through the AAFSAT at Orlando.

The first practice mission of the Group consisted of four B-17's attacking the dock area of New Orleans. Another three missions were flown from Orlando - to Dry Tortugas Island just off Key West, to Mobile, Alabama, and to Charleston, South Carolina.

After four weeks at Orlando the Group were once again on the move, this time to Geiger Field, Spokane, Washington where the Squadrons began to be welded into a Group and where the "lead crews" arrived. Everyone was kept very busy with physical exams, "shots", lectures, classes, close order drill and the inevitable P.T. After four weeks at Spokane a Group parade was held on 29th June, to the satisfaction of the Geiger Field C.O. apparently, who congratulated them on their high state of training.

Then, early in July, Major Allison C. Brooks took over as operations officer from Major Frost and Lt. Col. Harris E. Rogner became Deputy Group Commander. Later on Col. Rogner became the Commanding Officer of the nearby Glatton Group, the 457th B.G. (H).

The training phase at Spokane came to an end and on 1st July the Group moved to the Army Air Base at Great Falls, Montana, where more aircraft and crews were received and training went on for a further month. Then, early in August, three of the Squadrons moved out to satellite fields around Montana. The 612th and Headquarters remained at Great Falls, the 613th went to Cutbank, the 614th to Glasgow and the 615th to Lewistown.

The Ground Echelon left Great Falls and the satellite fields on Tuesday morning, October 19th, 1943. The morning was cold and bleak and as the men boarded the trains the first snow of the winter began to fall. It was a foretaste of the weather they were heading for in England. They were not sorry to leave after the tales of the frigid weather and the Montana snows that had left them very apprehensive.

They were taken to the famous Camp Shanks before the final trip across the Hudson and on board the Queen Mary. Then, on the morning of 3rd November, they arrived at Greenock, Scotland. A train then took them on the long tedious trip to the English midlands, to a very small railway station called Geddington in the county of Northamptonshire. The train pulled into the station at 2100 hours on a dark November night with the whole countryside under a strict blackout. Station 128 was about 10 miles away but it was very early in the morning before everyone managed to get settled into a hut and get to sleep.

Station 128 turned out to be RAF Deenethorpe, a triangle of land with the villages of Weldon, Deenethorpe and Upper Benefield at each corner. It was roughly 80 miles to the north of London and about 50 miles southwest of the Wash.

While the crews and aircraft were at RAF Polebrook half of them were permanently assigned to the 351st B.G. (H) because it was not thought possible for a new Group to handle a total of 64 aircraft in combat. The crews of the 401st were then sent to the American base at RAF Bassingbourn for intensive training, and some individuals flew on missions to Germany, and in one instance, Norway. Then, at 1342 hrs on the 19th of November, Capt Leon Stann landed "Pee Tey Kuh", followed by 29 other 401st aircraft. The other three 401st aircraft stayed at Polebrook for the night.

The base officially opened for operations at 0800 hrs on Wednesday, 24th November 1943.

The following morning, Thursday 25th November, a mission was briefed and then scrubbed. At 0500 hrs on Friday 26th November, a mission to Bremen was briefed and flown.

The 401st flew out over the North Sea with Col. Bowman as Group Leader, attacking the target from 25,000 feet. To the crews it was like sitting in a deep freeze, the temperature at this altitude dropping to a low of -47 degrees C. The only casualty was in "Fancy Nancy" of 612th Squadron, piloted by 1st Lt. Scribner C. Dailey, that happened when a waist gunner went into a faulty ball turret to effect some repairs. A B-17 from another Group, flying below the 401st formation, suddenly went out of control and plunged upwards into the "Fancy Nancy" cutting off the ball turret and taking the gunner with it. The ship managed to land at another base where it was deemed to be beyond repair.

Four of the briefed crews didn't even manage to get off the ground that morning. A 614th ship dropped off the perimeter track, and, in doing so, trapped the 615th Squadron Commander, Major Seawell, behind it. Then, as Lt. V.J. Kaminski neared the tail of Lt. Ralph Dempsey's ship and attempted to brake, he had a brake failure. In the ensuing collision the tail of 42-31091 was demolished by the props of 42-39873.

The following crews flew on this first mission:-

612th Squadron:- 1st Lt. J.F. Goodman and crew.
2nd Lt. S.C. Dailey and crew.
2nd Lt. G.M. Fox and crew.
2nd Lt. W.D. Sellers and crew.
2nd Lt. S.E. Smith and crew.

613th Squadron:- 1st Lt. W. Riegler and crew. (with Col. Bowman)
Capt. L. Stann and crew.
2nd Lt. C.E. Hess and crew.
2nd Lt. J.R. Locher Jr. and crew.
2nd Lt. W.B. Keith and crew.
2nd Lt. R.M. Fowler and crew.

614th Squadron:- 2nd Lt. W.R. Dawes and crew.
Capt. J.C. Peck and crew.
2nd Lt. A.H. Chapman and crew.
2nd Lt. S.P. Wilson and crew.
2nd Lt. B. Stimson and crew.

615th Squadron:- 2nd Lt. H.J. Chapman and crew.
Capt. W.M. Rumsey and crew.
2nd Lt. F.D. Grinham and crew.

This was the one and only mission for November 1943, but must be considered to be an excellent start for a new Group from an untried base that they had occupied for only three weeks. The first 8th Air Force Group had taken two months to prepare for their first mission, and even then it had only been a force of twelve B-17's across the English Channel to nearby Rouen in France.

The second mission took place on 1st December, 1943, to Solingen, led by the second in command, Lt. Col. Rogner. On this mission the Group received credit for bringing down its first enemy aircraft. It went to Sgt. Percy W Stengel, a ball turret gunner.

The second mission of the month was to Paris, France, but, because of the order that only visual targets in France could be bombed, the Group had to return with full bomb loads. At first it was very doubtful if the Fortresses would be allowed to land at Deenethorpe that afternoon - the rule being that a firetender should be on hand to handle emergencies. In fact the remains of the 401st firetender were scattered over the nearby village of Deenethorpe - along with a B-17 named "Zenobia El Elephanta" - blown to pieces by 6,000 lbs of bombs and over 2,000 gallons of aviati-fuel.

As far as the villagers of Deenethorpe were concerned Lt. Walter B. Keith had given his B-17 a very appropriate name. "Zenobia El Elephanta" is the Latin for "white elephant" - in English an object you have no use for - and the inhabitants of this little Northamptonshire village certainly had no use for a fully loaded Flying Fortress in the middle of it.

On this quiet Sunday morning, 5th December, 1943, Lt. Keith's aircraft began moving along the main runway from west to east at about 8.30 am. Ice began to form on the wings and they suddenly found themselves in the prop-wash of the preceding bomber. Sgt. Ben Musser, the radio operator, glanced out of his side window to find he was looking down at the runway with a sheet of sparks being throw up from the port wing tip dragging on the concrete. At a speed of about 100 mph the aircraft was slewed off the runway and began its run down the hill into the village of Deenethorpe. In front of them was an old stone barn and Lt. Keith realized that a head-on collision would mean instant death for the crew. His only hope was to lift it off the ground and stall it and kill the speed, and hopefully to clear the barn. With both feet on the instrument panel he pulled back on the yoke and the heavy bomber became airborne just enough to drop on top of the barn. The tail of the aircraft, with Sgt. Bob Kerr inside, broke off somewhere up the hill and when it rolled to a stop Bob Kerr stepped out shaken but unhurt.

Eight of the crew managed to scramble clear and dashed around the village to warn the inhabitants to run for their lives before the burning plane exploded. The navigator and bombardier were in the nose of the aircraft and were badly injured. They were bravely rescued by ground personnel and recovered eventually from their injuries. Twenty minutes after crashing the plane blew up with a tremendous roar, taking the fire tender up with it.

The ground crew who braved the burning aircraft to rescue the injured men were M/Sgt. Earl K. Williams and M/Sgt. Francis F. Snider, who dragged clear Lt. Carl T. Floto, the navigator and Capt. Ralph J. White, a squadron operations officer, and Cpl. William M. Luna, a medic, who rescued Lt. John J. King, the bombardier.

The RAF handed the base over to the USAAF in a ceremony in front of Group Headquarters on 20th December 1943. The Union Jack standard of the RAF was replaced by the Stars and Stripes, where it flew over Deenethorpe until June 1945.

In addition to the four Squadrons of the 401st B.G.(H) stationed on the base the following units were also there:- 450th Sub Depot, 78th Station Complement, 379th Service Squadron, 861st Chemical Company, 1597th Ordnance Supply and Maintenance Company, 1199th Military Police Company, 1209th Quartermaster Service Group, 2966th Finance Detachment, 860th Chemical Company and the 18th Weather Detachment.

On 22nd December, 1943, the target was Osnabruck. In a mix-up over the target the Group found itself on a collision course with another formation and in avoiding them flew under another formation of B-17's on a bomb run. They released before the 401st were clear and a bomb struck a 612th Squadron ship, "Channel Express", causing considerable damage to its controls. The pilot, Lt. Stuart E. Smith, managed to bring the aircraft back to Deenethorpe where the crew bailed out before heading it for Germany on automatic pilot. The plane in fact did not go all that many miles from base, crashing near Washingley, Huntingdonshire.

On Christmas Eve, 1943, the Enlisted Men threw a Christmas party for 650 local children from Kettering, Corby, Deene, Deenethorpe, Peterborough, Upper and Lower Benefield, Stanion, Clapthorpe and Oundle.

On 30th December, 1943, the Group lost its first crew when Lt. Trian Neag, an original member of the Group, was shot down. His B-17G was "Stubborn Jean", Code SC-H, Serial No. 42-39826.

The following day also proved to be a costly one for the 401st. The primary target for the mission was the submarine pens at Bordeaux but owing to bad weather the Air Commander, Major W.T. Seawell, took the Group to the secondary target at Cognac, a Luftwaffe base. The bombing was excellent and the Group received a commendation from the 94th C.W. Commander, Brig. General J.K. Lacey. Unfortunately two crews were lost on this mission. The 614th Squadron Commander, Major I Wayne Eveland, flying co-pilot with Lt. Homer E. McDanal was shot down by fighters, killing four of the crew. Three men of this crew, including Major Eveland, subsequently evaded capture and walked over the Pyrenees into Spain, eventually returning to Deenethorpe. This crew were flying a Fortress named "Flak Rat", Serial No. 42-37770, Squadron Code IW-A. The other crew lost was that of Lt. Donald H. Lawry, flying "Hey Lou", Serial No. 42-31064, Squadron Code IW-H. They went into the English Channel and only the body of the co-pilot, Lt. James Dockendorf was found. By the time the other aircraft had reached England the weather had become so difficult that all aircraft diverted to emergency fields near the coast. Capt. Jere Maupin and his crew bailed out of "Fool's Luck II" near Ware, Herts, when they ran out of fuel and Lt. Scribner Dailey and his crew did the same near Kimbolton, Hunts in "Fancy Nancy III".

January 1944

With ten missions behind them, the 401st greeted the New Year of 1944, confident in the belief that the year's end would see peace in Europe.

The 8th Air Force had now reached the point foreseen by Generals Arnold and Eaker back in the dreary days of 1942, and the dream of "One thousand of our planes by day and one thousand RAF planes by night" bombing Axis-held Europe had now become a reality.

On the first day of the year Capt. Carl C. Hinkle was made Commanding Officer of the 614th Squadron, to succeed the missing Major Eveland. To take Capt. Hinkle's place as Operations Officer of the 613th Squadron went Capt. Leon Stann. ~~Capt. William "Judy" Garland succeeded Capt. James Foster, the 614th Operations Officer, shot down on 11th January on the Oscherslaben mission with the staff of the 614th Squadron.~~

On 3rd January the 401st received a wire from the 94th Combat Wing C.O., Col. Lacey, congratulating them on the accuracy of its bombing and praising them on their efficiency in adapting themselves to the 8th Air

Force program without exhibiting the beginners usual mistakes.

The Group bombed Kiel on January 4th. It was the 11th mission and Major Martin and Capt. Garland were in the lead ship. Over the North Sea the aircraft, "Carolyn", developed engine trouble and they were forced to ditch. Capt. Garland landed the plane near two British trawlers, but it was mid-winter and it was an hour before the rescue could be completed. The British Admiralty pronounced it the coldest and roughest day of that winter at sea. During the hour the crew were in the water two of them were swept away, Lt. Floyd C. Howe, bombardier, and Sgt. Ralph D. Newton. Lt. Howe's body was recovered and he was given every possible attention by the British seaman, but he could not be revived. Sgt. Newton's body was never found. The rest of the crew were Lt. E.P. Nolte, navigator, T/Sgt. B.W. Stimmel, radio operator, T/Sgt. A.V. Spacek, top turret gunner, Sgt. T.D. McNab, ball turret gunner, Sgt. J.L. Parrott, waist gunner and Lt. E.G. Owens, tail gunner/observer.

Lt. James Goodman took over as deputy leader of the Group and led the 401st planes over the target in a highly successful mission.

The next day, the 5th, Lt. Col. Rogner lead the B-17's of the Group on a mission to Tours, France. The Luftwaffe base near the city was given a thorough going over and Colonel Rogner expressed himself pleased with the way the crews kept close formation to and from the target.

A letter to Colonel Bowman from General F.L. Anderson arrived in January congratulating the Group on its completion of 8 combat missions without losing a single plane. The General also praised the Colonel for the Group's rapid development and general tendency to stay "on the ball".

The chemical works of the Farbenindustrie in Ludswigshaven was chosen as the target for January 7th. Captain Ralph White was deputy leader. Originally referred to as Mission 12B the completion of the operation saw it chalked up as the 13th Mission ... a matter of caution rather than superstition claimed one of the Squadron historians. The bombing destroyed a great section of the chemical plant along the northern side of the river. The Farbenindustrie covered a stretch of land 8 miles long and 3 miles wide.

When the crews filed out of the briefing room early on the morning of January 11th, they were setting out on what was later described as "the greatest air battle of WW II". The target was Oscherslaben and there had been no indication that this was going to be tougher than some of the previous forays over enemy territory.

Major Allison Brooks was Combat Wing Leader and the 8th Air Force sent aloft the largest number of planes it had ever mustered for a single mission. In the course of the mission the Group encountered every type of difficulty - there were new, huge rockets, there were swarms of enemy fighters that attacked for $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours, flak was heavier than ever before, and to make matters worse, the Group had no fighter support in the target area.

The single exception was a lonely P-51 (Mustang), piloted by Major James Howard, of St Louis, Captain Bill Dolan's home town. Bill later served with James Howard and they became friends. The work of Major Howard in the sky over Oscherslaben that day was considered one of the greatest single achievements of the war. TIME MAGAZINE of January 31st 1944 published the following story from a cabled report issued by the Group.

"US heavy bombardment crews came back from the hard-fought raid on Oscherslaben laden full of admiration for the daring of an unknown fighter pilot --- a US airman in a Mustang who took on single handed a formation of 30 Nazi fighter planes.

Fortress pilots and gunners could scarcely believe their eyes as the Mustang flyer slashed in, all knees, elbows and fists, shooting and turning like a man possessed. Observers vowed they saw him knock down five or six German fighters. Said the Fortress formation leader:

"It looked like one American against the entire Luftwaffe. He was over us, across the formation and around it. For sheer determination and guts it was the greatest exhibition I have ever seen."

The bomber crews who saw the beginning of the combat lost sight of the Mustang in a dive. It seemed little better than a 1 - in - 100 chance that such gallantry could have survived such odds. 8th Air Force Intelligence Officers found that the odds had been cheated. Last week they identified the Mustang pilot as Major James H. Howard, of St Louis. What was more, Major Howard had landed at his British base unscratched, even his ship had emerged from the maelstrom of Messerschmits with nothing worse than one bullet hole in the wing.

Correspondents who interviewed Major Howard found no daredevil youngster, but a lanky, quiet-spoken, 30 year old veteran air fighter with thinning reddish hair, and a slow smile. They also found that the one-man-air-formation's private war with the Luftwaffe had lasted for about 30 minutes, and included at least five combats with individual Nazi planes within the pattern of the general melee.

Flying long range protection for the bombers, Howard's flight had attacked enemy fighters, and after the first encounter he found himself alone and near the forward box of Fortresses just coming under heavy attack by twin and single-engine fighters.

Major Howard was embarrassed by his fame. "I'd just see one, give him a squirt and go up again, look around, see another, give him a squirt, and go up again, look around and repeat! There were a lot of them around and it was just a matter of shooting at them."

In the mix-up Howard hauled out every trick in the book, among them "chopping the throttle" (to slow down abruptly) and dropping flaps (to turn a tighter circle). He began with all four guns going, finally was reduced to one. He wound up his day, all ammunition spent, scaring off a rocket-carrying Dornier 217 by plain bluff, and then scooted for home.

Howard learned how to fight from a top-grade teacher. Originally a Pensacola Navy flyer, he resigned his commission to join the A.V.G. Flying Tigers in China under Major General Claire Chennault. He found good company, then became a Squadron Leader in six months, shot down six Japs. When his China term was up he came home rail-thin from dengue fever, took three months leave, then went back to war, this time with the Army Air Force.

Modest Major Howard's combat report last week claimed only two planes destroyed, two probables and one damaged. But the Confirmation Board which passes on his reports may have the unusual duty of revising a victory upward. Shop-talking airmen in London this week understand that Major Howard was being recommended for the Congressional Medal of Honor."

The formation leader quoted in the above story was Major Allison Brooks.

Howard's story was on everyones lips returning from the mission. The operation itself was almost dwarfed by his valorous actions.

The big trouble started over the Zuyder Zee. The Germans evidently believing it to be the first daylight mission against Berlin, sent every fighter plane against the 8th's Armada of Forts and Libs that could be made airborne. For the next $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours the battles went on without a pause --- a fight in which some 2,000 planes and nearly 10,000 men waged the fiercest engagement ever seen in the skies. In terms of aerial warfare, it represented the full development of a scale and pattern of attack and counterattack that equalled a great naval engagement.

The Germans even employed "balloon mines" - a sort of aerial bomb fastened to the end of a cable towed by advance planes. The objective was to pull these mines into the American formations, then release them and let them explode automatically.

The 401st was in the thick of the fight and each crew landing had stories to tell that could have filled many books.

Sgt. James R. Hamilton, a tail gunner on Lt. Fred D. Grinham's crew, emerged as the No. 1 hero of the Group, when, although wounded by a 20 mm shell which creased his skull and pierced his ear, stuck to his guns and drove off repeated enemy attacks at the rear of his plane. The plane had straggled when flak destroyed the No.4 engine.

He was officially credited with three enemy aircraft destroyed, but his crew insisted that he downed 8 and possibly 10. The heat of battle, the feverish activity and the inability to adjudge specific times, angles of attack, etc., precluded the submittal of full claims.

Lt. Grinham, his pilot said:

"We would never have been able to reach England if he had'nt been cracking away at those crazy fighters. He was practically out on his feet, covered with blood, and those Jerries picked on us for 3 hours because they figured our plane was a dead duck when the flak hit us. Hamilton saved the day."

The Governor of Kentucky and Senator Albert B. "Happy" Chandler sent respectively a cable and a letter of congratulations to Sgt. Hamilton.

Lt. George F. Bingham, pilot, and Lt. Francis W. Hoad, co-pilot, landed their plane on automatic pilot when two cables, one connected to the elevator and one connected to the rudder, were shot away.

Lt. Bingham ordered eight of the crew to bail out and he and Lt. Hoad set the plane down without mishap. Their feat was regarded as "just something that can't be done" by their fellow pilots at that time.

S/Sgt. Earl L. Keohler, a waist gunner, distinguished himself on board the plane piloted by Lt. Donald V. Kirkhuff. Knocked unconscious when flak pierced his back, he recovered and insisted that the other waist gunner refrain from informing Lt. Kirkhuff over the interphone of his injury.

Lt. Kirkhuff's crew claimed 9 enemy fighter on this mission and S/Sgt. Keohler's guns continued to blaze as they fought their way back home.

On this mission to Oscherslaben the Group were credited with 26 enemy aircraft destroyed, 15 probables and 29 damaged.

The 401st lost four crews on the mission, they were, Capt. J.H. Foster's, Lt. S.G. Nason's, Lt. H.J. Chapman's and Lt. D.C. Sprecher's.

The January 11th., 1944, mission to Oscherslaben will always be remembered by the 401st B.G.(H).

The 15th mission was to Gorenflos and Major Martin led. The bombing was classed as superb - as befitted Captain Julius Pickoff, the Group Bombardier.

On the 19th of January, Major Malcolm "Kenny" Martin was transferred to the 94th Combat Wing at Polebrook as Assistant Operations Officer. His loss was softened by the fact that Polebrook was only 10 miles away from Deenethorpe, and frequent visits would, and did, take place.

Major Martin was succeeded as 612th Squadron Commander by Capt. Jere Maupin. Capt. Donald McCree was appointed 612th Operations officer to fill Capt. Maupin's vacancy.

The 16th Mission was led by Capt. Hinkle. It was to Notre Dame de Ferme on the French rocket coast. It was a successful mission and there was no enemy opposition.

A mission to Frankfurt was scheduled for the 24th, but weather conditions forced the planes back when they interfered with visual bombing. Lt. "Ed" Cury, bombardier, had a narrow escape on the return journey when some live incendiary bombs (British type) jammed in the bomb bay. He removed the pins and commenced dropping them into the sea. Taking off his oxygen mask to facilitate his task he almost fell into the icy waters below when the lack of oxygen rendered him unconscious. His pilot, Lt. Trimble, and Sgt. Schaffer, a gunner, grabbed him in the nick of time.

Major Edwin Brown led the 17th mission to Frankfurt. It was a large scale operation and one of the gunners remarked that the sky over the target looked like Moving Day over Willow Run.

Knocked to his knees by a 20mm shell which creased his skull, T/Sgt. Thomas Urmson, top turret gunner, stuck to his guns, and, although bleeding heavily, managed to account for at least one enemy fighter over Frankfurt. His pilot, Lt. Donald E. Jones, whose ship was a flying wreck after several hits by flak shattered it, stated that T/Sgt. Urmson had refused to let him know about his condition until they landed because T/Sgt. Urmson believed the distraction would have given the German fighters the chance they wanted -- T/Sgt. Urmson realized the 9 other crew men had their hands full. The crew claimed 6 enemy aircraft.

Four crews were lost: Capt. R.W. Beers. Lt. L.C. Van Syckle, Lt. D.T. Nicklawski and Lt. J. Tannahill.

On 30th January Lt. Col. Rogner led the Combat Wing on the Group's 18th mission. It was to Brunswick. The operation culminated 72 hours of the greatest bombing assault ever staged over Festung Europa. Over 800 US heavies were engaged in the operation and 1,800 tons of bombs were dropped.

The crew of Lt. Ronald R. Rohner were listed as Missing In Action on the mission.

February 1944

The Group chalked up ten more missions in February - one more than the previous month. The reason for this was a decision reached by USAAF and RAF officials to hammer the Air War home to Germany while the Luftwaffe and German industrial cities were still reeling from previous blows. Day and night, the skies over England resounded with the heavy roar of planes on their way to Occupied Europe.

Strategically, it was decided to strike at the main barrier in the way of the invasion of the Western front -- the Luftwaffe. For this reason, factories and plants manufacturing German fighter planes were struck time and time again. Whole airfields and airdromes were obliterated in north-western France and western Germany.

At the time it was impossible to judge the results. Staggering blows were delivered to the German aircraft production plants, but only the skies over the Second Front could give the true answer.

Captain Delwyn "Hi Ho" Silver led the Group on its 19th mission, when Wilhelmshaven, the great port and fighter base on the North Sea coast was attacked. Over 1,100 fighters and bombers participated. The 401st emerged unscathed and the bombing results were good. The date was 3rd February.

The next day, the 4th, Lt. Col. Harris E. Rogner, the Air Executive, was transferred to 94th Combat Wing Headquarters and Lt. Col. Burton K. Voorhees arrived from Wing to take his place.

Thus departed one of the key figures in the 401st. A great athlete at West Point, a pilot's pilot and one of the most popular and respected officers in the Group, his loss was felt keenly by the enlisted men as well as his fellow officers.

A fellow officer said of him:

"He had the knack of handling men because he could do any job just a little bit better than the next fellow whether playing baseball, leading a formation of Fortresses, breaking records at skeet, handling a billiard cue, or conducting the myriad executive duties of his office, Colonel Rogner was tops.

He was what they had in mind when the phrase "An officer and a gentleman" was coined."

On October 11th 1944 Col. Rogner took over as Commanding Officer of the 457th B.G. (H) at Glatton, a member of the 94th Combat Bomb Wing. The post war years saw Col. Rogner attend staff college and then serve with NATO. During the Korean War he was given a combat command and led several B-29 missions. It proved to be his last command because late in 1951, on his way home in a B-29, he was killed in the crash of the B-29 as it attempted an instrument landing at Barksdale Field, Louisiana.

On 28th July 1945 Col. Rogner and his second in command, Lt. Col. William F. Smith, flew a B-25 from their Sioux Falls base to Newark, New York, where Col. Rogner spent the weekend with his family. He allowed Lt. Col. Smith to go on to Bedford, Massachusetts, with the B-25 so that he could pick him up at Newark the following day. On the following day Lt. Col. Smith found himself in very bad weather over New York, and, after a zig-zag course between the towering building of the city struck the Empire State Building, passing clean through it and out the other side.

On the same day that Col. Rogner moved to Folebrook to join the 94th C.B. Wing, Major Brooks led the Combat Wing on a mission to Frankfurt. It was the 20th mission and despite intense flak, the Wing ploughed through a heavy overcast in 45 below zero weather to successfully bomb the target. 2nd Lt. Frank J. Zitkovic's crew were reported as missing in action after the operation. The other members of the crew were 2nd Lt. Bascom O. Clifton, 2nd Lt. Wayne R. Goodwin, 2nd Lt. John L. Wenger, S/Sgt. Joseph H. Dippel, Sgt. Burton S. Davidson, Sgt. Charles J. Howard, Sgt. Max Slotnick, Sgt. Raymond W. Fritelager and Sgt. James O. Nichols.

~~Fritelager~~
FRITZINGER

Their aircraft, "Nobody's Baby", Serial No. 42-31036, Squadron code IW-X, had been hit by flak and, when last seen, was 4000 feet below the formation with all four engines turning and seemed to be under control. It's one of those cases when it appears that the crew should have survived but didn't. The post war Missing In Action Report states that the entire crew were killed.

I'm happy to report that on Christmas Eve, 1986, Lt. Russell J. Prechtl, an F-16 fighter pilot of the 613th Fighter Squadron, 401st T.F.W., and his crew chief renamed their aircraft "Nobody's Baby" in honor of Lt. Frank Zitkovic and his crew.

On February 5th Capt. Leon Stann led an operation over the Chateauroux airfield in France. The results were perfect. Pictures of the 401st bombs striking the target appeared in Stars and Stripes and in the London newspapers. They showed the target completely demolished. It was mission No. 21.

The following incident was recorded at the time of Mission 21.

"The crew had proudly boasted it was the only one in the Air Force on which every single member of the crew could take off, fly and land a B-17.

Their Fortress, "Nasty Habit", was returning from Chateauroux when several bursts of 20mm penetrated the plane, severely wounding 1st Lt. Harry L. Piper, pilot, in the arm, and spraying 2nd Lt. George J. Hellmuth, co-pilot, from shoulder to waist with jagged shell fragments.

Lt. Piper was in intense pain and S/Sgt. James M. Bailey, engineer, and T/Sgt. Robert F. Wager, radio operator, helped carry him to the radio room where a tourniquet was applied to his arm. The 20mm fire which wounded Lt. Piper and Lt. Hellmuth had also caught S/Sgt. Bailey in the back. Nevertheless, he walked forward to the pilots cabin to survey the damage and see whether he could help Lt. Hellmuth.

The No. 3 engine was completely useless and the gas tank of No. 4 had been peppered so much that it was leaking badly. The compass had been shot away and the transformer pump was badly damaged.

The instrument panel looked like someone had been using it for a dart board.

Lt. Hellmuth had shifted to the left in the pilot's seat, with S/Sgt. Bailey easing himself into the co-pilot's chair.

Neither knew about the others wounds.

Expertly and surely they guided the crippled giant back to England. It took an hour to sight the friendly coast. The No. 4 engine was now threatening

to give out from lack of fuel --- the transformer pump would'nt work and the gas leakage had drained the No. 4 gas tank.

A forced landing was imperative. The badly damaged ship, two strangers at the pilot's and co-pilot's controls, both wounded --- fate had thrown down the gauntlet to the ten men of "Nasty Habit".

They eased her down towards the earth.

"It was a nervous few minutes," said 2nd Lt. James A. Coventry, navigator. "The next thing I knew we were on the ground and everything was safe."

"I went into the pilot's compartment and there were Hellmuth and Bailey out cold. They were bleeding heavily and both must have passed out only when they realized the ship was safe on the ground."

"Both of them had refused to say anything over the interphone about their wounds. They must have been in agony. The medic who looked at Hellmuth said he must have had over twenty pieces of shell fragments in his arm."

The men of the "Nasty Habit" are still proud of their claim --- everyone of them can fly a B-17. Prouder, today, however, are they about Lt. Hellmuth and S/Sgt. Bailey, the two men who proved their claim --- the hard way."

The 22nd mission was to Caen, France. It was led by Colonel Bowman, who took along as a guest, Colonel James R. Luper, Commanding Officer of the newly opened field at Glatton. On 7th October Colonel Luper was in one of the five B-17's lost on the Politz mission - resulting in Colonel H. Rogner's assuming command of the 457th in his place. This same Politz mission also cost the 401st five crews missing in action.

The Caen mission was a target of opportunity attack on an airfield, and it was severely pounded. Weather prevented the bombing of Dijon, the original target.

General Bowman had reason to remember this mission. He was called to Wing H.Q. at Polebrook and told to stay clear of the Caen area, and the reason for the order became clear on June 6th when the Allies landed there. It was all part of the plan not to draw the German's attention to the area.

On February 10th, the Aero Club was opened on the Station under the auspices of the American Red Cross. It was for Enlisted Men only and offered games, a library, snack and music facilities. A dance was held on the opening night. Mrs Helen Smith was director of the Club with Miss Lois Murphy as progress director.

The mission to Frankfurt on February 11th was the 23rd, and Capt. Donald McCree led the Group. Frankfurt was the railway centre of southwestern Germany and site of important aircraft and manufacturing plants.

"It was a very successful mission," reported Capt. McCree, "we could see the target area and our bombs smacked right into it. The fighter support was superb."

On February 15th Lt. Danial H. Goetsch, from the 614th, returned to the Station after having evaded capture by the Nazi. He parachuted to safety over France on December 31st, 1943. It was the mission to Cognac and he flew as navigator in Major Eveland's plane.

Lt. Goetsch reported that all the crew had bailed out but, unfortunately, it was later discovered that four of them had been killed in the fighter attack that downed the aircraft. He volunteered to speak to the combat crews and his story and advice on escape techniques were invaluable. The crews who had been shot down and evaded were not allowed to fly again in the ETO for fear of them falling into enemy hands and disclosing escape routes.

The 24th mission, on February 20th, was history making.

Colonel Bowman led the 1st Bomb Division in an operation over Leipzig, where the greatest blow of the war at German aircraft production was struck. Over 600 heavy bombers dropped over 2,300 tons of bombs.

The success of the mission led General Williams to wire:-

"February 20th will be marked as probably the most important date in the Air War over Germany. You and your crews are responsible for the most crushing defeat yet administered to the German Air Force. I can assure you the result of this mission will be felt in future operations.

"I further wish to commend you and your crews on the excellent air discipline demonstrated on this mission. This was evidenced by an assembly under difficult conditions and orderly well flown formations on return to England.

"My heartiest congratulations on a difficult mission well done. I am proud to be a part of this command."

Also the following teletype message was received from General Doolittle:-

"In recognition of the contribution made by the RAF Bomber Command toward the success of our operation of 20th February, the Commanding General USSTAF dispatched a message of appreciation to Air Marshall Harris. In response thereto as follows: "I much appreciate your welcome message and congratulate you in turn on your heavy and most successful attack, thanks largely to our combined efforts on the previous day and night, the enemy fighter force failed to achieve any successful defence of Stuttgart which we hope has now been heavily hit at a small cost, By mutual help such as this we can impose a strain on the German fighters which will break them down. If we thus share the lead, we have the power to reduce to impotence the greatest obstacle to complete and final victory. I shall be most grateful if you will communicate your message and this reply to your command."

"It is desired that all crew members be informed.
Doolittle."

The following story about Mission 24 was issued to the press at that time:

"The plane piloted by 1st Lt. Alvah H. Chapman arrived safely at base after this mission but Lt. Chapman and his mates knew they had been on a mission (and then some) when they climbed out.

The fort was nearing the target when a swarm of Me-109's attacked it. The No. 3 engine was shot away, crankshaft broken and the prop looked as though it would go flying off at any minute. A blade of No. 4 prop was torn off, and the throttle controls rendered useless. The brakes and flaps also took a severe splintering.

Two Me-109's moved in for the kill, thinking the Fortress was now a dead duck. In an effort to throw them off the trail, Captain Delwyn Silver, co-pilot and deputy Group leader ordered the plane put into a spiral earthward in an attempt to mislead the Jerry fighters into the belief that the Fortress was crashing.

The Germans clung to the pursuit, however, and tailed the damaged giant in its flight downwards, blazing away with everything they had. T/Sgt. George S. Wilson, top turret gunner, sent a burst at them and the rest of the crew of "Battlin Betty" report that one of the German planes burst into pieces, its pilot hurled out of the ship.

"We saw him thrown clear of the plane." said Sgt. Michael C. Brennan, "And he was'nt opening up any parachute either. That plane was really blown to bits."

Captain Silver reports that the other Jerry peeled off then -- the going looked too rough. By this time the "Battlin Betty" was down to an altitude of 2,000 feet.

The Fortress was now all by its ownsome, deep in the heart of enemy territory. There were no friendly fighters in sight, and Captain Silver realized that if they climbed higher in the badly damaged plane, the German fighters, thousands of feet above would make mincemeat of them.

They turned in the direction of home and continued to fly at the 2,000 feet level.

"We could see the German countryside below us just as if we were touring Festung Europa in a sightseeing bus, only there was'nt any fun attached to it. We expected enemy fighters on the entire trip back."

"Lt. Chapman did a magnificent job of flying us and he was found to bare down every foot of the way."

We flew around every sizeable village we came to, because we knew their flak would get us if their fighters did'nt. This made the flight a zig-zag affair, and we sweated out our fuel tanks all the way back -- Leipzig is a helluva way from Britain."

They flew in a zigzag line for Amsterdam and it was in the vicinity of that city that one last enemy fighter made a last pass at them. He was beaten off when the Fortress turned the full strength of its guns against him. They crossed the Channel and landed safely.

Pictures of the damaged plane showed the terrific struggle the "Battlin Betty" must have experienced. Observers could hardly believe that the riddled ship could have made the long voyage home. The fuselage looked like a lace curtain and, crowning point of all, was a large section of the Me-109 prop which had become wedged in one of the gun emplacements."

2nd Lt. Edward T. Gardner's crew were reported missing in action after this operation. Post war reports show that Ed Gardner gave his life for his crew, holding the aircraft until the nine crew members had safely bailed out but too late to bail out himself. The following crew members undoubtedly owe their lives to his bravery:- Lt. G.L. Carter, Lt. C.A. Couger, Lt. J.L. Foster, S/Sgt. D.W. Minard, Cpl. F. Monnes, S/Sgt. P.J. Piazza, S/Sgt. S.R. Rezowski, Sgt. S.A. Trupia and Sgt. F.J. Durben.

On February 21st the target was Lippstadt, the mission, the Group's 25th, was led by Major Edwin Brown. The 8th Air Force later announced that they had dropped some 8,000 tons of bombs on German fighter factories in the preceding 36 hours, claiming to have seriously hampered fighter output.

On Washington's Birthday, 22nd February, the 401st returned to Oscherslaben, the mission being led by Major W.T. Seawell. It was the Group's 26th mission.

The feature of the mission was the fact that it was the first North-South air blow dealt out over Europe, a joint operation being executed by the 15th USAAF from bases in Italy and the 8th from stations in England.

Oscherslaben again proved to be an expensive target for the 401st, two crews being reported as missing in action. They were the crews of Lt. Loy M. Shanks, aircraft Serial No. 42-31930, Squadron Code IN-M, and Lt. Vernon A. Arneson, aircraft Serial No. 42-38002, Squadron Code IW-Q. There is some evidence to show that both crews were made POW's.

On February 24th Captain Garland led the Group on its 27th mission. The target was Schweinfurt. Despite the fact that 21 ships were held up for major repairs as the result of heavy flak and fighter opposition on the Oscherslaben mission, the Group put a full complement of aircraft into the air.

The bomb results were excellent. The plants and factories in the city where most of the ball bearings were made in Germany was dealt a crippling blow.

Augsburg was the target on February 25th and Major Seawell led the Wing. It was the Group's 28th mission. It also marked the 6th day of "Big Week", an effective offensive staged by the 8th Air Force against the Luftwaffe, in the air and on the ground.

Lt. Durward "Fes" Fesmire completed his 100th mission on this operation. He had 92 to his credit in the Pacific on "Suzy Q" before joining the 401st B.G. (H).

March 1944

March saw the USAAF come into its own. Records were set in all directions --- prompting General Arnold to issue a special statement at the end of the month to the effect that the Second Front had, in fact arrived and that the giant air offensive over Europe was, in truth, accomplishing the same results as had only been obtained in the past by huge armies, fighting at terrific cost sustaining tremendous casualties. To those who scoffed, he presented hard, cold statistics which told in unmistakable terms of the way Hitler's armies were being weakened by strategic bombing of factories and war plants, and how Hitler's whole front was gradually being hammered into final submission. For the first time in modern German history, Air Power had carried the fight behind German frontiers.

One thousand plane missions became common place. The 401st, for instance, engaged in 18 missions during the month. Reconnaissance photos supplied proof positive that Germany's Goliath was machine was taking a severe licking.

On March 2nd the Group flew its 29th mission, the target being Frankfurt. Captain White led the Low Box of the Group formation. It was a Pathfinder job.

In this operation 1,900 tons of bombs were dropped by the 8th Air Force. Missing in action on this mission was 2nd Lt. William C. Sheahan and his crew, flying "Sac Hound", Serial No. 42-31467, Squadron Code IN-J. The other members of the crew were:- Lt. E.B. Ogden, Lt. R.O. Davis, Lt. D.M. Conway, T/Sgt. D.W. Silverstein, T/Sgt. R.W. Rickey, S/Sgt. E. Justice, S/Sgt. J.W. O'Mara, S/Sgt. S. Falk and Sgt. R.T. Leking.

Wilhelmshaven was the target on the next day (March 3rd), Captain Carl Hinkle led the Group. This was the Group's 30th mission.

Cologne was bombed on the 4th of the month with Lt. Col. Brooks leading the Wing.

The following is a newspaper account of a crash landing made by a 401st crew on returning from Cologne.

"A Flying Fortress, "Bonnie Donnie", piloted by 1st Lt. Donald A. Currie, landed on its belly in a crash landing at a Fortress base here recently and, thanks to Currie's superb pilotage, none of the crew were hurt.

The crash landing was made on the concrete runway of the base and was occasioned when flak over the Ruhr damaged Currie's landing gear so severely he was unable to get his wheels down.

Spectators who lined the field and roads surrounding the station, as the Fortress circled and recircled overhead, saw the big plane come in at a speed of over 100 mph, level out at about six feet above the concrete and then hit, tail first. The second the tail hit the runway, Currie brought the nose of the plane down and cut his switches. The sparks that flew from the crashing plane, as steel met concrete, practically enveloped the Fortress and onlookers thought it had burst into flames.

The illusion of an explosion, coupled with the ear-rending noise, made by the giant fuselage grinding into the runway, led spectators to abandon any hope of a rescue. The impact was heard two miles away. Fears for the crew and plane lasted only a second. The Fortress came to rest on its belly and, as crash trucks and ambulances sped to the scene, Lt. Currie and his crew emerged from the hatches, shaken but unhurt.

Currie had landed his plane flawlessly. Fellow pilots were referring to it today as a "dream landing". Damage to the aircraft was moderate.

Ordinarily, he would have set the plane down on the soft turf that fringes the runway, but recent rains and snows had so mired the ground that a glide landing would have been impossible.

As a safety measure, Currie had jettisoned his ball turret prior to landing. This piece of caution undoubtedly saved the day. The turret, which protrudes from underneath the fuselage, would probably have broken the plane in half at the point of impact.

Colonel Harold W. Bowman, C.O. of Currie's Fortress Group, congratulated him on his achievement."

The other members of this crew were: 2nd Lt. C.A. Johnson, 2nd Lt. M.B. Jeffery, 2nd Lt. R.R. Winn, T/Sgt. C.A. DiPierro, Sgt. E.C. Gibson, S/Sgt. C.L. Graf, S/Sgt. W.L. Surprise Jr., S/Sgt. M.T. Severson and S/Sgt. J.R. Amber.

Templin, outside Berlin, was the target on the 5th. The mission was led

by Major Brown, who flew as Wing Leader. Other Groups bombed Berlin --- the first giant USAAF mission over the Reich capital. Missing in action on this mission was 2nd Lt. Claude M. Kolb. His aircraft was 42-38136, Squadron Code IY-G. The other members of this crew were: 2nd Lt. E.S. Sutton, 2nd Lt. R.R. E'Del, 2nd Lt. E.C. Jones, S/Sgt. E. Wallach, S/Sgt. F.H. Webb, S/Sgt. W.C. Cameron, Sgt. L.E. Podlasek, Sgt. L.A. Raymer and Sgt. C. Cromerty.

Erkner, a suburb of Berlin, was bombed on the 8th, the Group's 23rd mission, led by Major Seawell. Other 8th Air Force Groups attacked Berlin and only desultory fighter attacks were made by the Luftwaffe. Missing in action on this mission was the crew of 2nd Lt. Dale A. Peterson in "Shade Ruff", Serial No. 42-31488, Squadron Code IW-D.

A mission to Munster was run on the 11th with Lt. Col. Voorhees as the Wing Leader. Once again, the Nazi fighters were conspicuous by their absence. Although over 1,000 American aircraft were despatched, only seven bombers were lost by the 8th A.F. in the day's operations.

Gorenflos was attacked by the Group on the 13th., the 36th mission by the 401st. It was led by Captain White. 2nd Lt. George J. Hellmuth and his crew were lost on this mission in 42-31374, Squadron code IN-B.

Captain McCree led the Group to Augsburg on the 16th. Captain Hinkle led on the 18th to Landesburg Am Lech, and Major Silver led on the 19th to Watten.

Frankfurt was the target on the 20th with Captain Garland leading the Group. It was the 40th mission.

The Group's erstwhile Air Executive, Lt. Col. Rogner, led the Division on the Frankfurt mission. The crew of 2nd Lt. John A. Dunaway were lost on this mission in 42-38033, Squadron code SC-M.

"Big B" (Berlin) was again visited by the Group on March 22nd. Captain Stann led the Group. Again, Jerry's fighters stayed on the ground.

Captain Maupin led the Group on March 23rd to Ahlen, and on the 24th Major Brown led the Wing to Schweinfurt.

The 44th mission was to Watten, on March 26th, Captain Hinkle leading the Group. One of the original 401st aircraft, 42-37833, Squadron code IY-F, "Omar the Dentmaker" went down on this mission with only 1st Lt. Haeffner, the bombardier and Sgt. John B. Carson, the tail gunner, surviving. Those KIA were: Capt. William M. Rumsey, 1st Lt. Robert D. Kaercher, 1st Lt. Michael R. Walsh, T/Sgt. William W. Carter, T/Sgt. Donald B. Roberts, S/Sgt. Irvin I. Lieberman, S/Sgt. Frank A. Rothwell and S/Sgt. Ivan R. Lee.

Tours was the target on the 27th and Captain Garland and Major Silver split the Group leadership.

The 46th mission was a return visit to Brunswick, and Major Seawell once again led the Wing. The date was March 29th.

During the month, Majors Silver, Pickoff and Charles Brown were notified of their promotions.

April 1944

The first anniversary of the Group was celebrated on April 1st. The 401st's first birthday was the occasion for a banquet and stag party at the Officers Club in the evening at which Brig. General Robert Williams, Commanding Officer, 1st Bombardment Division, was chief guest. Also invite were full Colonels Rogner and Lacey, from Combat Wing. It was noted by an RAF officer present, that by a happy coincidence April 1st was also the birthday of the Royal Air Force.

A musical revue, "You Caw'nt Miss It", was staged and produced by the Group, who then travelled to Northampton on the evening of April 2nd and entertained the patients at the County Hospital. Councilman Dennis Capron expressed the thanks of the people of Northampton for the gesture at the conclusion of the performance.

Bad weather in the early part of the month prevented any flights to enemy territory, but on April 9th the 401st struck at Marienburg, in East Prussia, for the 47th Group mission. Captain James Goodman led the Group and two targets, an enemy fighter aircraft plant and an airfield east of the city were attacked with good effect.

This was the first of 15 missions accomplished during the month. Actually, the 15 missions were accomplished in the last three weeks of the month. Two crews were lost on this mission, those of 1st Lt. William R. Dawes Jr., and 2nd Lt. G. Byrd. Lt. Byrd flew his badly damaged B-17, 42-97496, IV-J, to Sweden where the crew was interned.

Sgt. John L. Hurd, a gunner on "Battlin Betty" on this mission, described the sad end of Lt. Dawes and his gallant crew in a letter to me.

"Our target was a FW-190 factory. We flew over the Baltic Sea to Danzig, Poland, and turned south. Our ship, "Battlin Betty", was carrying incendiary bombs and our bomb run was from the south to north heading toward the sea again. No problems in the target area for us. As we headed west over the Baltic Sea and flying into the sun a German fighter came out of the sun and attacked a 614th Squadron ship piloted by Lt. William R. Dawes Jr. Since I ride the ball turret I cannot see whats going on upstairs so the first indication of trouble I saw was when I looked down towards the sea and there was this B-17 floating upside down toward the water. I did not see any chutes. A few minutes later I had my turret turned straight ahead and I could see three fighters going around in a circle. It was two P-51's chasing an enemy single-engined fighter. They made a couple of circles and then the German aircraft headed straight down, crashing into an island or part of northern Europe. I could see the orange flash as it hit."

Lt. Dawes and his crew were original members of the Group and were lost on their 22nd mission. Those KIA with Lt. Dawes were: 2nd Lt. J.D. Pratt, 2nd Lt. J.A. Schubert, 2nd Lt. R.N. Van Noy, T/Sgt. W.L. Brown, T/Sgt. O.A. Morell, S/Sgt. L.M. LaFontaine, S/Sgt. R.A. Gentry, S/Sgt. A.C. Aronson and S/Sgt. W.R. Mooney.

At about this time Majors White, Maupin and Hinkle were notified of their promotion from the rank of Captain.

On the 10th of the month, Major White led the Group on its 48th mission. An airfield on the edge of Brussels was bombed, and thus began a steady blitz of the enemy's invasion defences. The crew of 1st Lt. Gaston M. Fox

failed to return from this mission. It was the crew's 10th mission.

On the 11th the primary target was Sorau, but heavy clouds precluded its bombing, so Stettin was chosen and a huge oil refinery was knocked out. Colonel A. Brooks led the Wing and Major Maupin the Group on this mission.

The plane in which Major Hinkle was flying was hit heavily by flak over Hanover but managed to make its way back to base, thus enabling T/Sgt. Harold Cook, of Captain Kirkhuff's crew, to become the first of the original 401st'ers to complete a tour of 30 missions.

Documents written at the time of the mission gave the target as Stettin but later material - including the Blue Book - gives the target as Politz.

Oil refineries were always going to prove expensive to the 8th Air Force; Politz was no exception. Besides the heavily damaged aircraft that limped back to Deenethorpe four crews were lost. In fact, in four days, 9th to 13th April, the 401st lost nine crews missing in action. The crews that were lost were: 1st Lt. S.P. Wilson and crew, 2nd Lt. F.L. Shaw and crew, 1st Lt. R.O. Stine and crew and 2nd Lt. F.O. Kuhl and crew.

The 50th mission for the Group was also a tough one. It came on April 13th and the huge ball bearing plant at Schweinfurt was the target; Major Silver led the mission. Swarms of FW-190's opposed the formation over the target and flak was heavy all the way in and out.

The following is a news release describing one crew's exploits on the mission:

"Flying his 13th mission on the 13th of the month, 2nd Lt. Stephen Lozinski, piloted a Flying Fortress 185 miles back to an RAF field in England on one a half engines.

Attacked by Jerry fighters south-east of Frankfurt, Lozinski saw his No 1 and No. 3 engines hit so badly that he was forced to feather them. The same burst also knocked out the supercharger on his No. 2 engine.

This left him with only one engine, the No. 4, which was functioning normally.

His bomb bay doors were also knocked down and his plane started to lose altitude which ranged as low at times as 2,000 feet.

Another burst saw a shell land in his cockpit which exploded and wounded 2nd Lt. Eldon R. Child, the co-pilot.

Lozinski ordered everything in the plane pitched overboard in an effort to lighten the load and prevent the alarming loss of altitude.

Flight Officer Louis S. Rush, the navigator, was the only man on the plane who did'nt pitch his flak-suit overboard and his luck was running with him, for just south of Ostend, he picked up two pieces of flak which the suit prevented from entering his body.

Lozinski crash-landed the plane at an RAF field and he did it on one wheel and with the bomb bay doors open. One of the wheels had been knocked off before leaving enemy territory, and despite efforts to hand crank the bomb bay doors back, the metal arms which acted as levers had been smashed, and the doors refused to budge.

The landing was accomplished without injuries to any of the crew. Other in the crew were: 2nd Lt. H.E. Pughes, S/Sgt. B.J. Weber, S/Sgt. M.J. Murcurio S/Sgt. J.F. Keller Jr., S/Sgt. I.I. Friedman, S/Sgt. K.E. Brock and S/Sgt. J.A. Williams.

Two crews went missing on the Schweinfurt mission, one being the original 401st crew of 1st Lt. Boudinot Stimson, a VIP in that he was the cousin of the Secretary of State for War, Henry L. Stimson. The navigator of the Stimson crew, 1st Lt. John E. O'Neal, was killed and all other members were made POW's. Their aircraft was 42-97464, Squadron code IW-D. The other crew to be lost was that of 2nd Lt. A.B. Vokaty, they went down in 42-31508, Squadron code IN-Q. In this crew S/Sgt. W.M. Canter and S/Sgt. R.T. Sanders were both badly wounded in an attack by an Me-109 and died in the crash. All other members survived to spend the rest of the war as POW's.

Berlin was slated for the Group's 51st mission on April 18th, but Oranienburg, north of the city, was hit when conditions prevented bombing the primary. Lt. James Locher, of "Duffey's Tavern", led the Group on this mission. He had been the deputy leader and took over the Group when the Group leader was forced to abort due to mechanical failure.

The bombing of Kassel, specifically the aircraft assembly works, on April 19th marked the dropping of 8,500 tons of bombs on enemy targets within 30 hours.

Colonel Bowman led the entire Division on this mission (the Group's 52nd) and the results made banner headlines.

On 20th, the 53rd mission by the Group was flown to Bois Coquerel Airdrome. Captain Garland and Captain Stann each led a box. 1st Lt. Briarton's bombing was of such high standard --- he was lead bombardier --- that Colonel Lacey, Combat Wing Commander, dispatched a letter extolling his work and the bombing results.

During that day over 2,000 aircraft pounded France all the way from Calais to Cherbourg. Two 401st crews went down on this mission, those of 2nd Lt. Charles S. Ksieniewicz in 42-97448, Code IW-H, and 2nd Lt. Frank F. Dougherty in 42-31593, Code IN-L.

The mission was flown at 12-15,000 feet and the Group circled to locate the I.P., which, at that altitude, gave the flak gunners ample time to zero in on the formation. The wing of Lt. Dougherty's plane took a direct burst. In an instant there was a total loss of power on the starboard side of the B-17 and a fuel-fed fire. Control cables were also severed. The ship went into a dive and exploded and witnesses stated it would have been impossible for anyone to have gotten out. In fact the navigator, Flight Officer Dennis Beach, and the co-pilot, 1st Lt. Bill Maher, were blown clear of the plane and spent the rest of the war as prisoners. The other members of the crew, 2nd Lt. Frank P. Daugherty, 2nd Lt. Rito Arellano, S/Sgt. Harold L. Jones, Sgt. Patrick L. Leffler, S/Sgt. Jerome W. Nelson, S/Sgt. Joseph M. Pavlovski, Sgt. Lawrence W. Skehan and Sgt. W.J. Williams were buried in a WWI English cemetery near Abbeville.

On April 22nd Colonel Clayton A. Scott was transferred from the Group. His position as Ground Executive was taken over by Major Charles Brown, and Lt. Phipps was named as acting Group Adjutant.

The mission on 22nd was No. 54, and was an attack on the marshalling yards at Hamm. Captain McCree led the Group.

The 55th mission on 24th April was led by Major Seawell and was to Erding airdrome, near Munich. It was another joint north-south attack on Rumania and the Reich.

The 11th day of the blitz saw Colonel Voorhees lead the Group on its 56th mission. The target was Nancy and the date was April 25th.

On the next day, Major Maupin led the Group to Brunswick. Captain Goodman piloted the lead ship and it was recorded as one of the best formations ever flown by the Group. It was a PFF attack and no enemy fighter appeared in the vicinity of the bombers.

For the first time in the history of the 8th Air Force, two big missions were scheduled and run in one day. This was April 27th. The Group's bombing for both missions was excellent.

In the morning, the Group's 58th mission was flown to Le Grismont, Captain McCree leading. In the afternoon, the 59th mission was completed to Nancy, with Major Hinkle taking the lead.

Sixteen hours of bombing were thus accomplished without a let-up. 3,000 planes took part and it marked the 13th day of the massive onslaught against the Atlantic Wall.

On the 29th, Colonel Rogner led the Wing to Berlin. It was the Group's 60th mission and it was the biggest daytime blow ever struck at the Reich. Lt. James Reigler, erstwhile 613th pilot, led the PFF ships on the mission. Over 2,000 tons of bombs were dropped on the city and although 63 heavy bombers were lost by the 8th A.F., over 1,000 heavies made the trip. The bombers took a heavy toll of the Luftwaffe fighters who were out in force, and flak was heavier than it had been for months.

Three 401st crews went down over Berlin, those of 2nd Lt. Donald E. Butterfoss in 42-31226, Code IN-G, Captain George Gould in 42-31521, Code IY-M and 2nd Lt. J.H. Singleton in 42-31116, Code IW-O.

The last mission of the month was run on the 30th and was to Lyons Airdrome and marked the 61st mission by the 401st. Bombing results were recorded as very good. Captain McCree and Captain Garland spilt the lead. The following is the story of Sgt. Sweepe on this mission.

"S/Sgt. William H. Sweepe, ball turret gunner on a B-17 Flying Fortress, distinguished himself in a recent bombing mission to Lyons by his two separate acts of heroism was instrumental in saving the lives of his fellow crew members.

The Sergeant, who has 15 missions to his credit, was flying with an inexperienced crew on its first mission and when two bombs jammed in the bomb bay his quick thinking saved the day for the entire crew.

The two bombs were live ones and the spinners on the bomb noses were already revolving. Acting on his own initiative Sgt. Sweepe, hearing what had happened over the interphone, rushed to the bomb bay and, working quickly but extra carefully, managed to "safety" the bombs by inserting wire pins in the spinners.

His job was only half done, however. The two bombs were still wedged at the bottom of the fuselage and until they could be salvaged they constituted a menace to the plane and the crew upon landing.

When they reached the Channel on the return trip, Sgt. Sweepe lowered himself into the bomb well and, bracing himself against the catwalk, he managed to kick the two bombs loose from their precarious position. They fell harmlessly into the Channel below."

May 1944

The May history of the 401st is marred by the heaviest loss the Group had to suffer on a single mission. The date was the 28th May and the target was Dessau. Captain G.F. Carter ditched in the sea and all the crew were rescued. 1st Lt. Paul F. Scharff's crew bailed out successfully and were made POW's. 1st Lt. George E. West's crew had 3 KIA, including George West; 1st Lt. Walter B. Keith's crew lost 4 KIA; 1st Lt. William F. Protz's crew had 5 KIA and 2nd Lt. Frederick H. Windham's crew had 5 KIA. The seventh and hardest loss for the Group to bare was that of 1st Lt. V.J. Kaminski, the 615th oldest and best liked veteran. After a fighter attack the plane blew up, throwing two men clear to survive, Lt. Manning, navigator, and Lt. R.J. Enstad, co-pilot. They had the sad task of identifying the remains of the other eight members of their crew. Lt. Kaminski and his crew were buried at Muehro.

Colonel Bowman was awarded the Silver Star and the DFC during the month, and General Williams sent a special letter of commendation for the bombing of the marshalling yards at Luxembourg on 9th May when the 401st led the 94th Combat Wing.

It was on the Dessau mission that a lone P-51 pilot became a hero in the eyes of the 401st crews. His name was 2nd Lt. Dale Spencer and, as four Me-410's began to fly parallel with the Group prior to an attack, Spencer calmly slipped in behind and below them. In less than one minute the four enemy aircraft were spinning earthwards in flames in what must have been one of the classic attacks of WWII.

The month opened with mission 62 on the 1st, the target being Siracourt, a V-1 site, but bad weather frustrated the attack. Major Stann led the Group. The take-off was 0400 hrs and was almost in total darkness, the electric supply having failed just before taxi time.

On the 4th the target was Berlin but the weather resulted in a recall signal going out to the 600 plus bombers on the mission. Only the 401st, led by Major Seawell, managed to pick up a target of opportunity, the airfield at Alkmaar.

It was "Big B" on the 7th with Major R.J. White leading 39 B-17's from the Group. It was also the first mission for the finest "Mickey" operator the Group were to have, Lt. Alfred A. Winograd. Not that he was very impressed by his first mission. His set went out two miles from the Dutch Coast, his oxygen failed, and to top it all, the PFF ship he flew had an electrical failure at the I.P., causing the bomb bay doors to open and the bombs to drop out. Most of the Wing dropped on seeing the bombs leave the lead ship and they were forced - being trapped between two other Wings - to fly over the target with empty bomb bays. 2nd Lt. Browning O. Grimmet, a 612th pilot, went missing in action over Berlin in 42-39943, Code SC-F.

It was Berlin again on the 8th; mission No. 65. Captain C.A. Lewis leading the 615th Squadron flying the Low position of the Low Box "A" Wing.

At 0620 hrs on the morning of 9th May 21 ships of the 401st, under the leadership of Major Seawell, were heading for the marshalling yards at

Luxembourg. It was the start of the pre-invasion bombing of northern France and the Group were right on target. They received a commendation from General Williams for the mission.

The 11th of May, mission No. 67 and the target was Kons Karthaus. For some reason the mission leader is not given in any record I have. Nevertheless, the marshalling yards, the roundhouse and the railway workshops in the MPI were demolished.

The target on mission 68, on 12th May, was Merseburg, an oil refinery, and desperately defended until the end of the war. Colonel H.W. Bowman, the C.O., led 41 B-17's of the 401st, which, in turn, led the 1st Air Division.

The 615th Squadron Operations Officer, Major R.J. White led the next mission. The primary was Politz, an oil refinery, but because of bad weather Stettin was bombed by PFF. A 615th ship, "Bad Penny", did not return from this mission. The pilot, Lt. S.N. Tonti, escorted by friendly fighters, was near the Danish Coast when he judged that he would not make England in the condition he was in. He wisely turned north and landed safely in Sweden a short time later.

It was a week before the Group flew again, attacking Keil on 19th May on mission 70. By 5.0 am that morning two PFF ships from Bassingbourne were leading 37 B-17's from the Deenethorpe base, across the North Sea under the leadership of Lt. Col. E.W. Brown. The flak over Keil accounted for the loss of Lt. Marian O. Hagan and his crew in "My Day", Serial No. 42-30826, Code SC-N. Lt. Hagan had been flying with the Group for about four months.

The next day the targets for the 638 bombers of the Mighty Eighth were in France and Belgium. The 15 aircraft of the 401st, part of a force of 73 B-17's, were unable to bomb visually on their primary but located the air-drome at Villacoublay. Their bombs were placed in a group of buildings in the maintenance and repair area of the Luftwaffe base. Major A. Brooks led the Group

The 401st, on this their 72nd mission, were part of a force of 300 B-17's sent to attack Keil on May 22nd. The primary was the dock area and the warship and submarine yards but 10/10ths undercast foiled a visual attack. A PFF MPI was made on the centre of the city and 623 tons of bombs went down.

It was back to France the next day, the 23rd, when 29 B-17's from the Group and two PFF ships from Bassingbourne joined 800 four engined bombers and 560 fighters to attack airfields and railway targets. The Luftwaffe failed to appear and only three bombers were lost out of the 1,360 aircraft that were on the operation. Bayon was the Group target but cloud caused the bomb load of most aircraft to be dropped on targets of opportunity in breaks through the cloud.

Mission 74 was a return trip to "Big B" on 24th May. The Group were part of a force of 616 B-17's that PFF bombed the centre of Berlin. The Berlin flak accounted for 33 bombers, one of them a 401st ship piloted by 2nd Lt. John S. Whiteman. He was seen going down with one engine out and another smoking.

The following day the 401st set out to attack a coastal battery at Fecamp. Then a second Field Order came through with a second 401st force assembling near London and then setting out to attack Metz. This second force was led by Major White.

Lt. Col. A.C. Brooks led the 76th mission of the Group to Ludwigshaven on 27th May. Captain Arnold Kuenning was the Group Bombardier on this mission and bombed visually but not with a great deal of success due to a gyro error on his bomb sight.

The next day saw the 401st in the wrong part of the sky over Germany at the wrong time. The Luftwaffe Command realised that knocking down ten planes from a Group would hit moral in an air force more than knocking down ten from a formation of six hundred aircraft. The Luftwaffe succeeded in doing this many times and on May 28th it was the turn of the 401st. A mass fighter attack quickly knocked six 401st B-17's down and caused a seventh to later ditch. Although there was always the hope that the crews might have bailed out and been made POW, this time half of them were killed during the attack or minutes later in the crashes that followed. Twentyfive 401st aircrew members had died within a few minutes. At times 60 enemy fighters in formation would bore head on into the Group, and this went on for 40 minutes. The target was Dessau, an oil refinery.

The 29th saw crews that must have been a bit edgy after the loss of seven aircraft the day before, fly almost to the Polish border to attack Sorau, a target of aircraft plants and oil installations. Major White was the Air Commander. On this mission an astonished Captain Bill Dolan watched a new fighter pilot on his first mission, Lt. Dale Spencer, shoot down four Me-410's in about 45 seconds. It was the Group's 78th mission.

A return on the 30th to the scene of that great air battle of 11th January, Oscherslaben. The target was the FW fighter plant and the Germans showed their displeasure in mass attacks by Me-109's and Fw-190's. Two 614th ships went down in these attacks. 1st Lt. Carleton L. Wilson and his crew and 2nd Lt. Alpheus L. Kilmer and his crew in 42-97440 and 42-107207 were the MIA on this mission. A number of men on both crews were killed although I only know two for sure; S/Sgt. E.M. Gormley on Lt. Kilmer's crew and S/Sgt. G.R. Smith on Lt. Wilson's crew. The lead bombardier on the mission was 1st Lt. Durward Fesmire.

The last day of the month saw weather fronts going up to 26,000 feet and only about a third of the 1,029 aircraft sent out by the 8th Air Force were able to find a target. Lt. Col. W.T. Seawell led the Group and, as usual, were one of the formation that succeeded in located a worthwhile target. The target was Luxeuil and the lead bombardier was Captain Arnold Kuenning, so the bombs were placed neatly on the buildings of the airfield that were the Group's MPI.

Major Seawell had been promoted to Lt. Colonel during the month.

June 1944

"Gentlemen," said Colonel Harold W. Bowman, when the briefing room had quieted down, "remember the date, June 6th, 1944. Remember it, because your grandchildren will probably have to memorize it. This is D-Day".

Like all other histories of W.W. II Invasion Day is undoubtedly the highlight of the 401st B.G. history. All the history of the war seems to revolve around this one day. It was, as someone put it, "The longest day". For the Group it meant flying two missions, the first as part of a fleet of some 2,362 8th Air Force aircraft flying over the beachhead before the assault.

Most people had realized earlier that morning that something out of the ordinary was taking place when the Tannoy suddenly announced: "All military

personnel on the field --- all military personnel on the field. You will immediately carry gas masks and helmets, you will carry a weapon with you at all times. That is all."

There were more fliers in the briefing room that night than ever before and there was a fight for seats to hear the news. Everyone was excited and most of them felt that the time had come at last. That is not to say that there were not the cynics who'd heard it all before and believed it was just another "Pas de Calais job." But they were wrong - this time it was for real.

None of them really knew until the Colonel's opening remarks. Then there was a moment of bedlam - everyone yelled, laughed and slapped each other.

Colonel Bowman told them that this was the day they had all worked for and trained for. It was a short speech without frills and, after wishing them luck, he sat down to listen to the briefing for the D-Day mission.

After briefing was over and the men streamed out into the still dark night, C-47's could be heard overhead as they formed with their gliders in tow. They stretched in clusters across the sky, flashing coloured lights and shooting off flares as they formed up into their respective formations.

At Deenethorpe the Fortresses began to start up their powerful engines and flared arced up over the field as the big birds took off one by one. They were soon built up into the Groups, Wings and Divisions before heading for the Normandy Beaches and the historical open battle that was to bring six years of conflict to an end. Minutes before the troops hit the beaches the bombers unloaded their bombs to soften them up.

From D-Day everyone worked long hours without sleep and without complaint. A record number of missions were run during the month - 21 in total - and the Group chalked up it's 100 missions in a shorter time than anyone in the 8th Air Force. Their bombardiers were also breaking records for accuracy, and were soon within a shade of becoming the most accurate Group in the 8th Air Force. Only one B-24 Group would eventually pip them to the post by the narrowest of margins.

As so often happens when handling high explosives, a serious accident took place on June 12th when a fragmentation bomb was being unloading from an aircraft that had returned from an aborted mission. One was dropped and instantly exploded, detonating others. Six men were killed and eleven were injured. The following men of the Ordnance and Armament Sections were killed:

Sgt. R.T. Humprey	---	Ordnance
Cpl. A. Milunie	---	Armament
Cpl. L.B. Weber	---	"
Pfc. J.H. Oliver	---	"
T/Sgt. J.F. Bradsher	---	"
Sgt. A.B. Hecht Jr.	---	"

On June 4th the base turned out at a party in the Officer's Club to honor Lt. Dale Spencer, the Mustang pilot who shot down four Me-410's as they were queing up to attack the 401st during the Dessau mission of 28th April. To honor this outstanding fighter pilot Colonel Bowman made him an honorary member of the 401st B.G. (H).

On June 4th the 614th Squadron put up 12 crews and 12 aircraft to form a Box - something which was quite unique up to that time - with the Group putting up a complete Combat Wing, also for the first time.

The first target for June was flown on the 2nd was to Equihen, France to attack the coastal installations set up by Rommel to repel the Allied Invasion. Like so many other missions in Northern Europe, it was carried out through 10/10ths cloud by PFF methods. When the Group Leader returned to base with mechanical difficulties the Deputy Leader, Captain B.H. Johnson, succeeded in forming up the Group and was highly commended for his leadership and initiative.

The following day the Group again attacked coastal defences, this time at Neufchatel, France. The mission was No. 82 and the leader, flying in the PFF aircraft, was Major McCree.

With the invasion of Europe just a few days hence the 8th Air Force began to hit at targets that would cut communications in the Normandy area. In the third 8th A.F. mission of the day the 401st put up 37 aircraft under the leadership of Lt. Col. Edwin W. Brown to attack Palaiseau, near Paris. The targets were rail bridges and were known for obvious reasons as choke points. The Group carried out a visual attack and suffered a few flak holes in some of the aircraft. The results were excellent.

Then, suddenly, it was D-Day. On June 6th the 401st sent 36 aircraft to bomb the beach defences at Ver-Sur-Mere and Mont Fleury under the command of Lt. Col. Allison Brooks. The bombing was by PFF. It soon became obvious that the attacks on the fighter plants, the oil installations and the Luftwaffe itself had paid off. 2,362 aircraft attacked the Normandy area early on the morning of June 6th - only one aircraft was lost due to enemy action.

On D-Day afternoon the Group sent six B-17's to attack a position in the Caen area but the undercast was solid and they brought their bombs back to Deenethorpe. Captain Goodman led this second mission.

It must be most unusual for the Commander of an Air Force to fly combat, on his own, over enemy held air space; but, on this morning of the Invasion no less a person than Lt. General Jimmy Doolittle, 8th Air Force C.O., was flying a P-38 for some hours over the beachhead. His wingman was another VIP, his deputy, Major General Earle Partridge.

From the 7th of June the RAF and the USAAF were given the task of stopping reinforcements reaching the beaches. The 401st carried out their 86th mission on this day, attacking rail and transportation points leading into the area behind the German troops. This was the trap that the RAF and the USAAF had used in North Africa and now sprang in Normandy. With vehicles and men trapped on a road the ground-strafting and fighter-bombers attacked them with devastating effect. In this way tens of thousands of crack German troops were killed before they even reached the battle area.

Mission 87 was to Caen, the target that Colonel Bowman had bombed as a target of opportunity earlier on in the year. The date was the 10th June, and the 21 aircraft of the 401st, led by Major "Hi Ho" Silver, were forced to return to Deenethorpe with their bomb load because of 10/10ths cloud cover and a GH equipment malfunction in the lead aircraft.

An airfield at Bernay/ St. Martin, France was the target of the Group's 88th mission on 11th June. Major Leon Stann led the 21 B-17's of the 401st to form the Low Box of the 94th C.B.W. Although a visual bomb run had been forecasted the target was eventually bombed by GH after a second run over the target. On this day the Luftwaffe and the flak gunners must have been having the day off - enemy opposition was nil.

For a week the crews had been expecting the Luftwaffe to come at them over Normandy to challenge the complete take-over of their air space by the Allies. It came on 12th June on mission 89 to Vitry-en-Artois. The Luftwaffe came up in strength and 8 bombers and 16 fighters were lost by the 8th Air Force out of the 1,442 bombers and 988 fighters despatched. The Group put up 36 aircraft with Lt. Col. B.K. Voorhees leading the 94th Combat Wing.

The climax of the month was reached on June 14th when the 401st put up 60 aircraft to bomb Le Bourget airfield at Paris. Colonel Bowman flew as the Air Commander of the entire 8th Air Force on this operation, leading 1,528 four-engined bombers over the continent to obliterate this large Luftwaffe base. The Group were given five MPI's and each of the five bombardiers got a "Shack". The bombardiers were Major Julius Pickoff, Captain Henry R. Briarton, Captain Harry W. Meadville, Captain William W. Dolan and Lt. Ralph W. Wolfe. Major General R.B. Williams was so impressed by the results of the Group on this mission that he wrote a letter of commendation to each of the five bombardiers

Just before reaching the target at Le Bourget two Me-109's picked off a 615th ship, "Dry Run", 42-37843, Code IY-H, with the crew of 2nd Lt. Russell H. Schroeder. Almost immediately the two Me-109's were bounced by the escort, and the 50 8th Air Force fighters sent them crashing within seconds.

On the 15th June Lt. Colonel W.T. Seawell became Air Executive in place of Lt. Colonel B.K. Voorhees, who returned to the 94th Combat Wing at Polebrook. In place of Lt. Colonel Seawell, as commanding officer of 615th Squadron, went Major Ralph J. White - known as "Jumbo" to his very many friends.

On the Group's 91st mission 38 crews were briefed at 0135 hrs for an attack on Monchy/Breton, France. It was cancelled at 0340 hrs, put back on again at 0437 hrs and 18 crews were eventually briefed at 0730 hrs. It must have been a very long day for the 18 crews who finally took off - they'd been up for 11 hours before they became airborne. 10/10th's cloud made it necessary to use GH techniques to bomb. Major Jere Maupin, the 612th Squadron Commanding Officer, led the Group.

It was back to strategic bombing on the 92nd mission on 18th June, with an attack on the oil installations at Hamburg. Hamburg, and the oil installation at Misburg, was attacked by over 1,200 bombers on this operation, and about 3,000 tons of bombs were dropped. Major D.E. Silver led the Wing with Captain E.E. Christensen as his deputy. It was a PFF attack due to 8/10th's cloud cover.

The Group put up 41 aircraft for mission 93 to Merignac, France on June 19th with Major Silver once again taking the lead. As they were reaching the I.P. they suddenly found they were boxed in by two other Wings but the "Mickey" operator, Lt. Alfred A. Winograd, guided them around and eventually put them on the correct heading for their MPI. This enabled the Wing Bombar-dier, Captain "Fes" Fesmire, to bomb visually and get a "shack".

Unfortunately Merignac was to prove costly for the 401st. At one point the Group met, for about four minutes, some moderate but very accurate flak. As a result three B-17's from the Group went missing. The crew of Lt. G.A. Filemyr took a direct burst in the tail, killing the tail gunner, Sgt. L.T. Maiden. Lt. Filemyr flew the plane down into Spain, ordering the crew to bail out near the Spanish city of Barcelona. The aircraft, with the dead tail gunner aboard, went on to crash into the sea off Barcelona. All the other members of the crew returned to Deenethorpe within a short time.

1st Lt. W.W. Trimble and his crew, in 42-40002, Code IY-D, "Breezing Home", also went down with the crew being made POW. The third aircraft was 42-40050 and was piloted by Lt. William E. Massey, nicknamed "Channel Express III". At 26,000 feet it suddenly blew up, throwing three of the crew clear. They were the pilot, Lt. Massey, the bombardier, Lt. L.V. Stelljes and Sgt. F.J. Bernard. The explosion was so sudden that the survivors had no idea what had caused it.

20th June saw 38 crews from the Group join up with almost 2,000 bombers and 1,111 fighters in attacks on Germany, Poland and France. The oil refineries at Hamburg were the targets of the 401st, led on this mission by Major R.J. White, with Major Carl Hinkle also leading the 94th "B" Combat Wing, made up partly of 401st aircraft. The Luftwaffe and the flak batteries made a great effort to stop the attack with the 8th Air Force losing 50 bombers and 8 fighters. 942 bombers returned with battle damage, carrying 12 dead crewmen and 44 wounded back to their bases.

A second mission was run on the afternoon of the 20th June, and, incredibly, 1st Lt. A. DiSiano and his crew and 2nd Lt. W.M. Heenan and his crew flew this mission on their return from the tremendous battle over Hamburg. When they took off that evening on mission 95 for Hazebrouck at 1756 hrs they had been going without a break for some 18 hours. Major R.J. White, not to be outdone by two of the crews in his Squadron, led the mission

Mission 96 was the next day, 21st June, and it turned out to be a major attack on the German capital - a target where a hot reception was taken for granted - and this proved to be no exception. 42-31496, Code SC-Q was the ship of Lt. J. Atherton and his crew, was reported missing in action after the mission. There was lots of flak and the Luftwaffe were very active - but not in the vicinity of the 401st. 16 B-17's out of the force of 496 were lost and 216 B-17's suffered battle damage. The 401st reported that they were well looked after by their fighter escort.

The 401st were given the task of bombing the airfield at Frevent for their 97th mission on 22nd June with Major Carl Hinkle as the Group leader. As missions go this one was very quiet and uneventful, the only flak seen on that day being the right altitude but in the wrong part of the sky to give them any trouble.

The 23rd June saw the Group making up two forces that attacked rocket site installations on what was by then known as the French Rocket Coast. Despite the fact that it was mid-summer the 10/10th's clouds over France meant that both formations had to fall back on GH to bomb their targets. Mission leader was once again Major D.E. Silver.

Mission 99 was one of those rare cases when the attack was carried out in the late afternoon, the Group becoming airborne at 1707 hrs. The 24 B-17's of the 401st split up into two formations to make the 94th CBW "D" and "E" forces, Major L. Stann leading the "D" force and 1st Lt. E.C. Owens leading the "E" force. The targets were Belloy-sur-Somme and Bachimont in France.

The important milestone of 100 missions was reached on 25th June when the 401st carried out a very long distance mission to Montbartier, France. 36 ships carried out the mission under the very able leadership of Lt. Col. W.T. Seawell, flying as co-pilot with one of the ablest of pilots in the 401st, 1st Lt. F.A. Kalinski. In fact his ability was put to the test in no uncertain manner on the back over the English Channel when Lt. Dan Knight's "Mary Alice" struck him from below amidships. Most of the rudder of "Mary Alice" was bent over at an angle of 90 degrees and it was with extreme difficulty that Lt. Knight made it to the English Coast and an RAF field.

On their way to Montbartier the Group flew over the Normandy beaches, and, as they were approaching the town of Caen, they flew directly into a flak barrage. A 612th ship piloted by Lt. J.W. Myretetus, Serial 42-97811, took a direct hit and went down in the Caen area.

The 100th mission was celebrated on the 26th with a big hangar party where more than 1,000 dollars worth of beer was consumed. Congratulations came from General Williams, 1st Air Division Commander, for being the first Group in the Mighty Eighth to complete 100 missions in seven months of operations.

In June a 612th Squadron B-17, "Boche Buster", Serial No. 42-31087, completed 50 missions without an abort, and the ground crew of the aircraft was honored.

On the 28th June mission 101 was run to the Luftwaffe operational airfield at Laon/Couvron. 24 crews, under the leadership of Colonel Seawell, were able to bomb the barracks and buildings on the airfield visually with excellent results, both Boxes hitting the MPI. When the crews returned to England they found that the weather had closed in and they were forced to divert to 2nd Air Division bases.

July 1944

July, 1944, brought the gratifying news that the 401st Bombardment Group (H) had reached the objective it had been aiming for -- to lead the entire 8th Air Force in bombing accuracy during June.

The good news came in a telephone call from Major General Robert B. Williams, Commanding General of the 1st Bombardment Division, who telephoned his congratulations to the Group Commander, Colonel Bowman.

It was also announced in July that the Group had tied with the 303rd Bomb Group, stationed at Molesworth, for the first place in bombing results over the three month period of May - June - July. In this period both the 303rd and the 401st had 61% of their bombs within 1,000 feet --- which is the basis for the rating. The 303rd had 91% within 2,000 feet and the 401st had 90% within the 2,000 foot circle.

The Group's bombing slumped slightly for July but as August approached, every member of the 401st was determined to get back into the first place and remain there. In July the 401st went down to third place, with the 92nd B.G.(H) second and the 303rd B.G.(H) first. The Group's record, however, for June was outstanding for such a comparatively new outfit in the ETO and the 401st's bombing figures for June had never before been equalled in the history of the 8th Air Force.

The following news item was released in the magazine "Impact" at the time:

"By dropping 73% of its bombs within 1,000 feet and 96% within 2,000 feet of the assigned MPI, the Flying Fortress Group commanded by Colonel H.W. Bowman, established a new record for bombing accuracy and efficiency during June, 1944 and set a standard never before equalled in the 8th Air Force.

Compact patterns, indicative of the tight formation flying, and superior concentration of bomb hits on aiming points are illustrated in the accompanying "before and after" photographs. Both tactical and strategic targets were bombed.

The bombing figures of the Bowman Group, as announced by the Operational Research Section of the 8th Air Force, take on an added significance in view of the fact that more missions were flown by the 8th in June than in any other month since it has been operational. Twenty-nine visual sightings were made of which nineteen were by ten different lead bombardiers bombing from an average altitude of 22,000 feet, were scored. Ten others were listed as evidence of fall in target area where assessment could not be made because of smoke or partial cloud cover.

Missions were flown 21 of the month's 30 days. There were 8 PFF missions, or blind bombing of unobserved targets by use of instruments."

(END)

During July, it became known that the 1st Air Division had received the Presidential Unit Citation for the Oscherslaben mission of January 11th. It was during that great air battle that the 401st turned in more claims than any other Group and probably bore the brunt of the attack. Of the 76 claims turned in, 63 were allowed as follows - 24 destroyed, 11 probably destroyed and 28 damaged.

During the month the 401st flew 521 sorties and put 517 aircraft over the target in 18 operational missions. Eight crews were lost during the month and one tail gunner was killed in action. One crew ditched in the English Channel but all crew members except the co-pilot were saved.

During the month it was also learned that Captain A.C. Kuenning, one of the Group Bombardiers, also led the 8th Air Force in bombing for June and he was widely publicised for the outstanding job. He completed his tour during the month and was assigned to the 94th Combat Wing Headquarters.

Colonel Bowman received the Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC during the month for the mission when he led the Division to Le Bourget Airdrome at Paris, June 14th., and Major Julius Pickoff, the Group Bombardier, received the DFC and Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal, the latter two both for meritorious bombing on two different missions.

Among the promotions was that of James P. Egan, Group Navigator, from Captain to Major.

Major William C. Garland was named Commanding Officer of the 614th Squadron to succeed Major Carl C. Hinkle, Jr., when the latter completed his tour and was transferred to the 361st Bomb Group at Polebrook.

The Group participated in a huge bombardment in direct support of the ground troops which paved the way for the breakthrough at St Lo and the beginning of the successful American offensive to break out of Brittany.

Two groups of RAF ATC cadets from Corby and Northampton visited Deenethorpe on July 9th and 23rd.

The first cases of anoxia took place during the month when a bombardier and a navigator died from lack of oxygen on a mission.

During the month the 401st Soft Ball team won the championship of the northern half of the 1st Division by defeating all the other teams. This team was trained by Captain Adams, the Physical Training Officer.

Among the commendations received during the month were those from General Williams for the June bombing record and three others from Brig. General

J.K. Lacey, Commanding General of the 94th Combat Wing, they were first for the bombing on the Group's 100th mission to Montbartier on June 25th; second for the bombing of Bachimont on June 24th and third for the bombing of Rely, France on July 6th in which Lt. W.P. Fulgin, bombardier, was particularly commended.

This is a summary of the July missions:

Operation 102, to Saumur, France was flown on July 4th. Major Leon Stann led but no bombs were dropped because of the weather conditions. There was no battle damage and no casualties.

On July 6th, two missions, No. 103 to Rely, France and No. 104 to Renescure, France were flown. Major Carl Hinkle led both missions. Weather conditions were bad and targets of opportunity were bombed on the first. There was no battle damage but a bombardier was struck by a fragment of the propeller from an adjacent aircraft and was killed. He was 2nd Lt. Joseph P. Kozlowski, of New York. Mission No. 103 was cancelled a number of times that morning because of very thick fog. When the mission was finally reinstated for a 0645hr take-off four aircraft collided and were scrubbed from the mission. The collisions were between SC-A and IN-F, and IY-P and IN-H. The 615th ship, IY-J, landed soon after take-off with an oil leak and the crew rejoined the mission in IY-G. When the Group returned to Deenethorpe just before noon, a 612th ship, SC-B, ran off the end of the runway, nosed up, then righted itself. No one was injured in this incident.

Operation 105 on July 7th was to Leipzig and was led by Captain K.H. Opie. Briefing was at 0200 hrs and shortly after this there was some excitement at hardstand 48, a 614th aircraft, IW-D, Serial 42-97322, suddenly bursting into flames. There must have been little damage to this aircraft because eleven months later it is recorded as flying back to the USA on operation "HOMERUN". Ten aircraft received battle damage and one crew were lost. The members of this crew were - 2nd Lt. James C. Neill, pilot, 2nd Lt. Elbert L. Hammond, co-pilot, 2nd Lt. Albert E. Roddy, navigator, 2nd Lt. Calvin J. MacDougall, bombardier, Pfc. Frank J. Nebus, radio operator, T/Sgt. George H. Moore, top turret/engineer, Sgt. Harold J. Nicol, ball turret gunner, Sgt. Reynold T. Fraker, tail gunner, and Sgt. Merle E. Warner, waist gunner.

On Operation 106 on July 8th the Group was divided into two forces, one attacking Mont Louis Ferme, France and the other Belloy-sur-Somme, France. The forces were led by Major Jere Maupin and Captain R.H. Kaufman. Bombing was excellent and there was no damage or casualties in the Group.

The first of what turned out to be five bombing missions to Munich was made on July 11th as Mission 107. Captain W.E. Reigler and Lt. C.J. Parr were the leaders. Bombing was carried out by PFF and there were no casualties or battle damage.

Mission 108 on July 12th was again to Munich. Major D.E. Silver was the leader of the mission and bombing was by the PFF method.

Mission 109 on July 13th was again to Munich. Major Leon Stann was leader. Bombing was through undercast but the opposition was much stiffer than on the two previous days. One tail gunner, Sgt. Edward L. Page, was killed, and one crew was lost. They were 2nd Lt. Walter J. Otton, 2nd Lt. William H. Ballenger, 2nd Lt. Ernest L. Bockstanz, S/Sgt. Jerome W. Harley, S/Sgt. Richard A. Fingleton, T/Sgt. Raymond A. Westberg, S/Sgt. Robert K. Martin, Sgt. Ambrose W. Hussey and Sgt. Russell J. Martin.

Mission 110 on July 16th was to Munich and Stuttgart. Lt. G.A. Lincoln led the Munich Group and Lt. J.J. Connelly the Stuttgart Group. Both targets were completely obscured and the bombing was carried out by PFF. On the mission oxygen failure caused the deaths of Lt. Marvin C. Abraham, navigator, and Lt. Gerwin L. Dobrow, bombardier, and one crew was lost. Three aircraft received battle damage.

The missing crew were - 2nd Lt. Willie E. Johnson, 2nd Lt. Kenneth R. Powell, 2nd Lt. Raymond E. Malloy, 2nd Lt. Joseph J. Loverro, T/Sgt. John T. Murtha, S/Sgt. James E. Haire, Sgt. Clair G. Gore, Sgt. Cleatus D. Nolan and Sgt. Leonard Repoport.

The peroxide hydrogen manufacturing plant at Peenemunde, where fuel for flying bombs was being made, was attacked on Mission 111 on July 18th, and was led by Colonel H.E. Rogner. The bombing was good and seven aircraft received minor flak damage. There was no casualties.

The Messerschmitt assembly plant at Augsburg was bombed on July 19th on Mission 112. Colonel Seawell was the mission leader. The bombing was excellent but so was the flak. Three of the 401st B-17's received major flak damage with twelve others receiving minor damage. The crew of 2nd Lt. William J. McKeon were lost on this mission. The other crew members were - 2nd Lt. Robert P. Gray, 2nd Lt. Zukunst, S/Sgt. Fred L. Fletcher, togglier, S/Sgt. Charlie E. May, T/Sgt. Raymond E. Harman, S/Sgt. Jack T. Sharp, S/Sgt Edward H. Hill and S/Sgt. Harold T. Hallman.

Leipzig again was the target for Operation 113 on July 20th. Major D.E. Silver was Wing Leader. The Lead Box hit Leipzig, the Lead Aircraft hit Harborn, Germany, a target of opportunity and the Low Box hit the secondary, Kolleda. Bombing was recorded as being scattered. Three aircraft received major flak damage and seventeen minor flak damage and two 401st crews were lost. The two crews to go down were - 2nd Lt. Jack L. Fredrick, 2nd Lt. John W. Kirkbride, 1st Lt. John P. Szungyi, 2nd Lt. Raymond L. Nagle, S/Sgt. Raymond R. Roberts, S/Sgt. Kenneth R. Fritts, Sgt. Walter H. Jenkins, Sgt. Edgar E. Pierson and Sgt. Warnow. Their aircraft was Serial No. 42-102917, Code SC-E.

The second aircraft lost was Serial No. 42-31037, Code IN-F, the famous "PISTOL PACKIN MAMA" whose crew were - 2nd Lt. Kenneth R. Murgatroyd, 2nd Lt. James E. Pennoyer, 2nd Lt. Owen H. Jorgensen, 2nd Lt. James K. Alverkin Jr., S/Sgt. John S. Spirodek, T/Sgt. Stanley Lesser, S/Sgt. Jerome P. Robertson, S/Sgt. Donald H. Schnidli and S/Sgt. Howard M. Magnuson.

Major Ralph J. White led Operation 114 to Schweinfurt on July 21st. Bombing was excellent and there were no casualties but there was no escaping the accurate flak. Two aircraft received major damage and ten minor damage.

The Group was sent to St. Lo to give direct support to the American Ground Forces planning a break-through in the German lines on Operation 115 on July 24th. Major Leon Stann was the mission leader for the 401st B.G.(H). The weather was so bad that no bombs were dropped. A 613th ship, Serial No. 42-32005, Code IN-M was forced to ditch in the English Channel on the way home and although eight of the crew of 1st Lt. Edward W. Coleman were rescued, the co-pilot, Flight Officer Stewart L. Wilcox, was lost.

The St. Lo operation went ahead on July 25th as Mission 116. Major Leon Stann was again the leader and the bombing was classed as good. There was battle damage to one aircraft and no casualties. The next day the ground forces went ahead with the breakthrough.

Operation 117 on July 28th, was to Merseburg with Colonel H.W. Bowman leading the 1st Air Division. Colonel Bowman's pilot was Lt. F.A. Kalinski and as they took off an engine caught on fire. Lt. Kalinski set the PFF aircraft down at Polebrook, a few miles away, and was airborne within a few minutes in another PFF aircraft, Serial No. '965. They were obviously not fated to fly a four-engined aircraft that day because they lost an engine over the target and made it back to Deenethorpe on three.

Mission 117 also saw the end of an era for the 615th Squadron. Captain R.F. Causey, navigator, and Captain A.C. Kuenning, bombardier, were friends of long standing and flew their last mission on this day to Merseburg. Captain Causey had already flown his tour of operations but volunteered to fly this extra one to fly with his friend. They continued to be firm friends through the years until the death of Captain "Ruf" Causey in 1986. Captain Kuenning's bombing accuracy depended on the information he fed into his bombsight and Captain Causey, one of the finest navigators in the 8th Air Force, was able to inform him constantly of his correct position and altitude over Germany - or anywhere else for that matter.

On the 29th July the Group returned to Merseburg in Operation 118. 1st Lt. C.J. Parr led the Wing and the bombing was by PFF through undercast with unobserved results. But one of the Wings had hit the MPI because the strike photos showed huge columns of smoke raising up through the clouds to a height of 20,000 feet. There was a short but accurate burst of flak over the target which caused major damage to two aircraft and minor damage to twenty others. 1st Lt. Parr was commended for taking over the lead when the mission leader had been forced to abort due to mechanical failure.

The last mission of the month, No. 119, was again to Munich on July 31st. Major William "Judy" Garland was the leader and, it is interesting to note, that later on Major General William "Judy" Garland became the officer in charge of the USAF "BLUE BOOK" project - the study of UFO's. The flak over Munich was, as usual, intense and accurate and one aircraft received major and twentysix minor flak damage. A 615th aircraft, Serial No. 42-107092, Squadron Code IY-E, nicknamed "UMBRIAGO", went missing on this mission and I find there are two accounts of where it landed. The pilot was 2nd Lt. Jay D. Osslander and one account is that he landed in Switzerland and another that he landed in Italy. Maybe a member of the crew can clear up this mystery. At any rate, the aircraft did not return to Deenethorpe.

It is nice to record that four members of the ground staff were awarded the Bronze Star during July. They were: M/Sgt. M. Kotvia, M/Sgt. G. McDevitt, M/Sgt. H.A. Simons and M/Sgt. I.R. Stiltz.

Ninety-nine new aircrew members joined the 615th Squadron in July, and, within a few weeks, 36 of them were reported as missing in action.

August 1944

August, 1944, saw the Luftwaffe come up in force during one of the Group's operations, causing the loss of three crews. Seventeen other missions were flown, many of them in support of the advancing Allied Forces in France and others to oil storage plants and fighter aircraft factories in the Reich itself.

The fighter attack occurred on the mission to Weimar on 24th August. In the vicinity of Ulzen-Salzwedel from 30 to 50 Me-109's and Fw-190's attacked the 401st formation. Three aircraft, two of which became stragglers, were shot down and a third left the formation when it was hit by 20mm shells.

Four aircraft received major flak damage and one piloted by Lt. Carson came home with as much battle damage as any aircraft ever to return to home base during the height of the Luftwaffe attacks earlier in the year.

On a mission in support of British and Canadian troops in the Caen vicinity on 8th August, the lead ship in which Major Jere W. Maupin, the Air Commander was riding, received a direct flak burst. The pilot, Captain F.P. Ball, was struck by flak in the shoulder and five of the crew members bailed out, Major Maupin coming down in the direct fire of an artillery barrage. He was flown back to England that same night and was at his Squadron area 8 hours after bailing out. The ball turret gunner was trapped in his turret by the flak burst and the other gunners were still trying to get him free when the plane crashed, killing all four of them.

On the mission to a bomber assembly plant at Schkeuditz, Germany on 16th August, the 401st ran into as severe a flak barrage as the Group had ever encountered. Eight aircraft received major flak damage and twentythree of them minor flak damage. A co-pilot was killed and two other crew members were wounded on the mission.

On the first mission of the month two of the Group aircraft collided for the first and only time on operations. The target was Chartres, France and very little flak was encountered there but one lucky hit cost the Group two ships and eighteen crew members lives. IY-Q, Serial No. 42-39873, piloted by 1st Lt. Gerald J. Melofchik, took a direct hit and went out of control. It then sliced the tail of IY-D, Serial No. 43-37859 off and the two ships spun in, killing all members of both crews.

During the month Lt. Col. Allison C. Brooks, Group Operations Officer, finally received a long-sort after transfer to a Fighter Group. Major Delwyn E. Silver, who had completed a tour of operations and went back to the United States on a 30-day leave, was appointed Group Operations Officer. He had formerly been the Assistant Group Operations Officer and during his absence the position had been filled by Captain Robert Stelzer, a 613th Squadron Flight Commander, who had also just returned from a 30-day leave in the USA.

Lt. Col. William T. Seawell, Air Executive, received a Cluster to the DFC for a mission to Augsburg on July 19th which he led. During this month the famed pair of navigator-bombardier -- Captain Rufus Causey and Captain Arnold Kuenning -- left Deenethorpe, Captain Causey to the USA on 30 days leave before retuning for a second combat tour with the 401st and Captain Kuenning to the 94th Combat Wing as the Wing Bombardier.

Captain Clyde A. Lewis, returned from a leave in the USA, and was named as Acting Commanding Officer of the 615th Squadron when Major Ralph White completed his tour and went home - but to return and lead many more missions.

During the month 96 crew members completed their tours and went home, many of them to return and begin a second tour of operations. Among these were Captain Kirkhuff, Captain Wysocki, Captain Locher, Captain Curry, Captain Lewis, Lt. Smith and Lt. Hershey. Other outstanding personnel who went home during the month included Major James Egan, Group Navigator, Major D.E. Silver, Major Leon Stann, 613th Operations Officer, McCree, 612th Operations Officer, Captain Alvah Chapman, 614th Operations Officer, Captain Smith, 614th Squadron Navigator and Captain Haberer, 612th Squadron Navigator.

Several evaders and other crew members who had come down in France, returned to Deenethorpe with amazing experiences and stories to tell.

The record of the missions for the month is as follows:

The first August mission, No. 120 on 1st August, was to the airfield at Chartres, France. The 401st furnished three 12-Boxes with Major Maupin the Wing Leader and Captain V.K. Cammack and Lt. J.F. Irwin as Box Leaders. Bombing was classed as fair by two Boxes and poor by the other. There was no battle damage or air opposition but two aircraft, one hit by flak, collided over the target area and went down. The two crews were made up as follows:

2nd Lt. Robert S. Sproul, pilot, 2nd Lt. Donald L. Bennett, co-pilot, 2nd Lt. Thomas F. Ellington, navigator, 2nd Lt. James N. Moon, bombardier, S/Sgt. Donald O. Kotila, radio operator, S/Sgt. Frederick J. LaPoint, top turret, Sgt. Kenneth W. Mark, ball turret, Cpl. Frank M. Cornwell, tail gunner and Sgt. Frederick J. Hinderschied, waist gunner.

1st Lt. Gerald J. Melofchik, pilot, 2nd Lt. J.E. Pratt, co-pilot, 2nd Lt. Richard C. Tyson, navigator, 2nd Lt. Hughlon K. Grisham, bombardier, S/Sgt. Deland B. Tracy, radio operator, S/Sgt. Herbert Pressman, top turret, Sgt. Lyle P. Wheaton, ball turret, Sgt. James W. Bozarth and Sgt. Harold E. Mapes waist gunner.

All eighteen members of the two crews were killed in action.

Mission 121 on 3rd August was to the marshalling yards at Strasbourg with Major Silver as the Wing Leader and Lt. Connolly and Captain Cammack as the Box Leaders. Bombing results were excellent. There was no enemy air opposition but seven aircraft received flak damage, one being classified as major.

Mission 122 on August 4th was to the fighter component plant and airfield at Anklam, Germany. Colonel Rogner lead the Division in a 401st aircraft and Captain C.A. Lincoln and Captain R.D. McCord were the Box leaders. Bombing results were excellent, there was no enemy air opposition and no battle damage.

An oil storage plant at Nienburg, Germany was the target on Mission 123 on 5th August. Colonel Seawell was the Wing Leader and Captain Cammack and Lt. Connolly were the Box leaders. Bombing results were excellent, there was no enemy air opposition, no battle damage and no casualties.

On 6th August Mission 124 was to an aircraft engine plant at Genshagen, Germany. Colonel Brown was the Wing Leader with Captain F.P. Ball and Col. W.T. Seawell as the Box leaders. Bombing results were excellent, there was no enemy air opposition but flak damaged nine aircraft, killing one tail gunner, and one aircraft was lost. The missing in action crew was that of Lt. Sauerwald and the tail gunner killed was T/Sgt. Alex Garen, Jr., on Lt. H.J. Oshsenhirt's crew.

The crew lost was:

2nd Lt. John J. Sauerwald, pilot, 2nd Lt. John L. Zimmerman, co-pilot, 2nd Lt. Forrest E. Holmstrom, navigator, 2nd Lt. Cletus E. Meyer, bombardier, Sgt. B.L. Saville, radio operator, Sgt. Lloyd E. Dautrich, top turret, Cpl. Warren Spence, ball turret, Cpl. Robert Ruiz, tail gunner and Cpl. Paul M. Pamilia, waist gunner.

The mission on 8th August (No. 125) was to Hautmenil-Carriere de Aucrais, in support of ground troops near Caen. Major Garland was the Wing Leader and Major Maupin and Lt. Connolly the Box leaders. The target was covered

with smoke and the Lead Box did not drop its bombs. The Low Box dropped on the eastern edge of the target area. Major's Maupin's aircraft, piloted by Captain Ball, received a direct hit by flak and the bombs were salvoed. Others in the High Box dropped on the Leader and it was reported that some bombs fell among Canadian troops, killing 25 and wounding 131. Major Maupin's ship went down, five bailing out and four going down with the ship. Three of the five who bailed out were wounded. There was no enemy air opposition.

The marshalling yards at Luxembourg were the target of Mission 126 on 9th August. Lt. Colonel Seawell led the Wing and Captain Lincoln led the Low Box. Bombing results were excellent, there was no enemy air opposition, two aircraft received minor damage and there were no casualties.

One of the fortresses occupied by German troops still holding the city of Brest was the target of Mission 127 on 11th August. Lt. Colonel Brown was the Wing Leader and Lt. Parr led the Low Box. Bombing results were excellent. Ten aircraft received minor flak damage, no enemy air opposition was encountered and there were no casualties.

Road junctions, to cut off retreating German troops, in the vicinity of Elbeuf, France, were the target on 13th August when Mission 128 was completed. Major Garland was the Wing Leader and Captain Opie and Lt. L.A. Mitchell were the Box Leaders. Bombing results were only fair. There was no enemy air opposition and no casualties but eleven aircraft received minor flak damage.

The enemy's escape corridor in the vicinity of Haguenau, France was the target of Mission 129 on 14th August. Major Maupin was the Wing Leader, Major Garland and Lt. Irwin were the Box leaders. Bombing results were good. There was no enemy air opposition, no battle damage and no casualties.

The bomber assembly plant at Schkeuditz, Germany and the Luftwaffe station at Halberstadt were hit on 16th August during Mission 130. Major "Jumbo" White led the Wing with Lt. Col. Brown and Captain Lincoln being Box leaders. The Lead Box bombed Halberstadt with good results. The results of the other two Boxes at Schkeuditz were fair and good. Eight aircraft received major flak damage and twenty-three received minor flak damage. There was no enemy air opposition.

A bridge at Yvior, France was the Mission 131 target on 18th August with Lt. Colonel A. Brooks leading the Wing and Captain Locher and Captin Kalinski being Box leaders. Bombs of one Box covered the target fairly well and of the other two Boxes to the right. One bomb fell directly on the bridge. Five aircraft received minor flak damage. There was no enemy air opposition and no casualties.

The Group was then stood down because of the weather until 24th August when Mission 132 to a radio factory at Weimar was carried out. This was the mission when the Luftwaffe came up in force and in which the Group lost three aircraft. A radio operator on another crew was killed and two other men slightly wounded. Four B-17's received major flak damage and four minor flak damage. One ship came home with more damage than probably any other damaged ship to return to home base since the Group became operational. Lt. Colonel Seawell was the Wing Leader and Lt. Col. Brooks and Capt. Locher led the other two Boxes. Bombing results were good. Between 30 to 50 enemy aircraft, both Me-109's and Fw-190's, were encountered in the Ulzen-Salzwedel area at 1105 hrs with attacks lasting about 15 minutes. A second attack was encountered near Magdeburg at about 1200 hrs. They picked on

stragglers chiefly and concentrated on one element. The crews lost were those of Lt. P.W. Finney, Lt. M.M. Cain and Lt. M.S. Fish.

The members of the three crews were:

2nd Lt. P.W. Finney, pilot, Flight Officer Virgil W. Price, co-pilot, 2nd Lt. Dale E. Scott, navigator, S/Sgt. B.A. Bralley, togglier, T/Sgt. Edward S. Smith radio operator, T/Sgt. Woodrow H. Snyder, top turret, S/Sgt. G.B. Hill, ball turret, S/Sgt. William J. Duling, tail gunner and S/Sgt. B.V. Miller, waist gunner.

2nd Lt. M.M. Cain, pilot, 2nd Lt. R.E. Henderson, co-pilot, 2nd Lt. James M. Pettus, navigator, Cpl. Donald C. Byers, bombardier, S/Sgt. Emil M. Spencer, radio operator, S/Sgt. Paul E. Jameson, top turret, Sgt. Robert E. Barrow, ball turret, S/Sgt. Richard Truxell tail gunner and Sgt. Homer F. Arbogast, waist gunner.

2nd Lt. Melvin S. Fish, pilot, 2nd Lt. Leslie H. Hauss, co-pilot, 2nd Lt. Eugene F. Cramer, navigator, 2nd Lt. Kenneth D. Lucas, bombardier, Sgt. Warren G. Smith, top turret, Sgt. M.H. Warren, radio operator, Cpl. W.R. Cook, ball turret, Cpl. James W. Huff, tail gunner and Sgt. John W. Hanchak, waist gunner.

The killed and wounded were: S/Sgt. William C. Matthies, radio operator, (Killed), S/Sgt. James C. Dodson, radio operator and Sgt. James D. Roberts, tail gunner (Wounded).

The rocket experimental station at Peenemunde, Germany again was the target on Mission 133 on 25th August, the first of two missions run that day. Lt. Colonel Brown led the Wing with Captain Gruman and Lt. Parr leading the other Boxes. Bombing results were very good. Two aircraft received major flak damage and twentythree minor flak damage. There were no casualties and no enemy air opposition was seen.

The second mission on 25th August -- No. 134 -- was to an oxygen plant at Henin-Leitard, France. Captain Lincoln and Lt. Manix were the Box leaders. Bombing results were fair. There was no enemy air opposition, no casualties, and no battle damage.

Mission 135 On 26th August was to La Louvierre and Tertre, Belgium. Captain Kalinski led the "A" Force, Captain Gruman led the "B" Force. Visibility was so bad, the bombs were not dropped. No enemy air opposition, no battle damage, no casualties.

Mission 136 on 27th August was briefed to Berlin but was recalled and the aircraft returned their bombs to base. Major Jere Maupin led the Wing with Lt. Fowler and Lt. Parr as the Box leaders. No opposition, no battle damage, no casualties.

The last mission of the month, No. 137, was on 30th August and was to a rocket site at Coubronne, France. Lt. Colonel Voorhees led the Wing with Captain Gruman and Lt. Coleman leading the other two Boxes. Three aircraft of the High Box dropped on the primary with unknown results and all the other aircraft returned to Deenethorpe with their bombs. No casualties, no battle damage and no air opposition.

September 1944

Fourteen missions, many of them in front of the Allied Armies advancing

into Germany, and in direct support thereof, were flown by the 401st B.G.(H) during September, 1944, which also saw pass the 150th mission since its arrival in the E.T.O.

All attacks during the month were made against Germany proper and while many Groups suffered extensive losses from enemy aircraft, the month's missions by the 401st were featured by no enemy aircraft attacks. Aircraft which were lost went down because of intense, accurate flak.

Marshalling yards to disrupt the enemy's flow of supplies to its front in the Ruhr Valley, were many of the month's targets. Others were in the industrial Ruhr itself and still others were to the synthetic oil production centres.

The month further saw the 401st B.G. in excellent bombing support of the Allied airborne landings in Holland and on another mission -- to Frankfurt -- the Group were the Eighth Air Force choice to carry "Braddock" bombs -- tiny incendiary instruments -- to be used by foreign workers within the Reich in acts of sabotage and disruption.

The Group had two outstanding artists headlining USO Camp Show Productions during September. The first was two marvellous concerts by Yehudi Menuhin, world-famous violinist, who was accompanied by Marcel Gazelle, the Belgium pianist. This was written up at that time as being the finest concert ever presented at Deenethorpe. Before the concert the artist was the guest of Colonel H.W. Bowman, Base Commander, at a reception and dinner at the Officers Mess.

Another well known personage to visit Deenethorpe during the month was Marlene Dietrich who headlined a USO show given before more than two thousand five hundred officers and enlisted men at Hangar No. 1. Miss Dietrich was picked up by a 401st B-17G, Serial No. 42-31077, Squadron Code IY-A (a 615th aircraft) piloted by Lt. Colonel William T. Seawell, Air Executive Officer, at Birmingham and brought to the base for a show at 11 am. There was a "stand down" that day and most of the flying as well as Group personnel had an opportunity of seeing her. One of the pictures I have of this concert shows Marlene Dietrich playing a musical saw, an attribute I was told she had but did not believe until this photo came to hand. The aircraft that flew Miss Dietrich to Deenethorpe, "PAKAWALUP II", flew on the mission to Magdenburg on the following day, 30th September, and went MIA with Lt. Thomas A. Davis and his crew.

During the month two crews were forced to land in Belgium on their return from missions. One of the planes was lost but none of the crew were injured and the crews were flown back to Deenethorpe in C-47's and immediately went back on operations.

The first fatal crash on take-off in 150 missions occurred during the month when an aircraft loaded with fragmentation bombs crashed at the end of the runway on the main road to Weldon and exploded. Eight members of the crew were killed instantly and the ball turret gunner lived only a few hours. Guards were immediately thrown around the area because of the unexploded bombs and demolition crews dug for buried bombs for two weeks after the crash. It is reported that Colonel Bowman reprimanded Captain Burke, the R.C. priest, for going into the remains of the aircraft before the bombs had been made safe to give the last rites to the dead crew members.

Despite severe battle damage early in the month, the Group was able to put up 50 aircraft -- more than any other Group in the Theatre -- in a call for a maximum effort in support of the airborne landings in Holland.

One crew, returning with a badly damaged aircraft, bailed out in the vicinity of Deenethorpe and the aircraft crashed near Leicester. This was SC-F, a 612th aircraft nicknamed "FEARLESS FOSDICK".

The Group received three commendations during the month for bombing jobs.

Several crews returned from France during the month -- some of whom had been there since April -- one of the crew members having worked with the French Maquis for six weeks.

Many members of the Group completed their tours and went back to the United States while others who had been home on a 30-day leave, returned.

Among those to complete their tours were Lt. Colonel Seawell, Lt. Colonel Brown, Major Maupin, Major Garland and Major Pickoff. Named as Acting Squadron Commanders until the regular C.O.'s return were Major Donald McCree, the 612th, Major Eric de Jonckheere, a newcomer to the Group, the 613th, Captain Alvah E. Chapman, the 614th and Captain Clyde A. Lewis, the 615th. Other new officers to come to the Group included Major James H. Havey, who became Acting Group Operations Officer and Captain Wallace S. Harb who became Group Training Officer.

Staff Officers and Squadron Commanders who received additional awards during the month were:- Lt. Colonel William T. Seawell, Oak Leaf Cluster to a previously awarded DFC awarded to him while serving as Air Commander of a Combat Bombardment Wing composed of Fortresses on a bombing mission over Germany, 24th August, 1944. Lt. Colonel Burton K. Voorhees, awarded the DFC while serving as Air Commander of the Wing on several bombing missions from 11th March 1944 to 16th July 1944. Lt. Colonel Edwin W. Brown, two Oak Leaf Clusters to the DFC for serving as pilot from 16th November 1943 to 19th September 1944 and also for his airmanship while on a mission over Germany, 6th August 1944 as Air Commander of the Wing. Major Julius Pickoff, Oak Leaf Cluster for the DFC while on a mission over Germany, 6th August 1944, another Cluster to the DFC for the period 16th November 1943 to 22nd September 1944 while serving as lead bombardier of his Group and a Cluster to the Air Medal for completion of 22 missions. Major William C Garland was awarded the DFC for extraordinary achievement while serving as pilot on missions over Germany from 20th December 1943 to 11th September 1944, also an Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC while serving as Wing and Group Air Commander over the period 13th December 1943 to 31st July 1944 and an additional Cluster to the DFC for completion of a certain number of missions. Major Jere W. Maupin was awarded the DFC for the period covering 16th November 1943 to 25th September 1944 in which time he served as Air Commander of Wing and Group, and an additional Cluster to the Air Medal for the completion of a number of combat missions. The Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC was awarded to Major Ralph J. White for the bombing mission to Germany, 16th August 1944 in which he was Air Commander of the Combat Wing.

A Silver Star was posthumously awarded to Sgt. Edward L. Page, for his gallantry in action while on a mission over Germany, 13th July 1944. Sgt. Page was fatally wounded during a severe fighter attack but before he lost consciousness and died, Sgt. Page, who had been wounded in 35 different places, had destroyed an Fw-190 that had fired continuously at his tail position.

The combat men with the largest number of awards at this time were as follows:- Lt. Colonel Seawell with Air Medal and three Clusters, the DFC with three Clusters; Major Pickoff with Air Medal and five Clusters, the DFC with three Clusters; Major White with the Air Medal and three Clusters, the DFC with four Clusters and the Soldier's Medal; Captain Rufus Causey with the Air Medal and three Clusters and the DFC and three Clusters; Captain Arnold

C. Kuenning with the Air Medal and three Clusters and the DFC with three Clusters; Captain Durward W. Fesmire with the Silver Star and two Clusters, Asiatic-Pacific Ribbon with four Bronze Stars, the DFC with two Clusters, the Air Medal with six Clusters, Distinguished Unit Citation Badge with four Clusters, and the ETO Ribbon with two Bronze Stars; T/Sgt. James W. Cannon with the Silver Star, the DFC with two Clusters, the Air Medal with nine Clusters, the Purple Heart and the Presidential Citation Badge with two Clusters; T/Sgt. Thomas Urmson with the Silver Star, the Purple Heart, the DFC and the Air Medal with three Clusters; T/Sgt. James R. Hamilton, with the Silver Star, the Purple Heart, the Air Medal with three clusters and the DFC.

Captain Kuenning went to the 94th Combat Wing during the month as the Wing Bombardier and Lt. Myron Pierce went to the 1st Air Division Navigation Staff.

A summary of the month's missions is as follows:-

Mission 138 on 3rd September 1944 was to the I.G. Farbenindustrie plant, one of the largest in Germany at that time, at Ludwigshaven. Lt. Colonel Brown led the Division and Captain C.A. Lewis and Captain R.D. McCord led the other two Boxes of the 94th "A" Combat Wing. Bombing was by PFF with Lt. Stanley Fine as the "Mickey" operator and Captain H.D. Wood the navigator. Results were unobserved. Twentyfive aircraft received flak damage, five of them major damage. There were no casualties.

Mission 139 on 5th September was a repeat of the month's first mission -- again to the plant of Farbenindustrie. Major J.W. Maupin led the 94th "B" Combat Wing with Lt. Col. W.T. Seawell and Major W.C. Garland leading the other two Boxes. Bombing was by PFF but the results were observed through the broken clouds to be good. Lt. Robert W. Howard was the "Mickey" operator and Lt. H.D. Fishbeck was the lead navigator. There was no enemy air opposition and no casualties but twentyfive aircraft received minor flak damage.

Mission 140 on 9th September was to the large railroad yards at Mannheim, and Colonel H.W. Rogner of the 94th Wing flew with Lt. Denver Charleville to lead the (4th "A" Combat Wing with Major Garland and Lt. Colonel H.W. Brown leading the other two Boxes. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. Lt. C.H. Chaffey was the "Mickey" operator with Lt. E.F. Russell as lead navigator. there was no enemy air opposition but eighteen aircraft received flak damage, one in the major category. The veteran crew of Lt. David Loughlin was lost on this mission. The Loughlin aircraft was seen to drop behind the formation but was not observed to go down. It did not return to Deenehorpe and was reported as missing in action. Lt. Loughlin was flying SC-G, 42-97962 and had received some flak damage in the target area.

The crew of Lt. Loughlin's aircraft were 1st Lt. Charles F. Meredith, co-pilot, 1st Lt. Roger L. Burnard, navigator, 1st Lt. Edwin F. Sedlak, bombardier, T/Sgt. James L. Sommers, radio operator, T/Sgt. Oliver E. Livingston, top turret, S/Sgt. John A. Punte, ball turret, S/Sgt. Albert M. Bailey, tail gunner and S/Sgt. Arlo W. Dralle, waist gunner.

Mission 141 on 10th September was to a diesel engine works at Gaggenau, Germany. Lt. Colonel Brown led the 94th "C" Combat Wing with Major Garland and Major Maupin leading the other Boxes. Navigators were Lt. H.E. Kron, Lt. L. E. Gaskins and Lt. D.M. Ligon and the bombardiers were Captain H.W. Meadvillie, Lt. T.J. Klefisch and Lt. M.J. Wiegler. Bombing results of the Lead Box was fair and of the other two Boxes good. There was no enemy air opposition but four aircraft received major flak damage and nineteen minor flak damage.

Just after the target aircraft 44-6310 piloted by Lt. William B. Woodward, was hit by flak and went down. Other members of the crew were Flight Officer James F. Glidewell, co-pilot, 2nd Lt. Oscar R. McMahon, navigator, 2nd Lt. Dale A. Eckers, bombardier, T/Sgt. Joseph M. Lech, radio operator, T/Sgt. Alexander J. Pedgarney, top turret, S/Sgt. Theodore H. Schappert, ball turret, S/Sgt. David G. Steel, tail gunner and S/Sgt. Julian Pasillas, waist gunner.

The only other casualty of the mission was Lt. Herman E. Weiss, navigator on Lt. R.W. Calloway's crew, who was slightly wounded by a flak fragment.

Mission 142 on 11th September was to the I.G. Farbenindustrie's plant at Merseburg. Major W.C. Garland led the 94th "B" Combat Wing with Captain R. D. McCord and Captain Lewis leading the other two Boxes. Lead and High Boxes bombed on PFF with unobserved results but the Low Box bombed the MPI of the 351st Bomb Group and plastered it with almost 100% of the bombs within 1,000 feet of the MPI. Lt. Alfred A. Winograd was the "Mickey" operator of the Lead Box with Lt. P.F. Kaiser as navigator and Lt. H.D. Fishbeck was the Low Box navigator with Lt. J.E. Browne as the bombardier. (Bombing of the 351st B.G. was visual). Lt. Chaffey was the High Box "Mickey" operator with Lt. J.M. Kane as navigator.

Flak was intense over the target and while there was no enemy air opposition to the 401st, many dog fights were observed in the distance. Three aircraft received major flak damage and twentytwo minor flak damage. In the target area Aircraft 42-31091, piloted by Lt. Milton R. Wingard, was hit and went down. Other members of this crew were 1st Lt. R.J. Abresch, co-pilot, 1st Lt. R.F. Sullivan, navigator, 1st Lt. William E. King, bombardier, T/Sgt. Ernest G. Cicogna, radio operator, T/Sgt. James C. Rutledge, top turret, S/Sgt. Patrick M. Winzey, ball turret, S/Sgt. E.A. Chiariello, tail gunner and Sgt. Billie M. Ingram, waist gunner.

When the aircraft piloted by Lt. Garret A. Filemyre which previously had come down in France with the crew escaping through Spain, was hit, two crew members bailed out over Germany and were reported as being missing in action. They were S/Sgt. James Parkes, radio operator and Cpl. Thomas B. Campbell, waist gunner.

Three men were slightly wounded from flak. They were Sgt. C.J. Dupuis, Jr., radio operator, S/Sgt. Edward F. Swatski, tail gunner - both on Lt. Laurel A. Turk's crew - and Sgt. Mack A. Elstron, waist gunner on Lt. Daves' crew.

Aircraft 42-102957, "FEARLESS FOSDICK", piloted by Lt. Morris M. Mohler, was badly damaged by flak in the target area. When it reached Deenethorpe an engine caught fire and could not be extinguished. Five members of the crew bailed out in the vicinity of Peterborough and four members bailed out over Corby and "FEARLESS FOSDICK" crashed near Leicester. Lt. Mohler's leg was broken when he landed.

Mission 143 on 13th September was a repeat of the Merseburg mission of 11th September. Major Maupin led the 94th "B" Combat Wing with Lt. B.C. Konze and Lt. W.C. Mannix leading the other Boxes. The Lead Box used PFF to bomb the city of Gera with unobserved results. The Low and High Boxes bombed visually with the Low Box having good results and the High Box having only fair results. Lt. Howard was the Lead Box "Mickey" operator with Lt. M.B. Jeffery as navigator. Lt. O.L. Stork was navigator and Lt. A.G. Kossuth bombardier of the Low Box and Lt. W.P. Mallony navigator, Lt. Fine "Mickey" operator and Lt. C.L. Rostrom bombardier of the High Box.

No enemy air opposition was encountered but Aircraft 44-6104, straggling

back by itself, had four direct attacks and two members of the crew, Sgt. Frank C. Kott, ball turret gunner and Sgt. Leonard R. Mitchell, waist gunner, bailed out south of Saarbrücken; the pilot was Lt. R.A. Annis.

S/Sgt. Frederick K. Kolster, tail gunner of Lt. Konze's crew was slightly injured by flak.

Aircraft 42-97869 piloted by Lt. John W. Kovach was badly battered by flak over Merseburg. Two engines were knocked out and the Fort steadily lost altitude. The crew threw everything possible overboard, came over the Siegfried Line at 9,000 feet without a shot being fired at them and they landed at a C-47 base in Belgium on which damaged runways had been repaired only a few hours before. Most of the crew were flown back to Deenethorpe in C-47's that night and the others returned the following day. The aircraft was sent to salvage but none of the crew were injured due to Lt. Kovach's excellent landing.

On the mission seventeen aircraft received minor flak damage, three major flak damage and one was damaged by fighters.

After this series of missions the Group had so many damaged aircraft that it was "stood down" for a day until sufficient aircraft to go on a mission were placed in commission.

The following message to all Station Engineering personnel was the issued by Colonel Bowman, the Group C.O.:-

"Recently we took a lot of battle damage as you know all too well. Close on the heels of this headache came an urgent appeal from the ground forces for some help in Holland. The Eighth Air Force called for our maximum effort. They got it. The 94th Combat Wing made available for Sunday's mission 145 planes from its three Groups, 50 were ours. The next highest Wing offering was 82. The equipment functioned excellently and the eight formations our Group sent out obtained superior results. This record speaks for itself. Division and Wing are highly pleased. Congratulations to the engineering personnel for a swell job."

Mission 144 on 17th September was the maximum effort Colonel Bowman referred to. It was to gun fortifications along the Siegfried Line just before the airborne landing in Holland and is known as the Groesbeck Mission. In fact the aim of this mission was to ensure a flak-free corridor from the coast to the airborne landing zones. 852 American four-engined bombers, with fighter escort, took part in the operation. Following them were 2,000 transport aircraft and gliders carrying 34,876 soldiers, 1,927 vehicles, 568 guns and 5,227 tons of material. In spite of this great effort by the 8th A.F. the Allies lost 240 aircraft and 139 gliders, most of them to flak. The 401st furnished eight Forces of six aircraft each for the area bombing. Lt. Colonel Seawell was the Division Leader and lead Force one. Other leaders were Lt. Konze, Lt. Colonel Brown, Lt. R.R. Lockhart, Lt. T.D. Carroll, Captain J.A. Gruman, Major Maupin and Captain D.A. Currie. Each Force bombed visually with very good results and the Forces led by Major Maupin and Captain Currie received special commendations for their Lead Crews from Colonel Bowman who said, "An especially laudable feature of your achievement was the fact that the lack of target material, particularly photos, made the mission at the outside a tough one. Examining the comparatively poor photo which you were given to identify the target and then observing the splendid results as shown in the bomb-strike photos, it is very gratifying to note the efficiency with which you pinpointed the target. The success which greeted your effort could only have been attained by thorough pre-mission planning and preparation, smooth teamwork and determination."

Box No. 8, led by Captain Currie, achieved the superb pattern of 598 feet by 2,863 feet, and Box No. 7, led by Major Maupin, achieved the pattern of 600 feet by 3,000 feet. Lt. Morey B. Jeffery was navigator and Lt. Marion E. McClendon was bombardier for Captain Currie and Lt. Howard Fishbeck was navigator and Lt. Joseph E. Browne was bombardier for Major Maupin.

There was no battle damage and no enemy air opposition but one crew crashed at the end of the runway on takeoff and all members were killed. They were in Aircraft 42-97872 - "ROSIE'S SWEATBOX" - and members of the crew were 2nd Lt. Francis E. Cooke, pilot, 2nd Lt. Paul H. Clark, co-pilot, 2nd Lt. Charles R. Werner, navigator, 2nd Lt. Frank Warren Jorgenson, bombardier, Cpl. William E. Weston, radio operator, Cpl. Wilford H. Dahlin, top turret, Cpl. Walter J. Ambrogetti, tail gunner, Cpl. John R. Browning waist gunner and Sgt. J.L. Page, ball turret gunner.

Mission 145 on ~~19th~~ September was to the railway yards at Soest. Lt. Colonel Brown led the 94th "C" Combat Wing with Lt. T.D. Carroll and Captain McCord leading the other two Boxes. The Lead Box bombed the railway yards at Wessel visually with unobserved results, the Low Box dropped blindly on a target of opportunity and the High Box bombed the railway yards at Hamm on PFF with unobserved results. There was no enemy air opposition and no casualties and four aircraft received minor flak damage.

Mission 146 on 22nd September was to industrial targets at Kassel. Captain F.A. Kalinski led the 94th "B" Combat Wing with Major Maupin and Lt. Carroll leading the other two Boxes. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. Lt. Chaffey was the "Mickey" operator in the Lead Ship and Lt. E.F. Russell the Lead navigator. There was no enemy air opposition but four aircraft received minor flak damage and one received major flak damage. The only casualty was one man slightly wounded. He was S/Sgt. Donald L. Ewen, waist gunner of Lt. William W. Jennings' crew.

Mission 147 on 25th September was to Frankfurt. Major Maupin led the 94th "C" Combat Wing with Lt. W.M. Heenan and Lt. R.M. Fowler leading the other two Boxes. The 401st B.G. carried "Braddock" bombs on this occasion, tiny incendiary bombs that were to be used by foreign workers in Germany for acts of sabotage. The Group, which also carried a few leaflet bombs, was the only group to carry "Braddocks" and that day, General Eisenhower, in a message to foreign workers within the Reich, said, "In certain areas of Germany workers of organised cells are today being provided with means of active resistance. These instruments will not be effective if they are used thoughtlessly or without purpose. Those of you who find them should immediately read the instructions that are provided and memorise them. then destroy the instructions. Hide the instruments in a safe place. Determine carefully where and how the instruments can be used most effectively. Work out your plan of action. After your plan is complete in every detail -- and only then -- put the instrument to the use for which they are designed."

Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. Lt. Howard was the "Mickey" operator and Lt. D.B. Ligon was the lead navigator. Lt. Chaffey, Lt. Winograd and Lt. Strong were the other "Mickey" operators on the mission. There was no enemy air opposition, no battle damage and no casualties.

Mission 148 on 26th September was to the railway marshalling yards at Osnabruck. Colonel Rogner, flying with Lt. Heenan, led the 94th Combat Wing with Captain Gruman and Captain Locher leading the other two Boxes. Lt. C.W. Sellers was lead navigator and Lt. H.S. Arnold lead bombardier. Bombing was visual with fair results. There was no enemy air opposition and there were no casualties but eleven aircraft received minor flak damage.

Mission 149 on 27th September was to industrial plants in Cologne. Captain Lewis led the 94th "B" Combat Wing with Lt. Carns and Captain Gruman leading the other two Boxes. Bombing was by PFF with results believed to be excellent because of the visibility of a few good check points. Lt. Chaffey was the "Mickey" operator and Lt. J.M. Kane the lead navigator. No casualties, no enemy air opposition but five aircraft received minor flak damage.

Mission 150 on 28th September was to the marshalling yards at Magdeburg. Captain Locher led the 94th "A" Combat Wing with Captain Gruman and Captain McCord leading the other two Boxes. The Lead and Low Boxes bombed visually and the High Box bombed by PFF, all with good results. Lt. Strong was the "Mickey" operator in the Lead Box with Lt. W.F. Maloney navigator and Lt. C.L. Rostrom bombardier. Captain R.J. Andrews was bombardier and Captain C.M. Smith navigator of the Low Box. Lt. Howard was "Mickey" operator and Lt. H.D. Fishbeck navigator and Lt. J.E. Browne bombardier of the High Box.

There was no air opposition but two aircraft received minor flak damage. Just past the target Aircraft 42-31069 was hit by flak and went down. It was piloted by Lt. Edward N. Daves. Other members of the crew, all former members of Lt. Mohler's crew who bailed out on return from Mission No. 142 on 11th September, were 2nd Lt. Clayton F. Crunk, co-pilot, 2nd Lt. Ralph J. Mezydlo, navigator, 2nd Lt. John C. MacDougall, bombardier, T/Sgt. Harold C. McKinney, radio operator, T/Sgt. William R. Mayfield, top turret, S/Sgt. Paul J. Wheaton, ball turret, S/Sgt. James C. Rollet, tail gunner and S/Sgt. Melvin H. Crawford, waist gunner.

Aircraft 42-31863, "MISS B HAVIN", piloted by Lt. Charles W. Utter, was hit by flak over the Nancy area. One engine was knocked out and the second was running low on power. He was forced to straggle and, steadily losing altitude, decided to land at a fighter base near Ghent, Belgium. Despite a cross wind and a 1,500 foot runway, he set the Fortress down without damage or injury to the crew. It came to a stop six feet from a deep drainage ditch at the end of the field. Two days later Air Service Command took the aircraft and the crew was flown back to Deenethorpe in C-47's.

Mission 151 on 30th September was to the marshalling yard at Munster. Col Rogner, riding with Captain Don Currie, led the 94th "A" Combat Wing with Major Eric de Jonckheere and Lt. W.M. Fowler leading the other two Boxes. Bombing was done by PFF with excellent results. "Mickey" operators were Lt. Howard in the Lead Box, Lt. Strong and Lt. Walters. Navigators were Lt. A. Shapiro, Lead Box, Lt. R.L. Grilly and Lt. O.L. Stork. Bombardiers were Lt. M.B. Jeffery, Lead Box, Lt. G.R. Lewis and Lt. A.G. Kossuth.

There was no enemy air opposition but the flak was intense over the target area, causing the loss of two aircraft. Two others received major flak damage and another twentyfour minor damage.

Aircraft 43-37632, piloted by Flight Officer Otto F. Nagle, Jr., was the first to go down. Other members of the crew were Flight Officer Martin O. Holland, co-pilot, 2nd Lt. Bernard R. Hodowski, navigator, 2nd Lt. Walter Wolchik, bombardier, T/Sgt. Gene W. Robbins, radio operator, T/Sgt. Nelson E. Smith, top turret, S/Sgt. Gerard Meyer, ball turret, S/Sgt. George P. Matanic, tail gunner and S/Sgt. Max Perkel, waist gunner.

Aircraft 42-31077, "PAKAWALUP II", piloted by Lt. Thomas A. Davis, was the other one lost. Other crew members were 2nd Lt. Alan H. Newcomb, co-pilot, 2nd Lt. H.I. Corwin, navigator, 2nd Lt. Henry A. Kaczorowski, bom-

bardier, S/Sgt. Max D. Stedman, radio operator, S/Sgt. Wallace C. Litrell top turret, Sgt. Pete P. Keryan, Jr., ball turret, Sgt. Donald A. Cloutier, tail gunner and S/Sgt. Jack Djmal, waist gunner. It was this ship that brought Marlene Dietrich to Deenethorpe from Birmingham the day before for a USO presentation.

During September, 54 members of the 401st B.G. (H) which had been in France, many of them since April, returned to Deenethorpe.

October 1944

One of the most severe losses since the Group became operational occurred during October, 1944, on a mission to Politz, Germany, where the target was the huge synthetic oil plants. Five crews failed to return from this trip on October 7th, and seven other crew members were wounded, three of them seriously.

The weather was bad throughout the month and held operations to a minimum. Only 12 missions were run and most of these were pathfinder (PFF) missions with blind bombing and unobserved results.

Crews which failed to return from the Politz mission, where the flak was extremely accurate, were those of Lt. Robert W. James, (landed in Sweden) Lt. Alexander Harasyn, Lt. Thomas K. Hill, (landed in Sweden) Lt. Harry P. Silverstein and Lt. August J. Nelson. The two crews that landed in Sweden were interned. ~~None of the crew were injured.~~

No observations were made in the case of Lt. James' crew but the controls were shot away from Lt. Harasyn's aircraft and the plane was seen to go down in a vertical dive. Just before it left the formation someone announced from the doomed Fortress that the controls had been shot away. No. 2 engine of Lt. Hill's craft was hit by flak, the engine was feathered over the target and the aircraft began to lag and lose altitude. Other observers saw a large hole in the forepart of the bomb-bay doors. Lt. Silverstein's aircraft received a direct burst in the right wing near the bomb-bay and the right wing caught on fire. The ship went into a vertical dive, a wing came off and it exploded. No chutes were seen. Lt. Nelson's Fort received a direct burst of flak in the nose and most of the nose was blown off. The plane went into a vertical dive, hit the ground and exploded. From 1 to 4 chutes were seen to come out during the dive.

All of these aircraft were hit by flak, there being no enemy aircraft attacks.

T/Sgt. James W. Cannon, who completed a tour with the 401st B.G. and who came to the Group with 68 missions completed in the Southwest Pacific, was called to London during the month with the Group PR Officer for a USSTAF press conference and received wide publicity as well as a big spread in the "Stars and Stripes". A few days later he broadcast to the United States over 187 network stations on the Victory Parade of Spotlight bands to bring the 401st Group wide publicity. Colonel Bowman had the sad task during the month of presenting the Purple Heart to Mr & Mrs Peter A. McQueen, London, parents of Sgt. John C. McQueen who was killed on a mission to Schweinfurt with Lt. Boudinot Stimson's crew in April 1944.

Major Delwyn E. Silver, recently appointed Group Operations Officer, returned to the Group after a leave in the United States and assumed his new duties. Major James F. Egan, Group Navigator, also returned after a leave at home.

Major Albert E. Barrs, the Group Courts and Boards Officer, was presented with a huge birthday cake one noon at the Officers Mess, in honour of 38 years in the Army, which means that he joined up in 1906.

"HELLS ANGELS OUT OF CHUTE 13" completed 75 missions without an abort during the month. The crew chief was Master Sergeant Curtis H. Brown. The Fortress was originally named "HELLS ANGELS" and was always parked on the hardstand No. 13 - hence the addition of "CHUTE 13".

A beautiful belly landing was performed by Lt. G.S. Schaunaman with "HANGOVER HAVEN" during the month. One side of the landing gear refused to come down and Lt. Schaunaman landed his ship on one wheel until it swerved off the runway. A car, belonging to one of the British workers on the base, was unfortunately in "line of fire" that afternoon and came off decidedly second best. The airplane was not badly damaged - unlike the car.

The last mission of the month saw Lt. D.M. Schliemann crash-land when his landing gear on "TWAN-G-G-G" buckled. The Fortress swept off the runway and stopped on the perimeter, badly damaged but with no injuries to members of the crew.

The month's missions were as follows:-

Mission 152 on 3rd October was to Nurnberg, Germany. Captain F.A. Kalinski led the 94th "B" Combat Wing with Captain A.H. Chapman and Major Eric de Jonckheere leading the other two Boxes. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results although believed good. There were no casualties and no air opposition. One aircraft received major flak damage and five minor damage.

Mission 153 on 6th October was to the German airdrome at Stargard with Captain C.A. Lewis leading the 94th "C" Combat Wing and Captain D.A. Currie and Captain W.S. Harb leading the other two Boxes. Bombing was visual with excellent results. There was no enemy air opposition and no casualties. Five aircraft received minor battle damage, all due to flak.

Mission 154 on 7th October was to the synthetic oil plants at Politz. This was to prove the most difficult mission of the month and one of the most difficult in the history of the 401st Bomb Group. Lt. Colonel W.T. Seawell led the 94th "C" Combat Wing with Lt. B.C. Konze the Low Squadron Leader and Major Eric de Jonckheere the High Squadron Leader. Bombing was visual but results were unobserved because of a very effective smoke screen over the target area. The 401st were forced out of position by a formation to the left which caused considerable difficulties for Colonel Seawell in the lead ship.

On the same mission Captain T.D. Carroll was leader of the High Squadron of the 94th "D" Composite Group. The leader of this Group was far north of the course and made a 360 degree turn before the target area. Politz also was their target and although they also bombed visually they could not observe the results.

The Germans had obviously guessed the run in from the I.P. to the target on this occasion and for nine minutes, from Stettin to Politz, the 401st were subjected to a continuous flak barrage. Although this flak was classed as moderate, it proved to be of extreme accuracy and five aircraft were lost - at least three were shot down and two others forced to make for Sweden.

In addition to the missing aircraft, three others received major flak damage and 40 received minor flak damage. The casualties for the day were 45 missing in action, three seriously wounded and four slightly wounded.

Mission 155 on 14th October was to Cologne with Captain Kalinski leading the 94th "A" Group and Captain Carroll and Lt. B.F. Carns leading the other Squadrons. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. There was no enemy air opposition and there were no casualties. Three aircraft received some minor battle damage, two from flak and one from a friendly (?) fighter which was testing his guns with his nose pointing in the wrong direction.

Mission 156 on 15th October was again to Cologne with Colonel Bowman as the Divisional and Group Leader and with Lt. W.C. Manix and Captain Kalinski leaders of the other two Squadrons. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. There was no air opposition but flak was very accurate. One man was seriously wounded and one slightly wounded. Four aircraft received major flak damage and one minor flak damage.

On this mission an innovation was introduced with the 401st Group furnishing three 12-plane Squadrons to bomb in six-plane sections. The 1st Division was divided into Task Forces "A" and "B", composed of five Groups each.

The 401st Group was the Division Lead and led the "A" Force.

Mission 157 on 17th October was to Cologne for the third consecutive time. Captain Lewis led the 94th "B" Group with Lt. R.M. Fowler and Captain Carroll the other leaders. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. No casualties, no enemy air opposition but one aircraft received major battle damage and ten minor battle damage.

Mission 158 on 19th October was to the marshalling yards at Mannheim. Major McCree led the 94th "C" Group with Lt. G.W. Mercer and Lt. T.R. Cushman the other leaders. The Lead and Low Squadrons bombed Mannheim with PFF and unobserved results but the High Squadron with Captain D.W. Fesmire, who had recently returned to the Group after a leave in the United States and who was on his 121st mission, bombed Karlsruhe with excellent results. There was no enemy air opposition but four aircraft received major flak damage and 12 minor flak damage. One man was seriously wounded and one slightly wounded from flak.

Mission 159 on 22nd October was to the marshalling yards at Hannover with Major McCree as the 94th "B" Group Leader and Captain Currie and Lt. W.M. Heenan as the other Squadron leaders. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results but it was thought that the bombs hit well within the target limits. There was no air opposition, no casualties and the only damage was of a minor kind to three aircraft.

Mission 160 on 25th October was to Hamburg with Captain Kalinski as the 94th "A" Group leader and Captain Harb and Lt. Carns as the other leaders. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. No casualties, no air opposition, one aircraft received major flak damage and six minor flak damage.

Mission 161 on 26th October was to a tank and vehicle factory at Bielefeld, Germany. Captain A.H. Chapman, recently returned to the Group after a leave in the USA and acting 614th Squadron Commander and Major McCree were leaders of the 94th "C" Group with Lt. Mannix and Lt. Mercer the other

leaders. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. No casualties, no battle damage and no enemy air opposition.

Mission 162 on 29th October was to the marshalling yards at Munster. Major Eric de Jonckheere was the 94th "B" Group leader with Lt. Konze and Major J.H. Havey the other leaders. Bombing was visual. A few strikes from the Lead Squadron were seen well within the target area, with good results. Due to partial overcast, strikes of the High and Low Squadrons were not observed but were believed to be close to the assigned MPI. There was no air opposition but two aircraft received major and 21 minor flak damage. Two men were slightly wounded and one seriously wounded by flak. They were Flight Officer Elmer B. Crossman, S/Sgt. S.B. Cloyd and Sgt. Ted H. Madden.

Mission 163 on 30th October was to a tank and vehicle factory at Munster with Major McCree leading the 94th "A" Group and Captain Harb and Lt. B. C. Konze the other leaders. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. No casualties, no air opposition but four aircraft received minor flak damage.

November 1944

The first year of operations of the 401st Bombardment Group (H) came to a close during November 1944, when 12 missions were run. The weather was bad, and although the month started out fast with six missions in six consecutive days, standdowns became frequent when the weather closed in and operations were held to a minimum.

In the first year of the Group's operations, 172 missions were flown. The first mission of the Group was to Bremen on November 26th, 1943, and the 172nd and last one of the operational year was to Merseburg on November 25th, 1944.

The mission to Merseburg on 21st November was the most costly of the month with two crews lost, although the month's final mission on 30th November to Bohlen, the oil refinery in the Leipzig area, caused more extensive damage and the crews more trouble than any other. On the Merseburg mission, two crews were lost and a third reported lost, eventually returning to Deenethorpe. Twentythree aircraft received flak damage.

On the Bohlen mission, one of the Group navigators, 2nd Lt. Carl L. Hoag, Jr., received an "on-the-spot" Distinguished Service Cross from Lt. General Carl Spaatz, Commanding General of the USSTAF and three others members of his crew recommended for the Silver Star for their heroism in returning home after being badly shot up. Although blinded in one eye and his vision impaired in the other, Lt. Hoag navigated his crew back to Deenethorpe. Sgt. Irving Gordon, waist gunner, who had two fingers severed, refused to leave his guns despite his injury since the aircraft was straggling and the pilot, 2nd Lt. George K. Cracraft and the co-pilot, 2nd Lt. Mertin Karant each did an heroic job in bringing the ship and crew back to England.

"HELLS ANGELS OUT OF CHUTE 13" had a difficult time getting back. With its oxygen system out and the entire crew huddling in the front of the ship, it got back to Deenethorpe with one engine feathered and three others out of gasoline.

1st Lt. Louis Lawrence brought his Fort back on two engines and 1st Lt. Ernest A. Hanson brought his home, with a wounded gunner, on two engines and a half and a runaway prop. Another crew left the nose of the ship

because of a runaway prop and the navigator navigated from the flight deck. All in all, the flak damage from the greatly improved flak defences that had been moved to the interior of the Reich, was extremely extensive and caused damage to 30 aircraft. Two of the crews, those piloted by Lt. Frank Carson Jr., and Lt. Hanson, landed in France and later returned to Deenethorpe. One radio operator was killed and five other crewmen were injured.

Lt. Colonel W.T. Seawell, Air Executive, finished his first tour and departed for a 30-day leave in the United States during the month, and Major Delwyn E. Silver, Group Operations Officer, became acting Air Executive until the return, from R&R, of Lt. Colonel Seawell. Major Leon Stann left the 401st in November, being transferred to Glatton where he became a Squadron Commander. Major Ralph J. White, C.O. of 615th Squadron, returned from a leave in the USA and resumed command of his Squadron. Captain Clyde Lewis, acting Squadron Commander, then resumed his duties as 615th Squadron Operations Officer.

Captain D.W. Fesmire, 613th Squadron Bombardier, completed his 123rd mission during the month to set what was believed to be an ETO record for heavy bombardment missions by one man. He was called to the Headquarters of the Eighth Air Force late in the month for a special NBC broadcast over 192 stations in the USA.

The first member of the 401st to complete two tours of operations -- 40 missions -- was Captain Howard D. Fishbeck, a navigator. After completing 25 missions he went to the USA on leave, then returned and did 15 more. The day he completed his tour he was promoted to Captain.

During the month the Group received its first visit from the new Commanding General of the 1st Bombardment Division, Brig. General Howard M. Turner. He was accompanied by his Chief of Staff, Brig. General Bartlott Beaman. Later in the month General Turner returned for his second visit to Deenethorpe. On both occasions he visited several places on the base and interviewed crews returning from operational missions.

Thanksgiving Day was observed with turkey dinners in all the mess halls. A Union Thanksgiving Service of three stations, in charge of Chaplain Ward Fellows of the 401st Group, was held in historic Cransley church, near Kettering. This is the church with the famous Roosevelt - Churchill stained glass window.

Early in the month a Group of P-51 Scouting Force planes in the outfit that Lt. Colonel Allison Brooks was Executive Officer, spent a week at Deenethorpe while the runways of their base at Honnington was being repaired. This visit also proved to be a good exercise in bringing bomber and fighter crews closer together. The fighters brought their own ground crews with them and for a week Deenethorpe was a combined Bomber - Fighter station.

On November 25th, a new PFF ship was being brought into Deenethorpe to be turned over to the Group. It was flying in from Burtonwood. The weather was bad and after an attempted landing when it struck the runway hard and bounced off, it was sent around the traffic pattern again. It never made it. Striking the runway had badly damaged the aircraft and it crashed a few minutes later south of Corby near the village of Great Oakley, killing the crew of three - Lt. J. Mah, pilot, Cpl. H.D. Gorecki, engineer, and Sgt. Sherman, radio operator.

The month's missions were as follows:-

Mission 164 on 2nd November was to the Luena synthetic oil refinery at Merseburg. Captain A.H. Chapman led the 94th "A" Group with Captain R.M. Dempsey and 1st Lt. B.F. Carns the other leaders. Due to almost complete undercast, bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. Two aircraft received major flak damage and 25 minor flak damage. One aircraft piloted by 1st Lt. Herbert L. Oas, Jr., failed to return, with the loss being put down to flak. Between 10 and 20 Me-109's were encountered after leaving the target area and they made individual passes at the Low Section of the High Squadron. Four jets were also observed on the mission, but only at a distance, and they did not attack the 401st formation. Other fighters were also seen at a distance but none put in an attack on the Group. Strangely enough, none of the Group aircraft suffered any damage from the fighter attacks.

The other members of Lt. Oas' crew were 2nd Lt. Thomas A. Hayes, co-pilot, 1st Lt. William H. Green, navigator, 1st Lt. William M. Mencow, bombardier, T/Sgt. William E. Breeton, radio operator, T/Sgt. Byron E. Cook, top turret, S/Sgt. John J. Reardon, tail gunner and S/Sgt. John G. Dunn, waist gunner. I believe most, if not all, of this crew were killed.

Mission 165 on 4th November was to the large crude oil refineries at Hamburg. The 94th "A" Group was led by Lt. Colonel B.K. Voorhees with Captain B.F. Carns and his crew. The Low Squadron was led by Captain P.E. Campbell with the lead navigator, 1st Lt. R.F. Whitney and the lead bombardier, 1st Lt. H.S. Arnold - all from the 615th Squadron. Since there was solid overcast at the target bombing was carried out by the PFF technique with no observations of results possible. No enemy air opposition was met and only meagre to moderate flak was encountered along the route in and in the target area.

Mission 166 on 5th November was to the marshalling yards at Frankfurt. Major Eric de Jonckheere led the 94th "C" Group with Major J.H. Hevey and 1st Lt. B.C. Konze the other leaders. Cloud cover at the I.P. was about 9/10ths; a PFF run was made with visual assists. Because of the broken undercast, bombfalls for individual formations could not be identified, although some good strikes were seen near the target area. Two aircraft received major and eight minor flak damage. There were no fighter attacks and no casualties.

Mission 167 on 6th November was again to the synthetic oil plants at Harburg. Captain A.H. Chapman led the 94th "B" Group with 1st Lt. E.W. Coleman and Captain J.F. Goodman being the other leaders. Bombing was by PFF with a visual assist and photo coverage indicated excellent bombing results for the Lead and High Squadrons. One aircraft, piloted by 1st Lt. R. H. Hillested, failed to return and it was believed that the crew may have ditched. Two aircraft received major and ten minor flak damage. There was no sign of the Luftwaffe on this mission.

The other members of the missing crew were:-

2nd Lt. John H. Urich, co-pilot, 2nd Lt. Frederick L. Campbell, navigator S/Sgt. Chris A. Montoya, bombardier, S/Sgt. Raymond E. Kriz, radio operator, S/Sgt. James B. Dryden, Jr., top turret, S/Sgt. Robert Audron, ball turret, S/Sgt. Harold Fishbein, tail gunner and S/Sgt. Patsy C. DiCioco, waist gunner.

Mission 168 on 8th November was a return to the Luena oil plant at Merseburg. Major Leon Stann led the 94th "A" Group with Captain D.V. Kirkhuff and Captain P.E. Campbell leading the other two Squadrons. Due to complete undercast, bombing was by PFF with the usual unobserved results. Two Fortresses received major and 23 minor flak damage and one aircraft piloted by Lt. Richard I. Steele, which had two engines knocked out, made an emergency landing near Brussels. The crew subsequently returned to Deene-thorpe. There was again no sign of the Luftwaffe.

Mission 169 on 9th November was in support of General Patton's ground troops in the Metz area. Captain D.A. Currie led the 94th "A" Group with 1st Lt. B.C. Konze and 1st Lt. J.L. Cromer the other leaders. Bombing was by Gee-H but due to undercast, results were in the main unobserved. Photographs disclosed bursts of bombs dropped by at least one aircraft to be in the vicinity of the MPI. There was no battle damage, no air opposition and no casualties. Bombing was in Group formation and the Group was commended by General Patton and others for the superior work which paved the way for the capture of Metz and his eventual breakthrough.

Mission 170 on 16th November was again in support of ground troops in the vicinity of Eschweiler. Major Eric de Jonckheere led the 94th "C" Group with Captain J.F. Goodman as Deputy Group Leader and Lt. Konze and Lt. M. J. Kochel the other two leaders. Bombing was by PFF with bombfall unobserved but from all indications they fell within the assigned area. There was no battle damage, no Luftwaffe and no casualties.

Mission 171 on 21st November, again to Merseburg, resulted in the heaviest loss of the month. Captain A.H. Chapman led the 94th "B" Group with Captain Harb and Captain Goodman the other two leaders. A cloud bank from the I.P. on caused all the Groups to let down. At the I.P. at 20,000 feet it was no longer possible to stay below the clouds so the formation flew in the heavy haze on the bomb run. The High Squadron Leader with four other aircraft became separated from the Group formation so bombed Eisenach, a target of opportunity. Results were unobserved. Other aircraft bombed Merseburg by PFF with unobserved results. Two aircraft received major and 21 minor flak damage and three aircraft were lost but one, piloted by Lt. Paul Sullivan, landed in Belgium and the crew were able to return to Deene-thorpe. The two lost were piloted by Captain F.E. Rundell Jr., and Lt. Robert J. Keck. In addition, four men were wounded, one seriously. Captain Rundell's plane was hit by flak and Lt. Keck's plane was knocked down by enemy fighters after being forced to straggle because of flak damage. Although enemy aircraft were reported in the vicinity of Merseburg, only a single Me-109 was observed and it made the attack on Lt. Keck's aircraft. This same Me-109 was then shot down by one of the Group's Fortresses resulting in a claim of one fighter destroyed.

The missing crews are as follows:-

Captain Francis E. Rundell Jr., pilot, 1st Lt. Raymond E. Johnson, co-pilot, 1st Lt. Rene P. Champagne, navigator, 1st Lt. William N. Shearer, bombardier, Lt. Alastair Currie, radar-navigator, S/Sgt. Arthur J. Trajanowski, radio operator, T/Sgt. Harold B. Mears, top turret, T/Sgt. Robert E. Lee, tail gunner, S/Sgt. James J. Huffman, waist gunner.

1st Lt. Robert J. Keck, pilot, Flight Officer Lawrence A. Istel, co-pilot 2nd Lt. Hollis W. Freeman, Jr., navigator, 2nd Lt. Samuel Shepard, bombardier, S/Sgt. Richard E. Engler, radio operator, S/Sgt. Leonard V. Stoeger, top turret, S/Sgt. Elwood W. Norr, ball turret, S/Sgt. William T. Me-

tcalf, tail gunner and S/Sgt. Edward Fialkowski, waist gunner.

The crew members who were wounded were 1st Lt. Leslie E. Gaskins, navigator, 2nd Lt. Russell L. Aufrance, bombardier, S/Sgt. Edward B. Grasela, waist gunner and S/Sgt. Ernest A. Serafino, top turret.

Mission 172 on 25th November was to Merseburg again. Major D.E. Silver led the 94th "B" Group with Captain Kirkhuff and Lt. R.M. Fowler the other leaders. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results although a good PFF run was reported. Four aircraft received minor flak damage but there was no enemy air opposition. There was one casualty however, Sgt. Jack F. Irvin, tail gunner on Lt. Frederick R. Boddin's crew who died of anoxia.

Mission 173 on 26th November was to the oil refinery at Misburg. Major D. G. McCree led the 94th "A" Group with Captain Harb and Captain Kirkhuff the other two Squadron leaders. Bombing was by PFF because of an effective smoke screen in the target area although the weather was clear. Bombs were seen to strike in the target area and also to the left of the area. One aircraft received major and 11 minor battle damage. There was no sign of the Luftwaffe and there were no casualties.

Mission 174 on 29th November was a return trip to Misburg. Captain J.R. Locher led the 94th "C" Group with Captain Goodman and 1st Lt. R.O. Duckworth the other leaders. Due to solid undercast bombing was by PFF with unobserved results, but the "Mickey" operator thought the target had been well hit. There was no battle damage, no enemy air opposition and no casualties.

The last mission of the month, No. 175 on 30th November to an oil refinery at Bohlen, just south of Leipzig, was a costly one for the 401st B. G. (H). Major Silver led the 94th "C" Group with Captain Stelzer and Captain D.A. Currie the other Squadron leaders. Bombing was visual for the first time in weeks, but an effective smoke screen covered the target area and the results were reported as only being fair. Flak was intense and all aircraft but one were damaged, seven receiving major flak damage. After the target the 39 aircraft formation was down to 33 and by the time they reached Belgium it was 21 - the others being forced to straggle because of feathered engines and other flak damage problems. Luckily for the Group the Allied fighters were able to keep the Luftwaffe engaged elsewhere and no enemy fighters were encountered. A radio operator, struck in the neck by a flak fragment, died a short time later and five others were wounded. 25 aircraft received minor flak damage. The dead radio operator, T/Sgt. Dorsey W. Tyree, was a member of 1st Lt. H. Thompson's crew of the 614th Squadron.

The wounded were 2nd Lt. Carl Hoag Jr., Sgt. Elveer B. Heiss, ball turret, Sgt. Irving Gordon, Sgt. Berlyle Lunn, ball turret, and Sgt. Attilio Messa, radio operator.

Two crews, piloted by Lt. Ernest L. Hansen and Lt. Frank Carson, Jr., landed in France and were at first reported missing in action. They eventually returned to Deenethorpe.

December 1944

Early in December, 1944 Colonel Harold W. Bowman, Group Commander, was called to the Headquarters of the United States Strategic Air Forces in Europe as Deputy Chief of Staff to Lt. General Carl Spaatz, the Commanding General, and Lt. Colonel William T. Seawell was appointed to succeed

him.

Summoned to Paris for a conference with General Spaatz late in November, Colonel Bowman departed for his new assignment on December 5th. A reception in his honour was held at the Officers Club on the evening of December 4th. As a token of their friendship and admiration, a beautiful antique silver tea service was presented to Colonel Bowman for Mrs Bowman by the Station's officers.

Colonel Bowman thanked them in the following speech.

"Upon the occasion of my departure for staff duty in U.S. Strategic Air Forces Headquarters, may I express to you my sincere thanks for your loyal support, a heavy pat on the back for your efforts and congratulations on having made this team the best in the Army Air Force". Colonel Bowman said, "Regardless of where this outfit goes or where I go, I'll always feel that I'm still a member of the team and will continue to feel keen pride in your successes."

"I know you were all delighted, as I am, with Colonel Seawell's appointment as my successor, and will follow his able leadership and his high ideals without reservation, to victory - and home".

Colonel Bowman, who had taken command at Geiger Field, Spokane, Wash., in June, 1943, one month after the Group was formed, left as probably the most popular and respected Group Commander in the Army Air Force.

Lt. Colonel Seawell, Deputy Group Commander and Air Executive, was in the United States on leave at the time of his appointment. Word was sent to report back to the Group immediately and he returned by air, reaching the base at Deenethorpe a few days after Colonel Bowman's departure. Colonel Seawell had not been informed of Colonel Bowman's appointment, so, for a period he was under the impression that Colonel Bowman had been lost in combat over Germany.

Formerly Commanding Officer of the 615th Bombardment Squadron, Colonel Seawell had been with the Group since it had been activated. He was a veteran of 26 missions - including some of the toughest the Group had flown - and had already been decorated with the DFC and three Oak Leaf Clusters and the Air Medal with three Clusters.

He had attended the Marion Military Institute at Marion, Ala., and the University of Arkansas and was graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point in the class of 1941. His rise from 2nd Lt. to Lt. Colonel and to the command of a Bombardment Group had taken three years. In pre-war days this same promotion could have taken him 30 years - just one sign of the vast expansion of the American forces in WWII. He had received his wings at Ellington Field, Texas, in March, 1941, and was Assistant Chief of Staff, A-3, in Headquarters of the Second Air Force at Fort George Wright, Wash., for a year and then went to the 88th Bomb Group at Walla Walla, Wash., where he remained until the 401st was formed on 1st April, 1943, going to the Group as a Captain.

At 26 Lt. Colonel Seawell had become the youngest Group Commander in the Eighth Air Force.

Lt. Colonel Edwin W. Brown, 613th Squadron Commander, now became the Air Executive and Deputy Group Commander and acted as Group Commander until the return to Deenethorpe of Colonel Seawell. Major Eric de Jonckheere was named as Commander of the 613th Squadron.

During the month the promotion of Delwyn E. Silver, Group Operations Officer, from Major to Lt. Colonel, was announced, and Major Julius Pickoff, Group Bombardier, Major Jere Maupin, 612th Squadron Commander and Major William C. Garland, 614th Squadron Commander, returned from leave in the United States. Major I.E. Hevey, a newcomer to the Group who had been acting as Assistant Operations Officer, was transferred to Glatton. Captain Harold M. Kennard, Group Communications Officer, received his promotion to Major.

On December 21st and 22nd, the Group was visited by a Congressional Delegation composed of the Hons. Norris Poulson, Republican, Los Angeles, representing the 13th District in California and La Vern R. Dilwig, Democrat, Green Bay, representing the 8th Wisconsin District. They were in England as guests of the British Government and they expressed a desire to visit a heavy bomber base and Deenethorpe was chosen.

Christmas, 1944, was celebrated chiefly by private parties on the base although a few departments held departmental gatherings. On December 23rd more than 500 children from Weldon, Corby, Deene, Deenethorpe and Benefield were the guests of the men of the 401st at a Christmas party. Trucks brought them to the base where each child was adopted by a G.I. for a dinner complete from roast pork to ice cream.

The worst fog anyone had ever seen enveloped Deenethorpe during December. On one occasion the base was completely "blacked in" for a period of three days and on the following week intense fog hung over the area for seven days.

Returning from the mission to Gerolstein on December 27th, the pilots had an extremely difficult time in finding the runway. Ground fog and ground haze were such that Colonel Seawell, stationed in the caravan at the end of the runway, assisted Major Baldwin, Control Tower Chief, who was in the tower directing operations. It required two and a half hours to land the formation under the most difficult conditions since the field had been operational - and the fact that it was done without mishap speaks for itself.

On December 19th the Group sent 36 aircraft on a mission to Schleiden. Two Squadrons bombed Coblenz and one Squadron hit Schleiden. Deenethorpe had closed in with dense fog before the ETA and the formation was diverted. Twenty aircraft landed at a former RAF Coastal Command base at Predannack on the Lizard Point near Lands End and 12 landed at an RAF base at Tangmere, near London. In both places the men of the 401st received excellent treatment, despite crowded conditions -- and at Predannack a detachment of WAAF's passed the hat among themselves and the money thus raised was split among the gunners. They also shared their candy and cigarettes with the 401st'ers.

The crews were at these two bases until December 23rd when they took off for Deenethorpe. Before they could reach the base it had once again been closed by the fog so they were diverted to a Third Division base at Deopham Green. 19 of them reached Deopham Green and 13 others landed at various other Third Division bases.

Being away from Deenethorpe did not stop them flying a mission on Christmas Eve however, and 33 aircraft were loaded at Third Division bases for a mission to Coblenz in support of the hard pressed ground forces fighting off the German offensive. When these aircraft returned Deenethorpe was again closed in and 21 aircraft from the Group landed, plus some from Polebrook and Glatton before the airfield went "Red". The remainder of the aircraft and crews landed at Lavenham where the crews spent a very cold Christmas in crowded quarters.

In an attempt to ease the situation, the quartermaster at Deenethorpe sent several hundred blankets and scores of K rations to Lavenham for Christmas Dinner. Not until December 26th - an absence of a week for 32 of the crews - did all the 401st Fortresses get back to Deenethorpe.

The crews, which had been interned in Sweden since the Politz mission of 7th October, 1944, returned to Deenethorpe during the month. They were those of Lt. R.W. James and Lt. Thomas K. Hill.

In the mission to Frankfurt on December 11th, the lead crew of Major Alvah H. Chapman, Air Commander, whose promotion was announced late in December, lost an engine but continued over the target. After the target another engine went out and the aircraft landed in Brussels. After four days in the Belgium capital the crew were flown back to England in a C-47.

The month started off with three missions on the 4th, 5th and 6th -- then the missions were few and far between until the whirlwind close when the Group ran six missions in a row going into 1945. The last five days of December saw a mission on every day and despite a slow start, 13 missions were run in December to make a total of 188 by the end of the year.

In these 13 missions not one crew was lost and the Group could boast of a record that was among the lowest, if not the lowest, in the whole of the 8th Air Force, for casualties.

One mission was aborted on December 18th after the formation of Fortresses had reach the enemy coast, but this was not counted among the 13 completed.

Summaries of the missions are as follows:-

Mission 176 on 4th December was to Kassel. Captain C.A. Lewis led the 94th "A" Group with the other Squadron Leaders being Lt. C.W. Utter and Captain E.W. Coleman. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. No enemy air opposition was encountered and there were no casualties or battle damage.

Mission 177 on 5th December was to Berlin. Captain D.A. Currie, who completed his second tour for a total of 40 missions, led the 94th "B" Group with Lt. R.M. Fowler and Major J.H. Havey the other leaders. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. No battle damage, no casualties and no enemy air opposition.

Mission 178 on 6th December was to Merseburg. Lt. Colonel B.K. Voorhees led the 94th "A" Group with Captain W.S. Harb and Captain P.E. Campbell the other leaders. Captain J.R. Locher was Screening Force leader. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. Three aircraft received major flak damage and 28 minor damage. There were no casualties and no sign of the Luftwaffe.

Mission 179 on 11th December was to Frankfurt. Captain A.H. Chapman led the 94th "B" Group with 1st Lt. R.S. Hubbell as the deputy leader. The other leaders were Lt. R.M. Fowler and 1st Lt. M.J. Christensen. Bombing was again by PFF and again with unobserved results. There were no casualties, no air opposition and no battle damage. It was on this mission that Captain Chapman's aircraft, due to mechanical difficulties, landed at Brussels.

Mission 180 on 12th December was to Merseburg. Major R.J. White led the 94th "B" Group with Major Havey and Captain C.W. Keeling the other leaders. Bombing was again by PFF with unobserved results. Two aircraft received minor battle damage caused by flak. There were no casualties, no air opposition.

Mission 181 on 15th December was to Kassel. Major D.G. McCree led the 94th "C" Group with 1st Lt. L.A. Turk and 1st Lt. T.H. Cushman the other leaders. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. No air opposition, no casualties, no battle damage.

Mission 182 on 19th December was to Schleiden and Coblenz. It was on this mission that the aircraft were diverted from Deenethorpe because of intense fog. Lt. Colonel Brown led the 94th "A" Group with Captain Currie and Lt. Duckworth the other leaders. Bombing was by PFF with the Lead Squadron hitting Coblenz, the High Squadron Schleiden and the Low Squadron Stadtkyll, the latter a target of opportunity. Results were unobserved. No battle damage, no air opposition, no casualties.

On December 23rd the Group aircraft attempted to reach Deenethorpe but most were unable to do so because the base became "Red".

Mission 183 on 24th December was to Coblenz and Darmstadt. On the Coblenz target were aircraft taking off from six different bases where they were loaded with bombs and gassed up. Lt. M.J. Christensen was the leader of the 94th "B" Group with Lt. Fowler and Lt. Utter the other Squadron leaders. Bombing was visual and bombs were seen to strike the target area. One man was wounded by flak - he was S/Sgt. John Racick, chin turret gunner. One Fortress received major damage from flak and 21 received minor damage. There was no sign of the Luftwaffe on this mission. Captain D.A. Currie led the Squadron which bombed the Darmstadt railroad yards visually. Bombing was mostly unobserved. No air opposition, no battle damage and no casualties.

Mission 184 on 27th December was to Gerolstein. This target was bombed by the Lead and Low Squadrons with the High Squadron bombing St. Vith. Major Chapman led the 94th "C" Group with Captain Coleman and Lt. Christensen the other leaders. The Lead and High Squadrons bombed visually with excellent results and bombing of the Low Squadron was unappraised but results appeared to be good. There was no air opposition and no casualties. One aircraft received major damage from flak and nine minor damage.

Mission 185 on 28th December was to Rheinbach. Captain C.A. Lewis led the 94th "A" Group with Captain R.L. Stelzer and Captain E.W. Mercer as the other leaders. Bombing was by Gee-H with unobserved results. There was no battle damage, no casualties and no Luftwaffe.

Mission 186 on 29th December was to Bingen. Major Eric de Jonckheere led the 94th "A" Group with Lt. H.E. Haskett and Lt. J.J. Brown the other two Squadron leaders. Bombing was visual with the High Squadron putting 98% of the bombs within 1,000 feet of the MPI. The Lead Squadron missed the MPI by more than 2,000 feet and the Low Squadron missed the MPI by 4,000 feet. There was no enemy air opposition and no casualties but one aircraft received major and 26 minor battle damage from flak.

Mission 187 on 30th December was to Kaiserslautern. Captain D.A. Currie led the 94th "A" Group with 1st Lt. G.S. Schaunaman and Lt. Haskett the other two leaders. Bombing was by Gee-H with results that were unobserved. There was no battle damage, no casualties and no air opposition.

Mission 188 on 31st December was to Krefeld. Major A.H. Chapman led the 94th "B" Group with the other two Squadron leaders being Captain Coleman and Captain J.G. Goodman. Bombing was carried out by PFF methods with unobserved results. No casualties, no battle damage, no casualties.

Seven members of the Flying Fortress "UNDECIDED" literally had to dig the-

mselves out of the dirt when their aircraft made a belly landing in a soft peat field after two engines had been knocked out over Politz and a third caught fire.

The ball turret had been jettisoned along with everything else in an effort to lighten the aircraft so it could get to friendly territory, and all the crew but the pilot and co-pilot crowded into the radio compartment for the landing.

When "UNDECIDED" hit the ground, the soft peat, forced through the opening left by the ball turret, broke down the radio room door and all but buried the crew. No one was injured and they were soon back at Deenethorpe.

The crew, piloted by 1st Lt. R.W. James, was on its 10th mission. Over Politz flak hit the No. 1 and No. 3 engines and the propellers windmilled violently. A few seconds later fire started in No. 3 engine and it was put out by the extinguishers. The oxygen system was knocked out as were all navigational instruments and big holes were put in the ball turret, the radio room and several gas tanks. Another fragment knocked the pencil out of the hand of 2nd Lt. Gerald Morris, the navigator.

"We lost 6,000 feet immediately," said Lt. James, "and came home alone, without escort for an hour and a half. Once two Me-109's began to follow us but for some reason they didn't come in to attack. When we landed I think we skidded along the ground for almost 150 feet. I saw a big pile of peat in front of me and tipped the right wing into the ground, and this swerved us to the side or we might have been buried alive."

The co-pilot who assisted in the belly-landing was 2nd Lt. Crossman.

"UNDECIDED" was also badly damaged on its second mission to Merseburg, crossing the Rhine at 6,000 feet.

January 1945

January, 1945, marked the completion of 200 missions by the 401st Bombardment Group (H) -- 200 trips over Germany and Occupied Europe to hammer Nazi objectives ranging from the Western Front to Central Europe, war plants, marshalling yards, oil refineries, military installations and troop positions.

The 200th mission was to Cologne on 28th January, 1945, and was led by Major William C. Garland, Captain Robert L. Stelzer and 1st Lt. George S. Schaunaman. The 200 missions were completed in 14 months and two days, not an 8th Air Force record but few Groups in the ETO ever surpassed it.

Another record was made in January when the 401st B.G. (H) completed 30 missions without the loss of a crew. As far as could be ascertained at the time it was a new record for the 8th Air Force. Losses were also the lowest for any B-17 Group flying the same type and number of missions during the same operational period.

In the course of the 200 missions, the 401st had hit Berlin and the Berlin area 17 times, and had made more than 20 trips to the French rocket coast. It had also been over most of the major cities of the German Reich and Occupied Europe.

The only promotion among the staff was that of Ground Executive, Charles A. Brown, who was made Lt. Colonel.

Summaries of the month's missions are as follows:-

Mission 189 on 1st January, 1945, was to Kassel and Els with the 401st flying as the 94th Combat Wing "C" Group. Major R.J. White was the Group leader with Captain E.W. Mercer and Captain E.W. Coleman the other leaders. The High and Low Squadrons bombed Kassel with PFF and unobserved results and the Lead Squadron bombed Els where good strikes were seen on a railway line. Captain Coleman was slightly wounded in the leg by flak over the target and landed in Belgium. He was the only casualty. 22 aircraft received minor flak damage. Captain Coleman's aircraft, 44-6454, was badly damaged and abandoned on the Continent.

Mission 190 on 3rd January was to Hermulheim with the 401st furnishing the 94th "A" Group. Major D.G. McCree was the Group leader with Captain R.M. Fowler and Captain Mercer the other two Squadron leaders. Solid undercast over the target prevented any observation of the results. There was no enemy air opposition and no battle damage or casualties.

Mission 191 on 5th January was to Koblenz with the 401st furnishing the 94th "A" Group. The mission leaders were Captain J.R. Locher, Captain R.W. Fowler and Lt. R.S. Hayes. Captain E.W. Mercer led a Squadron of 12 aircraft which made up a screening force for the mission. Due to complete undercast bombing results were unobserved. One aircraft received major battle damage and eight minor battle damage, all due to flak. There were no casualties and no sign of the Luftwaffe, due no doubt to the excellent fighter escort. One of the 615th aircraft, piloted by Lt. Robert S. Jones, was forced to land in Belgium where it was refueled and returned to Deenethorpe the same day. A 613th Squadron aircraft, 43-38160, piloted by 1st Lt. Fred M. Garton, was badly damaged by flak on this mission and was forced to land in France where it was abandoned. The crew returned to Deenethorpe in a C-47.

Mission 192 on 6th January was to Kempenich with the 401st furnishing the 94th "B" Group. The leaders were Lt. Col. D.E. Silver, Captain P.E. Campbell and 1st Lt. T.J. Harlan. Bombing was carried out by PFF with results that were unobserved. There were no casualties, no battle damage and no enemy air opposition.

Mission 193 on 7th January was to Bitburg with the Group providing the 94th "C" Group. The three leaders of this mission were Major C.A. Lewis, 1st Lt. J.J. Brown and Captain R.M. Fowler. This was another PFF mission with no results observed because of complete undercast. Nothing was seen of the Luftwaffe and there was no battle damage by flak.

Mission 194 on 10th January was to the town of Euskirchen with the 401st putting up the 94th "A" Group under the leadership of Major Jere Maupin. Then, due to mechanical difficulties, Major Maupin's B-17 was forced to abort and the lead was taken over by Lt. Louis Lawrence. The other two leaders were Captain S.J. Lozinski and Lt. J.J. Browne. Bombing was by Gee-H although it was broken cloud over the target and some bombs were observed to fall in the immediate target area. After that the only reportable event was the fact that two aircraft sustained minor battle damage from flak.

Lt. Russell B. Thompson suffered the loss of two engines from mechanical problems over the target and was forced to land in the south of Belgium. He attempted a landing on a small fighter field occupied by a Polish RAF Squadron and missed the runway. Having failed to land he was then faced with two chimneys 120 feet apart, and having done this, had to fly under a power line and over a single story house, lifting a wing to clear its chimney, before crash-landing in the rolling countryside nearby. No one in

the crew was injured, but the aircraft, "HARD SEVENTEEN", was a complete loss. The crew returned to Deenethorpe four days later.

Mission 195 on 13th January was to a communications centre at Maximillian-sau with the 401st putting up the 94th "B" Group. The three leaders were Captain Stelzer, Captain T.J. Harlan and Captain P.E. Campbell. Bombing was visual with excellent results and the Squadron led by Captain Campbell was commended for its work on this mission, as was that of Captain Harlan's, by Colonel E.A. Romig, the C.O. of the 94th Combat Wing. Although the Luftwaffe did not put in an appearance the flak was intense. Sadly, 1st Lt Louis Lawrence, Jr., pilot, who had been congratulated on the 10th January for taking over the Group lead from Major Maupin, was struck in the head by flak and fatally wounded. His crew landed their aircraft near a hospital in France but he died that night. Two other crewmen were seriously wounded and one slightly wounded. They were T/Sgt. Robert Raymond Rowe, top turret, Cpl. John F. Collins, radio operator, and S/Sgt. Leonard C. Stewart, waist gunner. Two aircraft received major flak damage and 10 minor flak damage.

Mission 196 on 14th January was to Cologne with the 401st putting up just one Squadron. This was led by Captain Mercer. The bombing was visual with excellent results, 96% of the bombs falling within 1,000 feet of the MPI. No enemy fighters were seen but the flak caused minor battle damage to 7 aircraft. There were no casualties.

Mission 197 on 17th January was to Paderborn with the 401st putting up the aircraft to form the 94th "B" Group. Major R.J. White was the Group leader with Lt. J.J. Brown and Lt. W.R. Jennings leading the other two Squadrons. Due to complete undercast, no observations were possible. Bombing was by PFF methods. There were no casualties, no Luftwaffe and no damage by flak.

Mission 198 on 21st January was to Aschaffenburg with the 401st supplying the aircraft to form the 94th "C" Group. The formation was led by Major McCree with Lt. H.E. Haskett and Lt. J.J. Brown leaders the other two Squadrons in the Group formation. Bombing was again PFF and again without any chance of it being observed.

Mission 199 was on 22nd January and was to Sterkrade with the 401st furnishing two Squadrons for the 94th "A" Group formation. The leaders of these two Squadrons were Major Eric de Jonckheere and Lt. R.S. Hayes. Bombing was by the Gee-H method with a visual assist and the results were reported as being excellent. One B-17 received major battle damage and 18 damage of a minor nature, all by flak. There was nothing to be seen of the Luftwaffe. While the Group were getting into formation over the Cottessmore buncher an aircraft piloted by Lt. Robert M. Deen crash-landed nearby. Three members of the crew were seriously injured and one slightly injured. The aircraft, with a full bomb and gas load, was wrecked and it is difficult to understand, having seen a photograph of the crash, how any members of this crew survived. The front portion went down a gully, ripped up a railroad track and climbed the gully on the opposite side. All of the crew were in the aircraft when it crashed and five members returned to Deenethorpe the same day. This was Lt. Deen's 7th mission as an aircraft commander after flying for a considerable time as a co-pilot. The injured men were S/Sgt. Robert A. Haskinson, top turret, S/Sgt. Lewis J. Piocirilio, radio operator, Sgt. Alex Bacho, bombardier and Sgt. Richard E. Baker, tail gunner.

Mission 200 was on 28th January - a landmark in the history of the 401st - and was to Cologne with the 401st putting up the 94th "B" Group formation. The formation was led by Major W.C. Garland with Captain R.L. Stelzer and Lt. G.J. Schaunaman the other two Squadron leaders. Bombing was by PFF with a visual assist and the results were good with hits seen in and arou-

nd the marshalling yards. There was no let-up in the flak at Cologne and twelve aircraft suffered major flak damage with two receiving minor damage.

Mission 201 was on 29th January and was the last of the month. It was to Bad Kreuznach, a target of opportunity. The 401st put up the 94th "A" Group with Lt. Colonel B.K. Voorhees as the Air Commander. Lt. J.J. Brown and Major E. de Jonckheere were the other two leaders. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. There was no air opposition, no casualties and no battle damage.

February 1945

Early in February a party was held for all Enlisted Men and Officers with the object of celebrating the completion of 200 missions by the 401st B.G. Heading the list of VIP's for the occasion was Lt. General James H. Doolittle, Commanding General of the 8th Air Force. It was his first visit to Deenethorpe. With him was Brig. General Howard M. Turner, C.O. of the 1st Air Division. Also present were Colonel E.A. Romig, C.O. of the 94th Combat Wing, Colonel H.E. Rogner, former Air Executive Officer of the 401st and, at this time, the Commanding Officer of the 457th Bomb Group. A number of other Group, Wing and Divisional officers were also present.

A tent 200 feet long and 40 feet wide was erected in Hangar No. 1 for the formal part of the celebrations and a carnival-circus atmosphere prevailed elsewhere in the hangar where 1,000 gallons of beer and 5,000 American hot dogs were served. Among the attractions in the hangar were a fortune teller, a shooting gallery, strength testing devices and typical carnival side shows.

Music was provided by three bands, the Flying Yank Orchestra of the 8th Air Force, the Ambassadors and the Bomb Beats of the 401st Group. There was a USO show and some brief speeches by the visitors who had previously been dined by Colonel Seawell at the Officers Mess.

General Doolittle congratulated the Group on the work they had done in helping to stop the German breakthrough. When the Germans had run out of supplies the 8th Air Force had destroyed the roads and railways to cut them off completely. He complimented the 401st on its bombing record, particularly on the job it did from December 18th until early January under the most difficult flying conditions ever known. Bombing through undercast had been excellent, he said, adding that "we don't like to bomb through undercast but we do it when we have to and we've done well."

General Doolittle had had lunch in Paris with Colonel H.W. Bowman, former Group Commander, at noon on February 1st, and he brought regrets at his inability to attend the celebrations, he did however send his regards.

General Doolittle's introduction by Colonel Seawell brought a roar from the crowd when the latter said, "I'm happy to present to you the man made famous by Spencer Tracy. Don't embarrass him by asking who his pilot was over Tokyo."

General Turner said the 401st Group had established an enviable record, particularly in bombing accuracy and that "you deserve to be classified at the very top."

"The 94th Combat Wing is a fighting outfit," said Colonel Romig, "and the 401st Group has done its share to bring about that reputation. It is a sincere hope that your next 100 missions will be as successful as your first 200."

Seventeen missions were run during the month contrasting with the ten operations in February, 1944. Several of the missions were in direct support of the Russian drive on Berlin and among the targets were Dresden and Chemnitz. The mission to Gelsenkirchen on February 16th, which appeared at the briefing to be a short milk run, turned out to be a rough one. The flak was intense at the target and one of the lead aircraft, piloted by Captain S.J. Lozinski, a veteran of the Group and an R and R man, received a direct hit and blew up over the target. Another aircraft, piloted by Lt. Ernest A. Hansen, was so badly damaged by flak that the crew bailed out of it over Holland. A third, piloted by Lt. Jeff N. Donaldson, left the formation and was reported MIA. Yet another aircraft piloted by Lt. George W. McKay had its controls shot away. The crew put it on automatic pilot and bailed out, the aircraft coming down eventually in Lincolnshire.

Among the crew of Captain Lozinski's aircraft was a newcomer to the Group, on his second mission. This was Major Melvin C. Pfund, riding as co-pilot. As far as I know there were no survivors from this crew.

The loss of these crews and the previous loss of 1st Lt. Myron L. King on the Berlin mission of February 3rd, shattered the Group's remarkable record of having gone 31 consecutive missions without a loss, establishing a new record in the 1st Air Division and the 8th Air Force.

On the Berlin mission of February 3rd it was confirmed that the 401st had hits on the Air Ministry, Ministry of Propaganda, German War Office and the Reich Chancery. More than 2,500 tons of bombs were dropped on the Reich capital on this mission in perfect weather. On the second big Berlin mission of the month, February 26th, the 401st Group furnished the Screening Force and did not drop any bombs.

February saw the departure of one of the best known bombardiers. Captain D.W. Fesmire, who had established the remarkable record of 133 combat missions, went back to the USA. Not, I might add, to finish flying combat. In the Korean War Captain Fesmire rejoined the USAF and completed a further 68 missions before finally calling it a day. His record of combat missions must surely be one of the most outstanding in the history of the USAF.

With the intent to better the training and operational efficiency of the 401st Group, a relatively new system was installed on the last day of the month. This was the designation of one Squadron only to carry out the training and operation of all lead crews. It became the responsibility of the 615th Squadron.

An RAF "Lancaster", with 126 missions and a record of never having been hit, visited Deenethorpe with a complete crew in charge of Wing Commander Osborne. Many of the base personnel went through the bomber which had, painted on the outside near the flight deck, Herr Goering's famous words, "No enemy plane will fly over the Reich territory." This same "Lancaster" is in the RAF Museum at Hendon, near London.

Colonel Bowman returned to Deenethorpe from his headquarters in Paris for a brief visit in February and spent one night on the base.

Squadron Leader Sterne of the RAF spent a day on the base and lectured the crews and Group Captain Mahady, also of the RAF, gave a talk on RAF tactics.

As the month came to an end a new record for consecutive missions was being established.

This is a summary of the February missions:-

Mission 202 on 1st February was to Ludwigshaven. The 401st furnished the 94th "C" Group with Major J.W. Maupin the Group leader with the other Squadrons being led by Lt. M.J. Kochel and Captain T.R. Cushman. Bombing was by Micro-H with unobserved results. There were no casualties and no enemy air opposition but five aircraft received minor battle damage from flak. The Lead and Low Squadrons dropped on Ludwigshaven and the High Squadron bombed a last resort target - Pforzheim.

Mission 203 on February 3rd was an all-out attack on Berlin. Captain J.F. Locher, who was to go on to complete his second tour of operations at the end of the month, was the Group leader with Lt. C.S. Schaunaman leading the Low Squadron and Lt. H.E. Haskett leading the High Squadron. The 401st put up the 94th "B" Group. Bombing was visual with excellent results. There was again no sign of the Luftwaffe but the flak made up for this by causing major damage to four aircraft and minor damage to 17 others. The crew of Lt. Myron L. King lost an engine over Berlin; he was reported MIA for some time. It was later discovered that he had gone on to land in the USSR at Poltava. It was this loss that broke the long standing record of the Group of not losing an aircraft for 31 missions.

Mission 204 on 6th February was to Giessen and Eisfeld. Lt. Colonel W.T. Seawell was the Group leader with Captain W.S. Harb and Lt. J.W. McGoldrick the other leaders. The 401st furnished the aircraft to form the 94th "A" Group which had as its target Giessen. In addition Lt. R.S. Hayes lead a Squadron of 12 aircraft which flew with the 94th "B" Composite Group. This Group bombed Eisfeld. There was no air opposition, no flak and no casualties. Two aircraft from the Group landed on the Continent after the mission but then returned to Deenethorpe immediately. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. The two aircraft landing on the continent - a weekend in Paris maybe? - were piloted by Lt. Herman Tausig and 2nd Lt. Samuel R. Smith.

Mission 205 on 9th February was to Lutzkendorf and Eisenach. The 401st furnished the 94th "C" Group with Major A.H. Chapman the Group leader. Lt. McGoldrick and Lt. Schaunaman were the other two Squadron leaders. The Lead and Low Squadrons bombed Lutzkendorf with the High Squadron bombing Eisenach as a target of opportunity. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results although the High Squadron were certain they hit the target they aimed at. There were no casualties and no enemy air opposition but the flak once again took its toll with seven aircraft returning with minor battle damage. Aircraft 44-6113, IN-R, piloted by 1st Lt. Richard R. Scheller was abandoned on the continent.

Mission 206 on 10th February was to Dulmen. The 401st furnished the 94th "C" Group with Major D.W. McCree the Group leader and Captain S.J. Lozinski and Captain W.S. Harb the other two Squadron leaders. Bombing was carried out by PFF and Micro-H with unobserved results. There was no sign of the Luftwaffe and the flak was way off target for a change.

Mission 207 on February 14th was to Dresden. Lt. Colonel Edwin W. Brown led the 94th "A" Group with Lt. Hayes and Lt. Haskett the other two leaders. There was no enemy air opposition and no casualties but the flak was again on target and one aircraft received major damage and four minor damage.

Mission 208 on 15th February was to Dresden again. Major W.C. Garland led the 94th "A" Group with Lt. McGoldrick and Captain J.F. Goodman the other leaders. Due to complete undercast, bombing results were unobserved. There

was no air opposition, no battle damage and no casualties.

Mission 209 on February 16th was to Gelsenkirchen. Major C.A. Lewis led the 94th "B" Group with Captain J.J. Brown and Captain S.J. Lozinski the other leaders. Due to intense flak, haze and smoke, bomb falls were short. There was no enemy air opposition but the flak made up for it with three aircraft receiving major damage and 27 receiving minor damage. The aircraft piloted by Captain Lozinski blew up over the target. Lost with Captain Lozinski were Major Melvin J. Pfund, co-pilot, 1st Lt. Louis S. Rush, navigator, 2nd Lt. David W. Bradfute, "Mickey" operator, 1st Lt. Harold E. Huges, bombardier, T/Sgt. Joseph A. Concino, Jr., radio operator, T/Sgt. Cyril I. Martin, top turret, Sgt. Joseph T. Bolan, tail gunner and S/Sgt. Charles F. Smith, waist gunner.

The aircraft piloted by 1st Lt. Ernest A. Hansen went down over Holland, not far from the target. Seven chutes were seen to leave the aircraft. Listed as MIA were 1st Lt. Ernest A. Hansen, pilot, Flight Officer Joseph S. Chuderswicz, co-pilot, 1st Lt. Morton Greenberg, navigator, S/Sgt. James L. Morrison, bombardier, S/Sgt. Joseph V. Del Torto, radio operator, T/Sgt. Raymond A. Miller, top turret, S/Sgt. Wayde T. Brunson, ball turret gunner, S/Sgt. LeRoy E. McKnight, tail gunner and S/Sgt. Alonso A. Karcher, waist gunner.

The aircraft piloted by Lt. Jeff N. Donaldson, was last heard from at 25,000 feet above the Zuider Zee, proceeding to Brussels. That was the last message received from it and it was reported as being MIA. The other members of the crew were 2nd Lt. Charles R. Wilson, co-pilot, 2nd Lt. William W. Jeffers, navigator, Sgt. Richard L. Summers, bombardier, Sgt. Gerald S. Harvey, radio operator, Sgt. William O. Streuter, top turret, Sgt. Adelbert D. Shereck, ball turret, Sgt. Jack M. Harrington, tail gunner and Sgt. Michael Cagich, waist gunner.

The aircraft piloted by Lt. George W. McKay received major flak damage. The crew bailed out over England and the aircraft crashed east of Bardney Lincolnshire. None of the crew were injured. Those who bailed out were - 1st Lt. McKay, pilot, 1st Lt. Robert M. Deen, co-pilot, (pilot of the aircraft that crashed near the Cottesmore buncher on 22nd January, 1945) 1st Lt. John L. Rainey, navigator, S/Sgt. Mack A. Elston, bombardier, Sgt. James D. Douglass, radio operator, S/Sgt. Joseph J. Kozyra, top turret, S/Sgt. John L. Gremillion, ball turret, S/Sgt. Lars H. Wiederman, tail gunner, S/Sgt. William H. Butler, waist gunner and S/Sgt. Charles Heaton, spot jammer.

Mission 210 on February 20th was to Nuremburg. The 401st furnished the 94th "B" Group with Maupin, Captain J.J. Brown and Lt. Kochel as the three leaders. Due to complete undercast, the bombing results were unobserved. No air opposition, no battle damage and no casualties.

Mission 211 on 21st February was to Nuremburg with Major Eric de Jonckheere as the Group leader with Lt. Schaunaman and Captain R.M. Dempsey as the other two Squadron leaders. Due to complete undercast, bombing results were unobserved. Seven aircraft received minor flak damage.

Mission 212 on February 22nd was to Ludwigslust. The 401st furnished 94th "A" Group with Major A.H. Chapman as the mission leader. Lt. McGoldrick and Captain Goodman were the other leaders. Bombing was visual with some excellent results.

Mission 213 on February 23rd was to Ottingen with Major R.J. White, Lt. C.W. Utter and Lt. McGoldrick as leaders of the 94th "C" Group. This was a target of opportunity and bomb strikes on a small railway yard and two

bridges were excellent. Although there was no air opposition and no flak damage five aircraft landed on the continent and later returned to Deenethorpe. The pilots of these five aircraft were 2nd Lt. Samuel R. Smith, Lt. Collin I. Park, Lt. Lawrence E. Ayre, Lt. Gene H. Holmes and Lt. Hans V. Nielson.

Mission 214 on February 24th was to Harburg. Lt. Colonel Seawell, Division Air Commander, also led the 94th "A" Group with the other leaders being Captain William Riegler and Captain Hayes. Due to complete undercast, bombing results were unobserved, but the crews reported that as they were leaving the target area, black smoke was observed coming through the clouds at 12,000 feet. There was no enemy air opposition but the flak was again fairly accurate causing major battle damage to two aircraft and minor damage to eleven others. Two members of Lt. David M. Stauffer's crew received slight wounds. They were Lt. Thomas B. Burns, bombardier and Sgt. Libero L. Laura, waist gunner.

Mission 215 on February 25th was to Munich with Major McCree the 94th "B" Group leader and the others leaders being Captain Dempsey and Captain C.W. Utter. Bombing results were good with the Lead Squadron's bomb-fall in the smoke of the preceding Groups near the assigned MPI. There were no casualties and no enemy air opposition but eleven aircraft received battle damage from flak.

Aircraft 42-97780, IW-R, "BLUE BOMB EXPRESS", piloted by Lt. Edwin H. Spuhler and aircraft 43-38565, IW-X, "MISS GEE EYEWANNA GO HOME", piloted by Lt. Carl N. Gray landed on the continent but returned to Deenethorpe later in the day.

Mission 216 on February 26th was to Berlin and the 401st furnished twelve aircraft for the 94th "C" Group which was the screening force. The leader was Captain Riegler. Chaff was discharged as briefed at the target. There were no casualties, no battle damage and no air opposition. The 401st also furnished spares who flew with the 351st and 457th Groups.

Mission 217 on February 27th was to Leipzig with the 401st furnishing six aircraft to comprise the Low Section of the High Squadron of the 94th "B" Group. Three spares were also furnished for the 94th "A" and the 94th "B" Groups. The Low Section leader was Lt. R.H. Steele. Due to complete undercast, bombing results were unobserved. There was no air opposition, no battle damage and no casualties.

Mission 218 on February 28th was to Soest. The 401st furnished the 94th "B" Group with Captain Locher, Lt. Schaunaman and Captain P.E. Campbell the leaders. Due to complete undercast, bombing results were unobserved. No battle damage was sustained, no air opposition met and there were no casualties.

March 1945

A new record in the number of missions to be run in any one month since the Group became operational was established by the 401st Bombardment Group in March 1945. Twentytwo operations were completed - two in one day - and a record number of credit sorties were flown - 754, while 746 aircraft attacked targets. A total of 14,246 bombs were dropped on targets and 69, 870 rounds of ammunition fired.

Another record was set when 13 consecutive missions were run in the latter part of February and the first part of March. This record was established on March 4th on the mission to Schwab-Munchen. Nine consecutive missions

were run in February and four through to the 4th of March.

For the first time since August 24th, the Group encountered enemy air opposition - this on the mission to Berlin on March 18th. Six to eight jet aircraft type Me-262 attacked the Lead Squadron between the I.P. and the target, coming in through condensation trails and out of clouds until within 100 yards of the formation. One aircraft was lost as a result of these attacks.

One other aircraft was lost on March 28th on another mission to Berlin - making a total of two which failed to return during the month.

Bombing during the month was excellent on some missions and fair on others. The most noteworthy visual missions were to Barmingholte, Gladbeck, Hopsten and Twente - when the aiming points in each case was demolished. Missions to Lohne, Rheine and Weimar were only considered fair, but considerable damage was inflicted. The best blind bombing missions were to Heilbron, Hagen and Swinemunde.

On one mission a crew was forced to bail out just after crossing our lines in southeast France and another crash-landed in East Anglia, killing seven members of the crew.

At the end of March, the 612th Squadron had completed 90 missions without a loss - a record not only in the 1st Air Division but in the 8th A.F. for any one Squadron - a record they must have been very proud of.

One of the Group's most famous Fortresses, "HELL'S ANGEL OUT OF CHUTE 13", ended its great record when it was forced down in France.

"CHUTE THE WORKS" flew its 100th mission on March 8th and the records of two other Fortresses at the end of March showed that "FANCY NANCY IV" had completed 130 missions without an abort and "DIANA QUEEN OF THE CHASE" had completed 109 missions.

Five officers were promoted to the rank of Lt. Colonel during the month. They were Major Jere W. Maupin, C.O. of 612th Squadron; Major Eric De Jonckheere, C.O. of 613th Squadron; Major William C. Garland, C.O. of 614th Squadron; Major Ralph J. White, C.O. of 615th Squadron and Major Richard B. Engel, C.O. of the 450th Sub-Depot.

Changes in the Group during the month saw Lt. Colonel E.W. Brown, Air Executive and Lt. Colonel Maupin called to Washington for assignment to AAF Headquarters. Lt. Colonel D.E. Silver, former Group Operations Officer, was named Air Executive and Lt. Colonel Garland was named Group Operations Officer. Major Alvah H. Chapman was named C.O. of the 614th Squadron to succeed Major Garland and Major Donald G. McCree was named 612th C.O. to succeed Lt. Colonel Maupin. Captain D.T. Kirkhuff was named 614th Operations Officer and Major Joseph B. Strauss was named 612th Operations Officer.

Colonel H.W. Bowman, the former Group C.O., made a return visit to the base during the month and spent two days and a night visiting with Lt. Col. Seawell and other officers and men.

This is a summary of the month's missions:-

Mission 219 on March 1st was to Heilbron. The 401st Group furnished the 94th "A" Group. The leaders were Colonel B.K. Voorhees of Wing Headquarters, and Captain J.W. McGoldrick and Captain J.F. Goodman. Bombing was by PFF with no satisfactory observations because of the undercast. There was no

battle damage, no casualties and no enemy air opposition.

Mission 220 on March 2nd was to Chemnitz in support of the advancing Russian Army. The 401st furnished the 94th "C" Group and the leaders were Major C.L. Lewis, Captain C.W. Utter and Captain C.S. Schaunaman. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results.

Mission 221 on March 3rd was to Chemnitz again with the 401st furnishing the 94th "B" Group. Leaders were Lt. Colonel Maupin, Captain Schaunaman and Captain Utter. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. 19 aircraft received minor flak damage and two received major flak damage. There was no enemy air opposition. S/Sgt. Jack C. Stewart, tail gunner on Lt. James C. Nolan's crew was wounded. Their aircraft was "HELL'S ANGEL OUT OF CHUTE 13" and it received major flak damage over the target. It was landed on the continent and abandoned because of extensive flak damage.

Mission 222 on March 4th was to Schwab-Munchen. The 401st furnished the 94th "A" Group and the leaders were Lt. Colonel Seawell, Captain R.S. Hayes and Lt. M.J. Kochel. Bombing was carried out by the Gee-H method with unobserved results. One aircraft landed on the continent but later returned to Deenethorpe.

Mission 223 on March 7th was to Siegen. The Group furnished the aircraft to form the 94th "B" Group and the leaders were Lt. Colonel D.E. Silver, Captain D.V. Kirkhuff and Captain Hayes. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results.

Mission 224 on March 8th was to Essen in the Ruhr Valley, a softening up preparation to the Rhine crossing by ground forces. The 401st put up the 94th "C" Group with Lt. Colonel Silver, Captain F.A. Kalinski and Captain Utter the leaders. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. There was no enemy air opposition and no battle damage but one man was slightly wounded. He was T/Sgt. James T. Harper, a top turret gunner and engineer.

Mission 225 on March 10th was to Hagen with the 401st putting up the 94th "A" Group. The leaders were Lt. Colonel R.J. White, Captain Goodman and Captain Kirkhuff. Bombing was by the Gee-H method with unobserved results.

Mission 226 on March 11th was to Bremen. The 401st furnished the 94th "B" Group. The leaders were Major D.G. McCree, Captain A.R. Seder and Lt. A.D. Aschenbach. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results.

Mission 227 on March 12th was to Swinemunde. The 401st put up the 94th "C" Group with Captain Kalinski, Lt. Aschenbach and Lt. Kochel as the leaders. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results, but the "Mickey" operator said it was their best run and predicted excellent results. No air opposition, no casualties and no battle damage.

Mission 228 on March 14th was to Lohne. The 401st put up the 94th "A" Group with Lt. Colonel Eric de Jonckheere, Lt. Kochel and Lt. R. S. Hubbell the leaders. Bombing was visual with good results. No enemy air opposition was encountered but nine aircraft received minor flak damage. Despite this there were no casualties.

Mission 229 on March 15th was to Zossen. The 401st put up the 94th "B" Group with Major A.H. Chapman, Captain P.E. Campbell and Captain R.F. Hayes the leaders. Bombing was visual but the bomb falls were short. No battle damage, no casualties and no air opposition from the Luftwaffe.

Mission 230 was to Molbis on March 17th. The target was a flak battery.

The 401st put up the 94th "A" Group with Lt. Colonel Silver, Captain McGoldrick and Lt. Aschenbach the leaders. Bombing by PFF and was unobserved.

Mission 231 on March 18th was to Berlin. The 401st put up the 94th "C" Group with Lt. Colonel Garland, Captain McGoldrick and Captain W.S. Harb as the leaders. The bombing was visual with excellent results. The 401st was attacked by jet fighters and two of them were damaged. 15 B-17's received minor and two major flak damage. Aircraft 43-38607, IN-H, piloted by 2nd Lt. David E. Vermeer was lost. Hit by jets near the I.P., the aircraft continued over the target and then fell off on one wing. Other members of the crew were 2nd Lt. John J. Thompson, co-pilot, 2nd Lt. Eugene E. Holly, Navigator, Sgt. Ernest J. Butlin, bombardier, Sgt. Milan Easara, radio operator, Sgt. Harold E. Churchill, top turret, Sgt. Fred A. Gerhardt, ball turret, Sgt. Harold L. Babcock, tail gunner and Sgt. Rodney A. Williams, waist gunner.

Mission 232 on March 19th was to Plauen. The 401st put up the 94th "B" Group and the leaders were Lt. Colonel Silver, Lt. Hubbell and Lt. Kochell. Bombing was by PFF with strikes near the centre of the city.

Mission 233 on March 21st was to Hopsten. The 401st put up the 94th "B" Group and the leaders were Lt. Colonel Eric de Jonckheere, 1st Lt. J.D. Gerber and Captain Hayes. Bombing was visual with excellent results. No enemy air opposition was encountered but two aircraft received minor and one major flak damage. There were no casualties.

Mission 234 on March 22nd was to Barmingholten. The 401st put up the 94th "A" Group and the leaders were Captain Kalinski, Lt. Kochel and Captain R. F. Hayes. Bombing was visual with excellent results. One aircraft received minor flak damage. No enemy fighters were encountered.

Mission 235 on March 23rd was to Gladbeck in the Ruhr. The target was a storage depot and railway sidings. The 401st put up the 94th "C" Group and the leaders were Captain Kirkhuff, Lt. Aschenbach and Lt. Kochel. Bombing was visual with good results. 14 aircraft received minor flak damage but there were no casualties.

Mission 236 was the first of two run on March 24th. This was to Rheine - Salzbergen with the 401st putting up the 94th "B" Group. The leaders were Lt. Col. White, Captain Harb and Captain Hayes. Bombing was visual with good results. No enemy fighters were encountered but 16 aircraft received major and two minor flak damage. Aircraft 43-38733, SC-K, "I'LL BE SEEING YOU" (the aircraft flown by Captain Joe Cromer and his crew for many of their 35 missions) piloted by 1st Lt. Charles J. Campbell, badly damaged by flak, made a crash landing near Halesworth on the English coast. When almost on the point of touching down another engine failed and they stalled into a pond. Seven crew members were killed. They were 2nd Lt. David B. Gruhn, navigator, S/Sgt. Joseph R. Pearlin, bombardier, T/Sgt. Gene M. Feo, Jr., radio operator, T/Sgt. Charles F. Kartes, Jr., top turret, S/Sgt. Earl Sullivan ball turret, S/Sgt. Charles K. Dalton, tail gunner and Sgt. Howard M. Murray, waist gunner.

The other three crew members were injured and were 1st Lt. Charles J. Campbell, pilot, 2nd Lt. Phillip W. Foy, co-pilot, and S/Sgt. Charles E. Deemer, RCM operator.

Mission 237 was also flown on March 24th. It was to Twente, in Holland. The 401st furnished the High Squadron of the 94th Composite Group formation. Lt. Aschenbach was the leader of the 401st unit. Bombing was visual

with excellent results and the target was in direct support of the ground troops crossing the Rhine river into the Ruhr valley. Four aircraft received minor flak damage but there were no casualties. There was no enemy air opposition.

Mission 238 on March 28th was to Berlin, the Spandau assembly plant being the MPI. The 401st put up the 94th "A" Group with Major McCree, Captain Hayes and Lt. A.K. Wolf the leaders. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. No enemy air opposition was encountered but the flak was as deadly as ever. 18 aircraft receiving minor damage and two major damage. Aircraft 43-37551, IW-Y, piloted by 2nd Lt. Joseph W. McCullough, was hit by flak over the target and was last seen with the port wing on fire. The plane remained with the formation until it suddenly went into a spin and disappeared through the clouds. The other members of the crew were 2nd Lt. Norman R. Schook, co-pilot, 2nd Lt. John Mc. Maxwell, Jr., navigator, 2nd Lt. Pascal Santora, bombardier, Sgt. Thomas P. McGurn, radio operator, Sgt. Nick W. Lorris, top turret, Sgt. Robert G. Winterburn, ball turret, Sgt. Robert W. Jacobson, tail gunner, Sgt. Oren J. Tish, waist gunner, and S/Sgt. Lawrence Genauer, RCM operator.

Sgt. Luther F. Gilbert, ball turret gunner of 42-97931, IW-A, was wounded on this mission.

Mission 239 on March 30th was to Bremen. The target was the submarine yard. The 401st put up the 94th "C" Group and the leaders were Lt. Colonel Eric de Jonckheere, Lt. Hubbell and Captain Hayes. Bombing was by PFF with a usual assist but the bomb-falls were poor. No enemy air opposition was encountered but two men were wounded and 20 aircraft received minor and three major flak damage. The wounded men were Sgt. Leonard R. Mulcahey, ball turret gunner and S/Sgt. James F. Grumman, tail gunner.

Mission 240 on March 31st was to Weimar. The 401st put up the 94th "C" Group with Major J.D. Strauss, Captain Harb and Lt. Gerber as the leaders. Bombing was by PFF with fair results.

April 1945

The operational record of the 401st Bombardment Group (H) ended with its 254th mission flown to Brandenburg on 20th April 1945. On 21st April there was a "stand-down" which seemed ordinary, but when the "stand-down" extended first into five and then into ten days - and the Russians enveloped Berlin while the Americans and British swept forward along all fronts and linked with the Russians on the Elbe, everyone at Deenethorpe knew that the job of heavy bombardment in the ETO had been finished.

Fourteen missions were run in April until the final stand down and they were some of the most accurate the Group ever recorded. On two of the missions, to the German pocket on the Gironde Estuary at Royan north of Bordeaux, the Group flew without escort and on the second one - where results were excellent - the Group circled the target for more than an hour while a "traffic cop" in an observation plane watched the formations go in and directed others when to attack and where to attack.

The last mission of the Group was to Big B itself, when an attack was made on Brandenburg on Berlin's outskirts of the city.

Early in the month the Group received the 94th Combat Wing "Best Bombing" plaque for leading the Wing in bombing accuracy during March. The plaque was presented to Lt. Colonel W.T. Seawell by Brig. General J.K. Lacey, the Commanding Officer of the Wing. This was a new award and the 401st were

the first to receive it.

As the Allied Armies continued their speedy advance through Germany, liberating prisoner of war camps, word began to come back of several of the Group's POW's that had been set free. One entire crew, that of 1st Lt. G. F. Donaldson, 613th Squadron, which had ditched off the Dutch coast, was reported free with some of its members in a hospital suffering from malnutrition. S/Sgt. John A. Gray, 614th Squadron, who went down with 1st Lt. C.L. Wilson's crew on the Oscherslaben mission, 30th May 1944, was also liberated and returned to hospital in England.

Major Eric T. de Jonckheere, Commanding Officer of the 613th Squadron, was promoted to the rank of Lt. Colonel early in April.

The new 431st Air Service Group consisting of Headquarters and Base Services Squadron, the 681st Air Material Squadron and the 857th Air Engineering Squadron were activated during the month with Lt. Colonel Charles A. Brown, formerly the 401st Ground Executive Officer, as Commanding Officer.

A summary of the month's missions is as follows:-

Mission 241 on April 4th was to an ordnance depot at Unterluss. The assigned target was an airdrome and engine testing shop at Rotenburg but weather conditions were such that the primary target could not be attacked. Only the Low Squadron dropped on Unterluss. The 401st furnished the 94th "A" Combat Wing Group with Lt. Colonel Eric de Jonckheere as the Air Commander and the other leaders being 1st Lt. E.A. Post and Captain R.S. Hubbell. Bombs hit the built-up area of the depot in an excellent pattern but lack of target photographs made it difficult to interpret the bomb-fall. There was no battle damage, no casualties and no enemy air opposition.

Mission 242 on April 5th was to an ordnance depot at Ingolstadt. The 401st furnished the 94th "A" Group with Major D.C. McCree the Air Commander and Captain Hubbell and 1st Lt. A.K. Wolf the other leaders. En route to the target and just before the I.P., the formation was attacked by Me-262 jet propelled aircraft. This was an historic event because it was the last time that the 401st B.G. (H) were attacked by fighters in WWII. The first attack was from two jets who hit the Lead and High Flight of the High Squadron and the second was from four jets who also hit the High Squadron. Gunners fired on the attacking jets but they went through so quickly that no claims were made that they'd even hit any of them. The B-17 piloted by 1st Lt. Thomas N. Geren was damaged in this attack and the top turret gunner was killed. The rest of the crew eventually bailed out over France. The Lead and Low Squadron's bomb-fall was somewhat short of the MPI but the High Squadron's bombs covered the MPI completely. There was no battle damage from flak for a change and Sgt. David N. Leshner was the only casualty.

Mission 243 on April 7th was to a German airfield at Reinschlen but the primary was not visible so the marshalling yards at Luneburg were attacked. The 401st furnished the 94th "C" Group with Lt. Colonel de Jonckheere as the Air Commander and Captain Hubbell and 1st Lt. A.D. Aschenbach as the leaders of the High and Low Squadrons. Bombing was from 15,000 feet with good results and much of the rolling stock in the railroad yards was damaged. No enemy air opposition was encountered and there were no casualties and no battle damage.

Mission 244 on April 8th was to Halberstadt with Major J.D. Strauss as the Air Commander and Lt. Wolf and Lt. Post as the other leaders. The 401st

furnished the 94th "B" Group. Bomb patterns were good but were short of the assigned aiming point. There was no battle damage, no enemy air opposition and no casualties.

Mission 245 on April 9th was to the German airfield at Furstenfeldbruck. Lt. Colonel W.T. Seawell was the Division Leader and Group Leader with the other Squadron leaders being Captain W.S. Harb and Lt. Wolf. The 401st furnished the 94th "A" Group. Bombing was classed as excellent with 95 to 100% of the bombs falling within 1,000 feet of the assigned aiming point. Five aircraft received minor flak damage. There were no casualties and no enemy air opposition.

Mission 246 on April 10th was in direct support of the advancing Russian Armies and the target was the ordnance depot at Oranienburg just north of Berlin. The 401st furnished the 94th "B" Group with Captain D.V. Kirkhuff as the Air Commander and Captain Harb and Lt. Wolf as the other two leaders. The bombing was good although smoke over the target made accurate damage assessment difficult to determine. Two aircraft received major flak damage and the one piloted by Lt. C.P. Spence made a belly landing on a German airfield at Fassburg. Two of the crew were injured, five escaped from the German guards and three were taken POW. There was no enemy air opposition. The two injured crewmen were Sgt. DeFazio and Sgt. Bane and those taken prisoner were Flight Officer Victor D. Datlenko, navigator, Sgt. Mark R. Medows, ball turret gunner and S/Sgt. James W. Carsons, RCM operator. The aircraft was "HEAVY DATE", 43-38788, SC-T, and it is surprising how this Fortress keeps cropping up. Fassburg became an RAF base after WWII and three people who served on this base have contacted me to tell me they remember it being there up to about the end of 1948. There is a photograph of it in the January 1987 PFG, and I was again contacted yet again in February 1987 by someone who saw the old lady being taken out of Fassburg by the RAF on a low-loader truck.

Mission 247 on April 11th was to the marshalling yard at Freiam. The 401st put up the 94th "C" Group with Lt. Colonel Eric de Jonckheere, Captain Aschenbach and 1st Lt. J.D. Gerber as the leaders. Bombing results were good.

Mission 248 on April 14th was to the gun batteries at Royan with the 401st furnishing the 94th "C" Group. Captain A.R. Seder was the Air Commander with Lt. Gerber and Lt. Post as the other two Squadron leaders. As this mission was flown far away from the Luftwaffe bases no fighter escort was deemed necessary.

Mission 249 on April 15th again was to the gun emplacements in the German pocket near Royan. The 401st put up the 94th "A" Group with Lt. Colonel Voorhees as Task Force and Group Leader. The other leaders were Major J. R. Locher, Lt. Colonel E.R. de Jonckheere, 1st Lt. W.S. Knowles, 1st Lt. Post, and 1st Lt. R.D. Speer. Bombing was by sections with four of the air sections getting excellent results. There was no battle damage or casualties.

Mission 250 was to a railroad bridge at Regensburg on 16th April, the 401st furnishing the 94th "B" Group. Captain F.A. Kalinski was the Group Air Commander, the other leaders being 1st Lt. Knowles and Captain E.W. Coleman. Bombing was excellent with all three Squadrons putting 90% of their bombs within 1,000 feet of the aiming point. Two aircraft received minor flak damage.

Mission 251 on April 17th was to the big railroad centre at Dresden. Major A.H. Chapman was the Air Commander of the 94th "A" Group with 1st Lt. Ger-

ber and 1st Lt. Wolf the other leaders. Bombing was fair to excellent, the High Squadron putting 98% of its bombs within 1,000 feet of the aiming point. Some jet aircraft were seen to approach the formation but did not attack. Seven aircraft received minor and one received major flak damage.

Mission 252 on April 18th saw the High Squadron bombing the transformer station at Traunstein, supplying power for Hitler's Bavarian Redoubt, and the Low Squadron and Lead Squadron bombing the marshalling yards at Freising. The 401st furnished three ten-aircraft Squadrons for the 94th "A" Group and led the Division. Colonel Eugene Romig was the Division and Group Leader. The other leaders were 1st Lt. J.B. Hart and 1st Lt. Gerber. The strike photos showed good results on both targets. One aircraft, piloted by Lt. E.A. Viehman, was hit by flak and the crew bailed out over Germany. One crew member, 1st Lt. James J. Stalzer, returned to Deenethorpe after walking to the Allied lines. Reported missing on this crew were 2nd Lt. Harold K. Coutts, co-pilot, S/Sgt. Peter Orlando, bombardier, S/Sgt. James A. Retzlaff, radio operator, S/Sgt. Edwin D. Schwartz, top turret, Sgt. Kenneth E. Hobson, ball turret, Sgt. Joseph E. Reutkowski, tail gunner, S/Sgt. David M. Hay, waist gunner and S/Sgt. Joseph S. Allaire, RCM operator.

Mission 253 on 19th April was to the marshalling yards at Falkenburg with the 401st furnishing 30 aircraft for the 94th "A" Group. Major Strauss was the Air Commander and the other leaders were Lt. Colonel Eric de Jonckheere and 1st Lt. Gerber. The bombing was very good. No casualties, no battle damage and no sign of the Luftwaffe.

Mission 254 on April 20th was to the railroad marshalling yards at Brandenburg. The 401st furnished three ten-aircraft Squadrons for the 94th "B" Group with Lt. Colonel Eric de Jonckheere as the Air Commander and leading the 401st B.G. (H) for the last time in combat in WW II. The other two Squadron leaders were 1st Lt. Knowles and 1st Lt. Hart. They led the High and Low Squadrons. Bombing patterns were believed to have covered the aiming point but smoke and ground haze made it difficult to assess the damage. There was considerable flak over the target area and the aircraft piloted by 1st Lt. Aubrey J. Bradley, Jr., received a direct hit near the target. Before some of the crew could put on their chutes a wing broke off and the plane blew up. The following members of the crew were either blown clear by the explosion or scrambled clear of the wreckage immediately afterwards. 1st Lt. A.J. Bradley, pilot, 2nd Lt. K.F. Carey, co-pilot, 2nd Lt. M. Peterson, navigator, Sgt. W.T. Vaughn, Jr., ball turret gunner and S/Sgt. F. C. Nachtigal, waist gunner.

The following crew members were killed in the explosion. Sgt. W.K. Benson, bombardier, Sgt. E. Cowgill, top turret, Sgt. F. Toombs, radio operator, S/Sgt. W.J. McKee, tail gunner and T/Sgt. A. Massa, RCM operator. It was the crews 31st mission.

1st Lt. Bradley, the pilot, sustained very serious injuries after almost being beaten to death by German civilians.

May 1945

The operation tour of the 401st Bombardment Group (H) ended on 20th April, 1945 when Mission 254, to Brandenburg, was run. 254 missions in 17 months --- and with a bombing record second to none.

The first few days of May proved to be quiet -- and then came a restriction on the morning of May 7th. Everyone knew it was all over -- but they

had to wait until the final word came from Prime Minister Churchill at 1500 hrs on May 8th. VE day had come at last -- the war in Europe was over it was time to go home -- or to the Pacific to finish off the Japs.

VE Day was celebrated rather quietly on the base. There was a huge display of fireworks from the tower at 2300 hrs on May 7th and at 1900 hrs on May 8th the entire Station personnel marched to the Flying Control Tower for a formal Observance. There was a speech by Colonel Seawell, the Commanding Officer, followed by religious services with the men dividing into groups for the Protestants, Catholics and Jews. The Protestant services in front of the tower were in charge of Chaplain Ward Fellows, Catholic services were conducted from a portable altar set up by Chaplain Joseph E. Burke with a B-17 in the background and Jewish services were conducted by Mr. W. Meier of Kettering. Following the services there was a beer party but by nightfall, all was quiet, and another firework display concluded the entertainment.

Monday May 14th must have come as a horrible surprise to members of the Group who knew nothing of the pre-war army life. Bugle calls were heard, drill and calisthenics were the order of the day and reveille was at 5.45 am with Taps at 2230 hrs. It must have been hard to believe and hard to take.

Word came through on Tuesday May 15th by Field Order that the Group was to move immediately to the United States and this put an end to drills and calisthenics; there was plenty of work to do by everyone preparing for the move. Crews were taken on celestial missions and instrument checks and the aircraft were tuned up for the overseas hop. Fuel consumption checks were carried out and the aircraft weighed for balance.

While waiting for the final move the Group ran three observation trips over the Ruhr valley and down to Frankfurt for the ground personnel. The vast damage to the German cities was almost impossible to believe unless it was actually seen from the air at low altitude.

Four other trips were made to Linz, Austria for the purpose of evacuating French and British POW's. With a minimum of air crew the B-17, 30 in number, brought back 30 former prisoners on each trip. The French POW's were landed at Orleans and the British ones brought back to England.

The month also saw the promotion to colonel of Lt. Colonel W.T. Seawell, the Commanding Officer of the 401st B.G. (H) since December 5th, 1944 when Colonel Bowman left to become a member of General Spaatz's staff. It was also announced during the month that Colonel Bowman had left USSTAF to return to the United States where he became Public Relations Officer for the USAAF under General Arnold.

Preparations for the trip home reached a high pitch near the end of May. There was the usual processing, the physical examinations, checking of equipment and inspections, then more inspections. Inspectors were also at the station from the Army Air Force Headquarters in Washington, from USSTAF, from the 8th Air Force, ATC, UK Base and 1st Air Division.

It was announced that each Squadron would send 19 planes home, each plane loaded with its regular crew plus ten ground personnel. The aircraft were fitted with extra dinghies, and there were ditching drills and the aircraft checked carefully by Air Transport Command which was in charge of the overseas movement.

Then came the usual "scrubs". One delay followed another until at long last at 1100 hrs on Memorial Day the first airplane, piloted by Colonel W. T. Seawell, took off for America. Sixteen B-17's left Deenethorpe on that first day. By the end of the month 78 planes with crews and passengers were on their way. The route back home was via RAF Valley, Wales, and the usual North Atlantic route with stops at Iceland, Greenland, Goose Bay, Labrador and Newfoundland.

The Ground Personnel finally packed up and arrangements were made to evacuate Deenethorpe by June 10th at the latest. I have been told that when word got around the nearby villages on that last day that the Yanks were going home, crowds of people flocked to the base to bid their last farewell to their friends. And many tears were undoubtedly shed that day on both sides.

CHRONOLOGICAL COMMENTS

The first to arrive at Deenethorpe.

On 30th September, 1943, an Advance Detail was sent to RAF Deenethorpe. They reported to Captain Mays at the Laguardia Field, New York, and flew to England. On the 17th October, 1943, they signed in at 8th Air Force Headquarters, London and were sent to the 1st Air Division Headquarters on 18th October, 1943. They were:-

Lt. Col. Clayton A. Scott, Executive Officer.
Major Allison C. Brooks, Operations Officer.
Captain Wilfred B. Fry, Intelligence Officer.
1st Lt. Harold M. Kennard Jr. Communications Officer.

Colonel Harold M. Kennard Jr.

401st B.G.(H) Communications Officer.

On the way to England - a shot was fired.

"On our way overseas, to the 401st B.G. (H), we had a stopover at Scott Field, an Army airfield just outside St Louis, Mo. While there we had to post guard detail around the clock over our B-17. It so happened that Sgt. Roland Breen and Sgt. Harry Ross were out by the plane guarding it. They were issued new Colt .45 automatics and like new toys they began to play with them. How it happened only they knew. Well, for some damn reason Sgt. Breen pulled the trigger and the .45 bullet ripped through the No. 3 engine, cutting a couple of oil lines and ricocheted off the magneto, causing more minor damage.

Word got out fast about the shooting and the C.O. of the base came riding out in his jeep, saw the damage, and busted Breen to a private on the spot. Of course, once he set foot in England he was given back his stripes".

S/Sgt. Russell W. Johnson,

615th Sqdn. Waist Gunner on B-17
"DRY RUN".

2nd November, 1943. The "Queen Mary" sails into the Clyde.

"It was 1943, I had just turned 19, had never been on a ship before, and here I was on the "Queen Mary" heading for somewhere. Within hours I was sick --- boy, was I feeling queezy. It didn't get any better. I couldn't eat, and, for four days, I was bounced and rocked, feeling that death would be a blessing. All through the ordeal as often as he could, a gentle, kind, compassionate man remained by my side, comforting and encouraging this broken piece of seasick baggage. For a young kid to experience concern from a G.I. - an officer at that - after the grueling abuse we had received from induction through basic training was more than incredible. Then to top it off, this officer and gentleman carried much of my gear as I staggered and wobbled off the boat on landing in Scotland. I'm forever grateful to a jewel of a human being - Captain Hardesty, MD".

Cpl. Charlie Callaci

Member of the 401st "Bomb Beats"

26th November 1943. Bremen - the first 401st B.G. (H) mission.

"We went over the target as instructed and although the visability was not too good, my top turret gunner, Sgt. Leonard W. Click Jr. says he saw a thick band of fire spreading over the center of the city. We encountered little flak although it grew heavier directly over the target".

Brig. General H.W. Bowman

C.O. 401st B.G. (H).

1st December 1943. Solingen - the first German fighter to be shot down.

"It was a great feeling; he had a yellow-nosed ship so we knew he was one of the crack Herman Goering Squadron --- he made a pass at us then rolled out of range. Everyone in our ship had a feeling he'd come back and we were all set for him when he did.

Sure enough we saw him getting raedy for another shot at us. I was lucky. He came into range of my guns and I let him have it. The next thing I know he seemed to break into a hundred pieces. It was like a firecracker explosion. First a puff of smoke and then pieces of aircraft scattering in all directions".

Sgt. Percy W. Stengel

612th Sqdn. Ball turret gunner.

5th December 1943.

Paris - The big bang.

" It was a typical day at Station 128, Deenethorpe. Corporal Bob Bowen and I were working away at our Special Services duties scheduling films, requisitioning supplies and planning other activities when a sudden enormous blast rocked our Quonset hut and jolted us to our feet. In stunned amazement we stared at each other then raced to the door to determine what had happened. Our boss, the lieutenant, wasn't in the office with us at the time. He had left word he wasn't to be disturbed. He was going to his quarters to get a nap. Within seconds after the explosion we opened the door the lieutenant came bounding out of his hut red-faced with anger, obviously furious at having his sleep disturbed. Gesticulating wildly he shouted, "Who slammed the door?". It was the day one of our B-17's crashed and exploded in the village of Deenethorpe."

Cpl. Charlie Callaci.

Member of the 401st "Bomb Beat"
band.

Paris - A first mission.

5th December 1943.

"My first mission! A cold winter morning and a thick undercast. I remember getting a look at the enemy coast, my first, through the undercast and I must say it looked dark and forbidding. My guns froze and I am afraid I got a bit excited because I just knew the entire German Air Force would come up and attack us. I was later to learn better. We then had a recall in the midst of repairing my guns and I didn't know we had made a 180° turn and had started to let down to return to England. We returned with our bombs and I was a bit disappointed that we could not unload them".

2nd Lt. William W. Dolan

615th Sqdn. Bombardier.

Cognac - The loss of Lt. D.H. Lawry and his crew.

31st December 1943.

"On the return trip from Cognac, France, the aircraft (Lt. Lawry's) was hit by flak over the target and had to leave the formation. It continued to fall behind and was observed trailing all the way back to the coast of France near the Channel Islands. At this point it was attacked by some enemy fighters and was last seen smoking and diving into the clouds".

1st Lt. G. Gould

615th Sqdn. Pilot.

Note:

The wreckage of this aircraft was found out beyond St Catherines Point off the south of England. Near the wreckage was found the body of the co-pilot, 2nd Lt. J.S. Dockendorf. No other bodies or clues to the whereabouts of the remainder of the crew were ever found.

Bordeaux/Cognac - Shot down by fighters.

31st December 1943.

"Suddenly the steering column leaped back in our laps and the aircraft's nose went up. Lt. McDanal (the pilot) and I together managed to get enough downwards pressure to bring the nose down. But there was no doubt about it - something was wrong - our flight controls did not function.

"There was only one thing to do - so I gave the "Bail Out" order on the intercom. Lt. McDanal also hit the "Bail Out" switch on the panel in front of him. We received acknowledgement from the nose - but not from the Gunners. Then I realized the intercom was out. The aircraft was alternately heading nose up and nose down in spite of all we could do. The fighters continued to attack."

Major I.W. Eveland.

C.O. 614th Squadron.

4th January 1944.

Kiel - ditching in the North Sea.

"We were lucky, we could have had lots more trouble than we encountered, but every man on the crew did exactly what he was supposed to do when the time came.

"The enlisted men, in particular, did a fine job. Lt. Molte, my navigator, stayed at his job in the nose until we were only 100 feet over the water.

"Lt. Owens was everywhere at once. He supervised the crew when they were forced to throw things overboard to lighten the ship, he got them set in the Radio compartment when we were forced to crash and he kept up a line of chatter and banter throughout that was unbeatable.

"The British did a wonderful job recovering the bombardier and trying to revive him, but he was gone beyond all hope. They searched unceasingly for the other man, but the sea was too angry and the undertow too great for anyone to survive alone that day."

Major William C. Garland.

2 612th Sqdn Operations Officer.

11th January 1944.

Oscherslaben - Major James H. Howard wins the Medal of Honor defending the 401st B.G.(H).

"It was a case of one lone American against what seemed to be the entire Luftwaffe. Singlehanded, against those terrific odds, he covered the 94th Combat Wing all by himself."

Lt. Col. Allison C. Brooks.

Group Operations Officer.

Face to face with an Me-109.

"An Me-109 with guns blazing came boring in at 6 o'clock level. I couldn't miss! The twin 50's chattered in my hands as I fired in short bursts, the shell casings falling away in a yellow stream behind the plane. It loomed above me so close I could almost touch the big, black Swastika on the silver wings. Then it was gone. I was trembling and bathed in cold sweat. My mouth felt like it was full of cotton. I tried to relax in my cramped position in the tail of the Flying Fortress."

2nd Lt. Tom R. Cushman Sr.

Co-pilot in Observer/Tail
gun position.

Head-on attack.

"The nose of the plane was smashed and the Bombardier, Lt. Wallis, was killed instantly by being hit in the chest by a number of 20 mm shells. The Navigator, Lt. Hurlburt, was also wounded in the leg."

2nd Lt. H.J. Chapman.

615th Sdn. pilot.

11th January 1944.

Oscherslaben - The capture of 2nd Lt. S.G. Nason.
(From the files of the Luftwaffe)

"15th January 1944.

To:- Aircorps District Command. XI -Ic Hamburg-Blankenese.

Subject:- Capture of an enemy aviator.

On 13 Jan. 44 around 1830 o'clock 2nd Lt. Stephen G. Nason, 0681466 was arrested by two railway workers on the area of the station Bovenchen near Goettingen and sent to airbase command Goettingen on 14 Jan. 44 at 1230 o'clock. Today he was transferred to Oberursel. Presumably the prisoner belonged to the enemy aircraft shot down near Dederstadt. This plane is salvaged by airbase command Nordhausen.

Airbase Command Goettingen."

11th January 1944.

Oscherslaben - The loss of 1st Lt. H.J. Chapman and his crew.

"We were attacked by two Me-109's head-on at about 12 noon. This was still over the target, very shortly after bombs away. 2nd Lt. D.G. Wallis, the Bombardier, was hit by 20mm shells and literally cut in two at the waist. The controls were shot away in the attack and Lt. Chapman, the pilot, gave the order to bail out. The ship lost a wing near the ground and landed almost intact. We were about 10 miles S.E. of Oscherslaben at this time."

Sgt. D.D. Johnson & Sgt. C.D. Badura.

Right waist gunner & Top turret gunner

Oscherslaben - The loss of Capt. J.H. Foster and crew.

"At about 1130 hrs, just before the I.P. (location 51° 35' N - 10° 30' E) at 20,000 feet, a concentrated burst from enemy fighters hit the right wing behind No. 4 engine. Gasoline poured out and both wings caught fire. The aircraft pulled out of formation and was then attacked by three Ju-88's. Five parachutes were seen to open, two from the nose section and three from the side section."

Compiled by Lt. Wilson's crew.

27th January 1944.

Flaps or undercarriage?

"42-31414, Squadron Code IV-J, landed from Little Stoughton and was taxiing on Runway No. 33 close to the control tower. The pilot evidently hit the wrong switch and pulled the front wheels up instead of the flaps, as flaps were down."

Control Tower Log Book.

29th January 1944.

Frankfurt - Losing a friend.

"After almost a month's layoff I was at it again, this time to a big German industrial center at Frankfurt. The weather was once again undercast and we bombed through clouds. The flak at the target was not too bad for us, but after "bombs away" and on the return trip, we got hit by fighters, particularly Me-210's. They hit at the Low Box of the formation and I saw three of them in formation - black and nasty looking - God, how fast they travel! We lost some ships that day, particularly a good friend and roommate of mine."

2nd Lt. William W. Dolan.

615th Sqdn. Bombardier.

Three 401st ships lost in one fighter pass.

"These aircraft, comprising an element of the Low Box of the Wing, were attacked by 7 or 8 twin-engined enemy aircraft at about 1130 hours and just past the target. One was observed to blow up at once; the other two were damaged and went down simultaneously, one being observed to explode before reaching the undercast, the top of which was approximately 19,000 ft. The other one also exploded as it disappeared into the clouds; no chutes were observed to come out of any of these aircraft."

S/Sgt. William E. Merritt.

614th Sqdn. Ball turret gunner.

2nd Lt. J. Tannahill and seven of his crew KIA in fighter attack.

"Over the target we had two engines out (one was on fire). We were under heavy fighter attack previous to the explosion. I believe the pilots may have been hit for I heard shells exploding in the cockpit. The ship went into a steep dive - I started for the cockpit to try to lend assistance - the plane started to spin - I pulled the emergency escape hatch and was blown out by the ship exploding. As I attempted to get to the cockpit I could see the top turret gunner or at least the lower half of him - as far as I could tell he was uninjured at the time of the explosion. Only the tail gunner, Sgt. T.E. Brennan, and I managed to escape when the aircraft blew up."

2nd Lt. W.C. Frye Jr.

Navigator, 612th Sqdn.

29th January 1944.

Frankfurt - Capt. R.W. Beers, Lt. Van Syckle and Lt. D.T. Nicklawski all shot down in one fighter pass.

"We were shot down while participating in the bombing mission to Frankfurt - Main - Germany, on 29th January, 1944. The situation after take-off and crossing into enemy territory was normal prior to crossing the French-German border. At this time No. 3 engine failed due to mechanical difficulties. Upon arrival over the I.P. and the subsequent 360° turn, No. 2 engine failed because of flak damage. Our aircraft, with a flight of two others, straggled after leaving the target. Friendly fighters left the vicinity shortly after this and our three aircraft came under an enemy fighter attack by some 12 Me-110's and Me-210's. The enemy fighters made two attacks in which our aircraft was set on fire in the right wing, cockpit and the bomb bay, where two incendiary clusters had failed to release. The top turret gunner, (T/Sgt. C.E. Young) myself, the tail gunner, (S/Sgt. J.E. Turvey) and the navigator (1st Lt. H. Gershon) were wounded. All communication throughout the ship was destroyed during the attack. The bail-out signal was given by means of the emergency system. The forward part of the aircraft was evacuated with the exception of myself, and I attempted to leave the ship by the bomb bay after assuring myself that all crew members alive in the rear position of the ship had jumped. However, I was unable to make my way to, or go through, the bomb bay because of the intense heat, fire and exploding ammunition. I then returned to the navigator's hatch and bailed out; Almost immediately after this the aircraft exploded."

Capt. R.W. Beers

Pilot.

30th January 1944.

Brunswick - The loss of 2nd Lt. R.R. Rohner and his crew.

"The aircraft pulled up when hit by a Fw-190 just before the target. It turned on it's back and went into a spin. The No. 2 engine was on fire as it went down through the clouds."

2nd Lt. C.A. Couger.

615th Sqdn. Navigator.

3rd February 1944.

Wilhelmshaven - The weather.

"This time to North Germany, and once again an undercast. We had to climb to get above the weather and get as high as 28,000 feet. From a flak point of view altitude is good, but I was mildly surprised to find the damned stuff (flak) breaking way above our heads. Just after we left the enemy coast we were in the weather and it was so thick that you could not see the ship on your wing - an extremely uncomfortable feeling."

1st Lt. William W. Dolan.

615th Sqdn Bombardier.

4th February 1944.

Frankfurt - flak.

"We always avoid the Ruhr for this reason unless, of course, there is an assigned target. It has many nicknames, particularly "Flak Valley" and "Happy Valley". Well, unfortunately, we "toured the Ruhr" and it compared with Cognac in many respects. I have to confess that by this time I was becoming a little "Flak Happy" and frankly hated to even watch the damned stuff."

1st Lt. William W. Dolan.

615th Sqdn. Bombardier.

The loss of Lt. J.F. Zitkovic and Crew - sadly, there were no survivors.

"The aircraft, apparently hit by flak, was straggling some 4,000 feet lower than the formation (about 18,000 feet). All four engines were turning over and the aircraft seemed to be under control. Flak was bursting all around the ship when last seen."

2nd Lt. Clifford C. Bergeson.

614th Sqdn. Co-pilot.

11th February 1944.

Frankfurt - Use of American aircraft by the Luftwaffe.

"We were just approaching the Dutch Coast (on the way home) and had just crossed the Zuider Zee when a Fort crossed at right angles in front of our formation at a terrific speed followed by two P-47's hot on her tail. Naturally we were surprised and a bit confused as to what was going on. The two original P-47's were joined by about 15 others and we could easily see they were attacking the Fort. The bomber did every conceivable manoeuvre to shake the fast fighters, but, of course, he didn't have a chance and was shot down. We later learned that the Fort was a captured one flown by the enemy to learn our speed, altitude, etc., and to call his friendly fighters."

1st Lt. William W. Dolan.

615th Sqdn. Bombardier.

20th February 1944.

Leipzig - Major Alvah H. Chapman hedge-hopped his damaged B-17 from Leipzig to England.

"We could see the German countryside below us just as if we were touring 'Festung Europa' in a sightseeing bus, only there wasn't any fun attached to it. We expected enemy fighters on the entire trip back.

"Chapman did a magnificent job of flying us as he was forced to bear down every foot of the way. We flew around every sizeable village we came to because we knew their flak would get us if their fighters didn't. This made the flight a zig-zag affair and we sweated out our fuel tanks all the way back - Leipzig is helluva way from Britain."

Capt. Delwyn E. Silver.

Asst. Group Operations
Officer.

The loss of "Doolittle's Doughboys".

"The 401st were leading this mission to Leipzig and, near Magdeburg, we were attacked by a strong formation of enemy fighters from a 12 o'clock position. "Doolittle's Doughboys" was immediately hit by 20 mm shells directly behind the navigators compartment and the electrical generators were knocked out. The engines lost power and the ship dropped out of formation.

"I crawled up to the cockpit to advise the pilot, Lt. Ed Gardner, of the damage because the intercom had also been knocked out. He decided to "hit the deck" and try to make it to Sweden, but, at that moment, the fighters, seeing us falling out of the main bomber formation, made a concentrated attack on us. We were hit throughout the plane by 20 mm cannon fire and the No. 3 engine burst into flames. At that time Lt. Gardner gave the order to abandon ship.

"For a moment, in the heat of battle, Lt. Gardner and I paused and shook hands in a farewell gesture, then I hurried forward to inform the bombardier, Lt. Foster, that we were to bail out through the forward hatch.

"In POW camp we learned that Sgt. F. Monnes, the radio operator and Sgt. S.A. Trupia, the waist gunner, had both been killed in the fighter attack and S/Sgt. S.R. Bosowski, the tail gunner, had lost his leg. Lt. Ed Gardner, the pilot, was found dead in a field near Pilm, Germany three weeks later and had obviously left it too late to bail out or his chute had failed to open."

2nd Lt. C.A. Couger.

615th Sqdn. Navigator.

20th February 1944.

Leipzig - A Commanding Officer's viewpoint.

"A great deal has been written about "Big Week" that started February 20, 1944. Bad weather had greatly reduced the 8th Air Force effectiveness, permitting the Germans to greatly increase the production of war materials - especially fighter aircraft. Allied leaders were increasingly frustrated by the dangerous slippage. When at long last the forecast was favorable, the orders came for an all-out, maximum effort assault. It was my privilege to be Air Commander of the 1st Air Division forces, consisting of 417 B-17's, directed against aircraft plants. Each Group was assigned a specific target, ours being Leipzig. Despite the favorable weather forecast, cloud cover during our approach indicated that we would be forced to use "PFF" - that is, sighting by electronic means - less accurate than visual sighting. But shortly before our arrival over the target area, the clouds opened up, permitting direct, visual sighting at the last minute. Bombing accuracy was excellent.

When weather again closed in over the Continent, following the "Big Week's" maximum effort, the time came for appraisals. General Williams called a conference of the Division's Group, Wing and mission Air Commanders, for a mission-by-mission critique, calling on each leader for comments. There were the usual complaints about loose formations, timing, etc. When my turn came, to report on the Leipzig mission, I had no complaints. I reported, "Sir, nothing unusual to report. The mission was accomplished as briefed". General Williams replied, "Nothing unusual, except that it was the most successful mission ever run by the 8th Air Force". He left the stage, walked down the aisle, and pinned the Silver Star on me.

This History would not be complete without a brief explanation of the planning and conduct of a typical mission in the 8th Air Force in WW II.

After high level conferences, heated arguments, and collection of target intelligence information, broad categories of target types are selected for destruction. Detailed locations, aerial photos, and descriptions are distributed for careful study. Then the 8th Air Force Commander and his staff consider weather, forces available, and target priorities, and publish an order. Each echelon adds more details - Divisions, Wings, Groups and Squadrons. Crews and airplanes are designated, and each individual receives detailed instructions as to exactly what he is expected to do, and when. Routes, timings, rendezvous points.

So if every person performs perfectly, "as briefed", the aircraft behaves, the weather cooperates, and the enemy doesn't mess things up in this very complicated operation, the Air Commander has little to do. He rides in the co-pilot's seat, performing co-pilot duties as required by the pilot. The lead crew is carefully selected. The navigator leads the way for the Group. When the lead bombardier "toggles" his bombs, all the following bombardiers in the Group follow suit.

The Air Commander can direct the units that he's leading to "abort" the mission, if, for example, weather makes that necessary. (No mission was ever aborted because of enemy action, in the 8th Air Force). He can decide on alternative targets if the primary assignment is not bombed. He can "crack the whip", via radio, for sloppy formation or useless radio chatter. Or warn of enemy fighters. But mostly, he sits and observes, taking too much credit for success and too much blame for failure, as all leaders must do.

In my case, on the Leipzig mission, Captain William Reigler and his highly professional lead crew performed faultlessly, resulting in the high praise we all shared proudly.

Brig. General Harold W. Bowman,
401st Bomb. Group (H)
Commanding Officer.

2nd March 1944.

Frankfurt - loss of 2nd Lt. W.C. Sheahan and crew.

"Ogden and Davis left the aircraft before me through the same escape hatch as myself. These were the only two members that I saw leave. However, two days later, when I was on the ground, I met Sheahan and Rickey (the pilot and engineer/top turret gunner) and for five months was in hiding with them along with Ray E. Davis, a member of another crew. From Rickey I learned that Silverstein (the radio operator) had also gotten out of the aircraft. I landed near Salet, Belgium. Rickey landed near Hermoton-sur-Meuse. Sheahan landed near Maredret, Belgium. The aircraft landed near St. Gerard, Belgium."

2nd Lt. D.M. Conway.

Bombardier on Lt. Sheahan's
crew.

6th March 1944.

Berlin - the loss of Lt. C.M. Kolb and his crew.

42-38136, Squadron Code IV-G, was hit by flak over Berlin and crashed, the crew all successfully bailing out. Shortly before it crashed it passed over two German flak towers, both firing at it for approximately three minutes. Some four years ago Alfred Price, while researching this mission, contacted one of the gunners from these flak towers who told him that both towers had got about 150 rounds each off at this Fortress - and had failed to register one hit!

18th March 1945

Berlin - The day we met Hitler's Blitz Bomber - the Me-262.

"It must have been noon as we neared the Berlin area, as the sun was overhead. Then those familiar black and sometimes red ugly puffs of flak started popping all around us..... Seemed that we were not welcome here, as was the usual case.

The bomb-run was coming up. It was my turn at the controls, and the formation was very tight. This was the flying I loved the most. It made you feel like you were flying the ol' girl, and not just driving a truck. I was looking at the Fortress at my right. I could see the waist gunner's white eyes as he stared back at me over the horizontal stabilizer. I was proud of the tight formation I was holding for the bomb-run, when the damned vapor trails started up again, forcing us to loosen formation.

All of a sudden, there was a big "Varoomph", and our plane rocked violently for a moment and the wheel went mushy. I had not heard anyone announce fighters in the area, being on interplane frequency, so I thought we had taken a flak hit in the left wing. I could see jagged skin sticking out on the left wingtip and my control wheel was limp, giving only minimal control with full movement back and forth.

Bombs were away, so throttles went forward to catch up with the others and we ducked down, and moved under the Squadron for maximum protection, not knowing if there would be any more attacks. Our Chief Honcho, Lt. Cameron, had hurriedly set up good ol' George and soon the ol' girl settled down to a smooth level flight again.

At that moment, I thought we had bought the proverbial "farm", and this was to be our last mission, but it seems like the other Co-Pilot was flying again with us that day. I'm sure He heard from most of us before the day was out.

Once I had returned to intercom, I found out we had been attacked by a fighter with NO PROPS! It had made two micro-second passes on us, diving through our own vapor trails at the six o'clock position to hide his approaches. His wings were blazing with fire and luckily, it seems, he only scored two 30mm cannon hits upon us as he broke left on his second pass, and disappeared down below us."

2nd Lt. R.L. Davidson.

615th Sqdn. Co-pilot of "Net Result".

26th March 1944.

Watton - the loss of Capt. W.M. Rumsey and his crew.

"The aircraft received a direct flak hit between No. 3 and 4 engines, exploding the Tokio tank and breaking off the wing. The ship was observed to spin down on fire, the fire spreading back to the waist. One chute from the tail hatch was seen to open. The ship then blew up."

From MIA Report.

Note: Only the bombardier, 1st Lt. J.D. Haeffner, and the tail gunner, Sgt. J.B. Carson, survived.

V.M.

9th April 1944.

Marienburg - The loss of 1st Lt. W.R. Dawes and his crew.

"The FW-190's came in line abreast from 12 o'clock high. When they opened fire the nose of Lt. Dawes' aircraft blew off and it turned on it's back and finally crashed into the sea about two miles off shore."

S/Sgt. C.G. Esters.

612th Sqdn.

Note: None of Lt. Dawes crew were ever found and, sadly, Sgt. Esters, who witnessed the loss of this crew was himself killed in action on the following day.

V.M.

11th April 1944.

Sorau/Politz - a Luftwaffe report on a 401st waist gunner.

"Sgt. William G. Wolf probably bailed out between Salzkotten and Geseko/Westphalia on 11th April 1944 between 1000 & 1200. The prisoner has been captured by a citizen and was taken over by Airbase H.Q. Lippstadt at Branch Airfield Stoermede.

"The prisoner will be transferred to Oberursel on 19th April 1944. He refuses to give information about the time of his jump."

Signed by Captain and Staff Officer of
Airbase.

The loss of 1st Lt. R.O. Stine and his crew.

"When hit by flak, the formation was approaching Hanover, Germany, just north of the city. I turned in my seat and noticed the oxygen supply under the pilot and co-pilot's seat on fire. I immediately put on my chest pack and tried to call the pilot on the inter-phone. The line sounded dead, so I started moving towards the cockpit to notify the other crewmen of the danger. There was evident damage to the ship since it was not flying a steady course. Just as the ship fell out of control I was alongside the navigator. It fell some distance and fell apart. I found myself clear of the ship and pulled the rip-cord.

"Just before exploding the ship was enveloped in flames and the tail gunner, S/Sgt. Gilbert Praeger, bailed out after being badly burned on his face and hands. All the other members of the crew were killed."

2nd Lt. W.P. Empric.
614th Sqdn. Bombardier.

13th April 1944.

Schweinfurt - Lt. A.E. Vokaty and his crew shot down by fighters.

"Fighters set the No. 2 engine of Lt. Vokaty's B-17 on fire, then, about ten minutes later, with the engine still smoking, he was hit by a single Fw-190, which started a bad fire in the gas tanks. I saw 8, possibly 10, coming out of the aircraft just before it went into a dive and exploded."

S/Sgt. C.G. Merrill.

613th Sqdn. gunner.

Note: In fact it was 8 chutes that S/Sgt. Merrill saw coming out of the stricken Fortress, the tail gunner, S/Sgt. W. Canter and the left waist gunner, S/Sgt. R.G. Sanders Jr., both being killed in the fighter attack.

V.M.

17th April 1944.

Sgt. John L. Hurd, ball turret gunner of "Battlin Betty" was shot down on 11th April 1944 on the Politz mission.

"I entered POW Camp Stalag 17-B, Krems, Austria, on the night of 17th April, 1944. I remained there until April 8th 1945 at which time the Germans marched all POW's out of camp and kept walking toward the west for eighteen days. We stopped walking near Braunau, Austria and the Inn River. I guess I walked about 400 kilometres. For all practical purposes I was liberated on 2nd May, 1945. With other POW's I was flown to France on the 8th of May. There at Camp Lucky Strike in France I met Howard Kneese again. He was OK."

(Note: S/Sgt. Howard S. Kneese was the tail gunner on "Battlin Betty".)

Sgt. John L. Hurd.

614th Sqdn. Ball turret
gunner.

20th April 1944

Bois Coquerel - Taking a direct hit from flak.

"The Nazi gunners had taken full advantage afforded by the circling maneuvers to calibrate their range, speed and azimuth tracks. The first shell bursts were precisely on our altitude and course. The fourth burst of a four-shell barrage scored a direct hit on the right wing of my B-17, causing total loss of power on the right side of the aircraft and igniting a fuel-fed wing fire. The aircraft was hard to control because of the asymmetrical power situation and presumably because of severed control cables.

The name of the game now was not piloting and navigation but every desperate measure to effect evacuation of the aircraft by parachute bail-out.

I found the crew intercom radio was inoperative. I could not transmit the required bail-out command. So I gave my co-pilot, Lt. Daugherty, the sign to unbuckle and to go to the forward nose compartment and have him, the bombardier and the navigator, escape through the nose hatch. I, in turn, unstrapped and headed aft past the top turret position, through the radio room to give the rest of the crew the order to "bail".

I only got as far as the bomb bay catwalk; the bombs had been released from their shackles and the doors were still open. The aircraft was in a violent spin, the slipstream screaming through the open doors, and suddenly, I was aware of a very loud explosion and my next conscious impression was of absolute stillness and a slight whispering sound of air passing through my flight helmet --- I was free-falling, back down, looking up at the sky and aware of a tremendous amount of debris falling with me toward earth.

Although we had never received live jump practice, I was intuitively aware that this was the time to reach up and pull the rip-cord ring, of the parachute, on my left chest. As it turned out, I pulled the ring very prematurely, which resulted in my floating down for at least 7 or 8 minutes -- plenty of time for the German ground troops to track my descent and predict my landing spot.

The only other survivor of the shoot-down of the Daugherty crew was the navigator, Flight Officer Dennis Beach, whom I met ever so briefly while being escorted under German guard to the permanent prison camp in Sagan, Uber Schliesen, Ofizier Stamlager Luft III --- Stalag Luft III, as we came to know it."

1st Lt. W.P. Maher.

613th Sqdn. Pilot.

28th May 1944.

Dessau - the loss of Lt. Walter B. Keith Jr. and crew.

"The interphone was knocked out by fighters so I had had no communication with any of the crew for about half an hour before we were set on fire and the oxygen tanks were shot out causing a terrific fire in the cockpit. I was knocked unconscious by an explosion and when I came to the plane seemed to be sort of in a spin and no one was around me that I could feel and I could not see because of the fire so I scrambled out of the escape hatch in the nose.

"When I met my bombardier, Lt. Wiess, in POW camp he told me that Lt. Priest, the navigator, bailed out ahead of him. Lt. Wiess had also talked to the top turret gunner and he had told him of finding Lt. Maloney near the escape hatch dead, evidently he was killed before he could get out of the escape hatch since we were under constant fighter attack while we were bailing out.

"Sgt D'Agostino, the tail gunner, told me that he was still in his position when the plane blew up and that the tail was blown off with him in it."

1st Lt. Walter B. Keith Jr.

613th Sqdn. Pilot.

28th May 1944.

Dessau - the loss of 1st Lt. G.E. West and his crew.

"The pilot called for a heading home, explaining that if we made it we would have to bail out over England because of no rudder control at all, and very little aileron control. When the pilot gave the order to abandon ship the right wing was burning fiercely and in as much as the co-pilot was standing in the bomb bay when it exploded, and was thrown clear, and the pilot would have had to follow him, I assume he must have been standing in the cockpit and was killed when the explosion took place."

1st Lt. L.A. Nutter.

Navigator.

28th May 1944.

Dessau - the loss of 2nd Lt. F.H. Windham and his crew.

"Flak was encountered near the I.P. at which time a burst outside the plane knocked out No. 3 engine and killed 2nd Lt. D.P. Ferguson instantly. The ship was subsequently hit by Me-109's and other German fighters. I saw 2nd Lt. Melito, S/Sgt. R.W. Rittmaier and Sgt. C.E. Ireland bail out of the nose hatch and counted their chutes, then I bailed out. During my descent I saw Lt. Windham, the pilot, bail out safely."

2nd Lt. C.T. Floto Jr.

Navigator.

28th May 1944.

Dessau - the loss of 1st Lt. P.F. Scharff and his crew.

"Both pilots were hit in the fighter attack on our aircraft. Lt. Scharff was hit in the arm by a 20 mm shell, which tore off his entire lower arm. The bombardier (Lt. Hoover) and I put on his chute and bailed him out. I had put on a tourniquet hoping to stop the bleeding but he had lost a terrific amount of blood. I believe he must have died on the way down or shortly afterwards. Lt. Eckert (the co-pilot) was hit in the chest and head by half a dozen bullets and was dead."

1st Lt. B. Schwartz.

Navigator.

2nd June 1944.

Digging for Victory.

"Sgt. Gerlach reports that Lt. Orcutt, plowman for the Station Victory garden, has severed some of our lighting cables. The electrician informed and Sgt. Gerlach dispatched to determine damage. Lt. Orcutt asked to desist from his good works."

Control Tower Log Books.

4 June 1944.

Massey/Palaiseau - determination.

"On this bombing mission to France, the oxygen system of Lt. Clifford A. Lincoln's airplane failed soon after he was in formation at 16,000 feet. He immediately returned to his base, obtained one of the spare aircraft and joined the formation before it departed the English coast. This feat was accomplished in the least possible time and required the utmost effort on his part as well as that of his crew."

Col. H.W. Bowman.

C.O. 401st B.G.(H).

6th June 1944.

Ver-Sur-Mer/Mont Fleury - D-Day. - The briefing at 0230 hrs.

"Gentlemen, remember the date - June 6th 1944. Remember it, because years from now your grandchildren will probably be asking you all about it. This is D-Day!"

Col. H.W. Bowman.

C.O. 401st B.G.(H).

19th June 1944.

Bordeaux - 2nd Lt. G.A. Filemyr and crew bailed out over Spain.

"Approximately 2 minutes before bombs away the aircraft (42-31315) was hit by flak at the tail position."

Capt. A.H. Chapman.

Pilot.

"On our return to base we learned that another pilot reported seeing Sgt. Maiden disappear with the tail of the aircraft. The entire rear gunner's compartment and the rudder was torn off by the flak burst but his chute and dented flak helmet remained in the plane. We were at 23,000 feet at the time so concluded that he must have been killed, probably by the flak burst."

Lt. G.A. Filemyr.

Pilot.

25th June 1944.

Montbartier - the hazards of flying low over the sea.

"On our way home we crossed the coast near Bordeaux and Colonel Seawell true to his word, descended until we were probably no more than 100 feet off the water. It felt good to get the oxygen mask off, and, being over water, not to have to worry about flak. My left wing-tip was almost in colonel Seawell's right waist window when we ran into a dense patch of fog coming up from the water. When I say dense, Colonel Seawell's plane disappeared completely from view at the tip of my wing. From that moment on, everything happened much faster than the time it takes to tell. I kicked the rudder to the right and dropped the nose. Right then we came out of the fog and I saw water coming up. I hauled back on the wheel and the plane mushed down and a wavv hit the ball turret, bouncing me up, and, glancing above me, there was Colonel Seawell's plane coming down. I shoved forward but not in time to avoid hitting him. My vertical stabilizer hit the side of his fuselage, knocking a hole in him and bending about three quarters of my tail over. With all my rudder control gone, and to keep going in a straight line, I had to fly in a bank, eventually landing at RAF Weston Zoyland. It was my 30th and last mission."

1st Lt. Dan C. Knight.

615th Sqdn. pilot of the
"Mary Alice".

Montbartier - The loss of Lt. J.W. Myretetus and crew.

Lt. Myretetus and his co-pilot, Lt. C.C. Davis went down with their ship, the rest of the crew bailing out successfully. On the following day the German 48th Tank Corps sent this message to their H.Q.

" 26th June 1944.

From 48th Tank Corps.

Re: Execution of a guerilla.

The division is forwarding a proceedings concerning the execution of a guerilla (partisan). Included are the 2 identification tags taken from him as well as 9 photographs. The man executed did not have a pay book in his possession. The money taken from him has been forwarded to the division paymaster.

Name: Brotherton, Douglas F.
34606852

Place shot down: Near Torteval, executed as guerilla."

4th July 1944.

Saumur, France.

"The target was a bridge, but we could not drop our bombs because of poor visibility. Ran into some flak and got one hole in the ship. Altitude was 25,000 feet. Hell of a way to celebrate the 4th."

T/Sgt. John F. Thompson.
613th Sqdn. Radio operator.

20th July 1944.

Leipzig - loss of Lt. K.R. Murgatroyd and his crew.

"We flew 'Pistol Packin Mama' on 20th July 1944. We flew over Leipzig but didn't drop - don't ask me why. There was heavy flak. We headed for the secondary at Weimar and on the I.P. we were picked up by about six 88's. The formation leader took mild evasive action but we were suddenly hit hard, with No. 1 prop disappearing and a large hole in the No. 2 fuel tank, the gas pouring out. I feathered and shut down No.'s 1 and 2 and we started falling back. We were about 28,000 feet and the aircraft filled with smoke so I rang the bell and yelled "Bail out" over the intercom.

"I put her on auto-pilot and jumped down to the belly and there was the co-pilot peeping out at Leipzig. I shoved his fanny and he left. Then the navigator and the bombardier went out. As I went out my backpack hung up on the lip of the hatch and I found myself stuck. Finally it came loose."

2nd Lt. K.R. Murgatroyd.

613th Sqdn. Pilot.

Lucky "Lucky Lady".

"This particular aircraft, for some reason, and I suspect due to "rigging" - or whatever - was always a little faster, used less fuel, than any other of our Squadron. I really think this, and a mishap on the raid to Leipzig on July 20th 1944, entered in the naming. We were flying on the left wing of the lead ship and on the bomb run all three of us were hit by flak just before 'bombs away'. Our altitude was approximately 30,000 feet when we were knocked completely out of control and onto our back, spinning down. My co-pilot and I had to feather two engines and when the aircraft was back under control we were at about 9,000 feet. We struggled back to England as a straggler - extremely fortunate and lucky. I left the choice of a name to the crew members and I think as a result of the above incident they came up with the name "Lady Luck".

1st Lt. Roy H. Bonney.

612th Sqdn. Pilot.

29th July 1944.

Merseburg - damaged by flak.

"We were hit by flak 25 times causing major damage. The chin, top and ball turrets were put out of action and a hole appeared in the plexi-glass nose 6" from the bombardier, Lt. W.M. Mencow. Both left and right Tokyo tanks were hit and there were holes near the main entrance door; the main spar on the right wing was broken. The only casualty was Sgt. J.G. Dunn, the top turret gunner, knocked out momentarily when a piece of flak hit his flak helmet. My wish was that we didn't have to visit Merseburg again - their flak gunners were really good."

2nd Lt. H.L. Oas.

615th Sqdn. Pilot.

31st July 1944.

Munich - the No. 3 engine that didn't want to go to war.

"This is an unusual story of the No. 3 engine on B-17G "Section 8" of the 615th Squadron. "Section 8" participated on raids to Munich, Germany on the 11th, 12th, 13th and 16th of July 1944. On every one of these missions the No. 3 engine was lost to flak. In fact, the pilot, Lt. Bill McIlraith, told the crew chief not to replace the engine but just fill in the hole in the wing to save the weight of carrying a dead engine. "Section 8" went on a few more missions without mishap, then on July 31st back to Munich, and you guessed it, No. 3 engine shot out again. This time the engine was completely shot out and "Section 8" was escorted part of the way back to England by P-47's and made an emergency landing at Ipswich.

"Lt. McIlraith and his crew flew 32 combat missions in "Section 8" from April to October 1944, and then "Section 8" went to Lt. L.T. Stephens and his crew who flew it until the end of the combat missions of the 401st Bomb Group (H)."

Lt. (later Lt. Col.) Frank T Hughes.

615th Sqdn. Bombardier.

1st August 1944.

Chartres - The loss of two crews in a mid-air collision.

1st Lt. G.J. Melofchik and crew and 2nd Lt. R.B. Sproul and crew. There was only one survivor, Sgt. J.W. Bozarth.

"I saw Lt. Melofchik's aircraft at 1457 hrs 5 to 10 miles north of the target. It appeared to collide with another ship (Lt. Sproul's) because the tail assembly twisted sideways and fell off. It went into a spin and the other aircraft floated down. I saw the tail gunner (Sgt. Bozarth) crawl out of the tail section and open his chute".

1st Lt. C.W. Bryant.

Navigator.

6th August 1944.

Genshagen (Berlin) - T/Sgt. Alex Garan Jr., KIA .

"I was a togglier on this mission. Special bombardier briefing gave me the poop. No train, just salvo on the lead ship. He let go, I let go! After we got over the channel I crawled back and pulled the pins front and back from the bombs, checked the arming wire and the racks, using a walk-around bottle. Got back to the nose, counted the pins, all OK. We got on the bomb run and the flak was accurate and intense. Bomb bay doors open. I'm crouched in the nose, watching the lead ship. Left hand on the salvo handle. A Lt. Harding right behind, 'Rocks on a tin roof', we are getting hit by flak. Plenty of black clouds and 'WHOOMPS'. A voice calls out, "I'm hit". Just then the lead ship lets go. I salvoed and called out, "Bombs away" - then, "Bomb bay doors closing".

"I called for the radio man to check the bomb bay for all the bombs to be gone and the doors fully shut. The panel checked out OK, but why take a chance. Radio checked in - "OK"! Then the pilot called for a check, which as you know started in the tail. No answer. T/Sgt. Alex Garan Jr. was dead. He was a buddy of mine and is at rest in Cambridge. I went there several times and paid my respects.

"That night we sat in the barracks and in walks a sailor and asks for Alex. It's his brother."

S/Sgt. Howard J. Frohman.

614th Sqdn. Toggler.

11th August 1944.

Brest - a late breakfast.

"They surprised us by letting us sleep late, then the C.Q. came in and called us for, not a practice mission, but , "Lt. Mannix and officers report to Group Operations." Which meant not only an 'ops' mission, but that we were box lead or deputy. It turned out we were deputy, of course. Briefed for a quick tactical ground support mission, without breakfast or lunch, it seemed at first. Fortunately 'take-off' time was moved up three different times to a total of 2 hours later; and Colonel Bowman and Major Ewald(C.O. of this Group and Mess Officer, respectively) got on the ball and had coffee and cake at the briefing room, to which the crews were hauled back from the ships."

Lt. W.C. Mannix,

613th Sqdn. Pilot.

28th September 1944.

Magdeburg - bad weather and heating.

"No practice mission am or pm, because of weather. Talk by Lt. Col. Cuith, 94th Combat Wing Engineering Officer to all pilots, co-pilots and engineers - a very good one too we thought. I spent the rest of the evening at the boneyard picking up parts for an oil burner tank hoist (for the barracks)."

1st Lt. W.C. Manix.

7th October 1944. ✓

Politz - A view from the top turret.

"After engine starting, taxiing and run-up, we waited for the OK to take off. At this time, I was between the pilot and co-pilot calling off air speed to the pilot - we were all feeling the old bird pull and strain, and when the co-pilot pulled wheels up, I always felt a weight off my body. I don't know if that weight was fear or concern, but I do know it was always a relief to feel and hear the wheels lock up.

After breaking through the overcast we had to fire flares for the rest of the Squadron to form up. I half-way recall we were deputy lead on the flight to Politz. Once we had formed and all crew members had checked the formation, we started our second long haul over the North Sea in two days. When we were on our way we would make a firing check of all guns to be sure they were functioning properly if needed. I recall the sun was hot on my head in the top turret, and really it was a good feeling to look out on the formation and feel a part of such an operation.

Just before we hit the I.P., I recall scanning the formation and noting a B-17 without a chin turret, which no doubt was a snooper reporting our heading, speed and altitude. Shortly after that we really got into the flak. I saw a B-17 just disappear in a black cloud of smoke which we left far behind. About that time we got a good hit in the trailing edge of the left wing. I left the turret to check for damage and everyone was concerned, but we were able to go on. The bomb bay doors opened, and I checked visually to see that they were fully opened, and then it was bombs away. And whereas our main job was done, we still had to get home. I visually checked the bomb bay again to be sure all the bombs had left, and there were no hangups. From then on it was just a ride out of the flak and back to England.

When England hove into sight, it was a natural relief, and after landing and turning the ship back over to the crew chief, the guns were taken from the turrets and back to the armorer's shack. Then on to interrogation, a shot of bourbon, to the mess hall, a check on possible mail, and then back to the sack - it had been one hell of a long day."

T/Sgt. D.W. Stott.

Eng/Top Turret Gunner on
Capt. J.L. Cromer's crew.

7th October 1944. ✓

Politz - a co-pilot's view of a very tough mission.

"Our briefing had advised that the target was Politz, Germany, center of one third of Germany's synthetic oil refineries. No-one seemed to know much about the target, including our Group's S-2 Officer, Major Pat Fry. It must not have bothered Pat much since he slipped aboard one of the planes and flew the mission with us.

"Our Group had bombed Stargard, Germany, the day before and since Politz was nearby the Germans must have assumed where we were heading. We found out that their assumption was correct when we arrived at the I.P. The bomb run was nine minutes in duration and when our plane lined up at the I.P. the pilot, Joe Cromer, called Jack Waldorf our bombardier on the intercom, "Jack, you have the airplane." Jack took over with the Norden bombsight and guided us over Politz.

"Lt. Col. Bill Seawell, the leader, was chanting, "Hold the formation together, just a little longer, gather in closer, they can't stop us now !"

"The Lead Bombardier called "Bombs away", and our formation dropped it's bombs on the Leader. As deputy lead, our bombardier checked on the Leader's drop and they were together.

"I looked out of the co-pilot's window and watched a B-17 turn over on it's back. The right wing fell off and the plane came to pieces. I counted three white silk chutes trailing from the wreckage."

1st Lt. Ralph W. Trout.

612th Sqdn. Co-pilot.

230 - midn 304

(707) 555 823-8783

15th October 1944. ✓

Cologne - Lo Squadron Lead and PFF bombing.

"Called at 0110 (unholy hour!), Keeling, Baker and Mannix all called out for lead and deputy's briefing at 0215 (real eggs and good sticky mush, oatmeal). This Wing leading the First Division, this Group leading the Wing; Colonel Bowman, Air Commander (with Lt. Charleville lead pilot, Lt. Kalinski's former co-pilot.) Lt. Carns leading low section (in case of visual bombing, trying new 'gaggle' runs over target - six ship sections bombing individually.)

"Hi Squadron - 12 ships - was Lt. Heenan (lead pilot) with Captain Kalinski as Air Commander. Lo Squadron, Mannix (A.C.) and Cox (pilot). Leader of low section was Lt. Brown, with Baker his deputy, (Keeling was our Lo Squadron deputy.)

"Target (visual) was a 'hump' type marshalling yard at the bend of the river SE of the city. PFF Primary was a rail yard in the center of the built-up area on the E side of the river (Rhine) - 'if it gives good returns; if not, the center of the old city, west side of the Rhine'.

"Assembly and route out were generally good, with the exception of one half-hour in the climb across Belgium when we straggled as a squadron, but kept the Squadron together as a unit. By cutting across we got back in, in good shape for the PFF run. ^{bow} The returns (radar) were bright but inconsistent, so that Bill Strong's corrections were rather erratic and we were in a bank to the left at 'bombs away. (My fault actually) Strong got us in there, Rostrom put his pre-set data together with some scanty checking of ground points thru the 9/10 clouds and hit the toggle at the rule-of-thumb rate position and I completed the compensating errors by my left bank which threw the bombs to the right! Results: Excellent results for PFF bombing within 2,000 yards left and 1,000 yards over the actual Aiming Point.

Lt. W.C. Mannix.

613th Sqdn. Pilot.

The bombing results turned out to be much better than Lt. Mannix believed, and he was able to write the following in his diary:-

30th October 1944.

"On October 30th, myself, Maloney, Rostrom and Strong were listed in a commendation from the Commanding General of the 94th Wing (Gen. Lacey) on the PFF bombing of the Low Box on the 15th October. Lt.'s Strong and Rostrom were cited especially for their 'working in smooth conjunction (with each other) - ' etc. In this connection, reread the above."

Lt. W.C. Mannix.

613th Sqdn. Pilot.

31st October 1944.PAYDAY !

Received £44 - 12 - 2, which translated is \$180.00 American.
As follows:

Foreign Service Base pay	:	183.33
Flying	:	91.67
Subsistence	:	21.70
		<u>296.70</u>

Less the following:

Allotment	:	50.00
Insurance	:	6.70
50.00 Bond	:	37.50
Rations: 90 meals @ .25	:	22.50
		<u>116.70</u>

Balance \$180.00

Watch me run through that, first pass in London !!

1st Lt. W.C. Mannix.

613th Sqdn. Pilot.

2nd November 1944.

Merseburg - the loss of Lt. Oas and his crew.

"The target was the oil refineries at Merseburg, Germany, and I was flying on Lt. H.L. Oas' wing. He received a direct hit in his No. 3 engine causing his aircraft to pitch up into mine. I pulled back on the control column and managed to miss him. This caused a loss in airspeed and I fell behind the formation. As I applied full power to get back into formation, and as we watched Lt. Oas' aircraft spin down suddenly, we were hit from behind by three Fw-190's.

"I was doing some evasive action to avoid the flak and I think that prevented us from being shot down. The 20 mm shells fired by the 190's went through the right wing and burst in little white puffs approximately 100 yards in front of the aircraft. Out gunners opened up on the 190's and thought they had hit them but could not confirm this. We got back in formation and completed the mission."

1st Lt. John Udy.

615th Sqdn. Pilot.

4th November 1944.

Harburg - a commendation.

"The work done by the 401st Bomb Group on the mission to Germany of 4th November 1944, is a fine example of PFF bombing to all Groups. Bombing through a complete undercast, the scope photo-plots show the actual MPI to be very near the assigned MPI, and PRU coverage shows extensive damage to the target. An exemplary mission such as this one not only underlines the thoroughness with this crew has absorbed their training and teamwork, but also does much to hasten the end of the war by striking hard at a vital target in Germany.

" I wish to heartily commend the following lead crew members for their part in this mission:

Lt. Col.	B.K. Voorhees	Division Air Commander
Capt.	B.F. Carns	Pilot
1st Lt.	D.E. Ligon	Lead Navigator
Capt.	W.E. Haberer	Extra Navigator
Capt.	A.A. Winograd	PFF Navigator
1st Lt.	M.J. Weigler	Lead Bombardier "

Brig. General J.K. Lacey.

C.O. 94th Combat Wing, 1st
Air Division.

6th November 1944.

Harburg - the loss of "Lady Jane" of the 613th Sqdn.

"On November 6th 1944, a B-17 of the U.S. 8th Air Force made a wheels-up landing in a large field in the Polder Wieringermeer about 25 miles north of Amsterdam, Holland. The crew of 9 were taken prisoners of war. The Germans removed the most valuable parts of the aircraft and then blew it up. An eye-witness remembers that the plane had 56 bomb symbols and two victory marks painted on the nose. Towards the end of the war the Germans inundated that part of our country and the aircraft wreck was swallowed by the water.

"On October 20th 1982, the wreckage was excavated by myself and 7 other Dutch aviation enthusiasts."

Piet Brouwer.

Holland.

29th November 1944.

A trip on the "Paris Express."

"I was invited to be radio operator on a flight to Paris. It did not take me very long to accept the invitation. Others on the crew were: "Jumbo" White, Ralph Dempsey, Rufe Causey, Harold Kuenning, Bill Dolan, Russ Newman, John Studeny, Cloyd Sellers and Mac McDevitt. There was one passenger aboard, Harold Bowman.

There had been a number of rumors concerning Bowman's call to Headquarters, United States Air Forces in Europe. After we took off and I was settled in the radio operator's seat, Bowman came into the room and sat on the floor next to me. I offered him my seat, but he refused saying that I had a job to do and should be in the seat. We had a very interesting chat on the way to France. I asked him if he thought that he would be transferred. He answered that he hoped to talk General Spaatz into allowing him to stay with the 401st. I wished him good luck and said that we all hoped he could stay with us."

Capt. G.I. Blumenthal

Communications Officer.

10th April 1945.

Oranienburg - the loss of "Heavy Date".

"I flew as a Radar Countermeasures Operator, and when "Heavy Date" landed on the Luftwaffe base at Fassburg I began to run away from our German guards. I remember running down a steep embankment and being blinded by a flare from an RAF Mosquito aircraft and then stumbled over a crouched German guard. When I got up there was a Luger pistol about a foot from my head. Those of us that didn't make it were taken back up the road and we spent the night in a barn behind a house.

"We then walked for three days under guard. An interesting thing happened at this time. A Volkswagen with three German S.S. Officers stopped us on the road and one of the officers told us in broken English that President Roosevelt had died on the 12th. Of course we were stunned by the news."

S/Sgt. James W. Carson.
401st B.G. RCM operator.

THIS AND THAT

ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS

How a relatively small island like the U.K. could have accommodated the overwhelming hordes of outsiders so gracefully in WW II is beyond my understanding. And we have even continued to be "best friends" ever since. There were, of course, points of disagreement and friction, but they were worked out, as friends do, amicably, with good grace and humor.

One well worn quip concerned the Briton's reply to the American who asked, "What do you British think of us Americans?" The answer, "Well, you're over-paid, over-confident, over-sexed, and over here." Americans enjoyed that one as much as the British did.

"Lend-lease" was an apt title for a logical exchange of overages and shortages. The British had brussel sprouts, Scotch, fog, land, communications, military intelligence, transport, rescue services, bicycles, and fresh food, for example. We had manpower, production facilities, raw materials, bourbon, shipping, and (much to British disgust) peanut butter and Spam. So both sides provided what they could for the war effort. Both had goodwill, and shared it generously.

Our British neighbors welcomed us into their homes, but their tightly rationed food supplies made dinner invitations embarrassing to our friendly hosts. So the American policy from on high was that when we received an invitation to share a meal with our neighbors, we would take along food from our messes, as hostess gifts.

Brig. General H.W. Bowman.

401st B.G.(H) Commanding Officer.

A crew gets together.

"I came to Great Falls, Montana from the class of 43-D Pilots. I was assigned as a co-pilot to a Lt. Stann, who was on vacation at that time. Major Brown took me up for a check ride. It was a beautiful night; you could almost touch the stars. After the usual procedures, Major Brown proceeded to show me how to do a "chandel" in a B-17. What a thrill! It wasn't long before he introduced me to a pilot who was floating around Great Falls with no crew. His name was Bill Riegler. We were assigned to the 613th Squadron and sent to Cutbank. Our navigator was a big Swede by the name of Einer Anderson. He was built like a brick - you know what, and I would have hated to have skated against him in a hockey game. Andy, Bill and I were joined by a hot-shot bombardier who outranked us. He had seen action in the Pacific, and was rumored to have sunk a Jap ship without a bombsight. We were quite awed by this burly Texan who acted like a typical Army Sargeant. His name was Durward W. Fesmire. We just called him "Fes". That's how we got together at Great Falls."

2nd Lt. Tom R. Cushman.

613th Sqdn. Co-pilot.

The Control Tower Alert Crew and the "Bomb Beats."

I was assigned to the 78th Station Complement Squadron in July, 1943. we trained at Jacksonville, Florida and, later, at Groton, Connecticut. On or about the 23rd November, 1943 we sailed aboard the Queen Mary and arrived at Gourock, Scotland on 28th November. Following an overnight train trip we came to Deenethorpe the next day via Geddington station. At the base we were assigned to the alert crew, part of the crew or group at Flying Control. My job as airplane mechanic was chiefly to help transient aircraft when they would come to Deenethorpe. These aircraft had to be parked in an empty dispersal area, so we would meet them at the end of the landing runway with a jeep painted in a black and white checkerboard design. We would then escort the aircraft to its assigned parking space.

Sometimes the aircraft would require service and we would help with this. We also helped with other jobs related to mission take-offs and landings, such as placing kerosene lamps on the take-off runway before electric runway lights were installed, lighting magnesium flares to aid aircraft returning from a mission to find the head end of the landing runway during foggy conditions.

We also worked, sometimes, in the caravan, a wagon kept near the end of the runway to help the control tower keep track of aircraft which were either taking off or landing.

We were assigned to the tower for nineteen months and worked on a shift of twentyfour hours on duty and twentyfour hours off duty.

The 78th Station Complement Squadron later became the Headquarters and Base Services Squadron of the 431st Air Service Group.

I had another activity at Deenethorpe. That was playing the saxophone in a dance band called the "Bomb Beats". There were thirteen band members and we played at various locations such as the Base Officers Club, Aero Club, Sergeants Club, A.T.S. Camp at Brigstock, Red Cross in Kettering, the base at Polebrook and the Oundle Community Hall.

Robert G. Craig.

The Deenethorpe Buncher Beacon.

"Most of the 401st pilots and navigators will remember the Deenethorpe Buncher station, a non-directional homing station for use with the airborne radio compass. Some interesting and amusing facts come to mind when I recall this activity. The order came to our shop to install a transmitter on our base of no more than 75 watts output power. This transmitter was to be keyed with a morse code identifier and to be on the air continuously. We had a suitable transmitter available and the space in which to install it. However, no automatic keyer was available nor was there an antenna for the assigned frequency. Alth and Swalwell fashioned an automatic keyer from a code practice machine, using the adjustable speed motor, and a plexiglass disc into the edge of which they had cut and hand filed notches to actuate the roller switch to key the transmitter with the appropriate identifier. This rig worked for as long as the station was on the air, trully a work of genius. Most of you will remember that this activity was later moved to Cottesmore, a troop carrier base some 20 miles from Deenethorpe.

Capt. G.I. Blumenthal

Communications Officer.

Radar Countermeasures in the 401st Bomb Group (H).

"One of the early jamming methods used was to drop tinfoil over the target. Strips of tinfoil were cut the wavelength of the German radar (about 12" in length) and about 1/8" wide. They were bent so that they would float to the ground slowly. They were packaged in bundles about 1/2x 4"x12". As the strips floated down the German signals would bounce off them and their scopes would show millions of false signals that cluttered up the screens. This was not sufficient to completely obliterate the aircraft reflected signals so additional methods were devised.

"The Allies next developed "carpet jamming" - transmitters which would broadcast "noise" signals at the same frequency as the German radar. The Germans could tune their radar between 500 and 550 megacycles. The jammers only covered 3 megacycles each, so a jammer had to be tuned for every 3 megacycles to cover the German range of 500 to 550.

"Every aircraft then flew with three pre-tuned jammers so that a 36-plane formation would carry a total of 108 jammers to cover the German range. Even this, however, was not sufficient to completely obliterate the German scopes and sometimes an experienced German operator could "see" the reflected signals of our planes thru the "grass". The last development in the jamming methods was the "spot jammer". Each squadron of 12 planes carried a spot jammer operator. He had a tuneable jammer so that he could tune into any frequency between 500 and 550 megacycles. With earphones he would scan the German frequency range and if he heard a signal getting thru the "carpet jammers" he would tune his spot jammer on the exact frequency getting thru.

"By using all three methods together, tinfoil, carpet jamming and spot jamming, our jamming was reported to be quite effective."

Cpl. Benton W. Spear.

613th Squadron.

THE BLUE BOOK

That outstanding on-the-spot history of the 401st, known as the "Blue Book", is itself an interesting part of our history. The story was told to me by Charlie Brown, shortly after the war, and was recently confirmed by Bill Seawell, who was C.O. when the project took place.

Wherever there was an "Air Force Facility", in WW II, there was an Officer's Club, with a well stocked and patronized bar. That meant hundreds of profitable enterprises, and millions of dollars looking for a place to land when the bases were closed. Our far-sighted Chief, General Arnold, made plans to channel the money into welfare funds for the benefit of Air Force members at war's end. But the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury said, "NO. That money will revert to the federal coffers". The word got around. Spend it or lose it. There were free parties, of course. But Bill Seawell, Charlie Brown and Gordon Glosway got their heads together and looked ahead. After the war, when our members were scattered to the four winds, they agreed, we'd want a permanent record of our wartime kinship and accomplishments. So they paid \$10,000 cash in advance, from Club funds, to a publisher, and signed a contract. Glosway provided script and photos. The publisher agreed to print the book and send, free, a copy to every member on the Group roster, at the address listed.

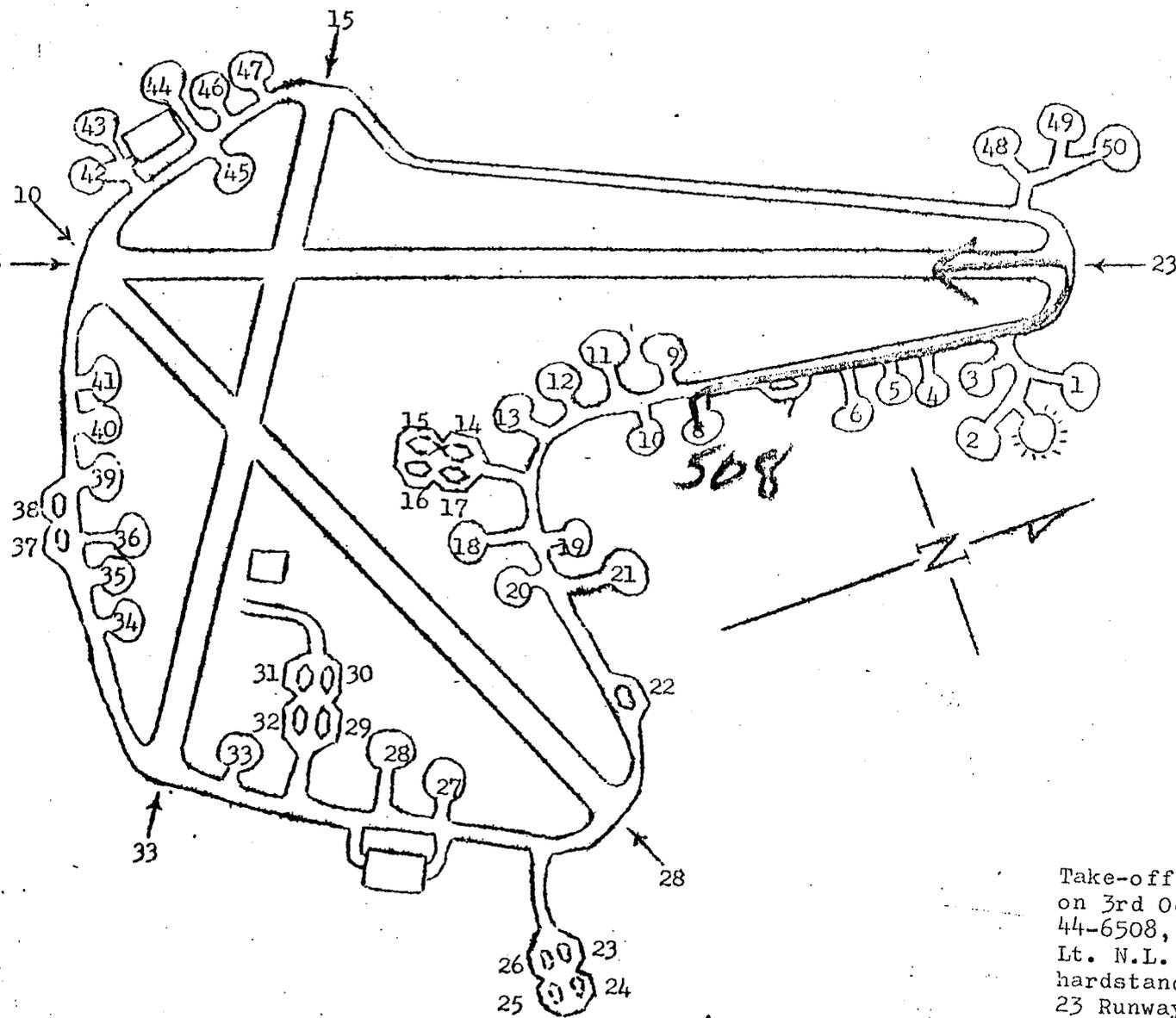
Unfortunately, many members could not be found. So, after several years, the project ended. Charlie loaded the left-overs into foot lockers, and toted them around until the supply was exhausted by found members.

Of course there was great renewed demand for the books after we started our Association in 1974, but by then, none were available. So Charlie Utter has arranged for two reprints in recent years. They too are gone.

After the war many Groups sought our advice on how it was done, but by then the money previously available had evaporated. The foresight of Bill, Charlie and Gordon had become history.

Brig. General H.W. Bowman,

401st B.G.(H) Commanding Officer.



DATE 3 - 10 - 44

T/O RUNWAY 23

A/C # 508 DISP.# 8

PILOT SISSON

T/O ORDER # 34

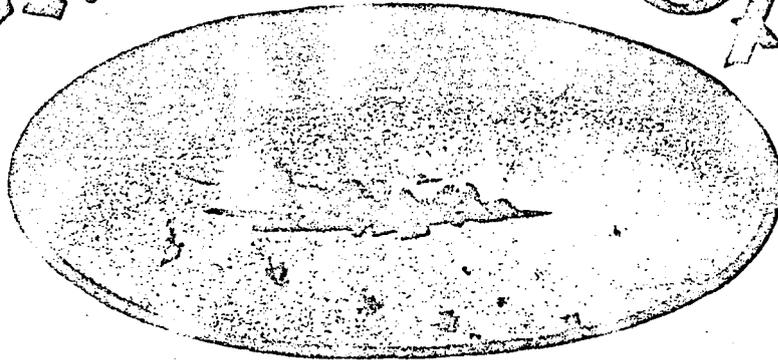
FOLLOW A/C # 628 DISP # 15

AIRCRAFT # 508

111

Take-off plan for 614th Squadron Fortress on 3rd October, 1944. The aircraft was 44-6508, IW-A, flown by the crew of 1st Lt. N.L. Sisson. The B-17G was parked on hardstand No. 8 and was to take off on No. 23 Runway following B-17G 43-37628 from hardstand No. 15.

401st Bomb Grp. H



Certificate of Combat Service

This is to certify that

Capt John W. McGoldrick, O-447291, 615th Bomb Sq (H), 401st Bomb Grp (H)
completed an operational tour of duty in the
European Theater of Operations as of the
 Eighteenth *day of* March 1945

Operational Record

MISSIONS COMPLETED: Thirty (30) Actual
 DEMONSTRATED PROFICIENCY: Excellent
 RECOMMENDED DUTY ASSIGNMENT: Instructional duties in Zone of Interior
 MEMBER OF LEAD TEAM: Participated in One (1) Group Lead, Nine (9)
 Squadron Leads, Five (5) Deputy Leads
 AWARDS & DECORATIONS: Air Medal, GO #459, Hq 1 BD, 25 Oct 44
 OLC to AM, GO #514, Hq 1 BD, 10 Nov 44
 OLC to AM, GO #20, Hq 1 AD, 8 Jan 45
 OLC to AM, GO #149, Hq 1 AD, 19 Feb 45
 OLC to AM, GO #238, Hq 1 AD, 20 Mar 45
 BRONZE SERVICE STAR, Ltr Hq ETO, 1 Dec 44, AG 200.6 OpGA - "NORTHERN FRANCE"
 BRONZE SERVICE STAR, Ltr Hq ETO, 5 Feb 45, AG 200.6 OpGA - "GERMANY"

William T. Seawell

SIGNATURE OF COMMANDING OFFICER

WILLIAM T. SEAWELL, Lt Col, Air Corps.

SECRET

MAY 6 1945 10 35

46

USLIST PA V OIBMP NR 47 OP OP
EXEMPT 103

FROM OIBMP 071954B MAY 45
TO 1. USLIST PA
EXEMPT 103
BT

MULTIPLE ADDRESS

SECRET

1AD M-337-E

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY 1ST, 2ND AND 3RD AIR DIVS ARE STOOD
DOWN FROM ANY FURTHER BOMBER AND FIGHTER OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS
IN EUROPEAN THEATER.
SCOUTING FORCES AND WEATHER FLIGHTS OF AIR DIVS WILL BE
DISCONTINUED AND SQS RETURNED TO THE BOMB GROUPS TO WHICH
ORIGINALLY ASSIGNED.

- - - TURNER COMAIRDIV ONE - - -

BT
AS FOR CK
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DPE R.....072014B DICK AR

DISTRIBUTION

S-2
S-3

&

SECRET

The End of the War in Europe

At 1025 hrs on the morning of 8th May, 1945, this telex was received at the Headquarters of the 401st Bombardment Group (H), officially bringing to a close the war in Europe. It was signed by Brig. General Turner, Commanding General, 1st Air Division, 8th Air Force.

Hi SQ 94TH B GROUP

Combat Flight Leader LT MERCER

Date 27 Oct 1944

Deputy Flight Leader LT RUNDELL

614 SQDN

612 SC JABWOCK

613 IN MACRO

614 IW GOLFCLUB

615 IY BUZZARD

MERCER

IW C 8033

ST AUBUN

IW X 8565

RUNDELL

IW R 7780

614 SQDN612 SQDNSISSON

IW A 6508

AIKEN

SC B 1662

SPUHLER

IW N 8738

MORAN

IW K 8677

ROADMAN

SC D 6992

LAWRENCE

SC S 7938

WITTMAN

IW H 6464

BABCOCK

IW Q 7478

SEDER

IW M 8236

SPARES

MORTON

IW B 7151

SPARE LEAD

IN Y 7600 Disp 46

GND SPARES

SC R 2393 Disp 18

IW O 7602 Disp 48

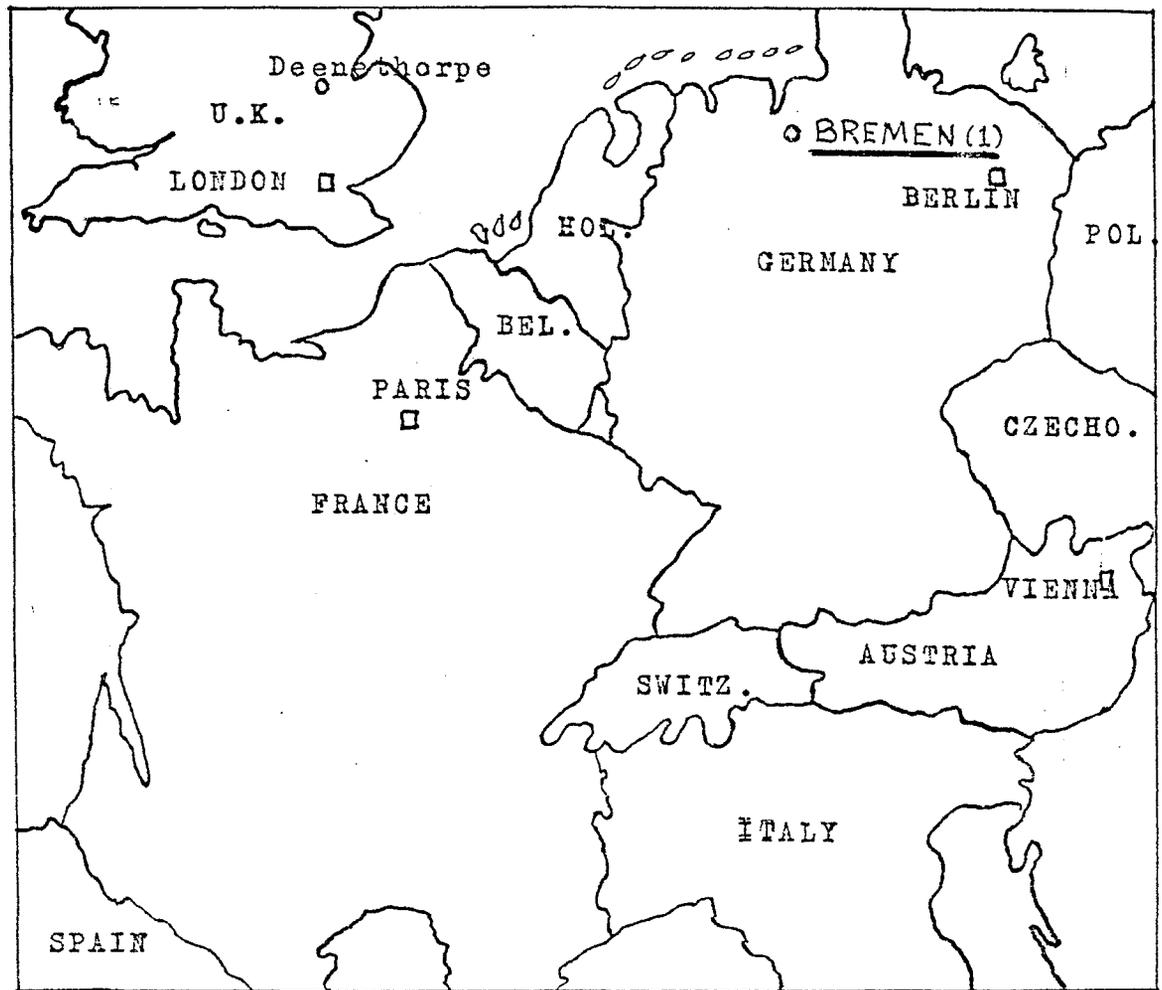
Mission formation sheet for 27th October, 1944.

(The mission was aborted)

Note the Squadron radio call signs, number and dispersal point of spare lead aircraft and the two ground spares.

MISSIONS OF THE 401st B.G. (H)

VIC MASLEN



Month - November 1943

No. of missions flown - 1

No. of A/c lost - Nil

Mission list:

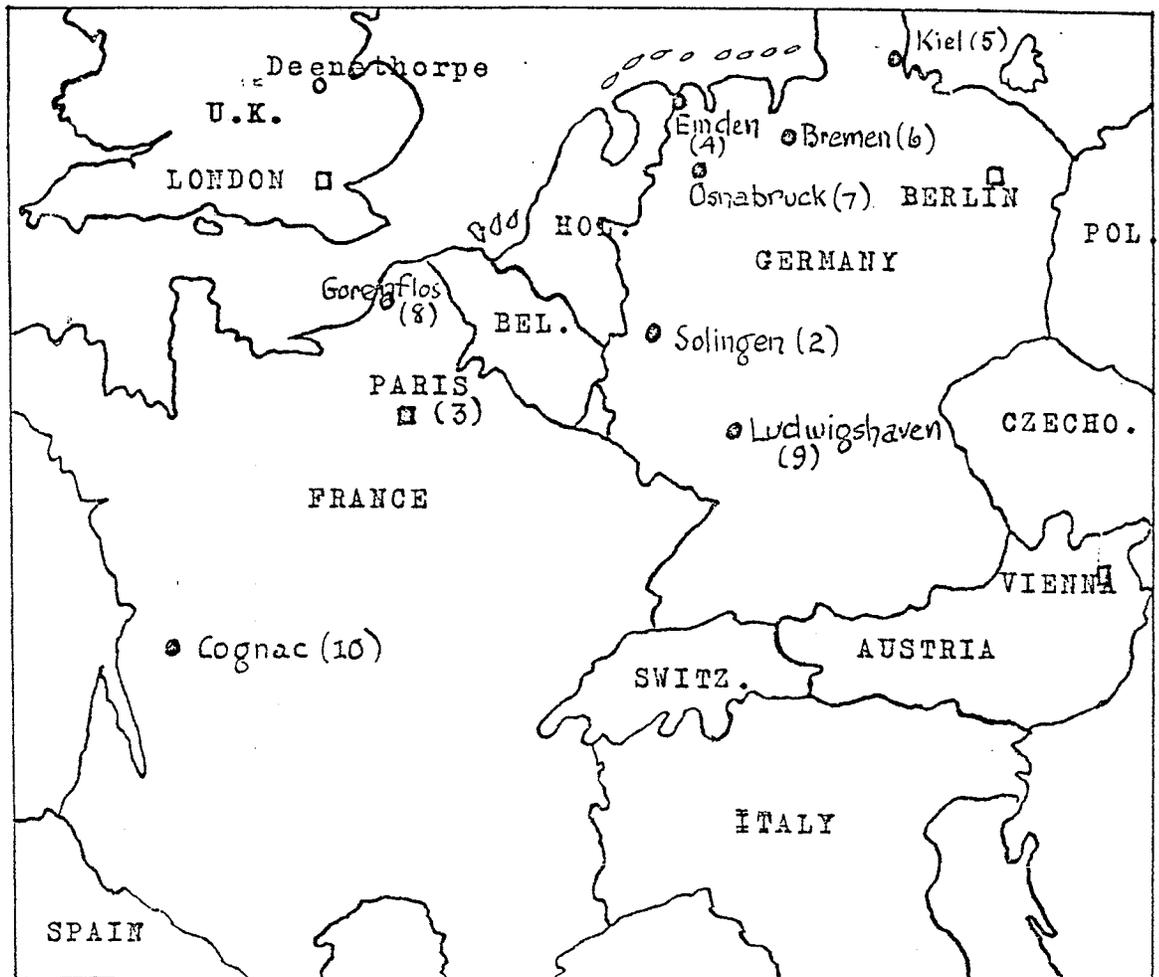
	<u>Date</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>No. of A/c</u>	<u>Type of</u>
	<u>Mission No.</u>		<u>on mission</u>	<u>target</u>
26	Nov.	1 Bremen	20	Nil Port

One aircraft written off, the result of a mid-air collision over Germany.

Notes:

The number in the bracket behind the target name is the 401st. B.G. (H) mission number.

The aircraft under the "Lost" column were those that landed or crashed on the Continent.



Month - December 1943

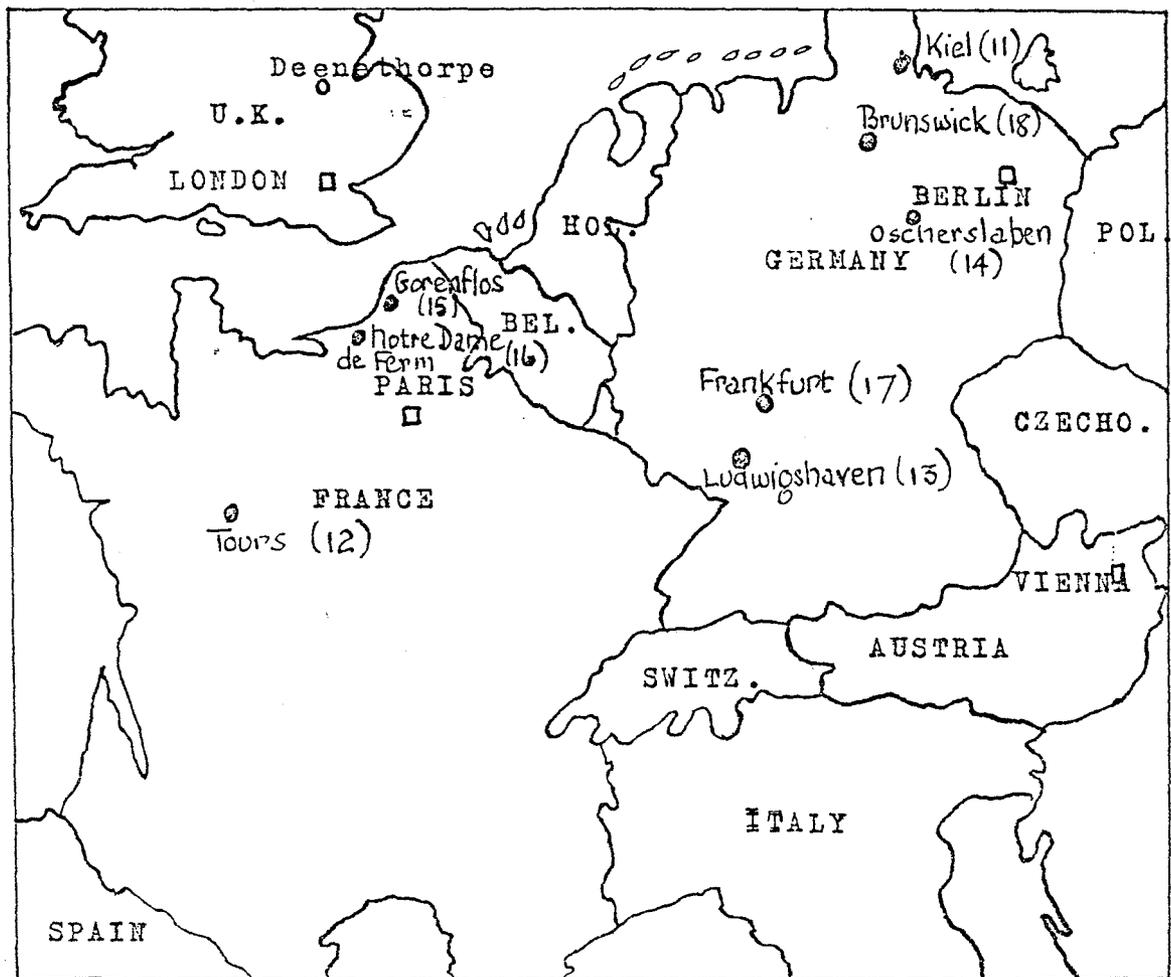
No. of missions flown - 9

No. of A/c lost - 3

Mission list:

<u>Mission No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>No. of A/c</u>		<u>Type of target</u>
			<u>on mission</u>	<u>Lost</u>	
1	Dec.	2 Solingen	17	0	H/Sdgs
5	"	3 Paris	22	0	Airfield
11	"	4 Emden	22	0	Port
13	"	5 Kiel	21	0	Port
20	"	6 Bremen	21	0	A/c plant
22	"	7 Osnabruck	21	0	A/c plant
24	"	8 Gorenflos	21	0	Crossbow
30	"	9 Ludwigshaven	25	1	Chem. plant
31	"	10 Cognac	21	2	Airfield

One B-17 was lost in the crash on Deenethorpe village and three others were lost when the crews bailed out due to battle damage.



Month - January 1944

No. of missions flown - 8

No. of A/c lost - 10

Mission list:

<u>Mission No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>No. of A/c</u>		<u>Type of target</u>	
			<u>on mission</u>	<u>Lost</u>		
4	Jan.	11	Kiel	18	1	Port
5	"	12	Tours	17	0	Airfield
7	"	13	Ludwigshaven	19	0	Chem. Plant
11	"	14	Oscherslaben	33	4	A/c plant
14	"	15	Gorenflös	9	0	Crossbow
21	"	16	Notre Dame de Fern	23	0	Crossbow
29	"	17	Frankfurt	35	4	Engr. plant
30	"	18	Brunswick	26	1	A/c plant

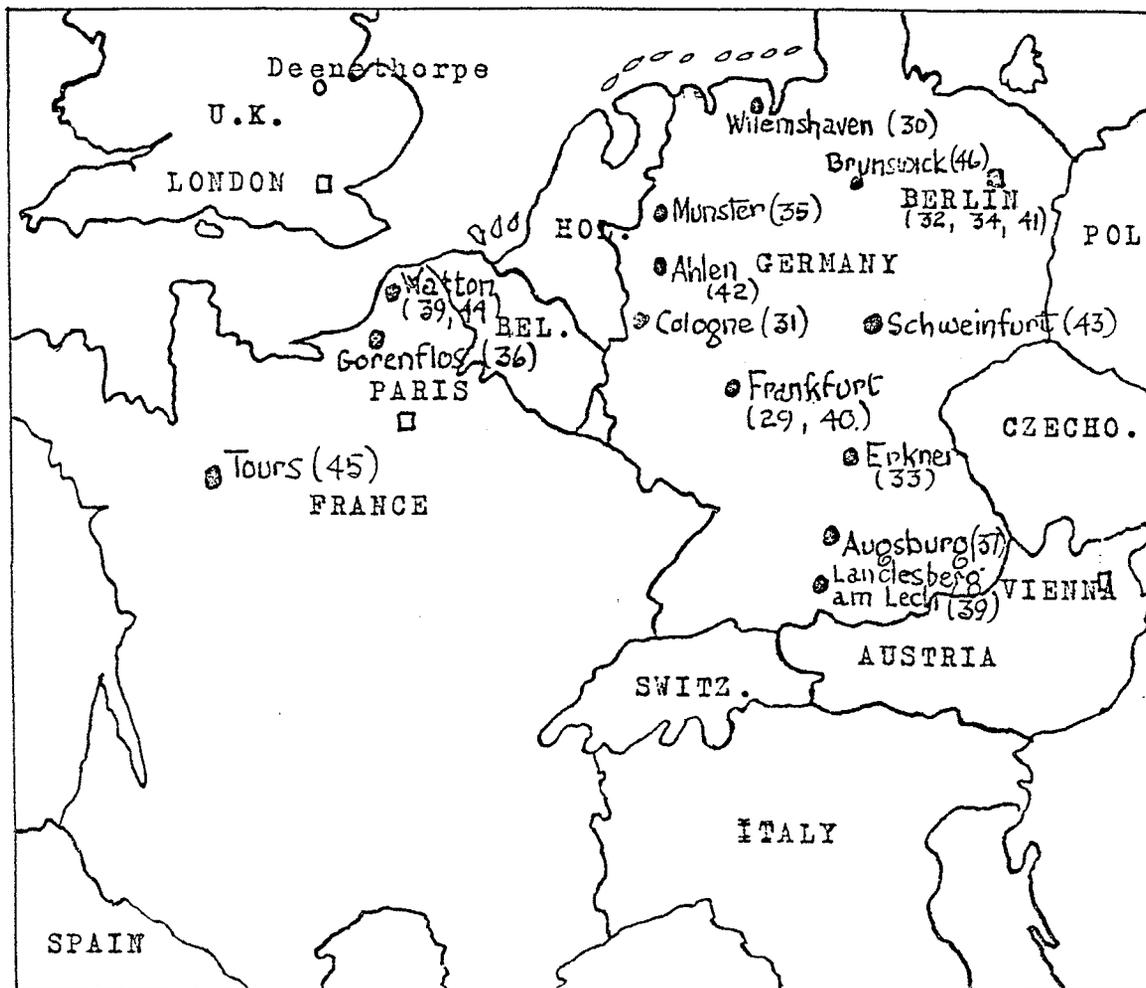


Month - February 1944 No. of missions flown - 10

No. of A/c lost - 4

Mission list:

<u>Mission No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>No. of A/c</u>		<u>Type of</u>
			<u>on mission</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>target</u>
5	Feb 19	Wilemshaven	28	0	Shipyard
4	" 20	Frankfurt	31	1	Engr. plant
5	" 21	Chateauroux	26	0	Airfield
6	" 22	Caen	27	0	Airfield
11	" 25	Frankfurt	36	0	Engr. plant
20	" 24	Leipzig	41	1	A/c plant
21	" 25	Lippstadt	36	0	Airfield
22	" 26	Oscherslaben	32	2	A/c plant
24	" 27	Schweinfurt	21	0	Ball b.plant
25	" 28	Augsburg	20	0	A/c plant



Month - March 1944

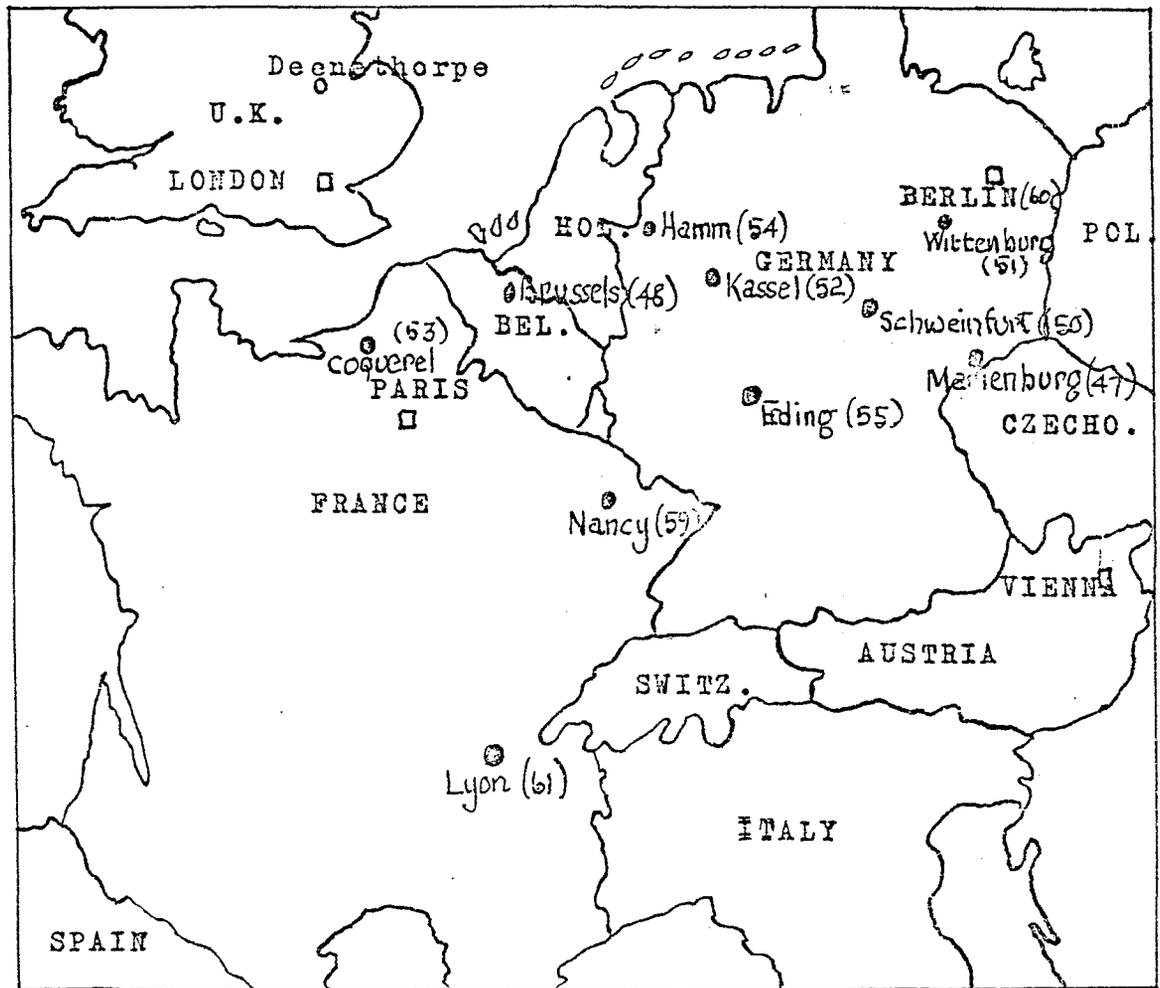
No. of missions flown - 18

No. of A/c lost - 6

Mission list:

<u>Mission No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>No. of A/c</u>		<u>Type of target</u>	
			<u>on mission</u>	<u>Lost</u>		
2	Mar	29	Frankfurt	36	1	Engr. plant
3	"	30	Wilemshaven	20	0	T. of Opp.
4	"	31	Cologne	33	0	T. of Opp.
6	"	32	Berlin/Tempelin	24	1	Ball B. wks
8	"	33	Erkner	22	1	Ball B. wks
9	"	34	Berlin	24	0	Ball B. wks
11	"	35	Munster	20	0	Rail sdgs
13	"	36	Gorenflos	23	1	Crossbow
16	"	37	Augsburg	20	0	Engr. works
18	"	38	Landesburg Am Lech	20	0	A/c plant
19	"	39	Watten	23	0	Crossbow
20	"	40	Frankfurt	21	1	Engr plant
22	"	41	Berlin	21	0	A/c plant
23	"	42	Ahlen	20	0	Airfield
24	"	43	Schweinfurt	21	0	Ball B. wks
26	"	44	Watten	21	1	Crossbow
27	"	45	Tours	40	0	A/c plant
29	"	46	Brunswick	21	0	A/c plant

One B-17 crash-landed on return from the mission on 4th. March.



Month - April 1944

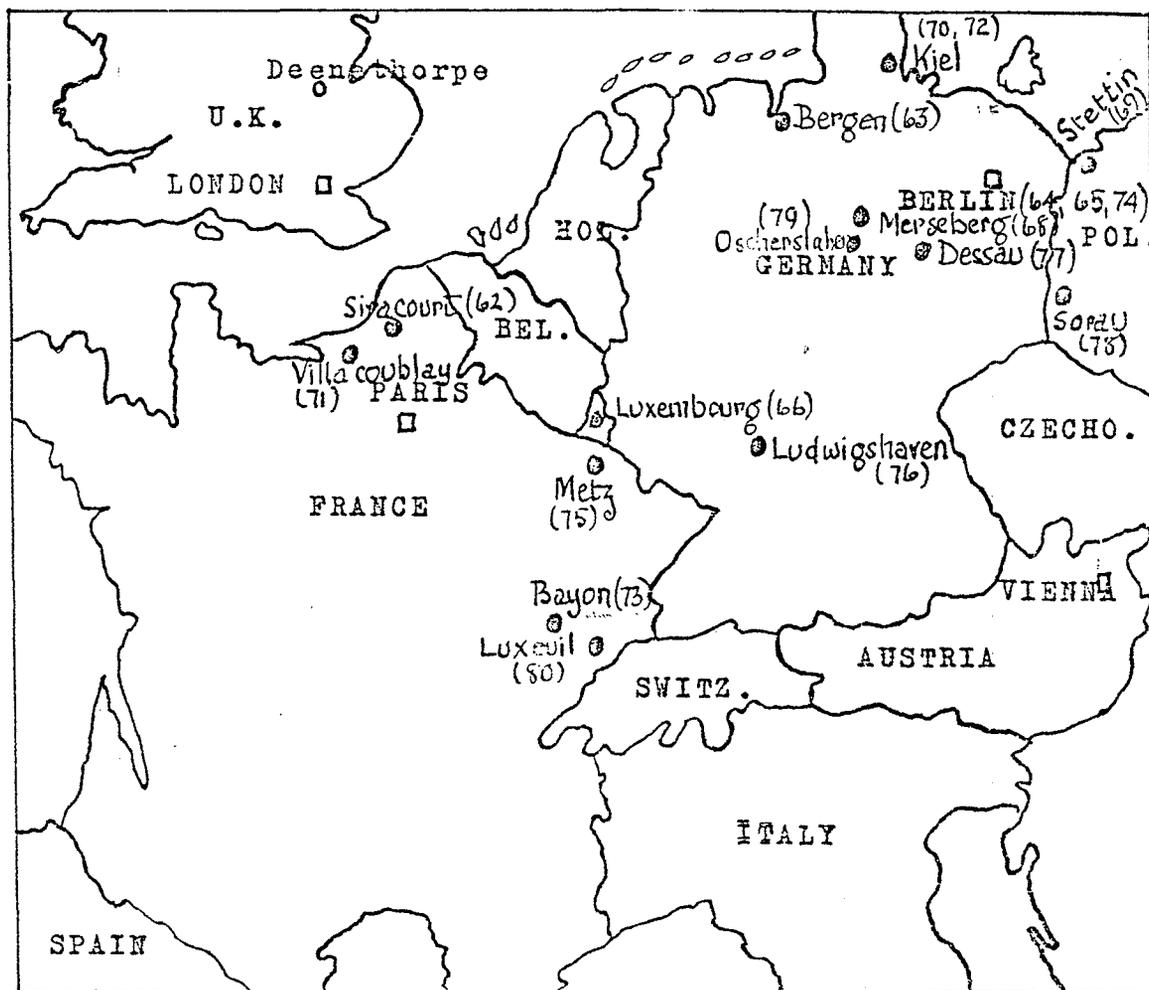
No. of missions flown - 15

No. of A/c lost - 14

Mission list:

<u>Mission No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>No. of A/c</u>		<u>Type of target</u>
			<u>on mission</u>	<u>Lost</u>	
9	Apr	47 Marienburg	21	2	A/c plant
10	"	48 Brussels	21	1	Airfield
11	"	49 Politz/Sorau	32	4	Oil Refny.
13	"	50 Schweinfurt	21	2	Ball B. wks
18	"	51 Wittenberg	21	0	A/c plant
19	"	52 Kassel	27	0	A/c plant
20	"	53 Bois Coquerel	28	2	Crossbow
22	"	54 Hamm	21	0	Rail sdgs
24	"	55 Erding	21	0	Airfield
25	"	56 Nancy/Essey	21	0	Airfield
26	"	57 Brunswick	21	0	
27	"	58 Le Grismont	20	0	Crossbow
27	"	59 Nancy/Essey	20	0	Airfield
29	"	60 Berlin	21	3	Rail sdgs
30	"	61 Lyon/Bron	21	0	Airfield

One B-17 also crashed at Manston on 13th. April on return from the mission.



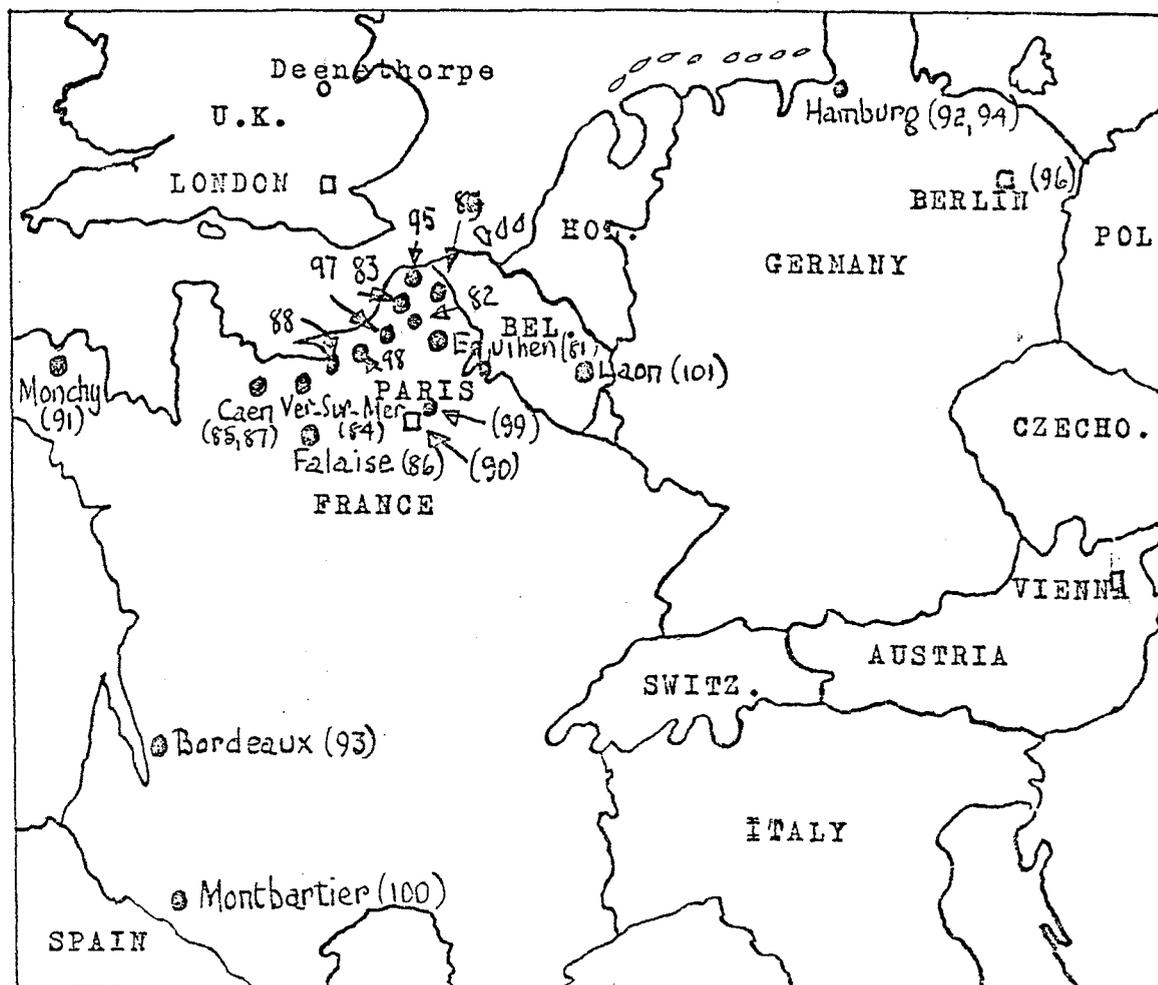
Month - May 1944

No. of missions flown - 19

No. of A/c lost - 14

Mission list:

<u>Mission No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>No. of A/c on mission</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>Type of target</u>
1	May	62 Siracourt	20	0	Railways
4	"	63 Bergen/Alkmaar	35	0	
7	"	64 Berlin	39	1	A/c plant
8	"	65 Berlin	29	1	A/c plant
9	"	66 Luxembourg	21	0	Rail sdgs
11	"	67 Kons Karthaus	21	0	Airfield
12	"	68 Merseburg	41	0	Oil Refny
13	"	69 Stettin	21	1	A/C plant
19	"	70 Kiel	37	1	Docks
20	"	71 Villacoublay	15	0	Airfield
22	"	72 Kiel	15	0	Docks
23	"	73 Bayon	29	0	
24	"	74 Berlin	21	1	A/c plant
25	"	75 Fecamp/Metz	34	0	Guns and Rail sidings
27	"	76 Ludwigshaven	38	0	Rail sdgs
28	"	77 Dessau	21	7	A/c plant
29	"	78 Sorau	21	0	A/C plant
30	"	79 Oscherslaben	18	2	A/c plant
31	"	80 Luxeuil	14	0	Tactical



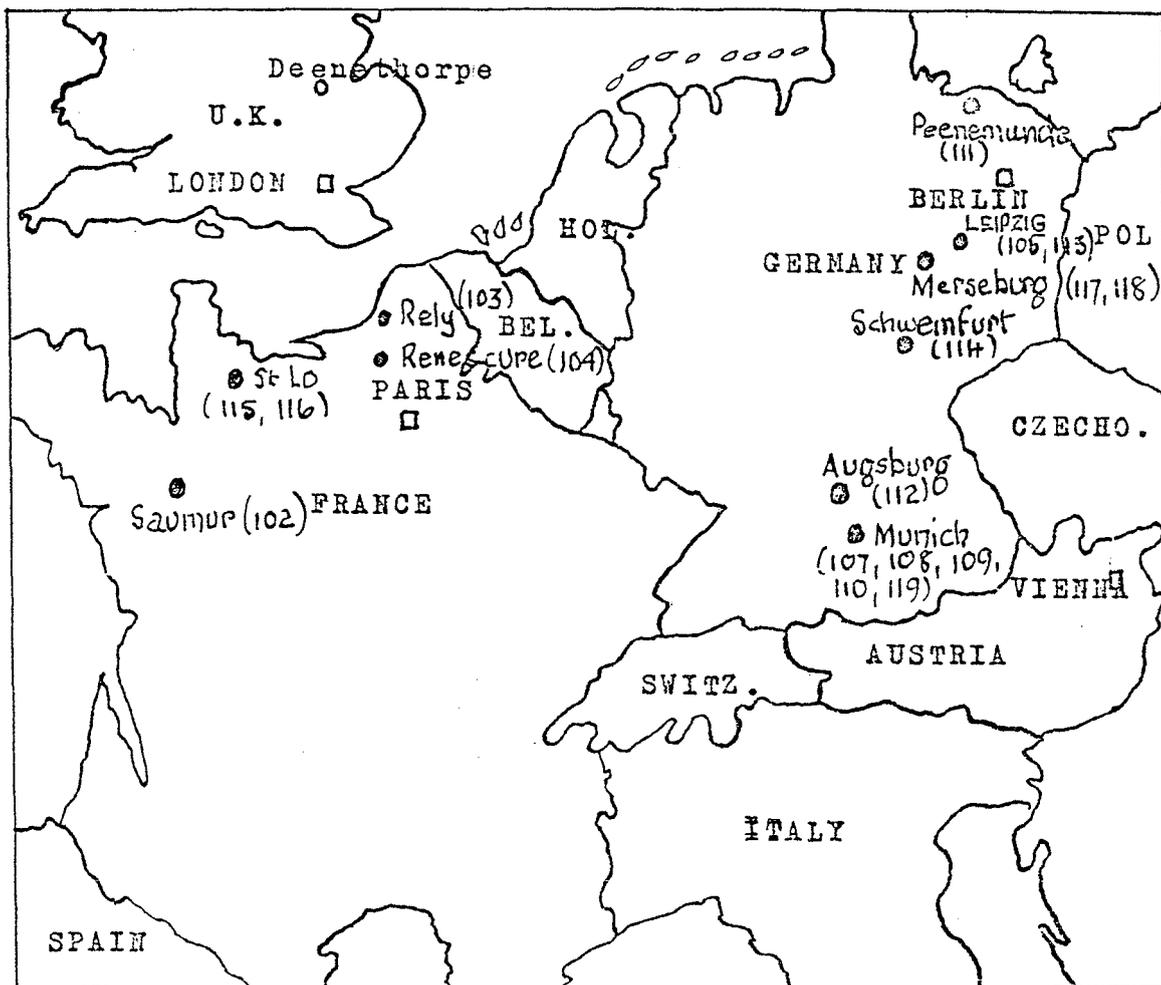
Month - June 1944

No. of missions flown - 21

No. of A/c lost - 6

Mission list:

Mission No.	Date	Target	No. of A/c		Type of target
			on mission	Lost	
2	June	81 Equihen	21	0	Tactical
3	"	82 Neufchatel	21	0	Tactical
4	"	83 Massey/Palaiseau	38	0	Rail sdgs
6	"	84 Ver Sur Mer/Mont Fleury	36	0	Beaches
6	"	85 Caen	6	0	Tactical
7	"	86 Falaise	18	0	Tactical
10	"	87 Caen	21	0	Tactical
11	"	88 Berny/St Martin	21	0	Airfield
12	"	89 Vitry En Artois	36	0	Airfield
14	"	90 Le Bourget	60	1	Airfield
17	"	91 Monchy/Breton	39	0	Airfield
18	"	92 Hamburg	40	0	Oil rfny
19	"	93 Bordeaux/Merignac	41	3	Airfield
20	"	94 Hamburg	38	0	Oil rfny
20	"	95 Hazebrouck	13	0	Oil rfny
21	"	96 Berlin	44	1	A/C plant
22	"	97 Frevent	36	0	Crossbow
23	"	98 Fienvillers	26	0	Crossbow
24	"	99 Belloy sur Somme	24	0	Crossbow
25	"	100 Montbartier	36	1	Oil dump
28	"	101 Laon/Couvron	24	0	Airfield



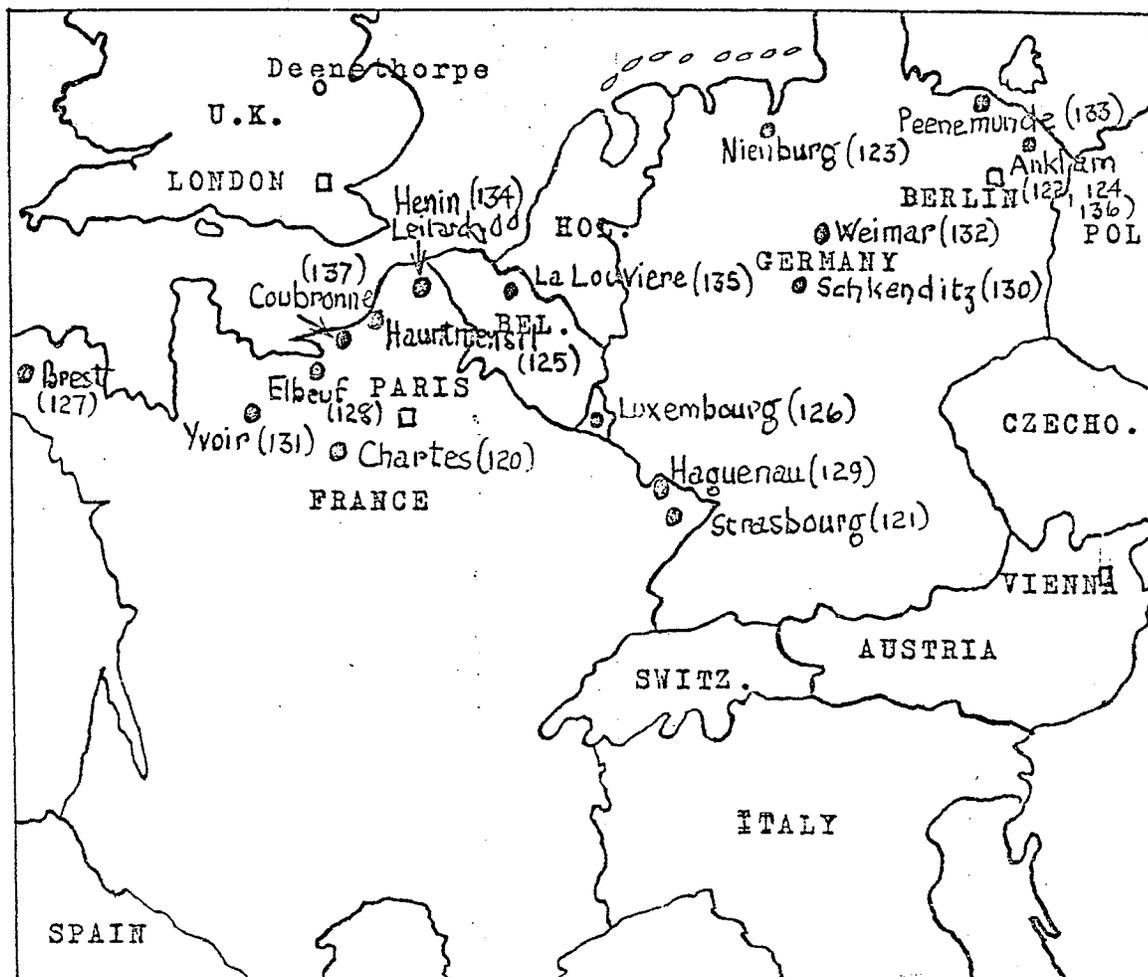
Month - July 1944

No. of missions flown - 18

No. of A/c lost - 8

Mission list:

<u>Mission No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>No. of A/c</u>		<u>Type of</u>
			<u>on mission</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>target</u>
4	July	102 Saumur	26	0	Bridge
6	"	103 Rely	36	0	Crossbow
6	"	104 Renescure	12	0	Crossbow
7	"	105 Leipzig	37	1	A/c plant
8	"	106 Mont Louis Ferme	26	0	Crossbow
11	"	107 Munich	36	0	Rail sdgs
12	"	108 Munich	36	0	Rail sdgs
13	"	109 Munich	21	1	A/c plant
16	"	110 Munich	36	1	A/c plant
18	"	111 Peenemunde	36	0	"V" plants
19	"	112 Augsburg	38	1	Industrial
20	"	113 Leipzig	26	2	A/c plant
21	"	114 Schweinfurt	26	0	Ball B. plant
24	"	115 St Lo	40	1	Tactical
25	"	116 St Lo	39	0	Tactical
28	"	117 Merseburg	39	0	Oil refinery
29	"	118 Merseburg	38	0	Oil refinery
31	"	119 Munich	37	1	Rail sdgs



Month - August 1944

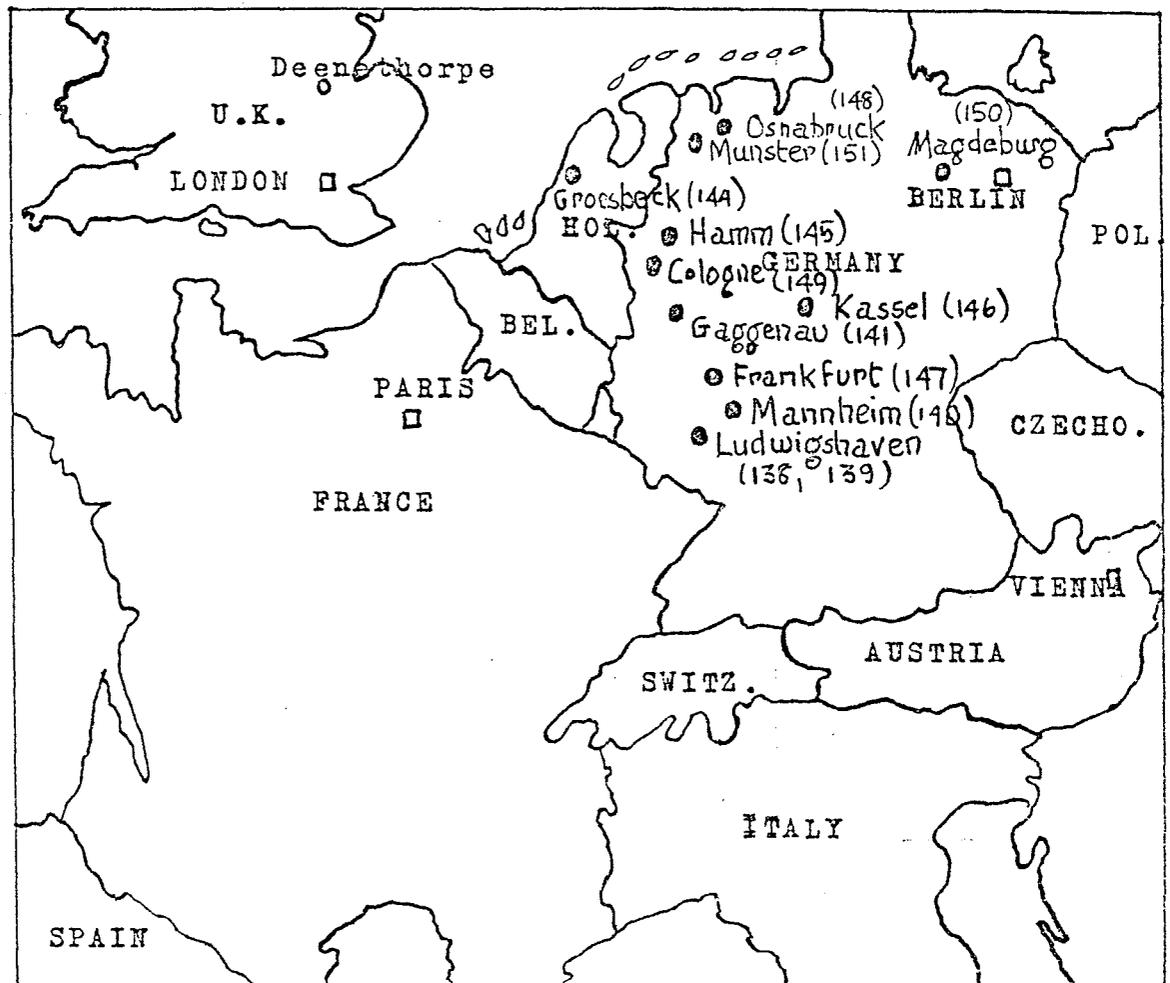
No. of missions flown - 18

No. of A/c lost - 7

Mission list:

<u>Mission No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>No. of A/c on mission</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>Type of target</u>
1	Aug	120 Chartres	36	2	Airfield
3	"	121 Strasbourg	39	0	Rail sdgs
4	"	122 Anklam	39	0	Air depot
5	"	123 Nienburg	39	0	A/c plant
6	"	124 Genshagen/Berlin	39	1	Diesel plant
8	"	125 Hautmensil/Carriere de Aucrais	39	1	Tactical
9	"	126 Luxembourg	27	0	T. of Opp.
11	"	127 Brest	26	0	Coastal guns
13	"	128 Elbeuf	37	0	Tactical
14	"	129 Haguenu	38	0	Airfield
16	"	130 Schkenditz	39	0	A/c plant
18	"	131 Yvoir	36	0	Bridges
24	"	132 Weimer	39	3	Factories
25	"	133 Peenemunde	39	0	"V" plants
25	"	134 Henin Leitard	12	0	Chem. plant
26	"	135 La Louviere Terte	33	0	Coke & oil
27	"	136 Berlin (recalled)	39	0	
30	"	137 Coubronne	36	0	Crossbow

The two aircraft lost on 1st. August crashed into each other over France with the loss of both crews.

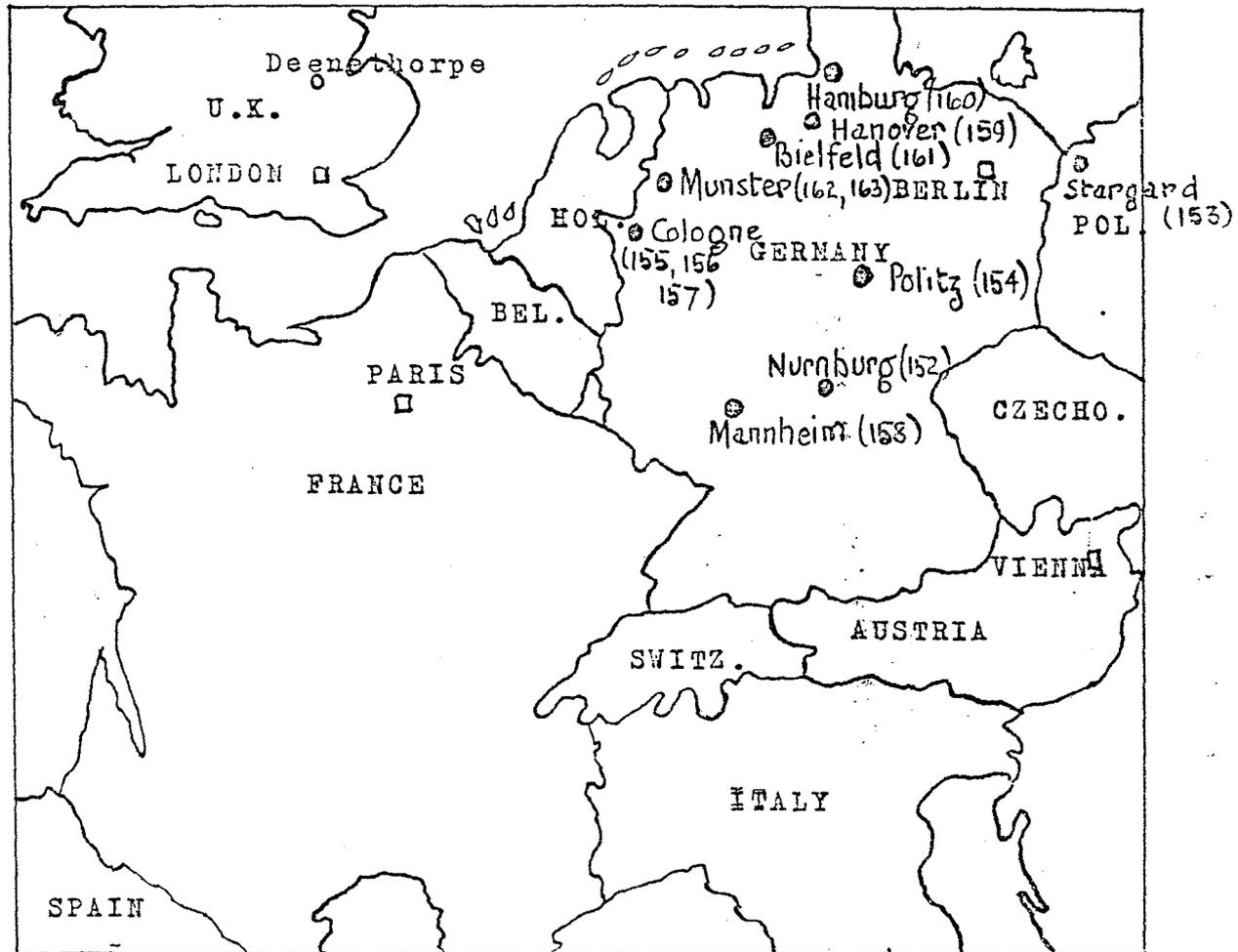


Month - September 1944 No. of missions flown - 14
 No. of A/c lost - 6

Mission list:

<u>Mission No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>No. of A/c on mission</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>Type of target</u>
3	Sept	138 Ludwigshaven	39	0	Oil refinery
5	"	139 Ludwigshaven	40	0	Oil refinery
9	"	140 Mannheim	39	1	Rail sidings
10	"	141 Gaggenau	39	1	Oil refinery
11	"	142 Merseburg	39	1	Oil refinery
13	"	143 Merseburg	39	0	Oil refinery
17	"	144 Groesbeek	51	0	Arnhem
19	"	145 Hamm	39	0	Rail sidings
22	"	146 Kassel	38	0	A/C plant
25	"	147 Frankfurt	38	0	Factories
26	"	148 Osnabruck	40	0	Railway shop
27	"	149 Cologne	39	0	Ford plant
28	"	150 Magdeburg	39	1	Krupp works
30	"	151 Munster	39	2	Luftwaffe HQ

One B-17 was lost on 17th. September in a take-off crash, and one was burnt out on its hardstand on 23rd. September.



Month - October 1944

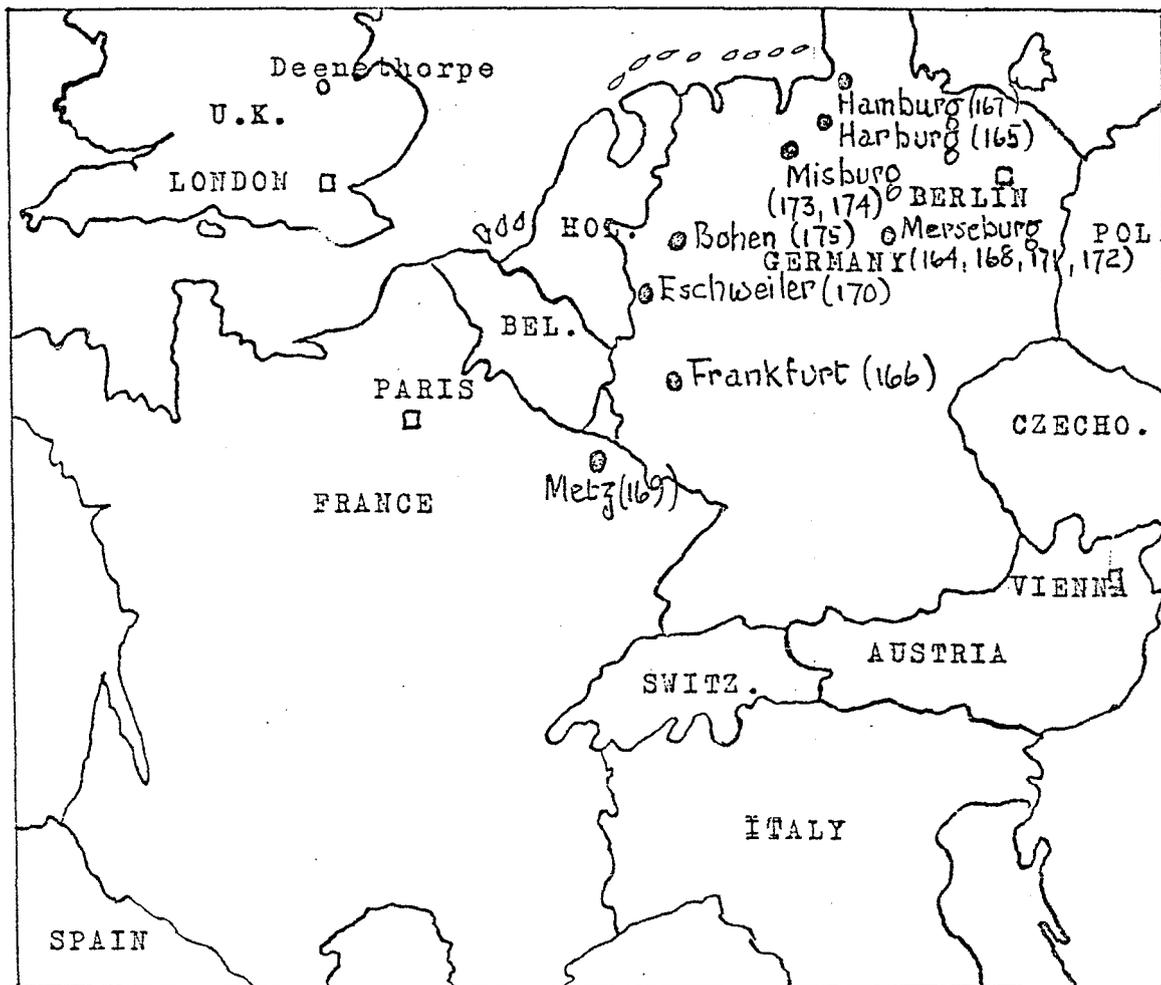
No. of missions flown - 12

No. of A/c lost - 5

Mission list:

<u>Mission No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>No. of A/c on mission</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>Type of target</u>
3	Oct	152 Nurnburg	39	0	Luftwaffe HQ
✓ 6	"	153 Stargard	39	0	
✓ 7	"	154 Politz	51	5	Oil rfny
✓ 14	"	155 Cologne	42	0	Rail sdgs
15	"	156 Cologne	36	0	Rail sdgs
17	"	157 Cologne	39	0	Rail sdgs
19	"	158 Mannheim	39	0	A/c plant
✓ 22	"	159 Hannover	39	0	A/c plant
✓ 25	"	160 Hamburg	39	0	Oil rfny
✓ 26	"	161 Bielfeld	39	0	A/c plant
✓ 28	"	162 Munster	39	0	Rail sdgs
30	"	163 Munster	39	0	Rail sdgs

One B-17 was also lost in a crash at the base on 20th. October.

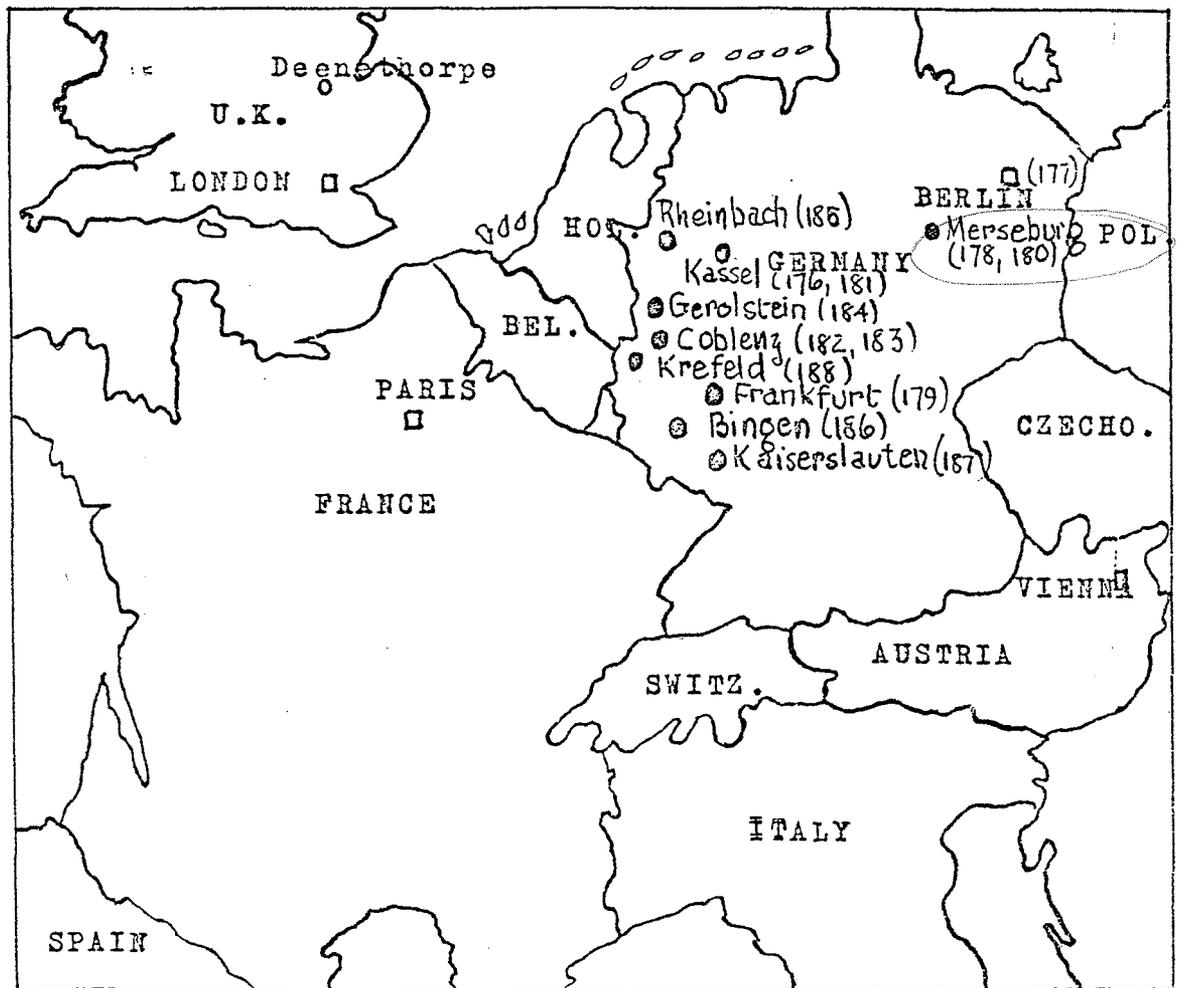


Month - November 1944 No. of missions flown - 12
 No. of A/c lost - 4

Mission list:

<u>Mission No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>No. of A/c on mission</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>Type of target</u>
2	Nov	164 Merseburg ✓	39	1	Oil refinery
4	"	165 Harburg	39	0	Oil refinery
5	"	166 Frankfurt	39	0	A/c plant
6	"	167 Hamburg	37	1	Oil refinery
8	"	168 Merseburg ✓	41	0	Oil refinery
9	"	169 Metz	39	0	Gun empl'ts
16	"	170 Eschweiler	39	0	Gun empl'ts
✓21	"	171 Merseburg ✓	39	2	Oil refinery
25	"	172 Merseburg ✓	39	0	Oil refinery
26	"	173 Misburg	39	0	Oil refinery
29	"	174 Misburg	39	0	Oil refinery
30	"	175 Bohlen	39	0	Oil refinery

One B-17 was also lost on 9th. November when it crashed in England on its return from a mission.



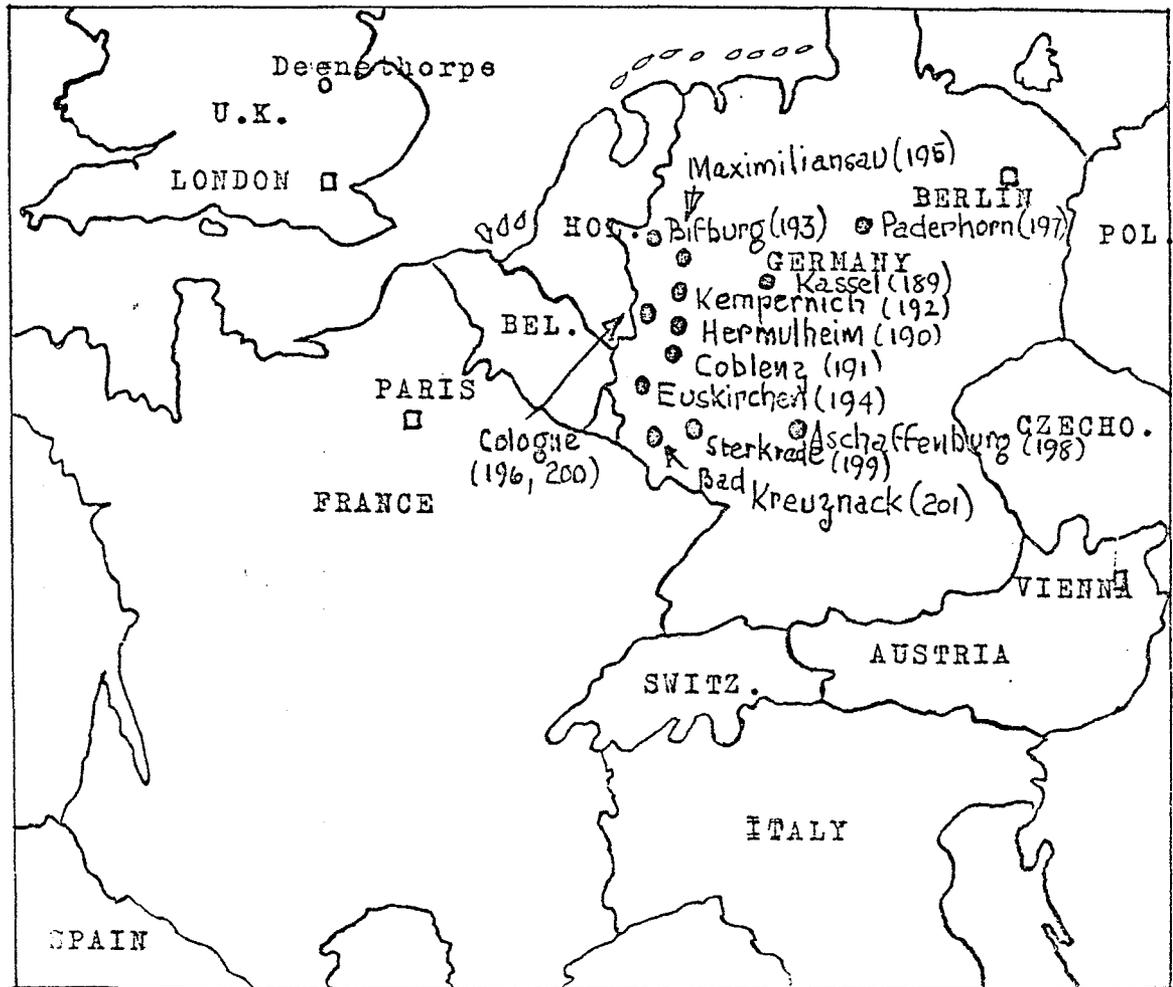
Month - December 1944

No. of missions flown - 13

No. of A/c lost - Nil

Mission list:

<u>Mission No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>No. of A/c on mission</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>Type of target</u>
4	Dec	176 Kassel	39	0	Rail sdgs
5	"	177 Berlin	39	0	Loco Works
6	"	178 Merseburg ✓	51	0	Oil rfny
11	"	179 Frankfurt	39	0	Rail sdgs
12	"	180 Merseburg ✓	39	0	Oil rfny
15	"	181 Kassel	39	0	Rail sdgs
19	"	182 Schleiden/Coblenz	40	0	Tactical
24	"	183 Coblenz	31	0	Comm. centre
27	"	184 Gerolstein	39	0	Rail bridge
28	"	185 Rheinbach	39	0	Transport
29	"	186 Bingen	39	0	Ord. works
30	"	187 Kaiserslautern	31	0	Rail sdgs
31	"	188 Krefeld	39	0	Airfield



Month - January 1945

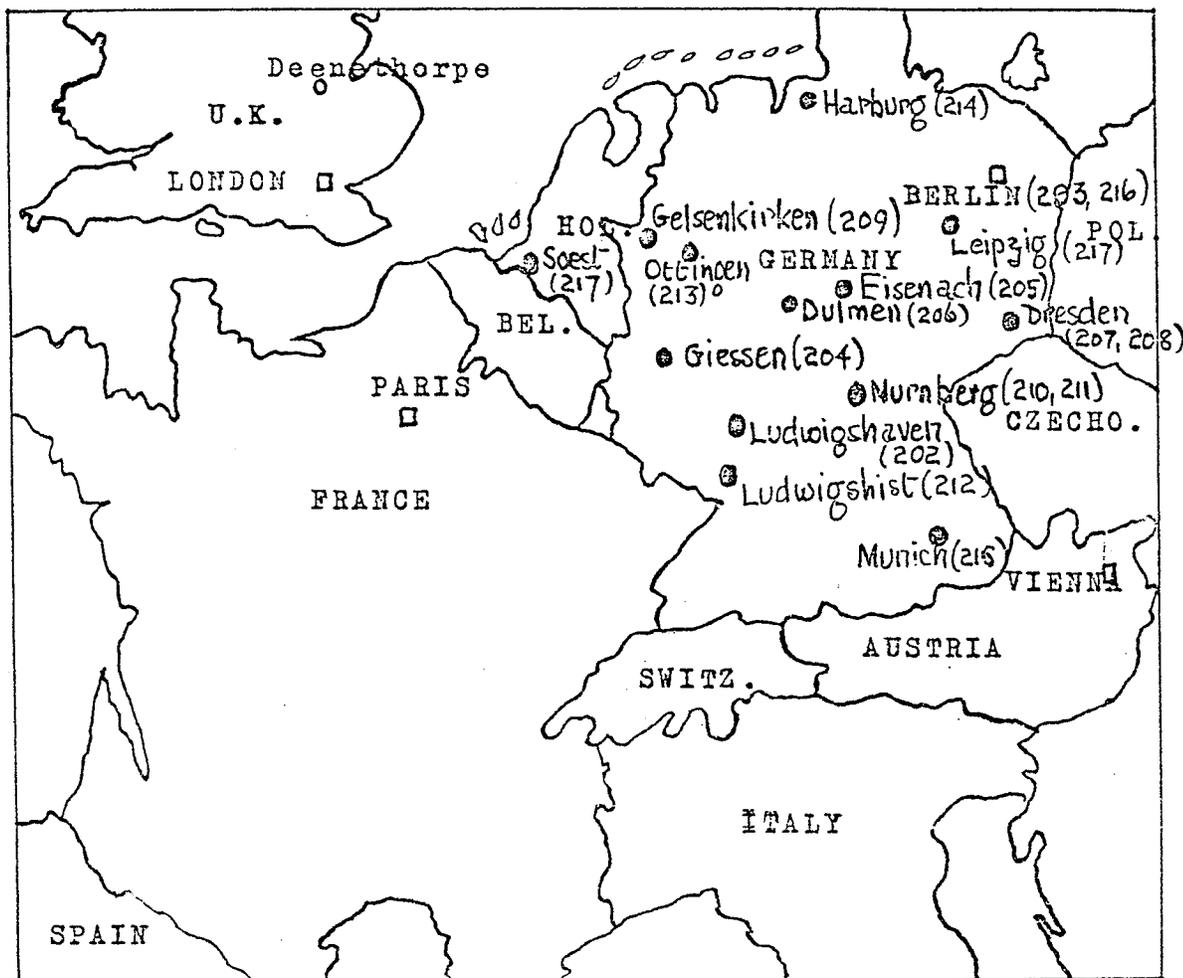
No. of missions flown - 13

No. of A/c lost - Nil

Mission list:

<u>Mission No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>No. of A/c on mission</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>Type of target</u>
✓1	Jan	189 Kassel	38	0	Rail sdgs
3	"	190 Hermulheim	39	0	Tactical
5	"	191 Coblenz	50	0	Rail Comm.
6	"	192 Kempemich	39	0	Tactical
7	"	193 Bitburg	39	0	Tactical
✓10	"	194 Euskirchen	38	0	Airfield
✓13	"	195 Maximiliansau	38	0	Rail bridge
14	"	196 Cologne	15	0	Rhine bridge
17	"	197 Paderborn	39	0	Railway repair shops
21	"	198 Aschaffenburg	36	0	Tank factory
22	"	199 Sterkrade	26	0	Oil refinery
28	"	200 Cologne	39	0	Rail sdgs & Bridges
29	"	201 Bad Kreuznach	39	0	Rail centres

One aircraft was lost at Cottesmore on 22nd. January as it was forming up with the Group for the Sterkrade Mission.



Month - February 1945

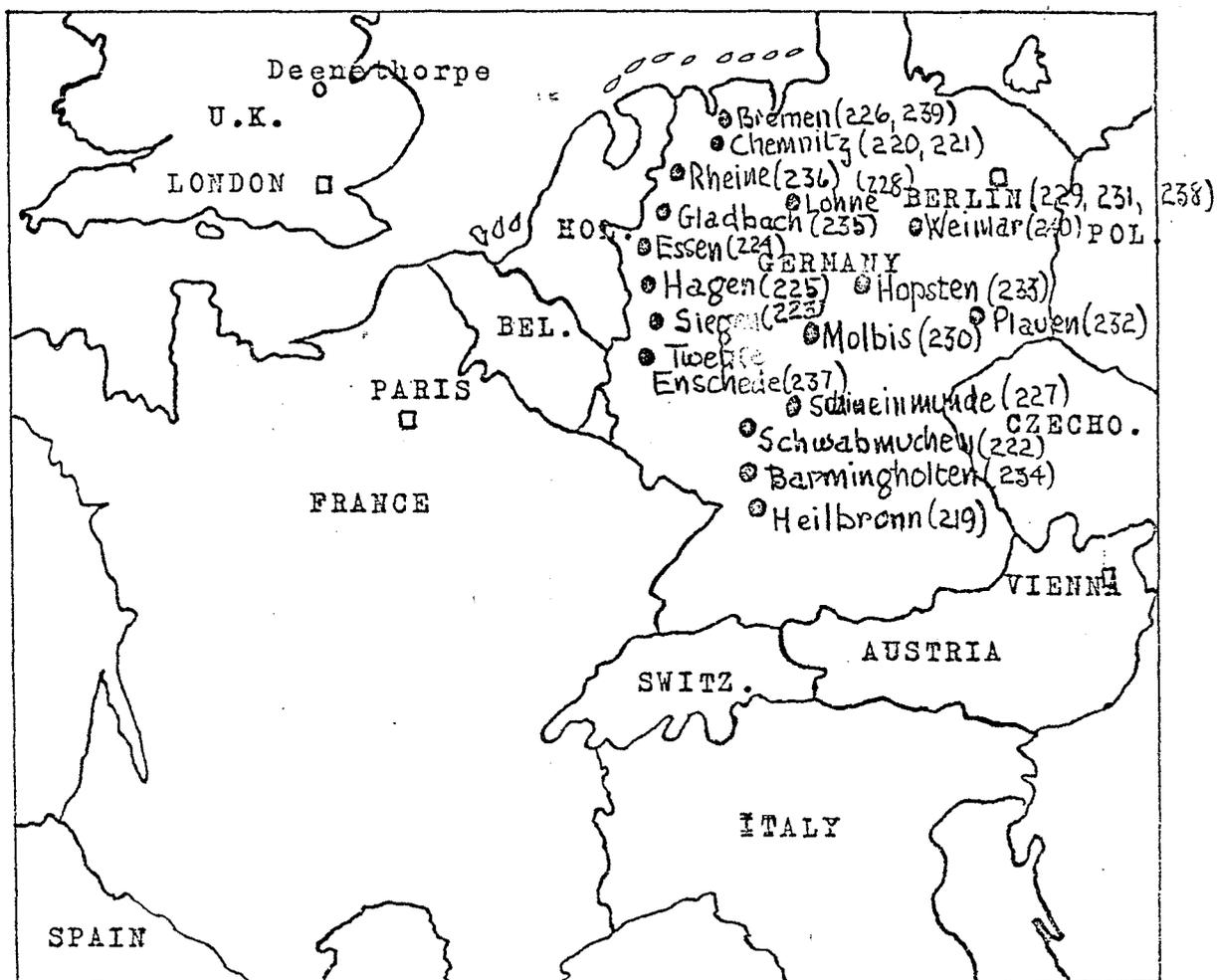
No. of missions flown - 17

No. of A/c lost - 3

Mission list:

<u>Mission No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>No. of A/c on mission</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>Type of target</u>
1	Feb	202 Ludwigshaven	39	0	Rail sdgs
3	"	203 Berlin	39	0	Rail sdgs
6	"	204 Giessen/Eisfeld	48	0	Oil rfny
9	"	205 Lutzkendorf/Eisenach	39	0	Oil rfny
10	"	206 Dulmen	39	0	Rail sdgs
14	"	207 Dresden	39	0	Rail centre
15	"	208 Dresden	39	0	Rail centre
16	"	209 Gelsenkirchen	37	3	Oil rfny
20	"	210 Nurnburg	40	0	Rail sdgs
21	"	211 Nurnburg	39	0	Rail sdgs
22	"	212 Ludwigshist	39	0	Rail centre
23	"	213 Ottingen	39	0	Rail centre
24	"	214 Harburg	36	0	Oil rfny
25	"	215 Munich	37	0	Air base
26	"	216 Berlin	20	0	Tactical
27	"	217 Leipzig	12	0	Rail sdgs
28	"	218 Soest	39	0	Rail sdgs

On 3rd. February a B-17 landed in Russia and was returned with the crew some months later.



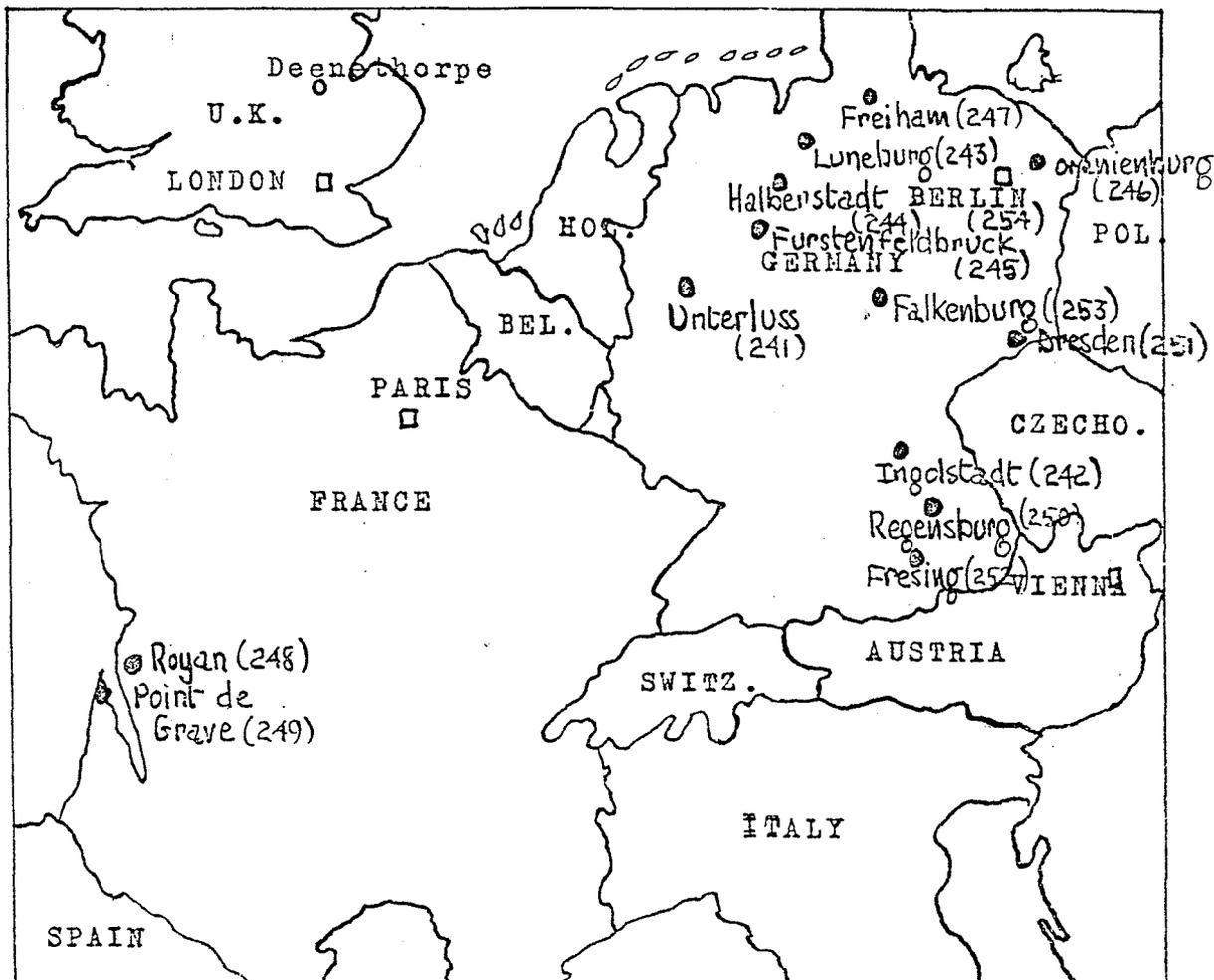
Month - March 1945

No. of missions flown - 22

No. of A/c lost - 2

Mission list:

<u>Mission No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>No. of A/c on mission</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>Type of target</u>
1	Mar	219 Heilbron	40	0	
2	"	220 Chemnitz	39	0	Rail comm.
3	"	221 Chemnitz	38	0	Rail comm.
4	"	222 Schwabmuchen	38	0	A/c plant
7	"	223 Siegen	38	0	Rail sdgs
8	"	224 Essen	39	0	Tactical
10	"	225 Hagen	38	0	Rail comm.
11	"	226 Bremen	38	0	Shipyard
12	"	227 Swindemunde	38	0	Shipyard
14	"	228 Lohne	38	0	Rail sdgs
15	"	229 Zessen (Berlin)	38	0	Army HQ
17	"	230 Molbis	38	0	Tactical
18	"	231 Berlin	38	0	Tactical
19	"	232 Plauen	38	1	Rail comm.
21	"	233 Hopsten	38	0	Rail sdgs
22	"	234 Barmingholten	38	0	Airfield
23	"	235 Gladbeck	38	0	Tactical
24	"	236 Rheine	36	0	Tactical
24	"	237 Enschede	12	0	Rhine crossing
28	"	238 Berlin	38	0	Airfield
30	"	239 Bremen	40	1	Rail sdgs
31	"	240 Weinar	38	0	Shipyards
				0	Tactical



Month - April 1945

No. of missions flown - 14

No. of A/c lost - 3

Mission list:

<u>Mission No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>No. of A/c on mission</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>Type of target</u>
4	Apr	241 Unterluss	38	0	Ord. plant
5	"	242 Ingolstadt	38	0	Ord. plant
7	"	243 Luneburg	38	0	Airfield
8	"	244 Halberstadt	38	0	Ord. plant
9	"	245 Forstenfeldbruck	38	0	Airfield
10	"	246 Oranienburg	38	1	Ord. plant
11	"	247 Freiham	38	0	Ord. plant
14	"	248 Royan (France)	38	0	Gun battery
15	"	249 Royan	38	0	Gun battery
16	"	250 Regensburg	38	0	Bridge
17	"	251 Dresden	38	0	Rail station
18	"	252 Traunstein/Freising	30	1	Tactical
19	"	253 Falkenburg	30	0	Tactical
20	"	254 Brandenburg	30	1	Army HQ

135
 42-30826 my Day-
 LIST OF 401st B.G.(H) B-17's

Number	Code	Nickname	History
X 42-3507*	IN-O	Duffy's Tavern	Declared war weary.
42-30227	SC-X		Ex 96th B.G. To USA April 1944.
X 42-30855	IN-N	Ol' Massa	MIA 8/5/44, Berlin, with 2nd Lt. J.D. Lenkeit.
X 42-31033*	IN-B	Pee Tey Kuh	MIA 11/1/44, Oscherslaben, with 1st Lt. S.J. Nason.
X 42-31034*	SC-G	Bonnie Donnie	Crash-landed at base 4/3/44. MIA 28/5/44, Dessau with 1st Lt. G.E. West.
X 42-31036*	IW-X	Nobody's Baby	MIA 4/2/44, Frankfurt, with 2nd Lt. F.J. Zitkovic.
X 42-31037*	IN-F	Pistol packin Mama	MIA 20/7/44, Leipzig, with 2nd Lt. K.R. Murgatroyd.
42-31061			
X 42-31064*	IW-H	Hey Lou	Crashed into the sea 31/12/43 with 2nd Lt. D.H. Lawry.
X 42-31068*	SC-D	Fool's Luck	Abandoned over Herts. 31/12/43 ex Bordeaux.
X 42-31069*	IY-K	Little Moe	MIA 28/9/44, Magdeburg, with 2nd Lt. E.N. Daves.
X 42-31072*	IN-K	Betty J	Returned to USA, June 1945.
X 42-31077*	IY-A	Pakawalup II	MIA 30/9/44, Munster, with 2nd Lt. T.A. Davis.
X 42-31081*	IN-C	Son of a Blitz	MIA 7/10/44, Politz, with 1st Lt. A.J. Nelson.
X 42-31087*	SC-K	Boche Buster (also Heaven Can Wait)	MIA 7/10/44, Politz, with 1st Lt. T.K. Hill. (Sweden)
X 42-31089*	SC-M	Carolyn	Ditched in North Sea 4/1/44, two of crew drowned.
X 42-31090*	IN-L	Nasty Habit	Beyond repair through battle damage, 5/2/44.
X 42-31091*	IY-O	Maggie	MIA 11/9/44, Merseburg, with 1st Lt. M.R. Wingard.
X 42-31098*	IW-B	Penny's Thunderhead	Crash-landed at base 26/3/44, scrapped.
X 42-31116*	IW-O	Cawn't Miss	MIA 29/4/44, Berlin, with 2nd Lt. J.H. Singleton.
X 42-31193*	IY-B	Little Boots	MIA 29/1/44, Frankfurt, with Capt. R.W. Beers.
X 42-31198	SC-N	Fancy Nancy II	Abandoned near Kimbolton 31/12/43
42-31202	IN-D		Beyond repair due to battle damage 29/3/44 ex Brunswick.
42-31226	IN-G		MIA 29/4/44, Berlin, with 2nd Lt. D.E. Butterfoss.
X 42-31315	IW-C	Liberty Run	MIA 19/6/44, Merignac, with 2nd Lt. G.A. Filemyr. (Spain)
X 42-31369	IW-K	Round Tripper	MIA 6/8/44, Genshagen, with 2nd Lt. J.J. Sauerwald.
42-31374	IY-J		Undercarriage retracted in error on base 27/1/44, scrapped.
42-31414	IY-J		
X 42-31467	IN-J	Sac Hound	MIA 2/3/44, Frankfurt, with 2nd Lt. W.C. Sheahan.
X 42-31485	IY-X	Old Ironsides	Declared war weary then used as a radio relay. (Polebrook)
42-31486	SC-Y		MIA 29/1/44, Frankfurt, with 2nd Lt. J. Tannahill.

(* = Original 401st aircraft that landed at Deenethorpe on 19/11/43)

Note: Dates given are in the British style - day/month/year.

<u>Number</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Nickname</u>	<u>History</u>
X 42-38026	SC-N	My Day	Crash-landed at Base 11/2/44. MIA 19/5/44, Kiel, with 2nd Lt. M.O. Hagan.
42-38033	SC-M		MIA 20/3/44, Frankfurt, with 2nd Lt. J.A. Dunaway.
42-38136	IY-G		MIA 6/3/44, Berlin, with 2nd Lt. C.M. Kolb.
42-38162	IW-R		Delivered 22/3/44. MIA 9/4/44, Marienburg, with 1st Lt. W.R. Dawes.
✓ 42-39012	IW-?		?
X 42-39765	SC-A	Baby Lu III	?
42-39780	?		?
X 42-39820	IW-J	Also Ran- Still Running	MIA 11/4/44, Politz, with 1st Lt. S.P. Wilson.
X 42-39822		<i>Jim</i>	
X 42-39825*	IN-M	Zenobia-El Elephanta	Crashed on Deenethorpe and blew up, 5/12/43.
X 42-39826*	SC-H	Stubborn Jean	MIA 30/12/43, Ludwigshaven, with 2nd Lt. T. Neag.
X 42-39837*	SC-L	Red's Rogues	MIA 28/5/44, Dessau, with Capt. G.F. Carter. (Ditched)
X 42-39840*	IN-A	The Lopin Lobo	To USA, 21/6/44.
X 42-39846*	IW-M	Widdle Twinkle	War weary in July 1944.
X 42-39847*	IW-G	Battlin Betty	MIA 11/4/44, Politz, with 2nd Lt. F.L. Shaw.
X 42-39873*	IY-Q	Stormy Weather	MIA 1/8/44, Chartres, with 1st G.J. Melofchik. (Mid-air collision)
X 42-39881	IW-F	Gloria J	MIA 11/4/44, Politz, with 1st Lt. R.O. Stine.
42-39893	IY-J		Delivered 2/1/44. MIA 11/1/44, Oscherslaben, with 2nd Lt. D.C. Sprecher.
X 42-39904	IY-C	Bad Penny	MIA 13/5/44, Stettin, with 2nd Lt. S.N. Tonti. (Sweden)
✓ 42-39932	IN-H	<i>Sweatier Out</i>	Delivered 2/1/44. Rammed on the runway, 6/7/44. Scrapped.
X 42-39943	SC-F	<i>Sassie Come Home</i>	Delivered 2/1/44. MIA 7/5/44, Berlin, with 2nd Lt. B.O. Grimmet.
42-39969	IW-K		Delivered 2/1/44. MIA 11/1/44, Oscherslaben, with Capt. J.B. Foster.
42-39979	SC-H		MIA 11/4/44, Politz, with 2nd Lt. F.O. Kuhl.
X 42-39993	SC-C	Hell's Angel out of Chute 13 (118 missions) <i>aka Mosley Inadequate</i>	Delivered 1/1/44. Nosed over at base, 7/5/45. Scrapped.
X 42-40001	IW-L	Paris Express	Declared war weary and used as a hack. Returned to USA.
X 42-40002	IY-D	Breezing Home	Delivered 22/1/44. MIA 19/6/44, Merignac, with 1st Lt. W.W. Trimble.
X 42-40050	SC-J	Channel Express III	Deivered 1/1/44. MIA 19/6/44, Merignac, with 2nd Lt. W.E. Massey.
42-40057	IY-N		MIA 29/1/44, Frankfurt, with 2nd Lt. D.T. Nicklawski
42-97073	IY-N		MIA 28/5/44, Dessau, with 1st Lt. V.J. Kaminski.

<u>Number</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Nickname</u>	<u>History</u>
42-97145	?	?	?
42-97322	IW-D		Returned to USA.
42-97344	IN-P	Carrie B II	Delivered 28/4/44. MIA 24/8/44, Weimar, with 2nd Lt. M.S. Fish. Crew bailed out Nr. Salty, Lincs. 25/3/45, destroyed.
X 42-97395	IW-F	Chute The Works (111 missions)	Delivered 1/1/44. MIA 30/5/44, Oscherslaben, with 1st Lt. C.L. Wilson.
X 42-97440	IW-A	Flak Rat II	Delivered 1/1/44. MIA 20/4/44 with 2nd Lt. C.S. Ksieniewicz. MIA 13/4/44, Schweinfurt, with 1st Lt. B. Stimson.
42-97448	IW-H		Returned to USA.
42-97464	IW-D		Crash-landed at base 3/10/44, scrapped.
X 42-97478	IW-Q	Shade Ruff II	MIA 9/4/44, Marienburg, with 2nd Lt. G. Byrd. (Sweden)
X 42-97487	SC-C	Hangover Haven	A PFF aircraft from 351st B.G. (Polebrook) MIA 21/11/44, Merseburg, with Capt. F.E. Rundell.
42-97496	IY-J		A PFF aircraft from 91st B.G. (Bassingbourne). Returned to 305th B.G. (Chelveston) 1945.
42-97600	IN-Y		Scrapped 8/5/45.
42-97602	?	?	
42-97636	IY-H		Delivered 28/4/44. Returned to USA.
X 42-97664	IY-F to SC-X	Aw Come On	Delivered 20/5/44. MIA 25/6/44, Montbartier, with 1st Lt. J.W. Myretetus.
X 42-97780	IW-R	Blue Bomb Express	Force-landed in Belgium, 13/9/44. MIA 16/2/45, Gelsenkirchen, with 1st Lt. E.A. Hansen.
X 42-97811	SC-N	<i>Wickie Chick</i>	Delivered 1/6/44. Crashed on take-off 17/9/44; blew up - all killed.
X 42-97869	IW-H to IY-A	Hula Girl aka <i>maid to order</i>	Delivered 1/6/44. Force-landed on continent 15/12/44. Returned to USA.
X 42-97872	IW-A	Rosie's Sweat Box	Crash-landed at base 28/10/44, scrapped.
X 42-97931	IN-Q to IW-A	Madame Queen #5 ??	A PFF aircraft from 351st B.G (Polebrook). Returned to 305th B.G. (Chelveston) 1945.
X 42-97938	SC-S	Twan-n-g-g-g	MIA 13/7/44, Munich, with 2nd Lt. W.J. Otton.
42-97947	SC-U		MIA 9/9/44, Mannheim, with 1st Lt. D. Loughlin.
42-97953	IY-N		Delivered 10/7/44. MIA 16/7/44, Munich, with 2nd Lt. W.E. Johnson
X 42-97962	SC-G	Casey's Strawberry Blonde	Crash-landed at Base 28/5/44. Returned to USA.
42-97982	IY-P		MIA 24/8/44, Weimar, with 2nd Lt. P.W. Finney.
X 42-102393	SC-R	Diana Queen of the Chase (111 missions)	Returned to USA.
X 42-102394	IW-C	Down 'n' Go	MIA 24/8/44, Weimar, with 2nd Lt. P.W. Finney.
X 42-102397		<i>Chest La Guerre</i>	
X 42-102398	SC-H	<i>Dynamite John</i>	Returned to USA.

<u>Number</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Nickname</u>	<u>History</u>
42-102468	IY-C to IW-S	(106 missions)	✓ Delivered 19/5/44. Returned to USA.
42-102580	IN-Q		MIA 28/5/44, Dessau, with 1st Lt. W.F. Protz.
X 42-102581	IN-L	Lonesome Polecat	MIA 28/5/44, Dessau, with 1st Lt. P.F. Scharff.
X 42-102647	IN-G	BTO in the ETO	MIA 28/5/44, Dessau, with 2nd Lt. F.H. Windham.
X 42-102659	IW-J	Hard Seventeen <i>aka Hard Luck</i>	Crash-landed on the continent, 10/1/45, scrapped.
42-102674	IY-M		Delivered 19/5/44. Scrapped on 5/11/44, battle damage.
42-102911	IN-L		Delivered 30/5/44. Crash-landed and burned out, 29/6/44.
42-102917	SC-E		Delivered 30/5/44. MIA 20/7/44, Leipzig, with 2nd Lt. J.L. Frederick.
42-102947	IN-S	<i>D-Day Dottie</i>	✓ Returned to USA.
X 42-102957	SC-F	Fearless Fosdick	Delivered 1/6/44. Abandoned near Leicester, 11/9/44.
X 42-106992	SC-D	Baby Lu <i>aka Green's Bomb</i> ?	
X 42-107009	IN-E	Lady Jane	MIA 6/11/44, Hamburg, with 1st Lt. R.H. Hillestad.
X 42-107039	SC-M	<i>aka Old Katy</i>	✓ Returned to USA.
X 42-107043	IN-B	Fitch's Bandwagon	✓ Rammed on taxiway, 2/6/44, scrapped.
X 42-107084	IW-G	Betty's Revenge	MIA 7/10/44, Politz, with 1st Lt. A. Harasyn.
X 42-107092	IY-E	Umbiango <i>aka Trickle</i>	MIA 31/7/44, Munich, with 2nd Lt. J.D. Ossiander. (Switzerland)
X 42-107113	IY-J to SC-O	Mrs Aldaflak	✓ Force-landed on continent, 21/11/44. Returned to USA.
42-107151	IW-B	<i>Cover Girl</i>	✓ Returned to USA.
42-107207	IW-C		MIA 30/5/44, Oscherslaben, with 2nd Lt. A.L. Kilmer.
X 42-107210	IW-N	<i>Be Coming Back</i>	Destroyed in Frag bomb explosion, 12/6/44. Seven killed.
43-37510	SC-T		MIA 8/8/44, Hautmensil, with Capt. F.P. Ball.
43-37511	IN-G		Delivered 29/5/44. MIA 24/8/44, Weimar, with 2nd Lt. M.M. Cain.
43-37551	IY-L to IW-Y		MIA 28/3/44, Berlin, with 2nd Lt. J.W. McCullough.
X 43-37602	IW-O	<i>Lady Vivian</i>	✓ Returned to USA.
X 43-37628	SC-A	Heavenly Body	✓ Delivered 8/6/44. Returned to USA.
X 43-37632	SC-L	<i>I.P.</i>	MIA 30/9/44, Munster, with Flight Officer O.F. Nagel, Jr.
43-37706	IN-U	<i>Satan's Children</i>	✓ Returned to USA.
X 43-37736	IN-T	Little Pedro	Delivered 12/6/44. Abandoned on the continent 8/11/44. Scrapped.
X 43-37790	SC-J	Lady Luck	Delivered 10/7/44. Abandoned over the continent, 28/3/45.
43-37859	IY-D		MIA 1/8/44, Chartres, with 2nd Lt. R.B. Sproul. (Mid-air collision)
X 43-38077	IY-Q to IW-K	Tagalong <i>aka</i> <i>Out of My Mind</i>	✓ Delivered 5/8/44. Returned to USA.
43-38125	IY-D		Delivered 5/8/44. Crashed near Cottesmore, 22/1/45. Scrapped.

* Add:-

X 42-107112 IY-B Section 8

<u>Number</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Nickname</u>	<u>History</u>
44-6132	IN-B		✓ Delivered 8/6/44. Returned to USA.
X 44-6145	IW-S	Cover Girl	Delivered 12/6/44. MIA 7/10/44, Politz, with 1st Lt. H.P. Silverstein.
44-6146	IY-R to IN-R		✓ Returned to USA.
44-6310	IY-P		Delivered 23/7/44. MIA 10/9/44, Gaggenau, with 1st Lt. W.B. Woodward.
X 44-6313	IN-F	Budd's Dudds	✓ Returned to USA.
44-6454	IN-C		Abandoned on continent, 1/1/45.
44-6464	IW-H		Delivered 23/9/44. Abandoned and crashed near Bitteswell, Leics, 4/3/45.
44-6485			New aircraft. Caught on fire and burnt out while on ground acceptance test, 23/9/44.
44-6506	SC-N		✓ Delivered 29/9/44. Returned to USA.
X 44-6508	IW-A		✓ Delivered 23/9/44. Landed in Russia 3/2/45, returned March, 1945. Returned to USA.
44-6588	IN-D	Carrie B IV	✓ Delivered 2/12/44. Returned to USA.
44-6842	IN-V		Handed over to 384th B.G. post-war.
44-6947	IW-S		✓ Returned to USA.
44-8033	IW-C		PFF aircraft. Returned to 305th B.G.
44-8153	SC-Q to IY-O		PFF aircraft. Returned to 305th B.G.
44-8258	IY-A		PFF aircraft. Delivered 5/10/44. Abandoned on the continent 11/12/44.
44-8259	IW-G to IY-K		PFF + Gee-H aircraft. Delivered 18/11/44. Returned to 305th B.G.
X 44-8371	IY-M	Badland Bat II <i>aka "Frickles"</i>	PFF aircraft. Delivered 1/12/44. MIA 16/2/45, Gelsenkirchen, with Capt. S.J. Lozinski.
44-8449	IN-P to IY-F		PFF + Gee-H aircraft. Returned to 305th B.G.
44-8454	IN-C to IY-T		PFF + Gee-H aircraft. Returned to 305th B.G.
44-8550	IN-Q to IY-D		PFF + Gee-H aircraft. Delivered 2/1/45. Returned to 305th B.G.
44-8648	IN-M to IY-N		PFF aircraft. Returned to 305th B.G.
44-8653	IY-S		PFF aircraft. Returned to 305th B.G.
44-8707	IY-M		PFF + Gee-H aircraft. Returned to 305th B.G.
44-8708	IY-G		PFF + Gee-H aircraft. Returned to 305th B.G.
44-8767	IN-W		✓ Returned to USA.
44-8812	IY-A		PFF + Gee-H aircraft. Returned to 305th B.G.
44-8825	IY-J		PFF + Gee-H aircraft. Returned to 305th B.G.

Aircraft not used on operations:-

41-9107	IN-P to SC-X	B-17E	Hack and target tug.
42-3483		B-17F	VHF relay aircraft.
41-31383		A-35	
43-35438		C-64	
41-6187		P-47C	

Aircraft Nicknames without a related serial number.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| ✓ Achin' Back | ✓ Mountain Dew |
| ✓ Arkansas Traveler | ✓ Mrs Knobby |
| ✓ Be There Baby | ✓ No. 2 Bandwagon |
| ✓ Beat Me Daddy | ✓ Oshkosh Bomb |
| ✓ Big Wheel | ✓ Patches |
| ✓ Bottoms Up | ✓ Patent Pending |
| ✓ Budd's Dudds (44-6313) | ✓ Pfft! |
| ✓ C'est la Guerre 42-102397 | ✓ Prop Wash |
| ✓ Channel Express II | ✓ Queen Sally |
| ✓ Command Performance II | ✓ Rhode Island |
| ✓ Day and Night | ✓ Ruff and Reddy |
| ✓ Doctor's Orders | ✓ Sa Dame Shame |
| ✓ Dorsal Queen | ✓ Saint and Ten Sinners |
| ✓ Dukes Mixture 43-38077 | ✓ Salvo Sadie |
| ✓ Dynamite John 42-102398-SC-4 | ✓ Satan's Chillen - 42-37706 |
| ✓ Elmer's Tune | ✓ Satisfaction Guaranteed → 44-6506 SC-N |
| ✓ Farmer's Daughter | ✓ Screamin' Demon |
| ✓ Fast Company | ✓ Screwball |
| ✓ Flying Jenny | ✓ Secret Weapon |
| ✓ Fool's Luck II | ✓ Sitting Pretty |
| ✓ Frockles (on starboard of Umbriago) | ✓ Sleepy Time Girl |
| ✓ Gapsis | ✓ Slick Chick 42-97811 |
| ✓ Grin'n Bare It (see 42-106992) | ✓ Snicklefritz |
| ✓ Grumblin' Gremlin | ✓ Snooper |
| ✓ Gushing Gertie | ✓ Something For The Boys |
| ✓ Happy Birthday | ✓ Spirit of Bloomfield |
| ✓ Helen Repeat | ✓ Star Eyes |
| ✓ Hell's Express | ✓ Sweater Out 42-39932 |
| ✓ Hell's Henchmen | ✓ Sweet Dreams |
| ✓ Home James | ✓ Sweet Seventeen |
| ✓ Ice Cold Katy 42-107039 | ✓ Swingin' on a Star |
| ✓ I.P. (43-37632) | ✓ Tantalizing Takeoff |
| ✓ Jill's Jalopy 43-37511 | ✓ That Sweet Thing |
| ✓ Lady Vivian 43-37602 | ✓ The Carefull Virgin |
| ✓ Lassie Come Home 42-39943 | ✓ The Shape |
| ✓ Leading Lady 43-39948 | ✓ Time'll Tell |
| ✓ Little Cheezer | ✓ Trixie James |
| ✓ Little Larry | ✓ Uncle Tom's Cabin |
| ✓ Lovely Lisa | ✓ Veni-Vidi-Vici |
| ✓ Maiden U.S.A. 44-6508 | ✓ Victory Girl |
| ✓ Man of War | ✓ Visibilty Perfect |
| ✓ Mary Makers | ✓ Washington |
| ✓ Missouri | ✓ What's Cookin |
| ✓ Miss Wing Ding | ✓ Wolf's Den |
| ✓ Mister Completely | ✓ Yankee Eagle |

Miss Brenny

Smilin' Jack

Texas Mangles

The Bandwagon #2

Thunderhead

Wildfire

Billie of the Brawl aka Billie O' the Brawl

Blue Tagoon

BFD

Devil's Daughter

Dog Breath

Heaven Can Wait

Hi-Ho Silver

Lazy Daisy

Mac's Goldbricks

Little Rebel

Lucy Stuber

Number	Code	Nickname	History
X 43-38159	IY-N	Wolf Pack	Delivered 10/8/44. MIA 2/11/44, Merseburg, with 1st Lt. H.L. Oas.
43-38160	IN-A to IY-A		✓ Delivered 10/8/44. Force-landed in France, 5/1/45. Returned to USA.
X 43-38187	IN-C	Carrie B III	Delivered 27/8/44. Force-landed on continent, 30/11/44. MIA 16/2/45, Gelsenkirchen, with 1st Lt. J.N. Donaldson.
43-38236	IW-M		Force-landed 5/11/44, Flambridge, Essex, scrapped.
X 43-38267	IN-M	Maximum Effort	Delivered 25/8/44. Crashed on runway at base, 28/11/44, scrapped.
X 43-38330	IW-Z	Gambler's Choice	✓ Delivered 21/8/44. Returned to USA.
X 43-38425	IY-K	Net Result	✓ Delivered 4/10/44. Returned to USA.
X 43-38452	IW-D	Undecided	Delivered 23/9/44. MIA 7/10/44, Politz, with 2nd Lt. R.W. James. (Sweden)
43-38458	IN-D to IN-A		✓ Delivered 12/9/44. Force-landed on continent, 30/11/44. Returned to USA.
X 43-38541	SC-F	Diabolical Angel	✓ Returned to USA.
X 43-38565	IW-X	Miss Gee Eyewanna Go Home	✓ Delivered 5/10/44. Returned to USA. <i>5.5.1944</i>
X 43-38607	IN-H	Lady Jane II	Delivered 5/10/44. MIA 18/3/45, Berlin, with 2nd Lt. D.E. Vermeer.
43-38637	SC-L		✓ Returned to USA.
43-38646	IW-T		Delivered 7/11/44. MIA 18/4/45, Traunstein, with 1st Lt. E.A. Viehman.
43-38677	IW-K		✓ Delivered 11/10/44. Returned to USA.
43-38680	SC-S		✓ Returned to USA.
X 43-38733	SC-K	I'll Be Seeing You	Delivered 11/10/44. Crashed at Westhall, Suffolk, because of battle damage, seven killed. 24/3/45.
X 43-38738	IW-N	Becomin' Back	✓ Delivered 11/10/44. Returned to USA.
43-38758	IY-P to IN-P		✓ Returned to USA.
X 43-38779	IY-O	Rough But Right	Delivered 6/11/44. Abandoned near Bardney, Lincs, 16/2/45, ex Gelsenkirchen.
X 43-38788	SC-T	Heavy Date	Delivered 7/11/44. Crash-landed at Fassberg (Luftwaffe base) 10/4/45, ex Oranienburg.
43-38791	IN-G		✓ Delivered 2/12/44. Returned to USA.
43-38810	IY-N to SC-V		✓ Delivered 6/11/44. Returned to USA.
43-38862	IN-N		✓ Returned to USA.
43-38941	IN-L		Delivered 6/12/44. Nosed over on the continent, 11/5/45, scrapped.
X 43-39125	IN-M	Der Grossarschvogel <i>aka you all right</i>	MIA 20/4/45, Brandenburg, with 1st Lt. A.J. Bradley, Jr.
43-39148	IY-Q		✓ Delivered 21/3/45. Returned to USA.
X 44-6104	IN-N	Homing Pigeon	MIA 21/11/44, Merseburg, with 1st Lt. R.J. Keck.
44-6113	IN-R		Delivered 2/6/44. Force-landed on the continent, 9/2/45, scrapped.
44-6129	IN-A		MIA 19/7/44, Augsburg, with 2nd Lt. W.J. McKeon.