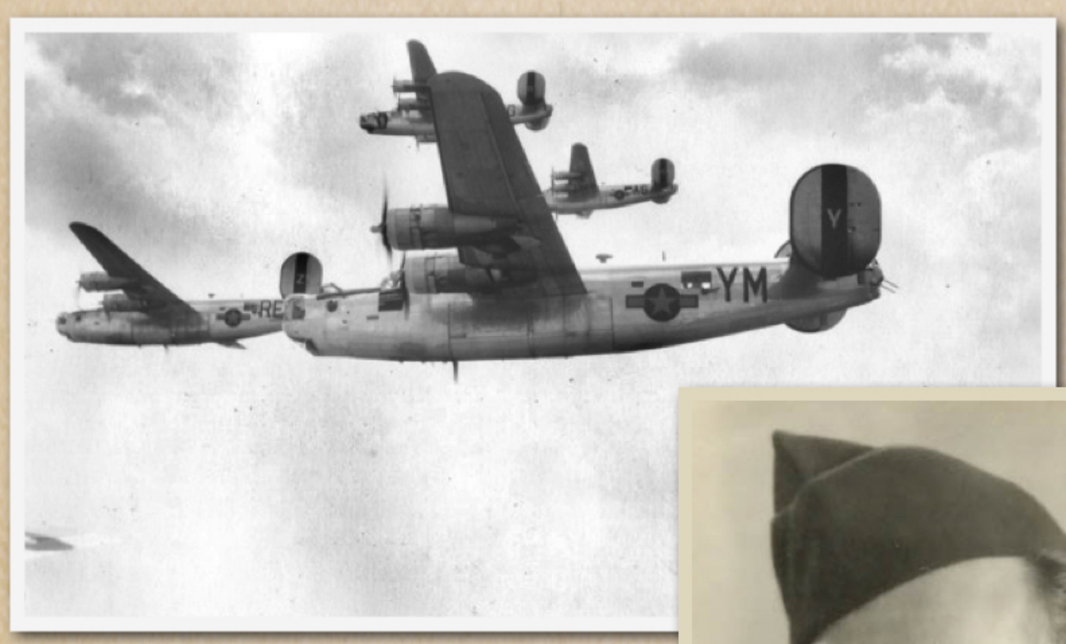
Memoirs



Crine Arthur Ferwerda

Memoirs

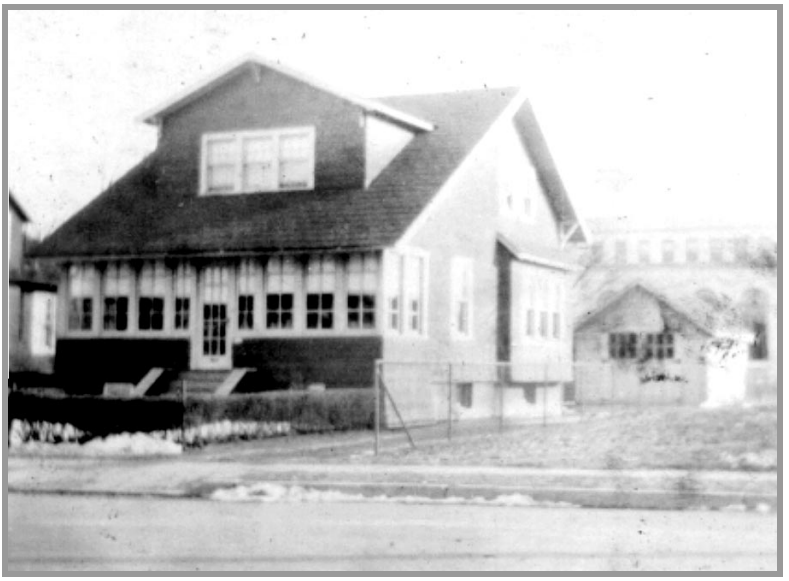
by

Crine Arthur Ferwerda

I was born on January 30th, 1920 in Passaic New Jersey. The house was on the corner of Central Avenue and Burgess Place, and still stands there today. I don't remember too much about those early years, except that next door to our house there was a duplex home, and there were a couple of young girls that lived there, and would play with me on their porch.

We moved away from there to Clifton, (which was the town adjacent to Passaic.) when I was 5 years old, and I do remember that I was quite upset about this. Don't ask me why.

We moved into the house in Clifton, shortly before Christmas. I remember this because although the house was new, it was not completely wired for electricity. However, I remember that on Christmas Eve, the lights were turned on for the first time. The house was located at 37 Barrington Ave. This was very near to the business district of Clifton. Here is picture of the house.



37 Barrington Ave. Clifton NJ

I remember my first day at school. The school was a two-story four room wooden building. My mother took me there and I remember that I wasn't at all happy when she left me there. (17 years later, I would take my pre-induction physical for the Army in this same building.) This was school #3 and that building also stands there today.

Sunday School, Easter 1926.

With Bill Braunlich, and Russ Williamson.

Across the street was a large brick school building, #10. This was the Grammar School. I graduated from School #10 when I was 13 years old.

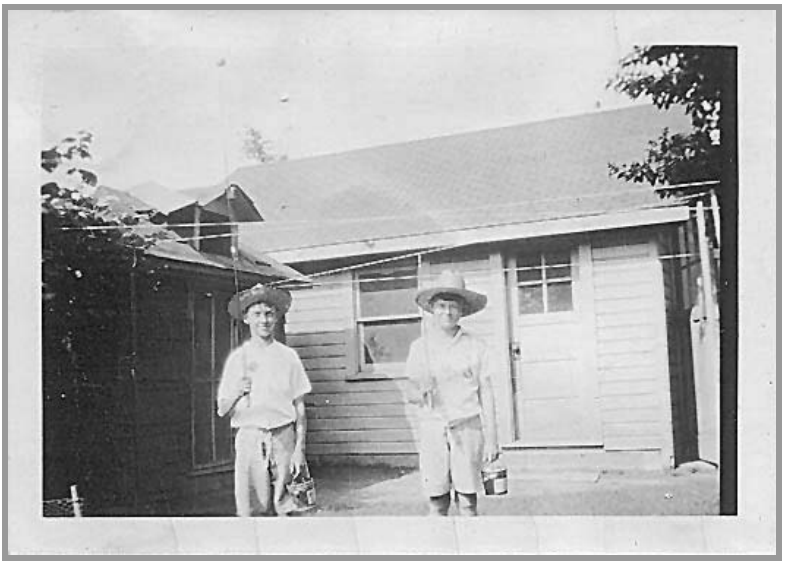
Our music teacher started an orchestra. This was the first time an orchestra had ever been formed. We didn't have an auditorium, but we would go across the street and on the second floor of that building, there was a hall called "Thorburns Hall". We had three violins, a clarinet, and a saxophone. But we did make some music, as we were all determined. Since the school now had an orchestra, the obvious was to build a

weekly assembly around it. Thus the beginning of the assemblies, and school student business, conducted once a week.

It was traditional for the graduating class to go on a boat ride up the Hudson River. The company that owned all the excursion boats was called the Hudson River Dayline. They owned three ships, and we were assigned to the smallest ship and had the whole ship to ourselves. The ship was called the Chauncey M. Depew. The ship traveled about as far north as West Point, and then turned around. It was just a daytime cruise on the water, and there was an orchestra, and dancing. There was no beer or liquor, and in those days, it never entered my mind.

Bill Braunlich and I first met when we played a game where we showed each other Valentines and other postcards from each of our parents' bedroom windows. We were about five years old and this is how we first met each other.

As kids, we found many interests to keep us busy, especially during the summer vacation. It was during the depression, and families didn't have the money to go on a vacation like today.



Bill Braunlich and I go fishing.

In the backyard of my home there were two cherry trees, the trunks of which were about 12 inches in diameter. One in particular had some sturdy branches that were horizontal and were strong enough to support

my weight. I had to jump to get hold of them and when I did I could manage to climb the rest of the tree. This tree was my pride and joy because I could climb very high, and it became my refuge where I could lay in the high branches and look at the clouds and get the illusion I was flying. I spent many hours in these trees and they became my very good friends. On rainy days I was sad that I couldn't spend the day there.

As the years rolled by, we had many good times playing together. I remember the time we built a miniature golf course in my back yard. Miniature golf was the big fad at that time, and at the end of Barrington Ave., and across Main Avenue, there was a miniature golf course. We would go over there in the morning, and we were able to find golf balls that were hit over the fence. They were different colors, and I can see them now, and how happy we were when we found one. That is how we got the golf balls for our course. Miniature golf was very popular at that time, and we spent many hours building a miniature golf course in my back yard. We only had room for about 5 holes, but again, we were very ingenious, and built many types of obstacles in the course that required skill and luck to play through. We didn't have to have money from the government (as required today). We had nothing, and made do with what little we had. I can't ever remember that we were bored, for the want of things to do. If there did happen to be a lull, and some of my close friends were busy for some reason or other, I would spend my time reading. There were many good books, and I enjoyed reading. And then there were the times when we would go fishing in "The Racy".

There was a pond in front of the Clifton High School that was always referred to as "The Racy". Long before I was born, there had been a horseracing track there. That is how it got the nickname. All one would catch would be large gold fish carp, and catfish. We always threw them back; it was just the fun of fishing. We would bring a sandwich along, and a bottle of soda, and have great fun.

The Racey was about 200 yards in front of the High School. It wasn't very large. It was oval in shape, and about 75 yards by 100 yards. It also wasn't very deep, about 4 feet maximum. This made it ideal for ice-skating. I used to take my ice skates to school, and keep them in my locker. Then after school, I would go skating for a couple of hours. There were always plenty of friends there so we really had a lot of fun. One time I remember that while we were skating; there started a sleet

storm, and the roads were all covered with ice. I was able to skate all the way home on the roads.

Bill and me with a tent.

We "Barrington Avenue kids" were very inventive, and always found many ways that would keep us busy and occupied. The area behind my house and my good friend Bill's house, which was next door, consisted of trees and shrubs. This was an area of about 300 feet long by 200 feet deep. Some of the trees were about 30 feet high, and we would climb them and would become all kinds of interesting characters, such as cowboys or Indians, and we created many types of situations. In this wooded area there were many wild cherry trees. We would collect the cherries before they were ripe, and still green. They were about ¼ inch in diameter, and we would use them in our peashooters, which we would buy for a penny.

We also made guns out of elastic bands cut out of an old automobile inner tube. We constructed these guns with a flat piece of wood and a clothespin. I won't go into detail, but they were very effective, and would propel the elastic bands about 30 feet. We would choose sides as "Cops and Robbers" or as "Cowboys and Indians". Whoever got hit with an elastic, was out of the game. These guns didn't cost any money to make. We would go to a local garage, and they were more than happy to have us take the old inner tubes.

Barrington Ave. was only one block long, and many times we would play in the road. In those days, there was very little traffic. At the end of "our block" there was a lumber company called The New York Sash and Door. Their trucks would use our street, and we would become quite annoyed that we would have to interrupt our game to let them pass.

The group of kids on Barrington Ave. was a close-knit bunch, and often we would challenge the kids from nearby streets to football or baseball.

We all had roller skates, and knew how to skate very well. We played street hockey on our roller skates, and had many hours of fun. We also would wear out skate wheels very fast, on the hard road pavement. We also would play hockey using our bicycles. This got to be very risky, and even though we were all good at riding, we had many accidents running in to each other. It really didn't matter though; we were young, and it was just another fall.

Another pastime we had was to build scooters. The roller skates in those days were not the shoe-type skates that are used today. Our skates had a clasp (that was operated with a key) that attached to the sole of one's shoe. The body of the skate was made in two pieces, fastened with a bolt for adjustment for shoe size. We would take the skate apart, and fasten the front section of the skate to a 2 x 4 about 5 feet long with nails and the rear section of the skate to the opposite end of the 2x4. On the front part we would nail upright an old orange crate (wooden box) which was about 3 feet high by 18 inches deep, and 18 inches wide. We most always could get one of these from the local grocer. On the upper portion of this box, we would nail a stick, running across the top. This would be our handle. We then had a scooter, which we used to use for races, etc. We had many hours of fun with these. Oh yes, when we wanted to use our skates again, we would just take them off the scooter, and connect them together again.

In my back yard were two large cherry trees. These trees produced many black sweet cherries. I would pick the cherries, and sell them for ten cents a quart. It took quite a lot of cherries to make a quart, as the cherries were very small.

In my back yard there was a chicken coop. My grandfather lived with us for a while, and my father built a small building, and a run, so that he

could raise chickens as a hobby. After he died, we cleaned it out, and it became a clubhouse for my friends and me.

Once a year my mother, and aunt would take me, and my two cousins to Coney Island. We would take the Main Avenue bus to the train station in Passaic. The train would take us to Jersey City. From there we would take the 23rd St. Ferry cross the Hudson River. We would walk up 23rd Street to the Eighth Avenue El (elevated railroad.) This was a distance of about four blocks. We would climb the many stairs to the top and board the train. After a few minutes, the train would go over the Brooklyn Bridge, and then go underground for a short while, and then would become elevated again. As I remember, it was a long ride, but being a young kid, and wanting to get there, it probably seemed longer. However, it did take about 30 minutes or more. The main attraction there was Steeple Chase Park. One would buy a ticket, and the admission was for all day. They had many interesting things to do inside of this very large building. The reason it was called Steeplechase Park, was because around the perimeter of the building, (which was about a large city block square,) they had a mechanical horse race. The horses were the same types that were used on the average merry-go-round. There were four tracks adjacent to each other, and one would actually be in a horse race. Great fun! We would stay there all day, and would leave for home after dark. We would then retrace our steps, and would arrive home in Clifton about 1 AM the next morning. The reason for relaying this story, is that, here were two women traveling with three small kids, fairly late at night, and there was never any thought of any crime. Dare to try it today!! So much for progress. And we made this trip every year for about 5 years.

I entered Clifton High School when I was 13 years old. The school was about a mile and a half from my home. The Depression was on, and many, many people were unemployed. The federal government had started a works program WPA (which stood for Works Progress Administration.) This was started to give men jobs. It didn't matter what your regular profession had been, this was a program in building the country's infrastructure and also may other types of projects. Many highways, highway bridges etc, were built. While I was attending high school, my father who was an industrial powerhouse engineering

advisor) coincidently was working with a pick and shovel just outside of the building constructing a new road.

In front of my house leaving for a trip.

When I was 12 years old, I joined the Boy Scouts, and this was one of the best things that I ever did. I joined because a son of a friend of my mother was a member of the Troop. The Troop was in Passaic, and the meetings were in the basement hall of the church. We had so many good times. There were about 30 members, and we were divided into 3 patrols. This made it very interesting, because the patrols would compete against each other in various scouting events, such as tying knots, making fire by using flint and tinder, and many other scouting projects. Each patrol selected a name of some animal, such as beaver, panther, etc. Each patrol had a cupboard where we kept our paraphernalia, and we were able to lock it until our next meeting. After the meeting, which usually ended about 9:30 PM, we would play ping-pong. There was a baby grand piano upstairs in the church proper, and very often, I would go there usually by myself, and play. I had many enjoyable hours playing, as the piano had a marvelous tone.

During the summer vacation, I would go up to the farm for about three weeks. My aunt and uncle owned a dairy farm in the northwestern part of New Jersey, in Sussex County. The farm was only about five miles

south of High Point, which was the highest point of land in New Jersey. When I climbed the high hill behind the farmhouse, I was able to see the window that was in the top of the High Point monument. At this time, I was 13 years old, and the year would then be 1933.

Life on the farm was quite primitive. We had no running water (indoor plumbing.) My aunt did all the cooking and baking on the large stove in the kitchen. There was no cooking gas, or electric, and all the stove served a double purpose. The kitchen was very large, so it was the only room in the house that was heated in the winter. So the stove was used for warmth, and cooking and baking. The fuel for the stove was wood, which my uncle would (after cutting down trees) cut into logs using a large circular saw that was belt driven from a gasoline engine. At one end of the sink, in the kitchen was a hand pump, and this was our source of water. My aunt did all of the baking using this wood stove, and was an excellent cook. She would make apple pies from apples that we picked. We would go out in the garden, and pick corn, and since it was freshly picked, it had a great flavor. Any water had to be heated on the stove. There was no central heating, and therefore during the winter, the bedrooms were cold, and many blankets were needed. Fortunately for me, I was there during July and August, so I did not experience the harsh winter living. Again, since there was no indoor plumbing, one had to use the outhouse. Also there was no electricity, so in the evening the only lighting we had was kerosene lamps.

They had a telephone, but it must have had ten parties on the line. When the phone rang, all of the phones on the line "neighbors" would also ring, so one really never had a private conversation, because anyone could be listening.

There were about 30 cows. They had to be milked twice a day, about 5:30 AM and 5:00 PM. The cows knew when it s time to be milked, because by the time we got to the barn, they had already come down from the meadow, and were standing by the gate which led into the barn. Milking took about 1½ hours. I never did any milking, but my uncle, and his son did. I always remember that whenever one shook hands with them, their grip was very, very strong, due to the countless hours of milking.

After finishing, the evening milking, the large metal containers of milk were submerged in the spring water to cool. After the AM milking the

following morning, the cans were also put into the spring water. We then had a quick breakfast, and then it was off to the creamery that was just outside of the city limits of Sussex. Before the milk was taken off of my uncle's pick-up truck, a sample was taken, to check the butterfat content. If it was too low, it would be rejected, and we would have to take it back to the farm. We would then make buttermilk, butter, and then feed some to the hogs, and throw the rest away. This didn't happen too often.

Being on the farm in the summer was such a pleasure. It was very quiet and peaceful, and many times one could hear birds singing. I remember my very first night on the farm. After it got dark, I couldn't believe how many stars there were in the heavens. People who live in the city have never experienced this.

I remember that my uncle had a team of horses which were used for various chores, such as plowing, pulling a cutting machine for cutting the hay in the summer, pulling the hay wagon, and also the manure wagon. Their names were Tom & Jerry, I can hear him yet calling, "c'mon Jerry, you're not pulling your load." C'mon Tom, watch what you're doing."

I would get down to visit Clifton for a few hours, once a week. My uncle had an egg route, and all of his customers were in Passaic Clifton, and Garfield. When the corn was ripe, we would pick it in the morning, and then bring it down with the eggs. Not only did the egg customers buy the corn but also many other people near our egg customers. The corn had been freshly picked, and we could have sold much more, had we had a larger truck. After an afternoon of this we were on our way back to the farm.

It was interesting how soon one could become adapted to the farm. Life was so much slower, compared to the hustle-bustle of the city, and Clifton was not a large city. The farm was so quiet and peaceful. I enjoyed chasing some of the cows into the barn, and I can still see their large black innocent eyes staring back at me.

My stay at the farm was usually about three weeks, and I loved every minute of it. However, all too soon, it was time to leave. Those three summers that I had on the farm were a memorable part of my childhood, and coincidentally, in the army, when I came into contact with people who were from the Midwest, and had been brought up on a farm. I could

appreciate what their feelings were all about when they spoke of "home".

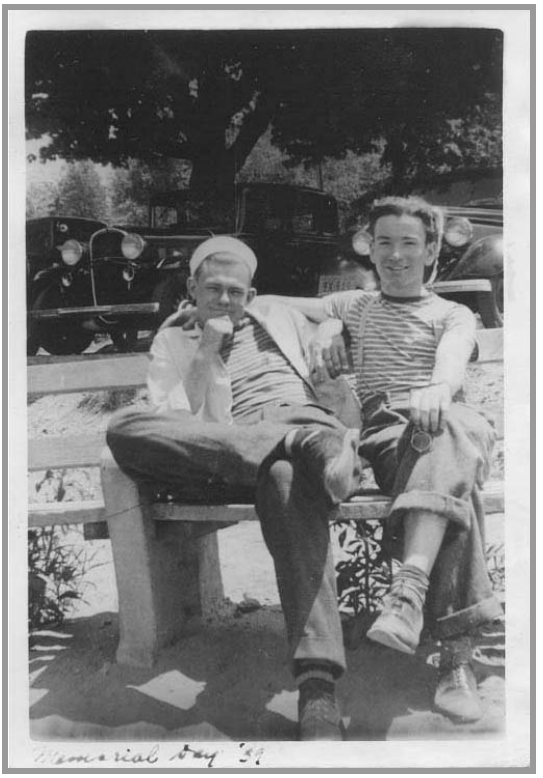
Soon after graduating high school, my father got a job installing an oil burner and boiler (industrial) for a company in Newark. This job would only last about three months, but while working there, he managed to get me a job there too. The company name was Cooper Chemical Co. and they manufactured artificial leather products, which was very popular at the time. Basically, they took cloth and coated it with many layers of plastic, which was really cellulose. They had huge vats that were filled with liquid solvent. These vats were about 30 ft. in diameter, and about 8ft. deep. Above and around the whole perimeter, there was a balcony. On this balcony, there were large fans spaced about every 10 ft. There were reels of motion picture film, which was clear, as all the pictures (silver nitrate) had been removed from them. The fans would blow the center of the film in a continuous string into the vat. A huge paddle in the vat would revolve, and eventually the film would be dissolved into a thick liquid. This liquid would be stored in metal drums, and color would be added. This is what was used to coat the fabric. It was then sent to an oven, and dried, and then embossed with various designs, some resembling alligator or snakeskin. This place was a time bomb waiting to blow up. As I think back, I wouldn't want my son to work in a place like that, but people in those days were naïve, and any job one could get was acceptable.

The depression was very bad for my family. The Stock Market crashed in 1929, and that technically was the beginning of the depression. However, my father was out of work about a year before that, because the industry was already taking a down turn, and the construction of powerhouses had ceased.

I remember hearing my mother and father talking about how we might lose our house, because there was no money to pay off the mortgage. I remember shortly after overhearing their conversation, I went out to play with some of my friends, but carried a great burden from then on.

I had two good friends, Bill Braunlich, and John McLain. Bill didn't have this problem, because the house that he and his family lived in (next door to us), was owned by his grandmother who lived with them (it was her house), so Bill had nothing to worry about.

With Bill and friends.



With John, Memorial Day 1939.

My friend John McLain's father had died, so there was only John, his sister, who was single and living home, and his mother. However, his sister and mother were both teachers, and had steady jobs. Living under this fear at my age (I was about 12 years old), left me with a stigma that I wasn't able to shake for many years.

While I was still in high school, after school I had a paper route. I had built the route up to about 100 papers. I had to go down to the city of Passaic every afternoon, rain or shine to pick up my papers at the Herald News. This was about 4 miles from my route, which was in Clifton. The price of the paper was 18 cents per week for 6 days. I made 1 penny for every paper that I delivered. To save money, I would walk to the Herald News building, so I would save the nickel (bus fare.) I would then take the bus back, because the papers were very heavy.

All dressed up, Easter 1938.

I also had another job, which paid me 25 cents a day. There was a Shell gasoline station near my house, and the owners had to send the days

receipts into the main office every day. I got 25 cents every day for carrying the money over to the post office, and making out a money order, and sending the money off.

After I graduated from high school, gave up the paper route, and got a part time job in this gas station. I worked odd hours, time when the owners had to take off for meetings or other important events, such as going down to the burlesque show in Newark. I also worked all of the holidays. I didn't mind the holidays, because it was a chance to make extra money. They were very good to me. They gave me a penny for every gallon of gas that I pumped. Also the fee for tire changes or repair that I did, they said that I could keep (usually 50 cents).

A friend of mine got me a job in a dog food-canning factory. Ugh! This was an awful job. We would take the cans after they came off of the filling machine (they were filled with raw entrails of whatever) and we would load the sealed cans on trucks, and wheel them into and autoclave to be cooked. After the cooking period was over, we would go into the autoclave, and wheel out the carts loaded with cans, and let them cool before packing them into cardboard boxes. The horrible part of this job was that during the time that the cans were being cooked, some of them would burst, and we would have this vile smell inside and anywhere near the autoclave. One had to have a strong stomach for this job. Needless to say, that we didn't have much of an appetite for lunch. However, during these depression times any job was not to be frowned upon.

I also worked on a used car lot, which was near the gas station. I worked there doing light maintenance work such as preparing cars for delivery that had been sold. I would also go to Philadelphia by train, with the owner of the lot, and he would buy some cars there at wholesale prices. The deal was that for every three good cars that he bought, he had to take one "clunker". After the purchase, we would each drive a car back his lot in Clifton. The following days, I would then take the train again to Philadelphia, and drive a car back, until all of the cars he purchased were finally brought back to Clifton. I had some "hair raising" trips on my return trip, with some of the "clunkers." However, I enjoyed it, and I was getting paid besides. I would take almost any kind of employment to make a few bucks.

With John, and "Minerva" the car, 22nd St. Paterson, May 1939.

My folks had a friend whose son worked for the American Can Co. in Hoboken. He had just been transferred from Brooklyn, because General Foods Corp. (Maxwell Coffee Division) had just opened a new plant in Hoboken. American Can Co. had 3 floors of the building, and was making the cans, and then sending them downstairs to be filled. This building was right on the waterfront on the Hudson River, and the ships would come in from South America, and dock there and unload the coffee. I was always impressed with this arrangement, because I used to eat my lunch inside at the rear of the building, which was all glass, and I would have a great view of the Hudson River, and all the activity going on. The drums of war were beginning to beat, and the Todd Shipyards were next door. Merchant vessels were coming in there to be fitted with guns. I saw the Hindenburg (Germany's largest transcontinental dirigible) fly by. I also saw the Bremen, which was Germany's largest

ocean liner leave New York, for the last time, before WW2 started. Both of them were flying the Swastika.

About a year before I got a steady job with the American Can Co., I got a part-time job in another gas station. The year was 1938, and I was eighteen. Behind my house, there was a gas station, and I became friendly with the two men who owned it. I would work there alone on holidays and Sundays, and pump gas. They were very generous. They would give me whatever money (profit) they would make on a gallon of gas, which was about two cents. I would usually work from 12 noon, until 8 P.M. Gasoline those days (1939) was about 15 cents a gallon. My father would bring a hot dinner to me about 5 P.M. It was only a three minute walk from my house to the gas station. I remember it was a time when the big bands, Tommy Dorsey, Benny Goodman et al. would be on the radio, (this was before the days of television) and they would broadcast for one hour from the popular ballrooms around the country. They would play all the popular hit songs of the day, and usually a new one. And there was at least one new one every week. Sometimes, they would broadcast from the Meadowbrook ballroom, which was about a half hour ride from my house.

The country was just coming out of the depression, and having a steady job with the American Can Co., was exhilarating, especially; now I had a steady paycheck, and money in my pocket.

I had a very good friend, John McLain, who played drums, and we played in the high school orchestra together for four years. John's sister belonged to a Scotch Lodge in Passaic, and there was a woman piano player who played all the jigs and reels, for the Scottish dancers. John would accompany her on the drums, and he asked me if I would like to join them and play my violin. I jumped at the chance, and we finally were playing popular dance music besides the jigs and reels. Once again, this was a chance to make a few bucks. We used to travel to the different lodges in North Jersey, and we had many, many happy times. We finally named our threesome the "Blue Bell Trio".

With John, Lambert's Castle, Paterson, NJ.

John was attending the College of Paterson, and one of their social activities, was to go roller-skating one evening a week. Roller-skating on a large indoor rink was a very popular pastime. John asked me if I would like to go, and he would get one of the girls from one of his classes to go. I agreed, and John picked me up and we drove to the college, and picked up some of the people, and then we drove to my date's house. By this time, the car was full, and there were no more seats. By the time we got to my date's house, it was dark. John went up to the door and rang the bell. When my date came out we were introduced by name, but since it was dark, we had no idea what each other looked like. Also since there were no more seats in the car, my date had to sit on my lap. This really turned into a blind date.

When we got to the rink, and we got inside, it was the first chance that I had to see what my date looked like. I really can't say that I remember what my reaction was, but it must have been favorable, for within the

week, I called Doris, and asked if she would like to go to the movies. And that is the story of how I met my wife.

John, Doris, and "Minerva", 22nd St. Paterson, NJ, May 1939.

One of the local places that the different bands would be featured, was a place in Cedar Grove, not far from where we lived. It was called the Meadowbrook. It was very well known, and they had what they called "tea dances" every Sunday afternoon. The cover charge was 50 cents. I can't remember that anyone drank alcoholic beverages; we usually had a couple of Cokes. We were too busy listening to the band, and dancing. These dances were from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Usually, they would broadcast nationally for a half hour. This was really a big deal, and most every one would stand around the bandstand and listen and watch. It really was great feeling. Through some distant friend of Doris's mother, Doris got a business card signed by Frank Daily (owner of the Meadowbrook) and when we presented this card, we didn't have to pay the 50-cent cover

charge. Doesn't sound like much money today, but back in 1939, one could do a lot of things for 50 cents.

With Doris, Shirley, and John, 22nd St, Paterson, NJ, May 1939.

There were other places that we could see these popular bands. They would perform at the Steel Pier at Atlantic City in the summertime. The best place to see them perform was in Manhattan at the Paramount Theatre. There were however, other theatres in the Times Square District that always featured the Big Bands. They were the Strand, and the Capital. Some of the Big Bands would also have engagements at the larger hotels, such as the Hotel Taft, the roof (top floor ballroom) of the Hotel Aster and the Hotel Pennsylvania.

Doris worked for Brogan Cadillac in Paterson, and one Saturday of every month, she would have to work the switchboard until about 2 p.m. I would drive up to the showroom, and I can remember it as if it was yesterday. I would be sitting there in front of the big glass show room and see all those beautiful cars, while I was waiting for her.

As soon as Doris finished work, we would take off for New York City. I would use the ferry instead of the Lincoln Tunnel, because the ferry was only 23 cents one way. We never had a long wait, and it didn't matter, because we always had plenty of things to talk about. We were young and had many things in common, and enjoyed everything. When we got

in Manhattan, I would drive up 8th avenue to about 52nd street, and there was a parking lot that I would use, because it was only 25 cents. There were no parking garages in those days, and parking was cheap. You paid your 25 cents, and that was it for the whole evening. We would then go to dinner in a little Hofbrau that I had found, and they had a German menu. We would have our dinner, which cost about 3 dollars for the two of us, including the tip. We would then head for the Paramount Theatre. The price of admission was 50 cents each. The Paramount had all the best bands of the day, and the program was: the latest movie of the day; then after, a short interlude with the house organ playing; then the most popular band of the day would rise up out of the pit (on an elevated floor). I can see and hear it now. The band would be playing its theme song, even before one could see them. There also would be a couple of acts such as tap dancers etc. accompanied by the orchestra. The stage show would last about an hour, and then the movie would be shown again. If one wanted to sit through the movie, then the stage show would come on again. If it was really one of the top bands of the day, we did this more than once.

In the evening after the show was over, and usually this was about 10 p.m. we would walk up Broadway to about 50th Street, and there was a record store there that sold only records that were taken off the juke boxes. At this time all the records were 78 rpm and fragile. If one was dropped on a hard surface, it would shatter. Also if left in the hot sun or in a hot car the record would melt and distort. Anyhow we got very proficient at holding the record up, and viewing it to see how badly it was worn. These records were only about ten cents each. On occasion, we would find a couple that were quite good. After this, we headed home, and since it was Saturday (Sunday morning) we would stay out late.

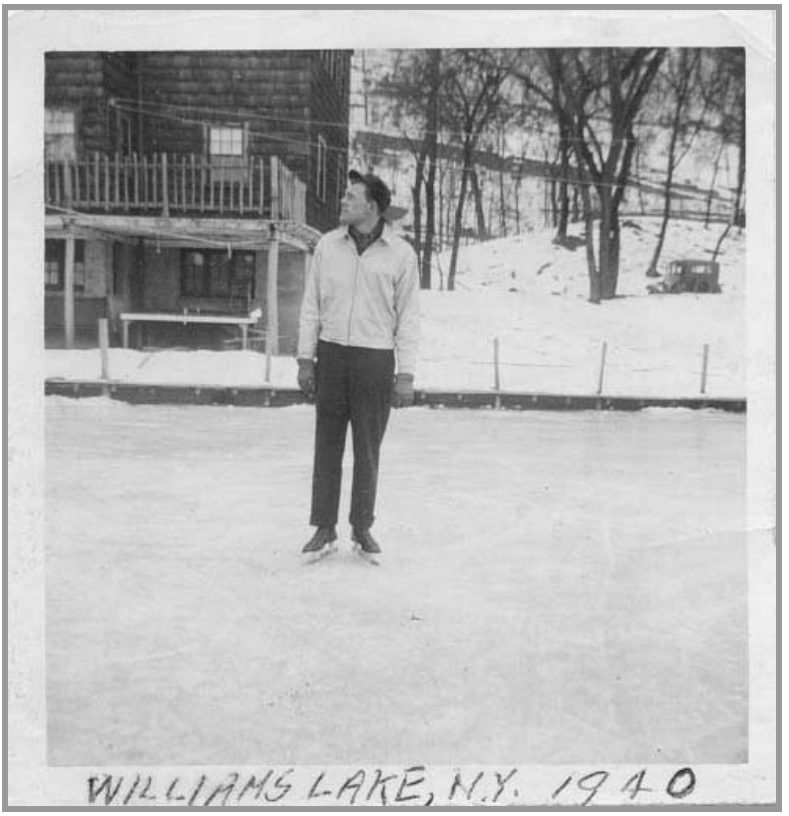
We would usually leave the City about 1 a. m. Then on the way back home, when we got to New Jersey, we had a favorite diner in Clifton that we would stop in for coffee and a snack, and as usual, the jukebox would be playing all of our favorite songs. To play a song in the jukebox, it cost 5 cents. The song on the record, played about 3 minutes. There was even a place on the jukebox where you could get 3 minutes of silence for 5 cents.

With John, and Doris, Memorial Day, 1939.

The next day, Sunday, in the afternoon, I would pick up Doris, and if it was a nice day, we would go for a ride. My parents had a membership to Crestwood Lake in Allendale, and Doris and I would go there for the afternoon, and in to the evening. It was nice, because at one end there was an outdoor dance floor with lights strung about, and it was at the run-off of the lake, and there were reeds growing there, and in the evening, it was very pretty and relaxing. Ah! Those were the days. Never did we suspect that in a few short months that we would be at war, and everything would change. This has been said many times, but one really has to have been a part of it to feel it. The great feeling of youth changed almost overnight. And we all became adults in a hurry.

There was a resort in New York State, not too far from Northern Jersey, that catered to winter sports. Its name was William's Lake. Scandinavian people owned it, and we would go there for a weekend. There was ice-skating on a large lake, and tobogganing. The Scandinavian people that went there, used to go swimming. That was always interesting. There was a large hole that had been cut into the ice. About 30 feet square. The swimmers would go into a steam room, which was right on the edge of the open water, and after being in there for some time, the would come out all steamed up and emitting steam from their bodies, and would then jump into the frigid water. We both suspected that they must have had

an ample amount of “schnapps” before. We would be standing there in our ice skates and watched the “sport”.



Williams Lake, NY, 1940.

I had to report for Army induction on February 16th 1942, Doris and I had just come back from one of the weekends at Williams lake, and I remember dropping her off at her house, and going inside and shaking hands with her father. I am sure he appreciated how I was feeling, as he had been in WW1, and had been in France. This was the evening of February the 15th, and tomorrow morning I had to report for induction.

That evening for me was a very sad time, and there were many more to follow. When I left home the following morning, I felt as though my world had ended. And in a sense, it really did, for from now on, it was a whole new experience.

The location that I had to report to was only three blocks from my home, and as I remember, I preferred to go alone. I said goodbye to my parents at home and then made the short walk to the induction center. I had plenty of company and by that I mean, that all of us that were there, were experiencing the same feelings.

Part II

The War

"Memoirs of a crew chief"

I graduated from High School in 1937. There were no jobs available. We were still in the depression, and there was no money for college. I was able to get part time work on a couple of used car lots, preparing vehicles for delivery, and doing minor mechanical work. This did not pay very much, but I was learning something every day, which was important.

The son of a friend of my father worked for the American Can company, and they were opening a new division in a new building in Hoboken. He arranged an interview for me. I filled out an application, and I was accepted. This was in May of 1939. Actually, General Foods Inc. built a new building on the waterfront of the Hudson River, and The American Can Co. was going to occupy the major part of the building. The arrangement was that American Can would Manufacture one-pound coffee cans on site, and they would be conveyed to another section of the building to be filled. Since our location was on the Hudson River, the coffee boats would dock here, and unload the coffee. A real efficient operation.

Although I was working on a production line, it was a good job. The company was sending me to school two evenings a week, and a half a day Saturday. I was learning to become a machinist. The pay was very good (34 dollars a week) and the hours were good, 8 hours a day, 5 days a week. The commute was quite long, from my hometown of Clifton to Hoboken; about 45 minutes, with in those days, no traffic ever, but I did not mind, because I had a steady job, and that was important. I had a steady girlfriend, now I had some money, and we were able to go places and do things.

December 7th 1941, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, and the next day, the United States was at war. I was not about to join up because I finally had a good job, and also I figured that it was important that I get as much schooling and hands on mechanical training, so that when the time came that I had to go, I would have a good chance of getting into the Air Corps. This eventually did happen.

I was inducted into the Army on February the 16th, 1942. I had to report to a room on the second floor of the Clifton Theatre building, in Clifton N. J. From there we boarded a bus that took us to the Pennsylvania Railroad Station in Newark. At that location we boarded a train, which took us to Fort Dix, NJ. A couple of the fellows were friends that

graduated from Clifton High School with me. Once I got to Fort Dix, that was the last I saw of them, and to this day, I don't know what happened to them.

Fort Dix was a staging area for inductees, and once we arrived, we were given our army uniforms (which by the way didn't fit very well.) Once we got our clothing we lined up on the platform outside of the stores, and I remember that my overseas cap was so large that it almost covered my eyes. The Sgt. In charge evidently thought it looked so ridiculous, that he took me back inside and got me one that fit. I can laugh at it now, but at the time nothing seemed very funny.

Being February, the temperature was very cold. It was about 5 degrees F. and we were living in typical pyramid wall type tents. In the center of the tent, there was a conical type coal furnace about 4 feet in diameter at the base and about 3 ft. high, which turned cherry red as we stoked it to keep warm. The first night as we were all standing around in a circle with our backs to the furnace, we smelled something burning, and when I turned around, I found out that I had singed the bottom of my new overcoat. I was very upset, and said to myself that here I am, one day in the army, and I'll probably get court-martialed.

The next morning, we were all given some drilling and marching instructions. We were told to keep our eyes forward and to not look down at the ground. This would have been OK except that a few days before we arrived at Fort Dix there evidently had been a thaw, and the ground was full of ruts from heavy trucks, and then had frozen. Well if you wanted to see a sorry sight you would have laughed to see us trying to march over this frozen ground full of ruts. We were falling all over ourselves.

The following morning, after being left standing about 1 hour in the 5-degree temperature, we were marched into a large auditorium, to take an IQ test. Once again after being nearly frozen, it was enough to just stop shivering, let alone concentrating on the various subjects, but as mentioned previously, the schooling that I had gotten, gave me a decided advantage, and I was transferred to the Air Corps. (That was the correct name in 1942.)

One day a sergeant had us all fall out (line up) and asked if any one of us knew how to type, and if so, to take one-step forward. There were about

ten of us who did. He then marched us off down to the railroad siding, and they had two boxcars of tapioca (in 100 pound bags) that had to be unloaded. We worked all night to finish the job. How quickly you learn when in the military, don't volunteer for anything.

So we were loaded on a troop train. I took us better than a week to get to Biloxi Mississippi I think that we were held on every siding between New Jersey and Mississippi. This was done so that the civilian trains could proceed. For some reason, they had priority. I remember looking out the window of our train at the civilian trains going through, and thinking, "I was one of them once."

It was interesting how we were fed. The first car after the engine, was a baggage car, which for those today who have never heard the name, it was a plane car with no seats, and was sometimes used just to store baggage, and sometimes was just used for the U. S. Mail. On the floor of this car, they had built a rectangular box out of timber about 2 inches thick and about 18 inches high. The rectangle was about 6 feet wide and about 12 feet long. This was filled with sand, and they had about 5 G. I. cans (metal garbage cans). Each one of these was filled with the type of food for the meal of the day with hot coals underneath. The people in the first car after the baggage car would proceed to the baggage care and then return to their seats. Then the second car would proceed, etc, until all of the people in the subsequent cars had been fed. Needless to say by the time the third and following cars of about a ten-car train had been fed, the aisles were quit slippery with spilled coffee etc. Since the train was traveling at its normal speed, it was quite a trick to get back to your seat without becoming a complete mess. Maybe that is where the military got the name from "mess hall". Wondering how we got our mess gear cleaned? The army thought of everything. We again filed to the baggage car, and this time they had G.I. cans full of boiling water, and since all the cutlery had a hole in it that fit over the handle of the mess gear, and the cup fit over the handle. The whole mess gear was dunked into the first can of boiling water, then into the second can and then to into the third can for a final rinse.

After a week on the train (without a shower) we finally arrived at Keesler Field in Biloxi Mississippi. It was a Sunday afternoon, and as we walked into the post, (I might add with our winter clothes on) the personnel who lived in the barracks greeted us. They all were leaning

out of the windows, and as was usual when a new contingent of people entered a new post, every one of them was calling out, “Anyone from Texas? Anyone from New Jersey? etc. etc.”. Little did we realize that they occupied the last and only permanent barracks that we would see while we were stationed at Keesler Field. We were assigned to a tent in “tent city.”

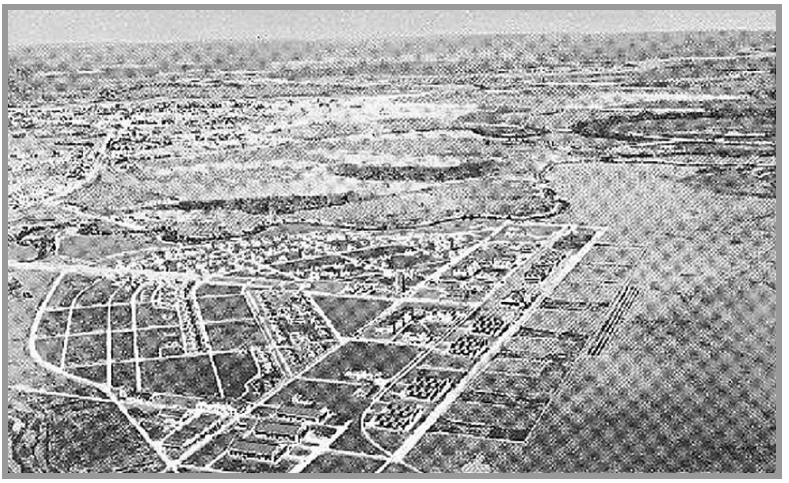
What we found out later, was that construction of Keesler Field wasn’t finished, and we were sent there because Jefferson Barracks was closed because of an epidemic, and there was no other place to send us. The only other construction completed was the mess halls.

The mess halls were all in a row and there must have been about 30 of them. They were what I would call double mess halls. The kitchen area was in the center of the building, and the dining area was at each end, and each dining area was very large. (Interestingly, I visited Keesler Field, in 1986, and they were razing the last of the original mess halls.)

We were assigned to an area that was called the Back Bay section, which was a sandy area, and we were living in tents. This then was to be our new home. Since this was the month of February, we were there at possibly one of the worst times of the year. It was foggy until about 10 in the morning, and then it never seemed to get really clear. It was always very damp, and almost every day, in the afternoon we would get a torrential rainstorm. It would rain so hard for about 10 minutes that even the sandy ground couldn’t absorb the water, and we would have about an inch of water on the floor (which was sand) of the tent. We learned very soon that we could leave nothing on the floor of the tent, and that everything had to be placed on our cots.

The post was occupied by many troops, and they had nothing for us to do. They didn’t have the necessary drill instructors; we had no guns to practice on the firing range. So how did they keep us busy? Well in those days, all food came in metal cans, and the cans all had paper labels on them (that was before the days of mimeographing on metal.) So each morning after breakfast, and each afternoon after lunch, they would march us out to the dump where all the cans from previous meals were dumped, and we had to take the paper labels off of all the cans and put them in the correct piles. Corn labels with corn labels bean labels with bean labels etc. What a way to fight a war!

When you were assigned to KP it lasted from 5 a.m. until midnight. But fortunately we only had this assignment about once every three weeks. I remember one of my jobs while on KP, was to clean the cooking vat that they used to prepare chocolate pudding (I never had chocolate pudding in my entire army career that wasn't burnt). Well this vat was made of stainless steel, and was so large that you had to actually get inside of it to clean it. This was no easy task, because the pudding was baked on to it. There isn't much more that I can add about Keesler Field except that the food was good. Oh yes there is one more thing. The first time I went to the "head" I was really shocked. There were two rows of toilets about 25 in each row back to back and about 8 inches of space between them. So much for privacy!



Aerial view of Barksdale Field, Shreveport, Louisiana.

About the end of June, we were moved to Barksdale Field in Shreveport La. We boarded the train in Biloxi, and traveled west. When we crossed the Mississippi river, they broke the train apart, and then put sections on barges. It was then reassembled on the other side. We were quite concerned, because we thought the army was pulling a fast one, and were going to take us to one of the large liners that were moored there, and ship us overseas.

This was going from the ridiculous to the sublime. Barksdale Field was a permanent air base prior to the war. There were many 3 storied by about 200 feet long permanent brick barracks (for the officers.) We were once again assigned to TENT CITY. It wasn't half-bad though. We did

have some real discipline, and did a lot of drilling' which wasn't too bad as it did take up the time and kept our minds off of our problems.

At Barksdale Field there were about ten huge hangars, all in a line and parallel to the main runway. Each hangar was large enough to house 3 B-24's. This was where I made my first flight. I remember asking someone how I could get on a flight, and I was told "just go over to the parachute bay, and check out a chute, and the next pilot you see ask him if you can go along." This I did, and I didn't believe it would be that easy.

There is an amusing story that I should tell at this time. Since Barksdale field was a permanent base before the war, there were many duplex type permanent brick buildings. Some were occupied by officers, and some by non- commissioned officers. Tech. and Master sergeants. Our drill sergeant was not one of the nicest people in the world, and he decided that he would get us out on the drill field at about 5 A.M. Well, if you can picture a parade field about the size of a football field with paved streets around the perimeter, and permanent duplex houses, with nice front lawns around this field, you can get the picture. As I said before GI's are quite ingenious, so once on the parade field (with out an order from the sergeant), we began to count out cadence of our march as 1,2,3, etc. as loud as we could. This did not sit too well with the tenants (at 5A.M.) and it created an immediate reaction. One by one the lights in the houses started to come on. Obviously we never had to do that again, and also we never did see that drill sergeant again. "One for our side!"

In about two weeks, we were moved into two storied wooden permanent barracks. This was a real luxury, after having lived in tents for so long. We had only been there for a couple days, when our temporary assigned C.O. (commanding officer) decided that after roll call (about 5A.M.) that he would take us for a 1 mile run each morning. Somebody in our group who evidentially had been familiar with army regulations determined that this procedure was not permitted before breakfast, so our C.O. had to comply. However, we didn't win because the following morning after breakfast, he took us on a 1 mile run with our gas masks on. However, GI's are very ingenious. Because the gas mask fit very tight on our face we were not able to get enough air for breathing on such a long run. So we got a little tiny stick or a roll of paper and put this between the mask and our face, and this let enough air in so that we could breathe. Since

we were now in new barracks, down the center of the floor are there were full sized lockers back to back, many more really than we needed by the amount of personnel in the building, and this leads in to another story. For some reason after we had breakfast, we didn't have roll call. I can only guess this was not done because everyone went to breakfast. However, after breakfast, we were allowed back into the barracks to pick up our gas masks, and this is when we took turns hiding in the full-length lockers so that some of us every other day didn't have to make the run. Since it was dark, our favorite C.O. never noticed the missing troops.

Since the 93rd Bomb Group was just beginning to form, I remember being interviewed by K.O. Dessert, who was to become the Squadron C.O. of the 409th Squadron. I didn't realize it at the time, but he did interview everyone that was to be a member of his squadron. We also took a flight physical, which also included a colorblind test.

Shortly after this procedure, we became operational and did a lot of flying and training on B-24's. Those that were selected as gunners, were given special training on the 50 cal. Machine gun. Those selected for engineers (and top turret gunners) were given gunnery training and ground and aircraft instruction on these specialized duties.

Soon after the interview, we were selected for specific duties. Such as, tail gunner, waist gunner, ball turret gunner, radio operator and the top turret gunner, who always had the dual position of being engineer. This required additional training in some of the mechanical workings of the ship, but mainly learning about whatever mechanical problems could be corrected because of battle damage and emergencies while in flight. The officer's (4) on every crew had previously had a great amount of training in their individual assignments. Beside the enlisted men, (6) there were (4) commissioned officers. They were the pilot, the co-pilot, the bombardier, and the navigator, the right and left waist gunners, the tail turret, the top turret gunner, (who was also the engineer,) and the radioman, who did not have a gun position. This then totaled to a normal crew of ten. In the earlier part of the war, all the B-24's were the earlier "D" models, and they did not have a gun turret in the nose, but they did have two individual 50 cal guns on ball type swivels in the nose. So it was the bombardier and or the navigator, or sometimes both of them. Whoever was not busy with his other duties, or how intense the action

was at the time to man the nose guns. Later on, about the beginning of 1944, we started to get the B-24 J and H models, which had a nose turret, which was manned by an enlisted man, a nose turret gunner. Also because of the added flexibility of the nose turret, but mainly because of a different type of formation that the squadrons flew, the whole group got better firepower coverage, and they didn't use the ball turret. Maybe I am getting a little ahead of my story. So let's get back to our training at Barksdale Field.

We all had a specified amount of time allotted each day for ground school. Each ground school of course depended upon your position in the aircraft. I should mention that most everyone on the aircrew had had previous training in his particular field. Gunners had been to gunnery school at a previous location. Radio operators, all of the crew including the officers had had previous training. The training we were getting at Barksdale Field was on the B-24. The crewmember that had the most difficult problem was the pilot. The B-24 was the first aircraft the air corp. had that had a tricycle landing gear, and this created quite a problem for the pilots. With the tricycle landing gear, the correct way to land was to land on the main gear, keeping the nose wheel off the ground until the aircraft had slowed enough to let the nose down gently (pilots new to the B-24 were not accustomed to this type of landing, because all the aircraft that they had flown previously in their training had a tail wheel, instead of a nose wheel). This then did not stress the nose wheel, which was rather fragile. If the aircraft landed and touched down with the nose wheel first, before the main gear, the nose wheel would almost certainly collapse. Prior to landing, many times the main gear would extend OK, but the nose wheel would not. It was then the engineer's job to go down and release the nose wheel lock with a screwdriver. When we were at Barksdale Field in May and June of 1942, and were training, we would make about 30 touch and go landings each day. About 10% of the time, the nose wheel would not come down. On every landing, not only in training, the Engineer must check to see if the nose wheel is down and locked. If the nose wheel does not come down, and the doors are open, it becomes a rather scary situation, because the engineer has to go down into the wheel well, and he is in a very confined area, and is looking directly down at the ground. The aircraft is traveling about 110 M.P.H. so the wind is clouding part of his vision; and because

the nose wheel is up, and the nose wheel doors are open, this leaves approximately, a 4ft. x 6ft. open hole between him and the ground.

However what has happened is that the doors have opened, but the lock holding the nose wheel in the up position has not released. So now, what you have is a nose wheel down hydraulic cylinder with about 1200 P.S.I. hydraulic pressure on it, and on the lock mechanism. What we did was to always leave a large screwdriver down there so that we could pry the lock free. Once the lock was pried free, the nose wheel would eject like it was shot out of a cannon, and one had better be sure that all of his parts are clear, or for sure he is going to lose them, or maybe even go down with the nose wheel, when it releases. The first time one gets involved with this procedure, it can be quite traumatic. Nevertheless, even on subsequent times it is always quite an experience.

The main Landing gear also had a lock, which was painted yellow, and was visible from the waist windows in the rear of the ship. When the main gear was down and locked, the waist gunners could see this yellow lock mechanism, and would report it to the pilot, that the main gear was down and locked.

Once we started training, the first phase was landing and taking off. This was so the pilots would become proficient in landing the B-24. The B-24 was the first heavy bomber that the Air Force had obtained that had a tricycle landing gear. (Nose wheel, instead of a tail wheel.) We would do about 25 to 30 what were called “touch and go” landings. The procedure for this was; take off, and once airborne, make a 180 degree turn, fly until you are out past the entrance to the runway, then make another 180 degree turn, line up with the runway and proceed to land. Usually the engineer was calling off the air speed to the pilot, because the pilot had all he could do just to concentrate on the other important duties. Once the aircraft was on the ground, and the landing was successful (that is with the nose wheel touching the ground at the reduced speed, the pilot would push the throttles forward and begin another take-off. This was accomplished by not stopping the aircraft. After doing about 30 of these everyone had had enough. And that would be it for that session, until the next day. I remember going through this procedure at night, which made everything a little more difficult. On occasion, a landing would be made with the nose wheel touching the ground first, and this would collapse the nose wheel Of course the

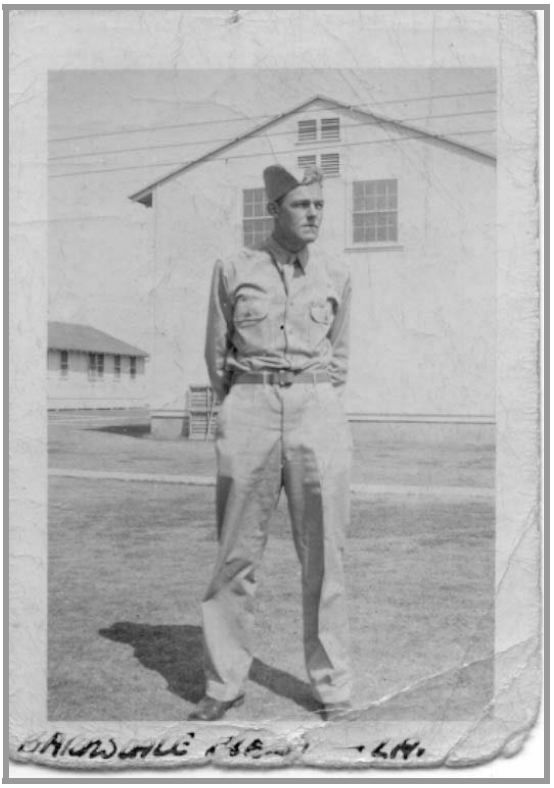
engineer was kept very busy during these take-off's and landings, because he had other duties to perform. Such as turning auxiliary generators on and off, which supplied back-up electrical power for the instruments during take-off, should an engine fail, which was driving the generator on that specific engine for normal electricity.

Another phase of our training was called cross-country. This was required really for two reasons. One was for the pilots and navigators to get airtime in flying, and navigation. The other reason was so that the pilot and co-pilot could get some instrument (blind flying time.) There was a small overhead track that ran around the pilot, and it had a curtain on it that could be pulled around which would completely obstructed the outside view of the pilot. When this completely encircled the pilot, he had to rely only on the flight instruments. I remember on one cross-country flight like this, we took off from Barksdale Field LA. And flew to Wright-Paterson Field in Dayton Ohio. We landed, had lunch, and then headed back to Barksdale. Of course, while the pilot was on instruments, it was the duty of the rest of the crew to make sure that the sky was clear of any other aircraft nearby. At this time we were using the B-24D, which was the earliest model of B-24. I don't know if later versions were equipped with the curtain for training for instrument flying.

Another phase of our training, (and I really shouldn't say our training,) but the training of the pilot and the co-pilot was, formation flying. This was the most difficult, and I think the most hazardous. The Idea was to be able to tuck your left wing tip in behind the right wing tip of ship on your left, and also at naturally at the same altitude, and speed. Also not to get your wing tip too far in to the ship on your left so that you would get into his prop-wash, which could be rather scary. I remember standing behind the pilot during these exercises, and when he started out his shirt was dry. After a short time his shirt was soaked with perspiration. A very difficult exercise, which required the utmost attention at all times. I can also remember at times getting in a little to close to the adjacent ship, and when the pilot pulled the four throttles all the way back, it felt like putting the brakes on at about 180 M.P.H. If you were not bracing yourself or holding on, you would be thrown on to the floor or up against the nearest object. Formation flying was very important in combat, because when all ships stayed close together, the

whole force had a more concentrated firepower. Also the idea was to keep German fighters from flying inside the formation. It seemed that new aircrews that were going into combat didn't have nearly enough training in formation flying. Therefore, whenever there was time, they would get additional training at their newly assigned airbase. However, later on in actual combat, the aircraft didn't fly so very close, as in training, so that part of the pilot or co-pilots job became less stressful.

After our training was completed, and we were officially assigned and organized as the 93rd Bomb Group, everything was crated, (like a circus) and we stood inspection. We were then shipped off to Fort Myers Florida for advanced training prior to our deployment overseas.



Barksdale Field, Louisiana., May 1943.

I remember that whenever we traveled into a military base by train, we always took a spur siding, and traveled very slowly. This time we were on the tracks that passed the warehouses that sorted and packed oranges. We would travel about a hundred yards, and stop. A couple of times we

stopped by one of these warehouses, and the people were out on the platform throwing oranges to us. We had so many oranges, that we didn't know were to put them.

The base at Fort Myers was very primitive. Once again we were living in tents. The ground was somewhat sandy, but very damp. We also had many mosquitoes; oh yes and a few alligators too.

We lived in tents again, and are beds were the typical army cot. Because we had so many mosquitoes, we were given mosquito nets. Thereby lies a story. There is a distinct method of preparing you bed. First you fold your blanket and lay it down flat, covering the whole cot so that none of it is hanging over the side. Then fastened to each end of the cot, there was a wooden structure. A vertical stick, with a cross piece at the top of each end.

This was fastened to each end of the cot, and the mosquito net, which was placed over the structure. If you can envision an inverted box with the bottom flaps open would be the best way that I could explain it. The bottom flaps of the netting were tucked in under the blanket, so in effect, you get in bed, you are in this enclosure. The idea is to get in bed before any mosquitoes can follow you. This never happens. Therefore, you always have to have a flashlight with you. However, when you see a couple of the critters there is no way that you can swat them, because the netting is very fragile. If you don't kill them, they will not let you sleep; with their constant buzzing. So how do you kill them? Well you go hunting with your flashlight, and when you find one, you pinch him. Ugh!!

The first two weeks at Fort Myers, we had No aircraft, so we were given menial tasks. I remember that about six of us would be selected every morning, to go down to the Fort MyersBeach (which was nothing like it is today.) There were no motels etc. Just a few beer joints and eating places on stilts.) We would fill the truck with sand, then spend the rest of the morning listening to the jukebox at "Nettie's Place," then return to the base, unload the truck, have lunch and do it all over again in the afternoon. After we came back, we would eat our dinner and take a shower and then we most always would go into town. This didn't go on too long, because as soon as we started to get our assigned aircraft, all our time was spent on maintenance.

Nettie's Place, Fort Myers, FL.

High altitude flying suit, Ft. Myers, FL, 1942

Barrington Ave. porch, August 1942.

While in Florida the aircrews flew anti-submarine patrols over the Gulf of Mexico. During these patrols, the group was credited with destroying three U-boats. The ground maintenance crews also spent time working on the aircraft at night, which was to help us perform our duties during blackout conditions, which existed in a combat zone. Of course, because we were training under sub-tropical conditions, we were all convinced that we were going to be sent to the Pacific Theatre. I might mention that at this period of time, Fort Myers was a nice small town. Once we arrived, it was overrun with military personnel. However it still retained the original atmosphere. The airbase was about two miles from the town of Fort Myers, and the road leading into the town was just a two lane black top road, with just a few houses aside it. The reason I mention this is because I went back and visited Fort Myers in 1985, and I couldn't get out of there fast enough. The road from the airbase to town was a four-lane highway; lined end to end on both sides with strip malls and the

traffic was horrendous. There isn't too much to say about Fort Myers except that it was very hot and humid. Oh yes, my fiancée came down to visit me, and she brought an engagement ring, and we became engaged; which became the beginning of a 33 month engagement.

Barrington Ave. August 1942

About two weeks later on September 5th the aircrews left for Grenier Field N. H. to prepare for their flight overseas to England. The ground crews were shipped to Fort Dix, N.J. Since it was only about 45 minutes by train from my home, I managed to get home for a weekend and brought two of my friends with me. A fellow named Bremser, and another named Arch Crump.

Bremeser's girl friend had come in from somewhere out west to see him and of course my fiancée. I managed to get a companion for Arch, and we all went over to New York City for a day. None of my guests had ever been to the City, so it was quite an experience for them.

Arch Crump was a crew chief, and the pilot of his ship, was Captain Fleener. After we were in England a short time, Arch and Capt. Fleener became very close friends, and Fleener had asked Arch quite a few times to fly as engineer on one of the missions. Finally Arch agreed, and went along. The target was Brest in France. Their ship was shot down over Brest. All were KIA. I was quite upset when I heard the bad news.

Arch Crump

About two years ago, a man in Brest who was head of a small historical society, found my web page, and wrote to me. It seems that this group was trying to get information on all American aircraft that were shot down over Brest in WW2. He wrote to me, and asked if I had any information, which of course I did. I had some pictures of the crew and also of Arch Crump (who by the way I mentioned above had come home with me, Just before we were shipped overseas.) I sent the pictures to him by regular post, for which of course they were very grateful. The Internet has really made it possible for people to make contacts, which otherwise would be impossible.

Shortly after the aircrews left for England, the ground personnel left Fort Meyers, and traveled to Fort Dix. We had a very short stay at Fort Dix, and then we left for England by boat.

We Left Fort Dix by train, and traveled to Jersey City. We each had three duffel bags, which were stenciled with our name and serial number on them. Also, the bags were marked with a large letter on each one. Each person had one “A” bag, and two “B” bags. The “A” bag was taken with us, and we had packed it with clothes etc. for daily living, and the “B” bags were evidently stored in the hold of the ship. I had my camera in one of the “B” bags (foolish move) because when I met up

with my “B” bags again in England, my camera was missing. We also had the old WW1 Springfield rifles. I can remember that when we got off the train in Jersey City we all suspended a “B” bag off each end of the rifle, put the rifle over the back of our neck and shoulders, (like a coolie) and dragged the “A” bag with us. We had about 100 yards to walk from the train to a regular car ferry, and boarded in the area where the cars would normally be. The ferry then took us directly to the Queen Elizabeth, which was berthed at 50th street, in New York City and we boarded there. I don’t know how many troops were on the ship at the time of departure, but we boarded on a Saturday morning, and troops were coming aboard continuously, until Sunday about 3 P.M. Before we set sail, we had 18000 troops aboard. Troops were even bedded down in the areas that had once been swimming pools.

The West Side Highway ran directly past the bow of the ship, and we who managed to get to the bow had to look down to see the highway. That is how high the bow of the Queen was above the highway. I remember that it was a Sunday morning, and we were waving to people, and some of them had even parked their cars there. Traffic was all tied up.

The one thing that I could never understand, (even too this day) is that all troop movements were to be kept secret, and here we were, getting ready to sail that afternoon, and it definitely was not a secret. Cars were stopped on the west side highway in N.Y.C. and people were waving to us. We were standing on the bow of the Queen Elizabeth, and we towered over the highway, and looked down at the people. We finally did leave about 3P.M. Sunday afternoon. That surely was no secret.

Our Bomb Group (the 93rd) was selected to be responsible for guard duty during the crossing. This was not really guard duty. We were stationed at strategic locations throughout the ship, so we could direct people. The ship was so large, that people were getting lost. We spent four hours on duty, and eight hours off, around the clock. I always felt that I was fortunate, because my station was on the flying bridge. I was up there on the same level as the wheelhouse, and could see all the action, and even the captain of the ship. I was supposed to be a “look out” for submarines. I remember that the first night out that I saw a light flickering, and I ran into the wheelhouse to report it. I was then informed

that it was nothing more than the Phosphorescent glows from the whitecaps of the waves.

I remember the first morning and our first breakfast. I can only surmise that the room that we were in must have been the Grand Ballroom, because it was so large. There was no furniture in it, only long tables with aisles between (about every thirty feet.) The person on the end of each table was the coffee monitor, and had to take a large metal container to the front of the room and fill it, then come back and serve the rest of the people at the table. When he was to have enough time to feed himself, I don't know. Then English stewards served us the food. I remember that the first breakfast was greasy baked mackerel, and fried greasy tomatoes. That was the last meal I ate in the mess hall. Also the lines were so long, that by the time one got to the mess hall, for breakfast, it was time for lunch, and then the line would start all over again. So I went to the PX, and lived on Hershey Bars and Pepsi-Cola for five and one half days. Since we were on so-called guard duty, we did get Spam sandwiches before going on duty so that did help.

Of course as usual every time personnel moved from one place to another, our medical (shot records) did not catch up with us. So we had to take the shots all over again. This did not create a good situation. Many of the people on the ship had never been to sea before, and were seasick and then getting their shots created many sick people. May I say that the floors were littered with vomit. This also exacerbated the problem.

The first day out near the end of the day, a B-17 flew over us, and that was the last we saw of anything, except on about the third day, we did see an empty life raft. We were told that the ship was changing course every six minutes to avoid submarine attacks?? I really could never figure out how this could help. One day, it got very warm, and we all spent as much time as we could on deck. We were later told that the Captain had received word about a sub pack, and that we went far south to avoid it. As for the remainder of the trip, it was rather uneventful. We did have one day that it got very cold and windy, and I remember seeing waves coming over the bow of the ship. However, the ship was so large I can't say that if affected me in any way. There were many that were seasick. It didn't bother me. I guess being from New Jersey, and having gone deep sea fishing many times, I sort of had my sea legs.

In our sleeping quarters, we were packed in like sardines. We were in what had previously been an inside stateroom. The bunks were built from 2x4's, and were 12 inches high. When you got in to your bunk, there was about 3 inches between your nose, and the bunk above you. However, we were young, and after being in the service this long, it really didn't bother us that much.

One of the fellows found that the door leading out the back of our quarters led to a catwalk through the bowels of the ship. Not to far down this catwalk there was a room for some of the ships crew. They also had their own kitchen. After a little persuasion, we talked the crewmember into selling us a big pan of mutton stew. We all hated mutton, but we were so hungry at this point it looked and tasted good. They sold it to us for 40 dollars. So much for British-American camaraderie.

On the morning of the sixth day, 3 destroyers escorted us. We were told that they were Polish. About 3 P.M. that same afternoon, we docked at Greenock Scotland in the Firth of Clyde.

Of course the Queen Elizabeth was too large to dock, so we anchored in the Firth of Clyde and we were then taken off the Queen Elizabeth in large motor launches. As I recall, this was about 5 P.M. We were given then some tea, and boarded a train. By this time we were all pretty much excited, and also quite happy to be on land again. I don't remember the exact route that we took, but I do remember that when we arrived at York, there was an air raid on, and the train stopped outside of the city. We could see the flashes of the German bombs being dropped, and the searchlights catching some of the German bombers in their beams. The train was being strafed by German aircraft. This was our first realization that we were in a war. After about 45 minutes, we started up again, and traveled all night. The next morning we arrived at a little town called Huntingdon. We disembarked from the train, and marched a short distance (about two miles) to an airbase. This area was called Alconbury Hill. Alconbury Hill really was a farm that had been taken over by the British Government. Alconbury Hill was close to the small town of Alconbury. All of the airfields in East Anglia were previously farms that were taken over by the British Government for the war effort. Alconbury was very close to Huntingdon, which was in Huntingdonshire.

Alconbury had been an airbase for B-17's before we arrive I think it was the 91st bomb group but I am not sure. Also they were the first

American bomb group in England. However, we were again going to be billeted in tents. I remember that we were on a dirt lane that was perpendicular to the main highway (two lane black top road) that was called the North Road. This was the main road from London to Cambridge, to Peterborough et al. The tents were on each side of this dirt road and were parallel the road. On our side, and about five feet to our right there ran a row of fence posts. There was some tired looking wire strung between them to keep the cows from coming into our tent area. Yes we were on a farm. Alconbury was a pretty place, and since it was early September everything was still green.

On the third night, we had another experience to remind us that there really was a war going on. It was dark, and we could see the searchlights very plainly. They had focused in on a German Bomber, and were following him. First two or three lights would track him, and then a couple more would come on, and the first two would go out. This was done so that the lights would have the greatest intensity on him at all times. It wasn't anymore than a few minutes, before they got his altitude. The Ack Ack (anti-aircraft cannon) let loose and hit him, and he started down in flames. Alconbury was just a very small village in Huntingdonshire, and dated back to the time of the Roman Legions. The closest village was Alconbury, which was not very large. The main street consisted of about 40 houses, and a pub. There was a very large church. It was, even though very small, considered large enough to have its own rail station direct to London.

Our base was located on a farm that at one time raised livestock grain, and produce for the local markets which were mostly open air with a minimal of cover for inclement weather. Now at Alconbury we added to the landscape the olive drab colored bombers.

Each evening we were given passes, but had to be back at the base for roll call in the morning. The closest city was Peterborough, which was very large compared to Huntingdon. Another fellow and I decided to visit Peterborough, so we boarded the truck, and in a short time we were in the center of the city. Of course everything was blacked out and we were not able to see the exact location where we were. When it came time to be back at the trucks for the return trip, we missed the trucks.

Since we had to be back at the base for roll call at 6AM, the only way we could get back, was to walk, and walk we did: all 16 miles.

Fortunately, it was late September, and the weather was not cold, and it was not raining. We also had another advantage; there was moonlight to help us find our way. We did have flashlights, which we always carried after dark. We were young, and this was just another experience. After some time, as we were walking, we felt something under our feet, which felt like gravel. After a closer examination with our flashlights, we discovered that we were walking on candy. The candy was made of little square pieces of licorice. There were thousands of pieces. The road was just covered with them. Naturally, we stuffed our pockets with them. As we proceeded onward, we figured out what had happened. A few minutes earlier, a lorry (truck) had passed us, and shortly we came upon him, and the truck had turned over, and was on its side, and all of the candy had spilled. Fortunately, the driver was not injured, so we proceeded on our way. We arrived at the base about 4AM, so we managed a couple of hours of sleep, and were present for roll call

The Group went on its first mission from this location, to the submarine pens at Lille on the coast of France. The weather over the target was closed in, and since they could not see the target, and the mission was over France, they returned with the bombs.

It was at Alconbury that the King came out to visit the Group. This was the first time that he had visited an American air base, and from what we were told, he was quite impressed by his first view of the B-24's.

We managed to get in a few more missions while we were at Alconbury, before we were relocated to another airfield in East Anglia. Our new airbase was in a remote area, and the location was called Hardwick.

Hardwick was another farm which had been converted to an air base, and was about 15 miles south of a very large city; Norwich.

We originally had moved into Alconbury in early September of 1942, and we moved to Hardwick in the middle of December 1942. The English weather never was anything to rave about, but at this time of the year, it was horrendous. Many times the aircraft would be sent on a mission, and they would return without dropping their bombs. This became very discouraging to the aircrews, as well as the ground crews. After all, we had come over to do a job, and felt that every successful mission would eventually bring us closer to returning home. The reason that the crews returned with the bombs was because the weather over the

target area was obscured, and we were not to drop the bombs randomly, for fear of killing French civilians. However later in the war, once we started to bomb targets in Germany, we were told never to return with out dropping the bombs randomly, for fear of killing French civilians. However later in the war, once we started to bomb targets in Germany, we were told never to return with out dropping the bombs.

In January of 1943, I was told that I was to be sent to school, and be enrolled in a course about the Pratt Whitney R1830 Engine (the engine used on the B-24.) The location where the course was being given was near the city of Warrington. Warrington is about 180 miles west of Norwich (Hardwick, our home base.) I was traveling alone, and had to take a train south to London, and then take another train from London that went northwest to Warrington. Just out side of the city of Warrington, was the largest air depot in England. This was a location where aircraft were sent to be overhauled (few ever made it.) However, it was a large base that overhauled the engines that we received for replacement, and refurbished all accessories such as generators, voltage regulators, instruments and any of the many parts used on all types of aircraft. Although this was predominately an American Base, there was a small contingent of RAF personnel there, and it was these people that were teaching the course on the B24 aircraft engine.

I was supposed to arrive at the Warrington station at about 8:30 in the morning, but as usual, the schedule was all fouled up, and I arrived at the station at 3:30 in the morning. I got off the train, and there I was all alone, in the blackout in a strange location, and also, the rail station was closed. I did see a little shaft of light ahead, so I headed in that direction. Fortunately it was a moonlight night. As I walked up the street, the light was coming from what looked like a large storefront. I opened the door, and to my surprise, it was a Salvation Army Headquarters. There were about 5 pool tables, and there was hardly a place that someone wasn't sleeping. There were troops of all denominations sleeping on the floor, on the pool tables, and any space that was available. I managed to find a place on one of the pool tables, and laid down for a small catnap. Abut 7:30 some one woke us all, and we had a cup of tea; and I was on my way back to the station, for a truck was to pick me up there and take me to the airbase. The truck was on time, and when I got to the base, I had a proper English breakfast, tea

porridge, bread and marmalade, since we were housed in the RAF section.

The course duration was to be two weeks. After about the third day, I contracted a cold, and each day, it got a little more severe. Finally one morning, I felt so bad, that I decided to go on sick call. The medic finally saw me, and said "I'm sorry mate, but I can't do anything for you, as you are an American, and this is a RAF billet." Since I was feeling awful, my reply was "what am I supposed to do die?"

We were housed in small barracks. About 10 of us to each building, with the usual army cots, and a pot bellied stove in the center of the room.

When I got to class that morning, one of the fellows said to me that just across the runway from where we were stationed was the huge American airbase, and perhaps I could go there for help. As soon as school was over for the day, I hiked across the runway, in the blinding wind and snow, and once again saw a small shaft of light on the snow. As I approached, there was a door, and I decided that I had to try this, as I felt that I would not be able to go much further. I got lucky, as this was an American dispensary. I went inside, and the only person there was a nurse. I told her what my problem was, and she said not to worry, she would take care of it. She first gave me some penicillin, which was a new drug at the time, and I had never heard of before. She said it was pretty much a wonder drug, and was used for many different problems.

She gave me a liquid for gargling. She then told me that when I got back to the barracks, I should wear all my wool clothes including my overcoat, and to pull my cot next to the pot stove. I really did sweat it out, and although the next morning I felt a little weak, I did feel much improved.

The three ships that I crewed had some battle damage, but not enough to require hangar space. Maintenance outdoors in all kinds of weather was really rough, and as I look back on it now, I don't see how I did it. However we were all young, and youth can put up with a lot of inconveniences. All nuts used in securing parts on an aircraft, are special types. They are either lock nuts, which have a fiber section so that the nut cannot vibrate loose or else they were what is called a castellated type. These have cut outs in them, so they can have a wire passed through them, so that they cannot vibrate loose. However, when

the safety wire is passed thru them, it is then twisted, and cut off. This leaves many jagged pieces of wire exposed inside the engine area, I can remember when working on the engine when the weather was cold, and taking my hand out from the engine area—one bloody mess. The temperature was so cold, each time you got stuck with one of these sharp wires, your hands were so numb that you didn't' feel it until later.

Since we only had two hangers; which could only hold about three aircraft each, all of our maintenance was done outdoors, in all kinds of weather. I never had the privilege of having use of a hangar, which really was OK, because the hangars were only used for aircraft that needed extensive repairs due to battle damage.

In late October of '42, we were sent to the southern tip of England to do sub patrol over the Bay of Biscay, which included as far south as Portugal. Since I was an assistant crew chief, I did not fly south with the ship, but was elected to drive a jeep in convoy. I t was the first time that I had experienced driving on the opposite side of the road. I was very surprised to see palm trees in England, but it is true, that this far south on the Island, there are palm trees. I do remember that one evening we went to Torquay. This was a summer resort town prior to the war, and there were many hotels that were on the road that ran along the cliffs. The distance from the road down to the beach must have been at least 350 feet. There were wooden steps all the way down to the beach, which in itself, wasn't very large.

After a couple of weeks in the south of England, we returned back to our regular base at Alconbury and once again I had to drive a jeep. I remember this return trip, because it was on Thanksgiving Day. We had a second Lt. that was in charge of the convoy, and this idiot had Spam sandwiches made up for our lunch on the return trip. The idiot could have had us stop off at any military base (and there were many) and we could have had a complete turkey dinner. Needless to say, we didn't think too highly of him after that.

One day I managed to get a pass for a few hours, and decided to go to Cambridge. There were no civilian cars traveling in those days, but I managed to flag down a car driven by a man that was evidently in the Government service, and was on his way to London. Since he was going by the way of Cambridge, I made out OK.

I was walking down a narrow street in Cambridge, and before I knew it the street became pockmarked and specks of dust were rising from the same area. Then I heard the gunfire. One lone German aircraft had evidentially some how sneaked in under the radar, and strafed the street. This was in broad daylight. Fortunately no one was injured. While I was in Cambridge, I bought a bicycle, and rode it back to the base; about 16 miles.

Conditions were much improved at the Hardwick base. We had barracks with a pot stove (very small) in the center of the floor, and regular bunks, instead of the army cots. We also had a small table in the center of the barracks near a window, which we use to write letters, or play cards. We on occasion would bring bread and cheese back from the mess hall (in the winter) and make grilled cheese sandwiches on top of the small pot stove that we had in the barracks. In the winter it was always rainy and damp and lots of mud. Whenever we stood by the stove, you could see the steam coming out of your clothes. We all thought for sure that we had TB. This was in the winter of ’43, when they were scrubbing a lot of missions because of bad weather over the target. Many times the ships would go on a mission, and would return without dropping their bombs. If the target was in occupied territory (France, Belgium, or Holland) and the target was not visible, the bombs could not be dropped for fear of killing civilians. If the target was in Germany, and was not visible, the ships never returned with their bombs.

One morning we were told on very short notice that we were to have our ships ready for a long over water flight. The destination; was not mentioned.

I must mention here that all of these ships had sustained battle damage. Even thought we tried our best, to keep them in good shape; but given such short notice about this trip created a little bit of panic for the ground crews.

However, the next morning, June 25, (1943) we took off, and proceeded to fly to Portreath at the southern tip of England. This only took a couple of hours, so it gave us more time to do a little more maintenance.

The next morning after a WAAF (Women’s Army Auxiliary Force (British)) prepared breakfast we took off about 0900. The airdrome a

Porthreath was on the edge of land and there was about a 600-foot drop off, into the ocean at the end of the runway. The runway wasn't as long as we would have liked it to be. I remember that we were lined up at the end of the runway, and there was one ship ahead of us; and then it was our turn. We watched him, and after he reached the end of the runway, he disappeared. Well, this was a bit of a surprise, and we wondered if he had made it?? Then it was our turn, and when we got to the end of the runway, we too dropped about 100 feet, before we were flying normal again. It was like taking off from an aircraft carrier. After this traumatic experience, we finally recovered, and began to fly south, and over the Bay of Biscay. We were only a couple of hours out, when we saw a couple of German JU- 88's flying toward us, but they flew right on past us, and didn't make any contact. They evidently had been out on patrol, and were low on fuel. Our only worry was; did they call ahead to the mainland and alert other fighters, that we were there. We were lucky, because nothing happened, and we continued on our way. I don't remember seeing any land, until about 1500 and we could just about see the coast of Portugal. It sure looked good to see some land. I remember feeling that at least if we had trouble in any way, we would be close to land and a neutral country.

By this time we had joined up with the rest of the Group, and as we passed through the Straits of Gibraltar at about 100 feet off the water. Because we were near the front of the Group, I remember looking back as we made the turn, and could see about 50 aircraft behind us. It was a beautiful sight.

At about 1600, we landed at La Senia Airdrome, about 17 miles from Oran, in Algeria. We waited for the trucks to pick us up, and were informed that this base had once housed French air cadets. I remember that I was sure that this base had belonged to the French Foreign Legion, because when I looked at the beds, I couldn't believe what I was seeing. Picture if you can, a metal bed, and where the springs would normally be, there were about six bands of steel about four inches wide, and one quarter of an inch thick, and looked like inverted carriage springs. There were no mattresses, nothing. So with the two blankets that we had, and also by laying whatever clothes we had we piled them on, and used them for a mattress. Not much sleep that night. I am sure the officers faired much better. The toilets wee nothing but a four-foot square porcelain

slab slanted towards a hole in the middle, and two footprints on either side of the hole. Leave it to the French!

The next morning at 0500, we had as always, our not so very special friend the bugler awaken us. At this time the word was passed around, that our destination was to be Benghazi. Take-off was about 1000. There was a lot to see on this leg. There were many destroyed tanks, German aircraft and any kind of equipment you can imagine that had been left by the retreating German and Italian armies only two weeks prior. As we got closer to the shore, visible were many ships that had been sunk and destroyed in the harbor of Tripoli, and as we got further inland, we could see the Sahara. We continued on, and landed at a place called Ras Caroura, which is about 20 miles south of Benghazi. This was to be our home indefinitely we were told. Actually there wasn't much to be seen there, except a barren desert plain, with some sagebrush, but really not any vegetation to speak of. As for buildings, there were two tired looking Nissen huts and tents. I remember that after landing, the trucks picked us up, and took us to an area where there were long tables set up end to end, and piled high with khaki shirts and pants. There were a few pairs of scissors, we were asked what our size was, and were told to cut off the legs of the pants at a specific length, and from then on that was our clothes ration of shorts and shirts.

It didn't take long for us to realize that we were not alone. We had plenty of company. Actually I guess it should be said that we were the company. We had millions of grasshoppers that were about three inches long. They were harmless, but were a nuisance, and in about three weeks we never saw another one. I guess they had outlived their life cycle. We also had flies. These were the worst pests. From sun up, until sun down, they would stay with you all day. Whenever we ate, we would continually have to keep waving one had over our fork, as we were putting the food into our mouth. Many times we would have a fly crawling over our eyebrow (all you could see was a shadow) and he would stay with you for hours on end, there just was no way to get rid of him. We also had scorpions. We learned immediately to never leave any of our clothing on the ground, and when we put our shoes on in the morning we always were sure to turn them upside down, and shake them to make sure one of those little critters wasn't in them. We also never sat on the ground.

One day while we were out working on the ship, I saw a small snake (almost the same color as the sand) and their happened to be a little native boy there so I asked him about the snake. Of course he couldn't understand what I was saying; so what he did was to put his two hands together, tip his head with his hands against it, and closed his eyes as if he was sleeping. I got the message, and from then on we made sure that before we picked up anything from the ground, that we looked first. Another precaution we took, was to never ever sit on the ground.

The water we got, had a lot of iodine in it, and since it was quite warm, about all you could say about it was that is was wet.

I always felt sorry for the aircrews, because while the ships were standing in line to take-off, the sun beating down on the aircraft was like being inside of an enclosed container. Then after working up a sweat, they would take off and cool off, but when they got up to a substantial altitude, the extreme change in temperature had to be uncomfortable.

However, we on the ground also had our own troubles, which the aircrew did not have to experience. As all the aircraft started their engines, they created a sand storm that took a couple of hours to settle.

As the ships were practicing their low level flying in preparation for the Ploesti mission, the pilots were really having a ball. This type of flying (buzzing) was forbidden under normal circumstances. I don't know how true it was, but it was said that one of the ships was so low that the clipped a camel. It could be, because they really did fly low. On a couple of occasions, they got a little to wise, and blew down a couple of tents.

We were stationed at this base in Benghazi for about two months, and for breakfast the entire time, we had the same menu: pancakes! It really didn't bother me though, because I liked pancakes. Instead of syrup, we had marmalade. There was always plenty of marmalade.

There was always plenty of work to do on the ship. The sand really played havoc with the engines. If we got 100 hours out of an engine, we considered ourselves lucky. Whenever we received a rebuilt engine (we never did get new engines) the engine came with plastic spark plug's that were filled with a desiccant to keep the cylinder walls free from moisture. Once we removed each plastic plug, we had to screw in the new spark plug immediately, so that no sand would enter the cylinder.

Even though we took every precaution possible, we still could not seem to get the normal flying time out of an engine. Since every morning that there was a mission, the ships created their own sand storm; some of this sand was getting into the intake of the engines.

While we were at Benghazi, we supported the invasion of Sicily, and the invasion of Italy, and missions were flown every day.

Our home in Libya (I am 3rd from the left).

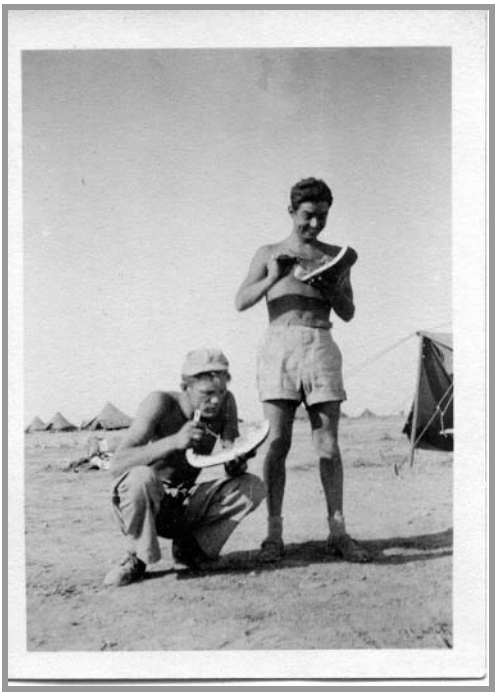
Our base was only about three miles from the Mediterranean, so in the evenings, if we finished our maintenance in time, we would be taken by truck for a swim. This turned out to be pure luxury. After all the air temperature was about 120 degrees F. during the day, and a cool dip helped to make it all bearable. However, there was also a disadvantage.

Since fresh water was very hard to come by, we didn't have any showers. I might add that after two months in the desert, we didn't have a fresh water shower with soap. The disadvantage then was; with the sand getting in our hair, and the salt water from our dips in the Mediterranean, after about two weeks of this it was next to impossible to get a comb through your hair.

All the gasoline for the jeeps etc. was delivered to the base in 5-gallon cans. These cans were set up in long rows, with aisles between them, so that the vehicle could pull in and fill up. Consequently, it seemed that we always had zillions of empty 5-gallon cans. These cans came in very

handy, because every evening there would be a movie shown (under the stars) and we used the cans for seats. We also used them in the tents for seats, because as I stated before; one never sat on the ground.

The natives were called WOGS, which stood for Working On Government Service. I don't know how they got that name, but that was all we ever referred to them as. They would come into the base, and sell food to us. We were permitted to buy any food from them, so long as it had a natural protective skin on it. Grapes, eggs, watermelon, and chickens. They also sold many other trinkets: hand made jewelry that we suspected was made from metal parts from the spoils of war of the German and Italian armies.



Weir eating watermelon.

After we had been in Libya for a couple of weeks, we were told that the Germans were dropping individual paratroopers to blow up or sabotage our aircraft. We were told that all ground crews would have to do guard duty on their respective ships. There were three of us on our crew, so that meant that each one of us would be on guard for about three hours, while the other two would sleep in the ship. Well I must say with that

sort of a threat, we didn't get much sleep. The ships were dispersed about a half-mile apart.

I remember that one night when it was my shift, and as always, it was very quiet out there, I heard this loud noise, and I was about ready to let loose with a volley (we were armed with a Thompson sub-machine gun, and a 45 cal. Side arm.) There were two antennae, on the aircraft each one running from just aft of the top gun turret to each vertical stabilizer.

For some unknown reason, one of the 3 inch long grasshoppers, had decided to fly, and ran into the antennae. In the still of the night, this was deafening. The grasshoppers never flew after sundown; so it was quite an experience. When one did guard duty under these desert conditions, we always had the feeling that someone was going to sneak up behind us. This kind of duty, we had never been trained for.

Libya July 1943 getting ready to guard the ship.

I must digress here for a moment about "what we had never been trained for." One of the rudiments in basic training was proficiency with the rifle. Troops were taken out on the rifle range to improve these skills, and before being shipped overseas, they would pass a test for marksman, and be issued a badge. When I entered the service, in February of 1942, the army didn't have enough rifles, so we trained with sticks that were cut out of wood to resemble a rifle. The only gun that I fired before going overseas was a .50 Cal machined gun, and that was after the 93rd Bomb Grp. got its aircraft. And we would get gunnery practice with a plane pulling a "tow target." I never fired a rifle before going overseas. They did issue us Springfield rifles from WW 1, but we never fired them. When I returned to the States, and after my 30day leave, we had to report to a staging area At Sioux Falls S. D. They didn't know how to keep us occupied, so they took us out to the range and taught us how to fire the Carbine. That is when I got my marksman badge. Well I guess better late than never.

The first thing gunners were to do on returning from mission was to clean their guns. Sometimes this wasn't possible, because what was also very important was interrogation. This was important, because the interrogation teams wanted to discuss the mission with the crewmembers while all of the events were fresh in their mind. However, if the interrogation came first, the gunners were still obligated to clean their gun. After all, their guns were actually "a matter of life and death for each crew member." On some rare occasions, and if the mission was extremely rough, they would neglect to do this, and I can't say that I blame them. After awhile stress takes over. The waist gunners would on occasion lay their gun on the shelf that was over the bomb bay; which contained some radio equipment, and oxygen bottles.

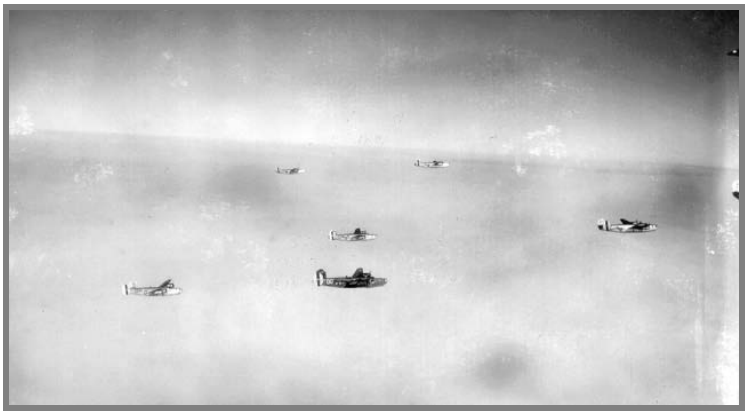
While we were in the Libyan Desert and late one afternoon after the ships had returned from a mission, one of the maintenance crew in another squadron, was checking out their ship, and climbed up over the bomb bay, to check out the oxygen system. He evidently kicked or in someway moved the gun, and the gunner had left a live round in the chamber. The ammo used was always: one armor piercing, one incendiary, and one tracer. Unfortunately, the round that was in the gun was either an incendiary or a tracer, and it discharged, going through a wing tank. The ship immediately caught fire, and we were about 300

yards from it and saw the crew chief jump on the wings, and remove the gas caps (very risky). We then stood and watched, because the fire equipment that we had was minimal. It was very sad to watch. The ship stood there like a sick bird, and as the fire consumed it, the wings started to droop from the weight of the engines, and eventually it was destroyed.

We went out to look at it a couple of days later, and it was still smoldering, but on of the things that impressed me, was that on the ground were large pools of solidified aluminum, of various thicknesses, and of course, still smoldering

Ploesti mission.

August 1, 1943 was the date of the Ploesti mission. I will not go into detail, for there have been volumes recording this event. However I should mention something here. All the ships were lined up adjacent to each other rather than in their respective parking areas. I had a small "Brownie box camera, which had only four shots left on the film. I think that outside of the official Group photographers, there was no one else who had a camera. Although ground personnel were not permitted to go on this particular mission, our Line Chief Ray Weir had managed to get himself passage on our ship, the TUPELO LASS. A couple of minutes before start engines, I gave Ray my camera, and the outcome was that he got four very good pictures over the target, and these were taken from the flight deck. I believe there was one other picture taken of the crew just before take-off, which would account for the fourth picture. I only saw that picture once, and I don't know what happened to it.



Squadron in formation, running into flak.

The TUPELO LASS was one of the few ships that returned that evening, and it didn't have a bullet or flack hole in it. Amazing! All of the guns were burned out, and all of the ammunition had been fired. The floor in the back of the ship was many inches deep with spent cartridge shells. On the return trip, they had to land at Sicily to refuel, and one of the funny things that I remember happening was when the ship stopped, and we went up to the waist window to greet one of the waist gunners, he had a 5 gallon gasoline can that he was going to hand down to us, and when he reached out to hand it to us, he fell out after it. It seems that for the short while that they were in Sicily, a two waist gunners had done a little exploring, and met an old man who had a well full of wine. They gave him an American dollar, and he filled up a couple of empty gasoline cans with wine for them. Without a doubt, they had tasted some on the rest of the flight back, and I would say they were smashed. In fact, that evening the rest of us did celebrate a little.

In 1985, Doris and I went on a tour of Spain, and Spain had only recently been allowed access to Gibraltar from Spain, so we were among the first people to visit Gibraltar. I remember standing on the "Rock" and looking across the Strait and visualizing the time in 1943 when we passed that way, and under such different circumstances. Who said, "You can never go back?"

I should digress here, that not only the aircrews, but also the ground crews, were all expendable. We in the 409th Sqdn. lost two crew chiefs to enemy action, and almost a third who had to bail out of his ship on the way back from Africa due to the loss of a couple of engines that were in bad shape because of the horrible sand, and other conditions in the desert. Whenever we given the order to go on detached service, all ships were assumed to be ready to go, and unless it was mechanically impossible for the ship to take-off, we had to go. We lost one ship that way on the trip to Africa. The ship started to take off from Hardwick, but had to abort the take off because of lack of power. The ship returned to the hardstand, they worked on it, then a short time later they tried to take off again, and this time they made it. However, when we got to Portreath in southern England, that ship did not arrive. The next morning we took off, and when we finally got to Benghazi; and after a couple of days, it still had not arrived. We then were told a few days

later, that it had blown up over Oxford in England, and all were KIA. I lost a very good friend on that one. All ships that went to the desert were overloaded. Every ship had to carry some spare parts, and other items that would be used for maintenance. One ship might carry a wing jack that would be used by any one who needed it.

Also all ships carried bomb bay tanks (some times referred to as Tokyo tanks.) These tanks were removable, and one was placed in each side of the forward bomb bay.

Once we arrived at Benghazi, we removed the bomb bay tanks, as they were not needed for most of the missions. However they were used on the Ploesti Mission. When we removed the bomb bay tank from our ship the Tupelo Lass, we were very careful, and covered the inlet and outlet hoses with heavy plastic that some of the K rations came wrapped in. We did this the morning after we arrived, and then went to lunch. We thought that we were doing the correct thing, but when we came back from lunch, and we approached the ship, the tanks were inflated. The sun beating down on them had expanded the gasoline fumes. We immediately ran over to them and removed the plastic covering, and they deflated with a whoosh! These tanks had about four 1 inch wide by 1/8 inch thick steel bands embedded in the rubber as reinforcement. We were quite concerned that they might have been overstressed, and that we might not be able to get them in place again, in the bomb bay for the return trip to England. We were very concerned that they would not fit back into the bomb bay, for our return trip to England… however more about that later.

A couple of days after the Ploesti mission, we were given a 4 day pass. I remember getting in the ship, and there was some discussion as to where we would go. I remember our pilot Jake Epting having the last say. He mentioned that he had been to Tel Aviv, and that we should go to Cairo. (Nice having your own transportation, and being able to decide where your destination would be.)

So Cairo, it was. On our trip to Cairo, we flew very low, because there was a lot to be seen on the ground: the spoils of war. There was just about any type of machine one could think of. There were tanks, German aircraft, and vehicles of all types, all for the taking. The only problem, was that most all were booby-trapped, and even the equipment that was near our base, we were told to stay away from it. One picture

that stands out in my mind is that as we approached Cairo, it was as if someone had drawn a line in the sand. The area beyond was a carpet of green. This was a shock to all of us, because we had not seen anything green for months. Within a few minutes, we landed at Heliopolis Airport, on the outskirts of Cairo. We had finally arrived.

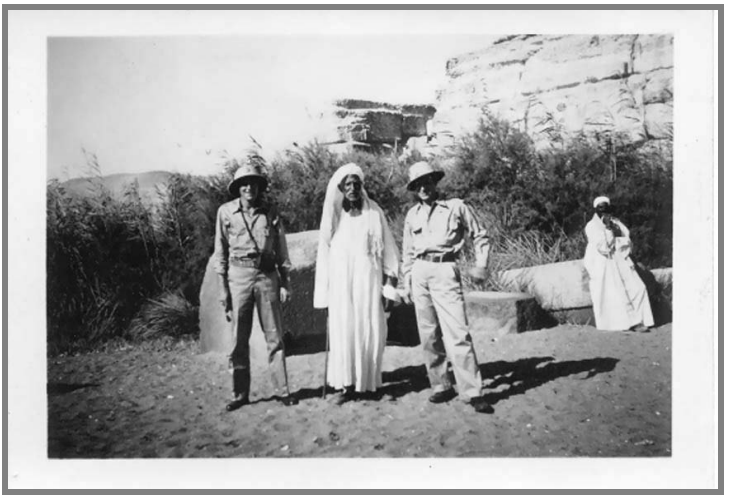
We took a cab into the center of Cairo. We stayed at what was then called the Grand Hotel. This was only for enlisted men, but it was super. We had more than we had ever hoped for. It reminded me of some of the movies I had seen, before I was in the service. We had showers with hot and cold running water, beds with clean sheets. All the woodwork was painted white. Each room had its own overhead fan. The doors to the room were of the louvered type, which allowed the air to circulate. The food was unbelievable, all kinds of fruit salads, fish, ice cream. We thought we were in heaven. It is incomprehensible for any one who had not been there at that time to experience the difference. It really was going "from the ridiculous to the sublime." What was very impressive, were the hot showers that were available. I went into the shower, and turned the water on and the water that was flowing into the drain was actually pink. One has to realize that up to this time, we had been in the desert for about 7 weeks without a real shower (only occasional dips in the Mediterranean.) The sand in the area where our base was located was really sun-baked parched earth, which had been ground to a fine powder by the heavy equipment, and the aircraft. This had encrusted our bodies and we didn't realize at the time how much (about 50 percent of our tans disappeared!).

When we came back from dinner, which was served by waiters with the appropriate attire, we returned to our rooms. It had gotten dark outside, and the world had taken a whole new turn. When we looked out of our windows, every thing was brightly lighted. You have to remember, that we had been living in a blackout in England for about a year, and the bright lights were a shock. The street below was crowded with people. Natives, and of course soldiers from many different nations.

I remember that there was a bar across the street from our room, and though it is not of any importance, there was a large sign in the window written in English, advertising TIGER BEER. It's odd how some of the insignificant things stick in your mind. Most everyone spoke English, and because of the war, Cairo became a very cosmopolitan city.

The first evening in Cairo, we went down to the Bazaar. There were all kinds of shops; selling just about everything one could imagine. It is not exciting to anyone reading this now, but you have to put it in context with the living conditions that we endured in England. To repeat an old cliché, this was not to be believed. Everything was so brightly lighted (there was no black out) that it really became spectacular. The shops were selling all types of things made of brass, all of them hand made by artisans the; skill being handed down from father to son. There were oriental rugs of all sizes, and the perfume! I bought some perfume for Doris, (my love) and they packed it in a little lead container. I remember going back to my room at the hotel, and sealing the cap of the perfume bottle with wax, and then sealing the lead container with wax. The next morning I mailed it, but I must say I didn't have any hope of its reaching Paterson N. J. Amazingly though it did arrive intact. The perfume was "Shalimar," and was not available in the U.S. because of the War. All of the French Perfume company's had moved to Cairo, before the occupation of France by the Nazis.

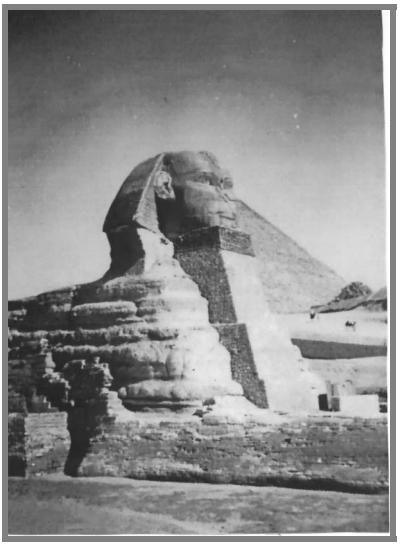
The next morning, we three went out to see the Pyramids of Giza, and the Sphinx. We went by cab, and the paved road just ended, and then we were back in the desert again. We each rode a camel from the end of the paved road and on our way to the Pyramids. The camels were very nasty, and I remember that the guide kept after him, because the camel repeatedly turned his head, and was trying to bite my leg.



At the base of the Sphinx I am on the left.

After a camel ride, we were at the largest pyramid. I remember being very surprised that the stones were not smooth. From a distance they appear to be smooth, but not so.

Another guide met us at the entrance, and we proceeded to follow him up this long very narrow shaft. There no lights, and the illumination that we had was when the guide lit a taper. Of course this taper would not stay lit very long. He would extinguish it, and told us he would relight it for three cigarettes from each of us. There were three of us, so by the time that our venture was over, he had well over a pack of cigarettes. As I mentioned, the shaft was very long, and inclined. It eventually led into a room about 15 feet square. This then was the burial vault of the Pharos. The room was empty, as the artifacts had long since been removed, and taken to various museums.



The Sphinx with sandbags.

After we finished our tour of the pyramids, we went over to the Sphinx. We were very surprised again, because sand bags were holding up the chin of the Sphinx. When the battles of North Africa were taking place, (which was only about a couple of months prior to our visit.) The Egyptians were concerned that some bombs might be dropped very close to the Sphinx, and the head would be knocked off.

The tombs were underground, and alongside of the Sphinx, but there wasn't much to be seen there. We finally caught a cab back to the center of Cairo, and to our hotel for dinner.

The next morning, we went down to the railroad station, and caught a train to Alexandria. The station was buzzing with activity. It was very interesting, because there were people in all kinds of dress. There were many taxicabs, and in a way, the activity reminded me of the similar situation back home before the war. The train as I remember, didn't travel; very fast, and stopped at some places to pick up some people where there wasn't a station.

I happened to get a seat next to an Arab businessman. He was dressed in a proper business suit, and was wearing a Fez. This and many other types of dress people were wearing impressed me. I don't remember his name, but he was very friendly, and as we traveled, he was showing me the Arabic alphabet, and trying to teach me some of the basic words. By the end of our journey, we had become quite good friends, and I was sorry that the trip didn't last longer.

On arriving in Alexandria we were directed to the Red Cross Club. Once again, we were in for quite a surprise; because the Red Cross Clubs in England were rather drab. This club was beautiful. The building was painted white (most all of the buildings were made of stone or clay of some sort, and all were painted white.) There were even formal gardens in the rear of the building, and everything was very spacious. Once again we were living a life of luxury. It really was unbelievable. This club was not in the hustle bustle area of the city, as in Cairo, but was in the suburbs. There were many palm trees; abundant shade. Once again we had sheets on our beds, and the food was not to be believed: fresh fruit of all kinds Ice cream, "yup" just like back home. We enjoyed every minute of it. We didn't have much time in Alexandria, and by the time we got there it was quite late in the afternoon, so we just stayed at the club. It was just as well, because we had seen a lot, and we had to leave early the next morning (Sunday) to catch a plane (another 93rd Bomb Grp. B-24) back to Benghazi.

The next morning we took a cab out to a restaurant. It was by the sea wall, and we spent a little time there looking at the sights. It was like a Sunday back home before the war. The traffic was unbelievable. There were autos as far as the eye could see.

Seawall, Alexandria Egypt. I am in the middle.

We took a cab, and when we arrived at the airbase, we found that the aircraft that was to take us back to our base had an oil leak. This was the last thing we needed to happen; after a perfect 3-day pass. We were going to have to go back to work, even before we got back to our base.

Our flight back to our base at Benghazi was uneventful. We were all wondering if it was going to be difficult to adapt to our desert surroundings again, but it wasn't a problem. GI's can adapt to anything. We continued to fly missions as before, supporting the troops for the invasion of Sicily, and Italy.

We received word on the 23rd of August that the next day, we were to take off and return back to our base in England. This of course was the typical short notice we were always given. With much "huffing and puffing," we did manage to get to get the auxiliary bomb bay tank installed again, for our return trip.

On August the 24th, we took off from Benghazi on our return trip to England It was a beautiful day, and everything was going smoothly, when we noticed that number 3 engine was running hot. In a few minutes it started to vibrate excessively, and we had to shut it down, and feather the prop. We had only been in the air about thirty minutes, and we were about half way across the Gulf of Sidra. It was decided that it would be best if we landed at Tripoli. I can't remember what the name of the base was, but it was very large, and was jointly occupied by Americans, and British. Ray Weir, our 409th line chief was flying with us, and he had some good suggestions.

Engine change, Libya, August 1943.

When we landed, there were no hardstands to park the aircraft on, but there were large circular areas that were cleared of brush, and these were parking areas for aircraft. Of course the terrain was sand, and this presented a problem for us a little later on. There was another B-24 parked near us, but none of the crew was there. We figured that they probably had taken off to visit Tripoli. We heard at lunch that they had been there for some time. I must give Ray a lot of credit here. He suggested that we go to lunch, and then come back immediately, and remove the defective engine, so that if a replacement engine became available, we would be ready to install it. Even though this base was not the worst, we had had enough of the desert, and were ready to get back to Hardwick in England, our home base.

On returning from lunch, we went back to the aircraft, and proceeded to remove the engine. By the time darkness had set in, we had the engine off, and on the ground (sand.)

The next morning we went to breakfast, and once again returned to the ship. Our parking area was facing directly toward the runway, and the runway ran perpendicular to the nose of our ship. Almost like a gift coming from Heaven; A C47 (cargo aircraft) that had just landed, stopped directly in front of us. A sergeant opened the side door, and hollered, “Do you guys have any idea who gets this engine?” We asked what kind it was, and when he told us, I guess there was one loud chorus, “We do!”

It undoubtedly was for the other aircraft that was parked near us, but since the crew was not around, we took it. Therefore, it was an excellent idea that Ray had; removing our defective engine immediately. We worked all the next day, and by nightfall, we had the new engine installed, and running. That evening the officers stopped by, and since we were again ready to fly, and no further work was required, it was suggest that the next day that we go in to visit Tripoli.

Bright and early the next morning we hitched a ride on an American truck, and in about 30 minutes, we were in Tripoli.

Ship blows up in Tripoli Harbor.

We went down to the waterfront, and the harbor was full of ships, unloading supplies for the war effort. The buildings were typical as seen all throughout the Middle East; stone covered with mortar, and painted white or pink. Whenever there were many shops adjacent to each other in the same building, the building was constructed with an overhang running the full length in front of the building, to shade the sidewalk from the sun. Three of us were walking by these shops, and looking in the windows, when all of a sudden there was a tremendous explosion. We immediately stepped into a doorway for some sort of protection. What happened next, was a complete surprise. We heard and saw all different pieces of metal and debris raining down onto the street. We immediately thought that we were being bombed. It wasn't long before we found out what had happened. An ammunition ship had blown-up. Our Guardian Angel was looking out for us, because if we had not been under the overhang of the building, we would surly have been killed, as the street was littered with all kinds of iron plates etc. We caught the truck back to the base in time to have dinner, as we had planned to continue our return trip to England the next morning.

Every new or replacement engine was supposed to have at least 8 hours of slow time. Slow time meant that the engine was not supposed to be run at maximum speed at take-off, or when cruising

As we were taking off the next morning, we got about three quarters of the distance down the runway, and were just about at flying speed, when to our surprise, there was a slight rise in the runway, and the ship started became airborne. I was on the flight deck, and I remember Jake Epting (pilot) saying. "OK you S.O.B. if you want to fly, let's do it." We then proceeded to remain airborne, and from that point, it was quite a joy ride. We made a made a turn, until we were coming in perpendicular to the runway. There was a row of trees on either side of the runway, and running parallel to the runway. The distance between the rows was about 200yards. We came in very low, about 200ft, just clearing the trees, then we dropped to about 100ft. over the runway, then just before the next row of trees, we pulled up enough to clear them, and then proceeded on our way. So much for the slow time on our replaced engine. I guess Jake still hadn't gotten the Ploesti mission out of his system.

The replaced engine seemed to be doing fine so we sat back, and tried to enjoy the trip to Marrakech, with the thought always in the back of our

mind that after leaving Marrakech, we would be flying over a long stretch of water with battle weary engines, and hoping that they would hold out until we let down at Hardwick airbase in England.

We laid over a day at Marrakech, and managed to go in to the city. It really wasn't much different than other Middle Eastern cities that we had been in. The construction of the buildings is typical. As usual, we were informed to stay away from the Arab Quarter, which we all were aware of by this time, and which made good sense.

The Red Cross Club in Marrakech was super. All kinds of fruit and all the Coca Cola that you wished for. Inside there were many rooms; for reading; pool and one large room that had a grand piano in it, which I played for a while. This room was evidently used for dances and various affairs. We had a couple of glasses of wine, and strolled the town, which had, as usual natives selling or trading for cigarettes all kinds of trinkets and hand made goods.

One of the outstanding and impressive sights was the Atlas Mountains. They were about 100 plus miles south of Marrakech, and the peaks were snow covered.

The next morning we took off for jolly old England; we did have a few anxieties. For one; would our war weary desert weary engines hold out over a long over water flight to England, and two; would German aircraft intercept us? Especially, since we were all alone, and there was no safe place to land.

As it turned out, there were no clouds for us to hide in, if we did have any enemy action. However we were lucky, and the trip went very well. We were on the alert at all times, and all gun positions were manned at all times. However, after peering at the sky for so long, one begins to see dots that really aren't there. Finally we saw land, and it wasn't long before we set down at an RAF field, not far from Lands End, and near the town of New Quay.

We were happy to get a warm meal, and finally get some sleep, and also to get rid of the anxiety created by the long over water trip, and the possibility of enemy action.

The next morning we took-off and headed for Hardwick, our home away from home. It was good to see the old gang again.

At this time, many of the assistant crew chiefs we made crew chiefs, and were assigned their own ships, as the compliment of aircraft for each squadron was increased.

I was promoted to crew chief, and I received my new aircraft #248. The pilots name was Lt. Robbins, and the crew was a new crew fresh from the states. For some reason, which is rather unusual, it never occurred to me to name it, and Lt. Robbins's crew never got around to naming it. The approximate date that I received this aircraft was the middle of February 1944. Lt. Robbins's crew flew all of their missions on this aircraft. I remember that Robbins was afraid of getting injured with a piece of flak in the groin, so I immediately "liberated" a couple of extra flak vests, which I placed in the seat well.

Sadly, the crew didn't make too many missions. The aircraft was shot down by German Fighters over Reims, France; April 1, 1944. All were KIA except the tail gunner who survived, and was taken prisoner by the Germans. (Coincidentally, through the marvel of the Internet, I found him [55 years later,] and we have been corresponding.) I was really devastated that my ship did not return from that mission, when there is no exact way at that time, to find out what exactly happened. It wasn't too many days later though that I learned that the aircraft took a direct hit in the bomb bay, from the German Fighters, and blew up over the target.

By this date in the war, missions were scheduled every day, and it was difficult for the ground crew to keep tract of each mission. Beside the normal maintenance that we had to perform, we had battle damage to contend with.

In about a week, I received another new ship; this one had the serial number 991. I don't recall the call letter. This ship was called the FLYIN' FOOL. It was piloted by Lt. Andrino. This ship was lost on August 13, 1944 because of anti-aircraft fire. It crashed at Alencon, France. Of the ten crew members, four were killed, and six became prisoners.

The next ship I received was in late August of 1944. Its call numbers were 578R. This was a new ship, and I might mention here that it was the first ship that I received, that was not painted olive drab. All of the ships were now coming through unpainted; there was no reason for them

to be camouflaged because there was no enemy bombing. I now had a new ship, and a new crew from the States, was assigned to it. This is when I met Howard Bolton, pilot of the new crew. He came out to the ship, and I saluted him, and he immediately said, “right now let’s knock that off”. We always did salute the officers of a crew on our first meeting, and were always told that it wasn’t necessary. Flying officers and crew were a different bunch. Not like some of the “ground pounder officers”, who demanded military courtesy at all times. We as a flying crew and ground crew became a very close-knit group and worked together to get the job done, and get home.

The Flyin’ Moose.

In my ship, the Flyin' Moose.

Howard Bolton (pilot) returns from a mission, and briefs me on any problems.

Air crew of the Flyin' Moose

This may sound a little strange, but I cared less about bombing the military targets. My main intent was to get the crew back to the base safely and I would devote all my energy to do this.

There is an interesting point to be made here about "flying status." The air force required a person to fly only 4 hours per month to be eligible to be placed on flying status. However most crew chiefs flew many more than 4 hours per month, but were not considered for flying status. The way it worked, was that it was left up to the discretion of some the higher brass to make the selection. So since rank has its privileges, the brass would select various ground pounder officers and these select friends would go up on local practice flights and get their 4 hours. Flying pay meant the addition of 50% of your base pay. So the lowly crew chiefs that were actually the brains of the maintenance and upkeep of the aircraft and flew on test hops were ignored.

Preparation for a typical mission started very early in the morning. The ground crews were awakened about 5 a.m.. Usually we had only gotten to bed about midnight, because we had been getting the ship ready for the mission.

5 a.m. wakeup call for a mission

Typical maintenance consisted of correcting any malfunctions that had occurred on the previous mission, and as a rule, there was always battle damage. One job that required a lot of patience was checking the de-icer boots for flak damage. Deicer boots were made of rubber, and were installed on the leading edge of the wings. The boots were inflated with air, and were used whenever there was a build-up of ice on the wing. An ice build-up would spoil the airflow over the wing, and the wing would eventually loose its lift. It was very difficult to find any damage caused to the boot by flak. The tinniest piece of flak would enter, and the hole or tear would close, but of course would not seal.

We always worked outside, in all kinds of weather, because there were only three hangars for about 60 aircraft. The only ships that were allowed hangar time were those that had major battle damage.

We often had to work in the darkness, in the early part of the war, because there was still a possibility of enemy aircraft, so a blackout was imposed. I became quite good at working with a flashlight tucked between my chin and my shoulder.

Gassing up, after a mission

The temperature could go as low as about 18 degrees F. This was not as low as we had sometimes in my home State of N.J. But when you are out in this weather all day and part of the night, and then factor in the dampness that was always present in England, the coldness just got into your system, and didn't leave. We used to build a small fire, and spend a few minutes there to warm our hands. As you stood in front of the fire, one could just watch the steam being evaporated from your clothing. The only way that we could get the grease and oil off our hands was by dipping our hands into a bucket of 100-octane gasoline. Of course, our hands got a little cleaner, but as the gasoline evaporated very quickly, it only made our hands colder. We lived with the ship, and the only respite we got was when the ship was on a mission. It gave us time to take a shower (cold water.) Later on, we rigged up a boiler from a bombed out home in Norwich, and set it up for heating the shower water. It also gave us some time to write a letter, take our laundry up to the quartermaster hut too be sent out. That was one break that we got. The women in Norwich would do laundry, and were paid by the Army.

Whenever there was a mission scheduled for the following day, the term used was that we were on ALERT. If there was no mission scheduled, which was quite unusual in 1944, the term was we were on STAND DOWN. If a mission was scheduled for Germany, and not to any of the occupied countries, the mission was never called off because of bad weather over the target. There was always a secondary target, and if the weather was bad over that one, the ships would just drop their bombs randomly. Many mornings, the weather at our base was so bad, that the visibility was zero. The ships would take-off using only their compasses and their air speed indicators. They were flying blind, for they didn't have the technology that we have today. They actually were "going out on a wing and a prayer," in more ways than one.

More than once I would see a pilot or other crew member who had been partying a little too much the evening before, and with a hangover, standing by the ship with an oxygen bottle sucking in pure oxygen, trying to clear his head. Not good, if he was the pilot.

When I went out in the morning to preflight the ship, I would always take one of my crew with me. I would rotate them, so that the other two could get a few minutes more sleep. I went out every morning. The rest of my crew would usually come out about a half hour later.

Typically, a jeep would pick us up, and we would ride in any place that was available. Very often, that was on top of the hood. This wasn't too bad, when the weather was good. However when it was raining, snowing or sleeting, by the time that we got to the ship, we were cold wet, and half frozen.

Me. pre-flighting the Moose.

When we finally got to our parking area, the first thing that we would do, was to walk around the aircraft with a searchlight to see that every thing was normal and intact, and that nothing appeared unusual. We were always aware that there could have been some sabotage. Having found everything in order, we would proceed to get into the ship. Just below the flight deck, there was a one cylinder gasoline engine with a generator attached, which we called the put-put. We would start this so that we would have power to start the engines. Each engine had a generator. Once we got the engines running, we would turn the put-put off. Up on the flight deck. We would take our places in the pilot and co-pilots position. We always referred to the engines by number. Sitting in the pilots seat, the farthest engine to our left, was engine #1, then counting from left to right, they were #2 #3 and #4. Engine #3, was always started first, because it was the only engine that had a hydraulic pump. This was needed to sustain the braking system, and to check other functions during the preflight, such as flap positioning etc. The next engine to be started was #4 then #2 and then #1. It was usually still dark outside, and in order to read the instruments, there was a blue fluorescent light mounted on the ceiling, and just behind our head, that shone on the instrument panel. It was a pretty sight, as all of the instruments were coated with a luminescent type of paint, which made the instruments readable. We had to run each engine individually, and check all of the various components, by watching the gauges.

B-24 cockpit.

Gassing up after a mission

It usually took about 30 minutes to preflight the engines; which consumed about 50 gallons of gas per engine. As the war moved on, and the missions became longer, the gas load became very important. The first thing we always did when the ship returned from a mission was to refill the gas tanks. However as the targets selected were deeper inside Germany, the flying time became longer, and fuel became a very critical

matter. Because of this, we would always top-off the gas tanks after preflighting, because preflighting used about 50 gallons of gas per engine, so after preflight; we would always top-off the gas tanks Those 200 gallons of fuel could mean the difference between life and death on the return trip from a mission. To show how critical this was, I will tell you about an incident that happened at our base.

Many times aircraft returning from a mission were so low on fuel; they would land at the first field they could find on their return. One day a B17 from some other group started to land, and as he approached, he was a little to far down the runway, and if he let down, he would have run out of runway, and would have crashed. We were waving at the fellows in the waist windows, and they naturally were so glad to be home. Since the pilots approach was incorrect, he decided to go around again. As he banked to turn left for another approach, the two engines on his right (#3 & #4) cut out, and he dropped like a leaf. He was only about 50 feet over the base building complex. He fell into our armourers building (fortunately there were no personnel in it) so there were no ground casualties. However everyone aboard the aircraft was killed.

Crash.

The RAF flew all the night missions, and starting in early 1944, it was the norm to see the sky full of RAF Bombers. This usually started about 8 PM, and it seemed that there was a never-ending stream of bombers. Then as we were preparing for our mission the next morning, we would

see them returning. Occasionally an RAF bomber that was badly damaged would land at our base.

What was happening was that the RAF was bombing at night, and we were bombing in the daytime. The RAF was not only bombing strategic targets, they were bombing cities as well. The idea was to never let the German people get any rest, thereby breaking their morale. The British had been at war a long time, and in the past Hitler had bombed many large British cities, creating many casualties, and now was the time to retaliate.

As the gas loads became larger, and hence heavier, and with the normal bomb loads, the runways became too short. More than once I had to pull small tree branches out of the engine air scoops on my ship, because they just couldn't get the required altitude immediately after take-off. Real scary! And many times the visibility was not good because of mist or fog. One has to remember that we didn't have the technology that aircraft have today. As a comparison, one could say that we were in the Model A Ford class. Imagine traveling down the runway at 120 mph, (not fast by today's standards) but not being able to see, and the only guide one has to follow a straight line is the compass.

Maintenance after a mission.

As always, we would start all maintenance immediately when the ship return from a mission. There was always plenty of normal maintenance to be taken care of, but when you consider that in addition, there was always battle damage, there wasn't a lot of time to get the ship in shape for a mission the following morning. We were always running close on

time. From about June of 1943 until the end of the war, we were flying missions every day

The last thing we would do before quitting for the evening which many times was only a few hours before briefing, (usually about 6 AM for the combat crews) for the next mission was to preflight the ship. Many times after my crew had left, I would stay behind. It would be quiet, because most of the other maintenance crews had finished their work, and would not be running-up their engines I would stay behind to try and locate a leak in the oxygen system. I became sleep deprived.

We never got new spark plugs, only rebuilt ones. This gave us a lot of trouble. Each engine had 14 cylinders, and there were 2 spark plugs used in each cylinder. The cylinders were arranged in two rows front and rear, and staggered, so that the rear row of cylinders would also get the benefit of the air; for cooling purposes. The spark plugs were on the top of each cylinder. One in the front, and one in the rear of each cylinder. Consequentially there were 28 spark plugs to each engine. Two magnetos fired the plugs. One magneto for the front row and one magneto for the rear row. One of the checks on preflight was to check the plugs by running the engine, on the font row of plugs, and then switching on to the rear row of plugs. In each case we were permitted to have no more than a 50-RPM drop. During our last preflight in the evening, we would perform this check, and every thing would be OK. Then we would come out in the morning, and perform this test again on the preflight, before the mission, and we would find out that the drop in RPM was unacceptable. More than once, we would have to remove all of the cowling to get to the plugs, and try to find out which plugs were the culprits that wee not firing correctly. Sometimes it was possible to find the bad plug by feeling it for its temperature. A plug that was not firing sometimes would not feel as warm as the others that were firing correctly. Visualize this happening to two engines, and having a deadline to correct the condition about 20 minutes before taxiing time. On more than one occasion, we worked up to the very last minute before taxiing time.

Ground crews never received much credit for the work they performed, or the hardships that they endured. All of the countless hours spent under severe handicaps such as the weather, lack of parts, and having to

be very ingenious in many ways to keep your ship ready to fly, became rather stressful.

Usually somebody was "running up" an engine late in the evening, so I would wait until most of the noise had stopped or was distant, and then I would go back to the ship early in the morning, and try to find out if there were any oxygen leaks. First I would go to various parts of the ship, and listen. If I couldn't hear any, I would go to various connections on the system, and with a bar of Castile soap and some water, I would coat the connection to see if any bubbles appeared. The reason we used Castile soap, was because Castile soap was formulated without grease. Grease and oxygen form a combustive mixture, and could cause an explosion.

Before D-day (June 6, 1944) it seemed like it was going to be a long war. After all, we had been overseas since September 4, 1942, and it began to look like there was no end. The one thing that helped is that as the war progressed we became busier, and busier. This helped to make the time pass, and didn't give one time to think too much about the time factor.

One morning, when a mission had been scheduled, for some unknown reason, I went out to the ship alone. The ships were always parked on a circular hardstand, and facing the runway. As I approached the front of the ship; I was about 50 feet away from the nose section, when all of a sudden, breaking the silence of the morning there was a loud report. I didn't realize what was happening, but a single round of 50 cal. ammo. had just missed me. The nose gunner evidentially had not cleaned his guns the previous afternoon on returning from the mission, and had come out to the ship early in the morning and before briefing. When he proceeded to clean his guns, he had left one live round in the chamber, from the day before. When it happened, I wasn't scared, because I didn't know what had happened. A minute or so later, when I realized what had happened, I began to shake. Then came the anger. My Guardian Angel must have been looking out for me, because when I located the spot where the round had hit the pavement, it was about 12 inches to the left of where I had been standing. Also the Guardian Angel of one of my crewmembers must have been there too, because he might have been standing along side of me, but on the opposite side of me, in which case he would have been killed or severely wounded.

On rare occasions if there was a stand down for the following day, and we were caught up on most of our work, we would make a "Pub run." Our airbase as were all the airbases were carved out of what land had previously been a farm. We were out in the country, and outside of the base, there were small villages consisting of just a few homes, and a Pub. We all had bikes, and it was usually only about a ten minute ride to the local Pub. However if there was no moon, it was a little tricky maneuvering in the blackout. It was worth the trip though, because on some of the cool evenings, it was nice to be inside where it was warm, and with a pint" of ale, and a few games of darts. I played the piano, so I was never able to buy any drinks. In fact, my buddies that came with me, as rule didn't either. The top of the piano was always lined up with glasses of ale or "mild and bitter." The ride back to the base sometimes was a little "shaky." Not only because of the blackout, but the excess ale didn't help.

When we got a furlough, we would often go to London. A truck would take us into the city of Norwich, and then to the train station. That was usually about a 30-minute ride from our base. Because of the war, and the lack of new rolling stock, the railroad was using any type of passenger car that was capable of rolling. Because of the sudden influx of so many GI's, this compounded the problem. The construction of the oldest cars was very similar to the old American western stagecoaches. Once one got on board, there was no way out of the coach until one arrived at a station. There was no aisle, and no bathroom. There was a door at either side of the compartment, and the seating arrangement, was two long seats facing each other, which held a total of about 10 people. In the door at each end of this compartment, a window could be raised or lowered. However the arrangement for this was a leather strap with holes in it. One end of this strap was fastened to the bottom of the window, and there was a peg in the door. To raise or lower the window, one would pull on the strap, and place one of the holes in the strap over the peg, which then regulated the fixed position of the window.

Sometimes we would get lucky, and get a modern coach, which had an aisle in the middle with seats facing each other, and a table in between. With this arrangement, we would usually play cards for the entire trip, which made the traveling time pass a little faster. We usually got the train late in the afternoon, and by the time we got to London it was dark.

At first, it was interesting being in a large city in a blackout. Later on it became a nuisance. One of the major hazards was being careful not to be run over by a taxi. Taxis and motorcycles were the only vehicles that were permitted, because of the rationing of petrol. The headlights on the taxis had a cover over them with just a little slit cut horizontally in it. It always amazed me, how they could find their way in the blackout. Another hazard, was training oneself to look in the correct direction when crossing the street, since the traffic traveled on the opposite side of the road from what we were used to at home.

Our bomb group was the second bomb group to be sent to England. We arrived in early September of 1942, and that early on, the German Luftwaffe was still very active.

Hyde Park was a large park (similar to Central Park in New York City) and it was quite close to Piccadilly Circus, which was the central hub of London. The Park had many anti-aircraft guns located in it, and whenever there was an air raid, they would fire at the incoming enemy aircraft, and many pieces of the exploded shells would come raining down on Piccadilly Circus, and adjoining areas. Obviously, it was not smart to venture out into the street at this time. One could hear the clank" of the metal hitting the pavement. Most all of the Pubs and the theatres would remain open during an air raid, and it was voluntary weather one wanted to leave. Sometimes when the noise would become rather loud, and it sounded like the bombs were getting very close, everyone would leave, and head for the Underground. One of these times, I had been in a cinema just off Piccadilly, and I decided to leave. This, by the way, was in the evening. When I got out onto the street, the mass of people was like a wave, and I found myself being propelled along. Everyone was heading for the Underground at Piccadilly, because it was very deep below the road surface. I remember this particularly, because when we finally got into the are below the first few steps, I found myself behind an American two star General. To explain how deep this Underground is, it required two escalators to get down to the train level. Once down there, there was not much room on the platform, because many families, with all of their sleeping gear, spent the night down there.

A bottle (quart) of scotch could only be obtained through the black market. One evening three of us decided that we would like to buy one,

so we hailed a cabbie, and the price was 26 American dollars, which included the cab ride to pick it up. The three of us hopped into the cab and drove someplace?? The cabbie finally stopped, and went into what looked like a storefront, and picked up a bottle. We three all had a taste to make sure that it wasn't a bottle of tea. We paid the cabbie, and he took us back to Piccadilly. There was a joke about a GI ho had just purchased a bottle of scotch, and because of an air raid, he was running across the street in the blackout when he tripped on the curb, and fell. He felt something running down his leg, and exclaimed, "I hope its blood."

We almost always stayed at one of the Red Cross Clubs, as they were very reasonably priced. A bed for the evening was about 25 cents. These buildings had evidentially been office buildings before the war. Everything had been removed, and replaced with army cots. In some, it was like sleeping in a large ballroom. There was no privacy, but we were all used to that. There is no privacy in the service. Of course, one didn't get too much sleep, because there was always a lot of activity during the night with GI's coming in at all hours, and shall we say a little noisy, after partying. However, it was convenient, clean, and warm in the winter. What more could one ask for?

Breakfast was served cafeteria style. Always powdered eggs; at least not green like the ones back at the base, toast, marmalade and tea.

We would always check with the activities person, as there usually were free tickets to many attractions. The cinema, the theatre etc. Sometimes we would go to a dance at Covent Gardens Opera House. All the seats had been removed, and it became a huge dance area. They always had a large orchestra, which played all of the latest tunes, it was worth being there just to hear the music, and also it was free.

One evening my buddy and I decided to go to the entertainment desk at the Red Cross Club, to see if there were any free tickets available. This club was called the Rainbow Corner. It was in Piccadilly, and also in the center of the theatre district. Sure enough, they had two tickets for the evening performance at the Palladium. When we arrived at the theatre and were shown to our seats, we were very impressed. We had box seats, the closest box to the stage. As the play progressed, and without any warning, there was a comment made about "THE YANKS." At that precise moment, a blinding spotlight was played on us, and we became an integral part of the performance, and the butt of a large uproar, and

clapping from the audience. We then realized why we had such choice seats.

There was a large store in Piccadilly Circus that was called The Lyons Corner House, and I suspect that they were located in many of the large cities in England Prior to the war, they were a cafeteria type of restaurant, and they also sold food that people could take home. But now, because England had been at war for such a long time, and most all food was rationed, about all that was available were cheese sandwiches, watercress sandwiches, and tea.

The Underground stopped running at midnight, because people were bedding down on the platforms. By ten o'clock each evening, people would start filing in with their blankets, in their nighttime clothing, This was because it was the only way the population of London living near the underground, would be safe from the nightly air raids. By the middle of 1943, most of the air raids by the Luftwaffe had ceased, and the underground platforms were clear again.

During the day, there were many sights to see in London. They are those that are the usual sites for tourists to see today. Of course during the war, all of the buildings had a drab appearance. As compared to my visit to London in 1985, most of the buildings have been cleaned. Big Ben even had a "face lift." In addition, during the war, there was very little color. All of the military were wearing blue or olive drab clothing, and except for the taxis that were painted black, all of the rest of the vehicles were military, and were painted in green or olive drab color. In the beginning just being in England who had been at war a long time, I found a little depressing. However, after a time I became used to it.

All too soon, it became time to return to the base. After a week of relaxation, I was not looking forward to the long train ride back to the base, and the feeling of being free disappeared very quickly. By the time we arrived at the base, it was dark. One of the first things too do was to catch up on all the latest news.

If a mission was scheduled for the next day, which was usually the case, the old grind started immediately. After a couple of hours "back on the line," it felt as though I had never left.

Ever since we moved to our present base (Hardwick,) we lived in barracks. This was a vast improvement over living in tents. At least we

now had a place to hang up our clothes, instead of storing them in a barracks bag.

One of the problems was trying to keep the barracks warm in the winter. Each barracks had a small coal fired pot stove in the middle of the floor.

This was hardly adequate to keep the building warm, but the one advantage we had was that we spent most of our time out on the line, (working on the ship.) It wasn't warm out there, but being absorbed in the work, helped, and we only came barracks to sleep. With the two blankets, we manage to keep warm at night. However, we would get a coal ration once a week. Since we, the maintenance people were on the line all day, and part of the night, it created a problem with the coal ration. Not all combat crew flew every day, and there were more combat crews than aircraft. The combat crews were in the same area as we were. When the coal ration was delivered to a location in front of the orderly room (the first sergeant's office at the head of the barracks area.) If there were no maintenance people around, which was usually the case, the combat crews were, shall we say, a little more generous taking their allotments. When we, the maintenance crews arrived in the area, there wasn't any coal to be had. This happened many times, we complained, but it didn't do any good. Being good mechanics, and very ingenious, we decided it was time to take action. There was always plenty of hydraulic fluid available. This consisted mainly of glycerin, and alcohol. We took a couple of oxygen canisters from a disabled aircraft, and installed them overhead in the beams of the barracks. We then ran a piece of hydraulic tubing down and inside the lower part of the lower part of the stove. We also installed a pan that acted like a reservoir, and the tubing fed the fuel to this reservoir. We also installed a valve in the line, so that we could regulate the flow, and VOILA, we had an oil burner. This worked very well, and we didn't have to worry about our coal ration anymore.

We had a radio in the barracks, and it was always tuned to a German station whose call words were Calais 1, Calais 2, Friesland, and Luxembourg. This station played all of the good American tunes, and was a propaganda station to demoralize the American troops. They often would comment about the music and say such things as "wouldn't you like to be home now instead of fighting this war for other people?" Also if we had new aircraft delivered to our field, some times they would

repeat the serial numbers. On the day of a mission, they would often tell us how many aircraft our group had lost. Sometimes this became a little "spooky."

Whenever we had a "stand down," after dinner in the evening, we would most always bring back bread and cheese from the mess hall. This would make a fine evening snack. We would put the cheese on the bread, and lay it on the stovetop, and we would have grilled cheese sandwiches.

As the war progressed, and they started to fly missions every day, my crew and I spent less and less time in the barracks, because by the time we finished working on the ship, it was almost time to start the morning preflight for the mission.

Because all the maintenance people spent so many hours on the line, and in all types of weather, a method to supply us with hot coffee around the clock was devised. Around the outside of the runway area, there was a pave circular road that was called the perimeter track. All of the aircraft in the group were parked outside of this perimeter. The perimeter was also used when the ships all lined up to proceed to take-off on a mission. It was arranged that a truck with two GI cans (large galvanized garbage cans) filled with hot coffee would circulate around the perimeter track 24 hours a day, and would stop at every hardstand aircraft parking area) 24 hours a day. We carried our canteen cups with us at all times, so we always had a container. As I look back on it now, I think that that coffee had a large part in keeping us afloat.

Some types of bombs were delivered to the ships in wooden boxes, which were discarded by the ordinance people after installing the bombs on the aircraft. My crew and I decided that we needed some shelter, since we were spending so much time with the aircraft, so we decided to build a shack. The shack was about eight feet square, and we managed to get a couple of pilots' seats with cushions from a demolished aircraft. We also built a place for one person to rest on, and also covered it with cushions from a demolished ship. About a month after D Day, we started ferrying food supplies to France. The food supplies were contained in individual wooden boxes, and consisted of the usual staples; sugar, flour, coffee, cocoa etc. also some prepared canned food such as meat and cheese etc. Occasionally a box would be dropped while loading it into the ship, so we would liberate it for our own use. The food was

delivered to Orleans in France, and it wasn't air dropped. The planes would land and unload. They would then fly back to the base and reload, and do it all over again. Each ship would make two trips a day, and this went on for about a week.

Immediately after completing this operation, we were back flying missions again. As mentioned, the missions kept getting longer as the troops were advancing closer to Germany. The maintenance became more difficult to keep up with, because as the missions became longer, the engines got more time on them. Flying at high altitude with heavy bomb loads, was stressing not only the aircraft, but also the aircrews.

I have to go into a little bit of technical information to make my next bit of information understandable. The internal combustion engine when running, builds up a pressure in the crankcase. As the fuel is ignited on top of the pistons, there is always a certain amount of pressure blowing past the piston rings. This pressure ends up in the crankcase. As the engine gets more time on it, there is more wear on the rings, and the pressure volume is increased. To allow release of these gasses, there is what is called a breather pipe. This pipe is vented into the atmosphere, which relieves that pressure. When the gasses are released, there is always some oil mist that is release with them. At a high altitude, because the atmospheric pressure is much less than at sea level, the problem is exacerbated. Because of this, there is an oil slick deposited on the aircraft. The inboard engines deposit oil on the side of the fuselage, and the outboard engines deposit oil on the vertical stabilizers. I was able to gauge the condition of the engines by the length of the oil slicks after each mission; thereby deciding how much longer it would be before I would have to change an engine.

Two days after VE Day (the day the war ended in Europe) we began to run what were referred to as TROLLEY MISSIONS. It was decided by the higher brass that all personnel should see what we had done to Germany, after 33 months of bombing and what our efforts had been for.

All personnel were taken on a detailed and planned flight over Germany, at low altitude. This included everyone. Cooks, truck drivers et al. Everyone was given printed sheets, which included a map of our route, and printed explanation of the cities and the targets that we had bombed so many times, as we passed over them. All aircraft were to fly these missions, until everyone in the group had a chance top view. Originally

it was decided that the altitude would be 1000 feet. However, sometimes we flew much lower than that, and, when possible. Some of the things that impressed me were: the masses of German prisoners that were contained in barbwire enclosures. For sure, they weren't going anywhere, because they all had to be deloused, and there was no food or showers for them if they were to leave. Another thing that impressed me was that as we went over the large cities, the homes below, were nothing but shells. Many of the homes in the large cities were constructed lf stone, and attached, and about six stories high. When flying over these homes, I could look clear down into the cellar, and see all of the plumbing for all of the floors, now down in the basement. What had happened, was that many of the bombers dropped incendiaries. Since the roofs, and the floors were all constructed of wood, the wood burned, and all of the plumbing, bathtubs sinks etc. landed in the cellar. The damage to the large cities was almost unbelievable.

We did loose one aircraft on these Trolley Missions. This particular aircraft was flying very low over the Rhine River. At his location, the Rhine was in a valley, and during since there was a lot of barge traffic on the Rhine, the Germans had stretched wire cables across the river, from one side to the other. Since the timing of our trips was so close to the end of the war, the cables were not removed, and the aircraft became entangled in the cable. Sadly, all hands were lost

It was a revelation seeing all of the destruction, and it made me wonder how Germany would ever rebuild again. The allied bombing of Germany in the latter part of the war was very intense. The Germans were manufacturing parts for military equipment in individually scattered areas, such as homes, many small buildings. They would then send the completed parts to a central location for assembly. Because of this, our fighter aircraft were told to bomb or strafe any small building that was standing alone. Nothing was sacred. Trains were attacked, and when the engine was fired upon with armored piercing, and incendiary shells, the engine would explode.

After about a week of these sightseeing missions, all the crew chiefs were told that they could take-off for home (the good old USA) anytime that we thought that our ships were ready for a long over water hop. I remember "Gee" all I had to do was take-off for home when ready. It

took awhile for this to sink in and for me to believe that this was really happening.

Crew and passengers of the Moose,, minutes before take-off for the States.

I receive my first bronze star; I'm in the first row, far left.

I had the option of flying home, or I could go by boat. After 33 months of combat maintenance, detached service flights, test hops, and a trip to the Libyan Desert, I was stressed out, and thought that it might be nice to go by boat, and bask in the sun on the deck. However, the new pilot of the Moose had other ideas. This crew had only flown a few missions

on the Moose, when the war ended, and I didn't know too much about them, especially the navigator. The pilot tried to convince me to fly back with them. I was noncommittal. The following day the pilot came out to the ship, and talked to me again. After a couple of tries, I said that I would, but under my terms. He said that he wanted to take the southern route. This meant that we would fly from England to North Africa, then on to the Azores, then to South America, and then to the USA. As I stated previously, I didn't know how capable the navigator was, I was concerned that if he missed the Azores which is just a tiny island, we would have a problem, for then we would be low on fuel, and we wouldn't have much flying time left to locate it. It was decided then, that if I were to fly back with them, we would take the northern route. This was; Hardwick to Valley, in Wales, just a short hop. Then Wales to Iceland. Iceland to Goose Bay Labrador, then Goose Bay to Bradley Field in Connecticut. The pilot agreed, so I decided that I would fly home.

Since now there was no priority on parts, we were able to get whatever parts we required. I proceeded to install a new tail section on the "Moose", including a new horizontal stabilizer, two vertical stabilizers, and two new rudders. I also installed two new (rebuilt) engines, and other repairs.

Since we would be flying below ten thousand feet, we didn't have to be concerned about the oxygen system. This was good, because the oxygen system was always a headache. We built and installed in the front bomb-bay, two wooden bins, that would be used for carrying clothes, and other gear. All ships would be taking twenty personnel. This not only included the normal combat crew assigned to the ship, and the ground crew (all of which had first choice,) but then any available space was available to armorers, ordinance, and then any other people who had been directly involved with the particular aircraft.

The following is from my flight log: May 23rd 1945, weather at Hardwick is bad, and field is closed in, we cannot take-off today. May 24. Left Hardwick at 1100 hrs. The weather is still not good, and the visibility is about 3 miles. We landed at Valley at 1430hrs. The ship is fine, and tomorrow morning, we take off for Iceland. Left Valley May 25 at1000 hrs., and landed in Iceland at 1600 hrs. The time changes here, and it is now 1300 hrs. This was the coldest trip that I have ever

experienced, and we only were flying at 8000 ft. Iceland seems to be a very barren place. However at this time of the year, there is no nighttime. We have 22hrs. of daylight, then 2 hours of twilight, then it starts to become daylight again. We are experiencing some minor problem with our left landing gear, but it won't interfere with our take-off tomorrow.

May 26th. We left Iceland at 1100 hrs. and landed at Goose Bay at 2100 hrs. The ship performed very well. I spent sometime in the co-pilots position, while he took a nap. It gave me a better chance to view all the instruments, and also to visually watch those engines purr along. We flew off the tip of Greenland, and were supposed to report in by radio. However, there were so many aircraft going down, that all who were not having trouble were told to stay off the airwaves. I feel sorry for those guys that went, down, because that water had to be cold. We saw many icebergs. When we landed at Goose Bay, we checked the ship, and we had a minor gas leak on #2 Carburetor, but nothing to be concerned about. All aircraft fuel is colored with a green aniline dye. This gives an indication when there is a gas leak, because the gasoline evaporates, but the dye leaves a telltale sign, so the leak can be located.

May 27th. We left Goose Bay At 0900 hrs. and landed at Bradley field Connecticut at 1600 hrs. But there is a little more to the story than that. Our radio operator was supposed to be on a band that would keep us in touch with the weather conditions. However he opted to listen to some good jazz music. There had been reports that Bradley field was closed in, and they rerouted all planes to Bangor Maine. When we arrived at Bradley field, we kept getting lower, and lower, but could not break out of the overcast. I thought, this is all I need now to crack up so close to home, and the thought began to run through my mind again, that possibly I should have come home by boat. Fortunately, our navigator was familiar with Bradley Field, and the surrounding area, and when we finally could see the ground, he visually guided us in. "Whew" that was a "sweat Job." When we finally got on the ground and got out of the ship, we all kissed the ground. Back in the good old USA. We were immediately escorted to the mess hall, and I was impressed. On a long table, there was a quart of milk about every 3 feet. I don't recall what we had to eat, but I do remember that there was an unlimited amount of ice cream. We stayed here over night.

The next morning, we boarded a bus, and we were shipped to Camp Miles Standish (a holding area) in Massachusetts. We were only here for two days.

The next morning, we were put on a train and transported to Fort Dix, in N.J. This was ideal for me, because I was only about 60 miles from home. We stayed there for a couple of days, and then were given 30-day passes to go home.

My Mother and Father and Doris met me at the Pennsylvania Station in Newark. I was in sort of a dream world, because once I got off the train in Newark, I had trouble believing that all of this was true. As we traveled by car on my way home, we traveled through the streets that I had been on many times before, but even though I recognized them everything seemed a little strange. Being away from home so long, and most all of the time on a military base, being back on my home turf would take a bit of getting used to.

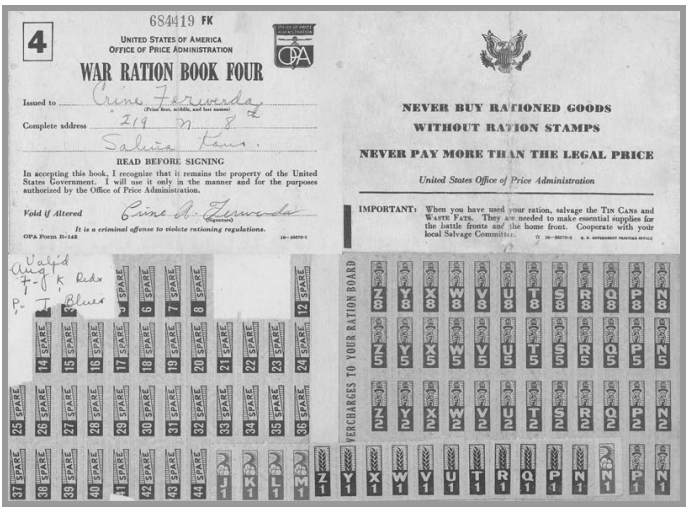
Home for good, Penn Station, Newark, NJ, my mother, me, and my father 6/1/45.

When we arrived at my home, the first impression I got was that all of the rooms in the house seemed so small. For what reason, I don't know.

Doris and I were going to be married, and we had set the date for June 10. Luckily my mother had been hoarding sugar, which was rationed, and so we would have enough for a wedding cake. We took the sugar to a bakery in Paterson, and they baked the cake for us. The wedding was in "Our Lady of Lourdes" church in Paterson, and the reception was at a well-known place called Blassbergs in Hawthorne. Since meat also was rationed, we had chicken. We had to find someone who would take pictures professionally. I knew Lew Seabert, who was not in the service, so we contacted him. The next person I had to locate was a "best man." I had an old lifetime friend who also was not in the service, Ed Garland.

So now just about everything was set. It doesn't sound like much now, but because everything was on the spur of the moment, things got rather hectic.

Doris and I had to make about four visits to the church before the wedding, since I wasn't Catholic; I had to get "instruction." The priest was Father Warnake (We will never forget him.) He really gave us a hard time. Like asking us if we really wanted to do this. Had we really thought this out? We had been going together since 1939, and then added to that my 31/2 years in the army, I would say that this really was not a spur of the moment thing. Doris and I look back on it now, and we were so naive then. Today, we would have told him to get lost and got married by a justice of the peace.



Gasoline ration book with stamps.

My father loaned us his car (and gave us ration stamps for gasoline) and we spent our honeymoon down the New Jersey shore at Manasquan. We were down there a week, and then Doris' mother and father came down for the second week. I have to say that I was still in a time warp because too many things were happening in a short period of time.

After our time at the Shore, we visited many relations, and the time went so fast (30 days) I had to leave and report back to Fort Dix in New Jersey. We were told that we were going to Sioux Falls S. Dakota.

Waiting on the siding also, and about 30 yards from us was a contingent of recruits, who were also waiting for their train. As the first train approached, we could see that it was a Pullman (the interior of the cars could be converted to quite good sleeping quarters, with upper and lower berths, and then during the day, were converted back to quite spacious seats for comfortable traveling.) Much to our chagrin, this train was for the recruits. We were sure that since we were troops who had recently returned from overseas, that we would receive the best. Not so. The recruits filed onto the train, and it departed.

Shortly, another train approached, and we just couldn't believe what we were seeing. This was an engine with only four cars. And to add further insult, the coaches were made of wood. We didn't think that that was possible. But that wasn't all: after we boarded, and got settled in, we discovered that these coaches were fitted with gaslights suspended from the ceiling. Every evening, the conductor would come around and light the gaslights. You can imagine the amount of bitching that went on among us. This was early August, and pictures this: a steam engine with only four coaches. The temperature was around 100 degrees, and we had all of the windows and doors open for air. The black smoke and cinders from the engine was going through the coaches. We were wearing our summer uniforms (khakis) and they were getting pretty raunchy. We had about four days of this before we reached Smokey Hill Air Base in Salina Kansas. Were we glad when we arrived, and were able to take a shower. Kansas was hot, and very humid, and while there, I often wondered why when the pioneers settled the west, they just didn't bypass Kansas.

Smokey Hill Air Base was equipped with B-29 bombers. This was the bomber that was used in the Pacific theatre, because of its extended range. We were to train on them and then we were going to fly to Okinawa, for the bombing and invasion of Japan.

The training flights usually lasted for about 10 hours. All of us (crew chiefs from the 409th Sqdn.) decided that we didn't want any part of the flying anymore.

What we did, was; performed all necessary maintenance and then after preflight, we would ride with the ship to the beginning of the runway. When the aircraft stopped there to run-up its engines one last time before take-off, we would disembark. We all felt that after being overseas for 33 months, and all the trauma that we had been through, we had had enough.

Kansas was noted for its severe electrical storms, and high winds. One evening I was standing guard at one of the ships, and one of their typical storms came up. I decided that I would leave a good amount of space between the ship and myself, just in case that the ship got hit with lightning, mainly because it was carrying a full gas load.

Because of my rank (T/Sgt.) and being married, I was allowed to live off of the post, and for that I drew "rations and quarters" pay. The way that it worked, was that I received a stipend that was supposed to cover my rent, and food. Since I spent all day at the base, I would have to pay for cash for my lunch in the army mess.

Doris came out to Salina bout a week after I arrived, and proceeded to look for a room. As one can imagine, with all the troops in such a small town, that was not an easy task. Doris finally did find a room, and was looking with the wife of a friend of mine. They each found a room in the same building, so it worked out well, because while my friend (Chuck Hood) and I were out at the air base the two girls had some companionship. Service people got to know each other very quickly. I guess because we were all in the same boat.

We were out at the air base from 7 A.M. until about 6 P.M. each day, and then we would come into town. We would stay with our wives until the next morning, and then return to the Air Base, for our usual duties.

We were surprised that all of the restaurants, and all of the movie houses were air-conditioned, especially since this was July and August of 1945. As a comparison, when we were stationed in Ft Meyers Florida in July and August of 1942, none of restaurants or movies were air conditioned, and the weather there was extremely hot and humid.

We continued our daily routine, for a couple of weeks, and then one evening, while we were in town, we heard an awful lot of commotion out in the streets. The word had just come down that Japan had surrendered, and that the war was over. It was such a shock, that it took a while for the news to "sink in."

As soon as the war ended, the military was discharging people on the point system. Without going into too much detail, one would accumulate points for various reasons. Points for months of service and points for overseas service. Most of the original members of our Group, the 93rd, each had by this time accumulated enough points to get two people discharged. So within two days I was on a train headed back to N.J. It is interesting how this worked. For some reason, when there were many cars attached to a train, they had what they referred to as a two-section train. Actually, it was two separate engines pulling "X" amount of cars each, but it was designated as the as the same train number, but section number 1 and section number 2. These two trains would travel within view of each other. I was in section number 1 which was a troop train, (this time we had Pullman) and Doris was in section number 2, which Just had plain coaches and was a civilian train. A Pullman type coach was quite a luxury. The arrangement was that there was a large area above the seats, which in the evening, the porter would pull down, (from above the seats) and it would make up into an upper and lower berth (bed.) Real luxury with clean sheets, a reading light, and a special section in each car that was large lavatory. When we had a 10 or 15-minute layover in some large city, I would get off the train at the station, and Doris' train would stop behind us, and we would meet. As our train (the troop train) approached various army bases, they would disconnect cars (which contained troops from the various induction centers of that area) and then we would proceed. The closer we got to the east, the shorter the train became. By the time that we reached N.J. there were only a few cars left, and we were taken directly inside Fort Dix.

It took a couple of days before we were officially discharged, and that was it. It was quite difficult to absorb what was happening, as everything went so fast.

Appendices

Appendix A

Insignia of the 409th Bomb Squadron. This was painted on the nose of every 409th Squadron Aircraft.

Appendix B

On the following pages is a compilation of the flight logs of the 35 missions that were necessary for a combat crew to complete their tour of duty. Howard Bolton was the pilot of this crew and the documents show what happened on each of the missions from time of takeoff to time of return including any action over the target.

MISSION #1

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT Freesman, Dur NAVIGATOR Ericson, JR DATE 26 Sept. 1944

JP Breedeman

STATIONS	4	ENGINES	GG	TAXI	0615	T.O.	0630
LEAVE BASE	0720						
COAST OUT	0905						
ENEMY COAST	0927						
I.P.	1120						
TARGET	1136						
ENEMY COAST	1340						
RETURN	1435						

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE..... secs./hour Gaining / Losing

At..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINT & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.		
Surf.		
5		
10		
15		
20		
25		
30		

FLIGHT RECORD

Bombs away TIME	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH /K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	C.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.
1136		MIT not hit due to bombs falling short in Ooosness district			FLAK - Enemy Coast far to right	FIGHTERS		-38 23000	237			340			
						None									
					Target clear Good attitude Flacking No casualties	BATTLE DAMAGE									
						None									
					RP far to right Rosetta Barrage - also rockets from ground	REMARKS									
						Following group: Left to Ships									
						Approach Flts started at Rally Point									
					Log Closed -										

Mission #V

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT Commander [illegible] NAVIGATOR Ericson, D.R. DATE 17 Sept. 1944

Lt. Gilbert

STATIONS 074	ENGINES 0 N T.O. 0830
LEAVE BASE 0900	Buncy
COAST OUT 1002	G Yarmouth
ENEMY COAST 1030	Ostende
I.P. 1056	
TARGET 1151	Kassel
ENEMY COAST 1411	Ostende
RETURN 1556	

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE..... secs./hour Gaining / Losing

At..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINTS & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS			
Alt.			Temp.
Surf.			
5			
10			
15			
20			
25			
30			

FLIGHT RECORD

TIME	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.A.
—					Flak	Fighters		-41	270			370			
					medium over target very accurate & to right.	None									
					Tracking & Barrage	At Jet Jobs at 40000 No Contact									
					Neighboring Ships received slight damage	Battle Damage									
						None									
						following groups lost 4 ships									
						Remarks -									
						No bombs dropped due to anoxia of lead bombardier over target									
					Log Closed -										

Mission #3

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT Forssmann, DW NAVIGATOR Ericson, DR DATE 28 Sept. 1944

Briefing 0330

STATIONS	ENGINES 0700 TAXI 0730 T.O. 0830
LEAVE BASE	0750 Bun #4
COAST OUT	0758 by Yarmouth
ENEMY COAST	0858 Ostende
I. P.	0948
TARGET	1007 KASSEL
ENEMY COAST	1150 OSTENDE
	RETURN 1350

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE..... secs./hour Gaining / Losing

At..... G.M.T.

FROM TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINTS & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.			Temp.
Surf.			
5			
10			
15			
20			
25			
30			

FLIGHT RECORD

Rounds TIME Way	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH /K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP	T. A. S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	C. S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.A.
1007		On time on 100 & ship			FLAK -	FIGHTERS		-37 VVbod							
					(A/C) Barrage & tracking - Rockets heavy & accurate	Yes - but No Contact									
					(Target area) Barrage & tracking - Very heavy & accurate - Rockets from enemy aircraft Slight damage to neighboring ships -	Battle Damage - Radio Compass antennae lost due to flak severing									
						Remarks -									
						Exceptionally low on gas - landed with 1/2 min. of fuel left. Radar tracking equipment in our ship caused tracking flak -									

FLIGHT RECORD

TIME	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. M.P.H. / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	C.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.A.
					Personal Remarks —										
					Pilot (Forasman) — Difficult to handle ship over target area due to close aggregate bursts of flak. Removed flak at time of bombs away. Confused group leader effected formation change through flak area. Rejoined formation over Rally point										
					As Pilot (Bolton) Brought ship back under control										
					Navigator (Ericson) Saw near miss of enemy fired rockets, commenced emergency procedure, laid course out for France										
					Bombardier (Walker): Saw accurate close flak										
					Engineer (Krammes) None — (Pilot) Engineers good judgment & procedure on transferring of fuel aided greatly in bringing ship back										
					Radio Operator (McCann) Saw five rockets fired level at 6 o'clock passing 50 ft under ship.										
					Gunners verified heavy flak & rockets —										
					Log	Closed —									

SIGNED Ronald R. Ericson 2nd Lt. A.C. NAVIGATOR

MISSION # 4

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT GORES MAJOR DW NAVIGATOR ERICSON, JR DATE 7 Oct 1942

STATIONS	ON ENGINES	TAXI	O.D.T.O.
LEAVE BASE	0935		
COAST OUT	0940		
ENEMY COAST	1105		
I.P.			
TARGET			
ENEMY COAST			
RETURN			

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE..... secs/hour Gaining / Losing

At..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH / K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINTS & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt. / Surf.			Temp.
5			
10			
15			
20			
25			
30			

FLIGHT RECORD

TIME	COURSE	W/V USED & / OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNC.	MAG. HDNC.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH. / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.A.
1128		Target for			FLAK -	FIGHTERS		-36 / 23000				280			
					SP - Light - No Contact	None									
					TARGET - Heavy Barrage Tracking	Battle Smoke									
						None									
		No apparent damage inflicted			Bow Hit No Damage	Neighboring ships hit									
						No casualties									
						Remarks									
						Due to battle damage sufficient fuel lost ships turned back - bombs dropped on area Surrendered by Navigator									
						No apparent damage inflicted									
						Apparent battle observed in area									
						HEINKEN —									

FLIGHT RECORD

COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. M.P.H. / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.A.
				PERSONAL REMARKS —										
				Pilot (Foreman): Ship remained under control										
				Good Bomb release, 2nd ship										
				FLAK: pocket flak exceptionally										
				accurate										
				Ready: received no hits										
				Our lead ship had several hits in										
				tail turret										
				Left wingman received several hits										
				One ship seen in flames										
				Crews conduct exceptional										
				Loc Closed +										

SIGNED Ronald R. Ericson 2nd Lt. NAVIGATOR

Mission

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT Foreman, J.W. NAVIGATOR Ericson, J.R. DATE 3 Oct. 1944

STATIONS OW ENGINES O/A AXI O/N T.O. 0740	
LEAVE BASE Buc [illegible] 0906	
COAST OUT Beachy Head 1004	
ENEMY COAST Becck 1030	
I. P. 1134	
TARGET 1144 Gaenaw	
ENEMY COAST Becck 1249	
Return 1418 (T.T. in air - 0716 hours)	

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE..... secs./hour Gaining / Losing

At..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINT & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.			T
Surf.			
5			
10			
15			
20			
25			
30			

FLIGHT RECORD

Bomb's TIME Away	COURSE	W/V USED & / OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH. / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T. A. S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	C. S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.
1144	On time on Ind. Good results	3 Dir -			Flak - Very light - Inaccurate - Rocket flak Very light - Inaccurate	Fighters / None / Battle Damage None		-37 14000				190			

Remarks - Apparently 1st time group hit target area. Other groups were observed to have made hits on surrounding targets -

Formation [illegible] low on gas - We were [illegible] accordingly keep flying time [illegible] with a maximum of [illegible] left. Consequent to no record pass at field (Some one erred)

FLIGHT RECORD

TIME	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVICATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	LAS MPH K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP	T.A.S.	RUN DIST	RUN TIME	G.S.	TOTAL DIST	TOTAL TIME
					Verbal Report									
					Pilot (Forkish) Good	[illegible]								
					No indications of [illegible]									
					Crew took [illegible]									
					as per [illegible]									
					Certified Bathon J. Sinus	Flooded [illegible]								
					soon after take off. Engine	[illegible]								
					properly — o — (Pilot)	[illegible]								
					minimum not serve on	duties to best of								
					abilities under physical	handicap [illegible]								
					Navigator (Ericsen): Ob-	[illegible]								
					served Sin Target area	[illegible]								
					(Pilot) kept accurate	[illegible]								
					kept crew [illegible]	upon [illegible]								
					Bombardier (Johnson)	Identified [illegible]								
					smoke caused by apparent	[illegible]								
					Explosion of [illegible]	[illegible]								
					target area, DEMBLER	GENITZ [illegible]								
					Explosive smoke plants									
					Engineer (Kleinwort) Con-	[illegible]								
					Radio Operator (McCann)	None — o — (Pilot)								
					(Co-pilot Ericsen) has	[illegible]								
					ship proper [illegible]	[illegible]								
					Harrison Gunner [illegible]	[illegible]								
					of flames									
					Tail Gunner (Schafer)	Rolled [illegible]								
					pain. Gosey (Pilot)	[illegible]								
					Mission Serv (Johnson)	Observed [illegible]								
					Log Closed									

SIGNED Samuel R. Ericsen Jr. 1st Lt. A.C.

MISSION #6

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT FORESHAW NAVIGATOR ERICSON, D.E. DATE 17 OCT 1944

STATIONS 0720	ENGINES 0730 TAXI 0745 T.O. 0800
LEAVE BASE	BU. #24 (0930)
COAST OUT	" " "
ENEMY COAST	OSTENDE 0958
I.P.	1058
TARGET	COLOGNE 1106
ENEMY COAST	1305 OSTENDE
RETURN	1413
T. IN AIR	5:30 HRS.

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises Sets

WATCH..... Fast Slow RATE..... secs/hour Losing Gaining

At..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. M.P.H. / K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINT & Remarks

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.		
Surf.		
5		
10		
15		
20		
25		
30		

FLIGHT RECORD

B.S.T. TIME AWAY	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. M.P.H. / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.
1108	ON SHIP, TARGET COMPLETELY OBSCURED. RESULTS UNOBSERVED.	TIME OF LEAD			FLAK VERY LIGHT ? INACCURATE.	FIGHTERS NONE BATTLE DAMAGE NONE REMARKS NONE		-39 24,000				280			
						LOG CLOSED									

Mission #9

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT Foreman, DW NAVIGATOR Ericson, DR DATE 19 Oct. 1944

STATIONS	0700
ENGINES	0730
TAXI	0810
T.O.	0845
LEAVE BASE	0900
COAST OUT	1040
ENEMY COAST	1118
I.P.	1146
TARGET	1155
ENEMY COAST	1233
RETURN	1433
(7 hr Air 0700 Hours)	

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE..... secs./hour Gaining / Losing

At..... G.M.T.

ROM / O	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINTS & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.			Temp.
Surf.			
5			
10			
15			
20			
25			
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FLIGHT RECORD

Bombs away TIME	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	C.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.A.
303		Unsatisfactory			FLAK —	FIGHTERS		-41 / 20,000				320			
					Light & sporadic Inaccurate	None									
						BATTLE DAMAGE None -									
						Remarks — Bombs failed to release due to malfunctioning Emergency release salvo handle pilots. Emergency release failed to discharge bombs — Armored gunners electrical suit burned out. Pilot ran out of oxygen over target. Nose heating unit inoperative. Eye & nose frost at 1000 RAM. Dry entire trip / using excessive gas 3.0 bombs released 10 min. late on last resort through overcast RON. Brussels —								

FLIGHT RECORD

TIME	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	LAS. MPH. / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	C.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.A.
					PERSONAL REMARKS —										
					Pilot (Goresman) 1st & 4 Props stops on 2400 RPM on way up to altitude of 24,000 ft. Engineer reports 1 engine down until descending below 3000 feet. Over target 2 Bx scattered flak. Ran out of oxygen over target. Engineer reports 600 gallons of gas remaining in tanks - Navigator reported 6½ hours of flying time left. Time required back to base as being 6 hours.										
					Unsatisfactory state of affairs —										
					Co Pilot (Bolton): None										
					Navigator (Ericson): Plotted course to emergency landing field at Brussels (Le Culot). (Pilot) — Accuracy with which Navigator located emergency strip attributed directly to safety or well being of ships crew. This navigation was completed under the handicap of a complete undercast										
					Bombardier (Walker): Went through procedure of releasing bombs (both normal and emergency). Reason for late release unknown -										
					Engineer (Krammes): None - (Pilot) Transferred all fuel from Tokyo tanks to main tanks & kept them well balanced										
					Radio (McCann) None - (Pilot) Upon orders fired flares indicating departure from formation, also flares requesting fighter support & again used emergency strip in dropping aerial bomber.										
					Armorer Gunner (Cole) Left extreme coldness becoming numb on feet & hands due to suit failure. Upon orders from pilot used emergency electrical blanket which failed to operate										
					(Pilot) — Demo squads were exploding unexploded bombs on this field. Upon return to base made instrument approach & daze landing relying upon Gee Navigation, which proved to be very accurate as base was covered by clouds & were 400 feet above ground. —										
						Log Closed									

SIGNED: Donald R. Ericson 2nd Lt A.C. NAVIGATOR

MISSION # 8

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT FORESMAN NAVIGATOR ERICSON, D.R. DATE 25 OCT. 1944

STATIONS 0925 ENGINES 0935 TAXI 0945 T.O. 1000
LEAVE ~~BASE~~ BU. #24 1104 / 10,000'
COAST OUT SPL. #5 1109 / 10,000'
ENEMY COAST HUNSEL 1312
I.P. HUNSEL 1312
TARGET 1318 MUNSTER
ENEMY COAST BAURES 1333
RETURN 1505
(T.T. IN AIR. 5:03 HRS)

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH.............................. Fast Slow RATE............secs./hour Gaining Losing

At................GMT.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINT & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.			
Surf.			
5			
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25			
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FLIGHT RECORD

BOMBS TIME AWAY	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.
1318	ON TIME ON LEAD SHIP				FLAK			-23 22,000				286			
					HEAVY, VERY INACCURATE										
					FEW CLOSE BURSTS.	FIGHTERS									
						NONE									
						BATTLE DAMAGE									
						NONE									
						REMARKS									
						ABORTED ONE HR. FROM ENGLISH COAST DUE TO CAMERA IN SHIP.									
						FLEW SURFACE OF N. SEA BACK TO BASE.									
						BOMB DOOR STUCK IN OPEN POSITION									
						LOG CLOSED									

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT Bigolin 9 NAVIGATOR Erickson, R.E. DATE 30 Oct 1944

STATIONS	ENGINES	TAXI	T.O.
	830	920	0915

LEAVE BASE	841 24 1020
COAST OUT	SPL #5 1028
ENEMY COAST	ZUIDEN 1103
I.P.	1149
TARGET	1202 HAMBURG
ENEMY COAST	1250
	RETURN 1418

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE..... Gaining / Losing secs/hour

At..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINTS & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS			
Alt.			
Surf.			
5			
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15			
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25			
30			

FLIGHT RECORD

BOMBS TIME AWAY	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.
1202	ON TITLE ON LEAD SHIP BY NAVIGATOR				FLAK — HEAVY & VERY ACCURATE	FIGHTERS NONE		-36 27,000'				325			

BATTLE DAMAGE

HOLE IN #3 ENGINE NECESSITATING FEATHERING

HOLE IN LEFT STABILIZER. VERTICAL

SIX INCH HOLE IN GAS TANK (BOMBAY)

BOOSTER PUMPS INOPERATIVE DUE TO SEVERING OF CABLES BY FLAK.

ALL FUEL TRANSFER INOPERATIVE.

THROTTLE QUADRANTS ON #3 & 4 ENGINES [illegible]

NUMBER THREE ENGINE FEATHERED.

NUMBER FOUR ENGINE OUT OF CONTROL RUNNING [illegible] WIDE OPEN.

ENGINEER'S & NAVIGATOR'S OXYGEN SYSTEMS SHOT [illegible] ENGINEER WITHOUT HEAT.

FOREMAN GROUNDED — SUBSTITUTE PILOT: BIGOLIN

FLIGHT RECORD

TIME	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. M.P.H. / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.
					PERSONAL REMARKS										
					PILOT (BIGOLIN): NONE										
					CO-PILOT (BOLTON): MISSION HAZARDOUS DUE TO FREQUENT BAD WEATHER CONDITIONS. PILOTED SHIP DURING BOMB RUN — IMMEDIATELY AFTER FEELING "BOMBS AWAY" FELT FLAK HIT SHIP & IMMEDIATELY DETECTED HIT IN BOMBAY GAS TANKS... NOTIFIED CREW OF DAMAGE VIA INTERPHONE. PUT SHIP ON AUTO PILOT... CONTACTED LEAD SHIP & NOTIFIED THEM OF OUR CONDITION AND INTENTION OF GOING TO SWEDEN, IF POSSIBLE. (LATER ON TRIP ROUTE WAS DISCARDED DUE TO POSSIBILITY OF BAILING OUT OVER SEA.) INSTRUCTED CREW TO BE READY FOR BAIL OUT AT INSTANTS NOTICE. CALLED LEAD SHIP INFORMING THEM OF OUR CHANGE IN PLANS & INTENTIONS TO GO TO BELGIUM. REQUESTED FIGHTER SUPPORT. ALSO RECEIVED LOCAL WEATHER REPORT.										
					NAVIGATOR BOMBARDIER (ERICSON): PLOTTED COURSE TO SWEDEN (LATER CHANGED THEN DECIDED TO GO TO EMERGENCY STRIP NEAR BRUSSELS — WITH AID OF MAP FROM YANK MAGAZINE. (CO PILOT) UNDER THE MOST ADVERSE CONDITIONS IMAGINABLE, SUCH AS NO MAPS, SOLID OVER & UNDERCAST, NO RADIO AIDS, NO U.S. REF REFERENCE NAVIGATOR, ENABLED CREW & SHIP TO REACH SAFE TERRITORY, DESPITE DECREASED SUPPLY OF PETROL. WHOLE CREW INDEBTED TO NAVIGATOR FOR SAFE RETURN										
					ENGINEER (KRAEMER) TRIED TO TRANSFER FUEL BUT UNABLE TO DO SO DUE TO SHOT AWAY TRANSFER SYSTEM & BOOSTER PUMP. (CO PILOT) ENGINEER IN BOMBAY WHEN DAMAGE INFLICTED, HE IMMEDIATELY NOTIFIED ME OF DAMAGE, THEN DISCARDING HIS OWN CONSTANT FLOW OXYGEN AND HEATING EQUIPMENT, HE RETURNED TO BOMBAY ATTEMPTING TO CHECK FLOW OF GASOLINE. ALTHOUGH DRENCHED TO SKIN WITH GASOLINE & SUFFERING FROM EXTREME COLD TEMP. (-5°C & 40 WINDS, HE CONSTANTLY TRIED TO REMEDY DAMAGE. FOR 2½ HRS THIS RESULTING IN IN INFLAMIATION OF FEET FROM GASOLINE.										
					ARMORER GUNNER (POLE): BY CRAWLING ONTO HALF-DECK, WAS ABLE TO DETERMINE EXTENT OF DAMAGE. INSTRUCTED RADIO OPERATOR OF DAMAGE AND CAUTIONED HIM AGAINST USING RADIO AS EQUIPMENT WAS SATURATED WITH GASOLINE. — SECURED WIRES DAMAGED BY FLAK, IN BOMBAY SO AS TO PREVENT ANY SPARKS.										
					RADIO OPERATOR (McCANN): REMAINED IN TOP TURRET UNTIL AFTER DAMAGE HAD BEEN INFLICTED.. THEN LEFT TURRET UPON INSTRUCTIONS & PREPARED FOR EMERGENCY TRANSMISSION. (NAVIGATOR) RADIO OPERATOR OBTAINED FIX WHICH PROVED VERY VALUABLE IN DOUBLE CHECKING POSITION.										
					NOSE GUNNER (BOYDSTON) KEPT CONSTANT VIGIL FOR ENEMY AIRCRAFT UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO LEAVE TURRET & TAKE OVER TOP TURRET... ALSO REPORTED ON FORMATION PROGRESS.										
					TAIL GUNNER (SCHAEFER) KEPT CONSTANT OUTLOOK FOR POSSIBLE ATTACKS BY ENEMY FIGHTERS & REPORTED LOCATION OF FLAK; REMAINED IN TURRET TILL ORDERED TO LEAVE & HELP WITH DISCHARGE OF CHAFF.										
					LOG CLOSED										
					SUPPLEMENT/ARRIVED AT EMERGENCY FIELD AT NEDOFT. FIELD RECAPTURED 5 DAYS AGO. BOMB CRATERS VISIBLE DOWN CENTER OF RUNWAY FULL LENGTH. PILOT LANDED LEFT OF CRATERS. UPON TOUCHDOWN #4 ENGINE BECAME OUT OF CONTROL AT FULL THROTTLE WHICH PULLED US ONTO MOD STRIP NEXT TO RUNWAY. WE TURNED TWO 360° VIOLENT TURNS BOT LANDING GEAR DID NOT COLLAPSE. FORTUNATELY										

SIGNED Donald R. Ericson

MISSION -10

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT Foreshan NAVIGATOR Ericson, D.E. DATE 9 Nov. 1944

STATION	0625 ENGINES 0655 TAXI 0650 T.O. 0700
LEAVE BASE	Bk. 24 0908
COAST OUT	DUNGENESS 0940
ENEMY COAST	BOULOGNE 0955
I.P.	1020
TARGET	METZ 1028
ENEMY COAST	BOULOGNE 1150
RETURN	1238
(T.T. IN AIR 0540 HRS)	

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE..... secs./hour Gaining / Losing

At..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINT & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.		
Surf.		
5		
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FLIGHT RECORD

BOMBS TIME / Away!	COURSE	W/V USED & / OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	C.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.
1028	(2)	2000 LB. G.P. BOMBS			FLAK VERY LIGHT & INACCURATE	FIGHTERS		-45° 23,000				285			
	ON TAIL ON LEAD SHIP					NONE —									
						BATTLE DAMAGE NONE									
						REMARKS — AIDED GEN. PATTON'S ADVANCE NORTH OF NANCY, BY BOMBING ENEMY TROOPS & GROUND INSTALLATION. 2000 LIBERATORS & FORTS USED IN THIS CONCENTRAT. ATTACK. GOOD BOMBING PATTERN OBSERVED & MANY HITS MADE. ABORTED AT FRENCH COAST EARLY DUE TO CAMERA SHIP. RETURNED TO BASE ON DECK WITH LOW ON FUEL!!								
						Lot Close									

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT FORESMAN NAVIGATOR ERICSON, D.R. DATE 21 NOV, 1944

STATIONS 680	ENGINES 0810 TAXI 0820 T.O. 0820
LEAVE BASE	BU. 24 1012 / 18000'
COAST OUT	BU. 24 1012 / 18000'
ENEMY COAST	WESER INLET 1120
I.P.	1150
TARGET	1159 HAMBURG
ENEMY COAST	WESER INLET 1305
	RETURN 1450
	T.T. IN AIR 0600 HRS.

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE..... secs./hour Gaining / Losing

At..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T. A. S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G. S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINTS & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.			Temp.
Surf.			
5			
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FLIGHT RECORD

ABS TIME / GMT	COURSE	W/V USED & / OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T. A. S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G. S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.A.
-10	ON	TIME ON			FLAK —	FIGHTERS		-34				260			
	LEAD	SHIP			EXTREMELY HEAVY & ACCURATE	NONE		22,000							
						BATTLE DAMAGE									
						NONE									
						REMARKS —									
						TARGET WAS OIL REFINERY — MADE EARLY RETURN DUE TO CAMERA IN SHIP — PRINTS REVEALED ACCURATE HITS ON OIL DISPERSAL AREA & RAILROAD YARD. ALL BOMBS FELL IN TARGET AREA — EXTENSIVE DAMAGE EVIDENT.									

FLIGHT RECORD

TIME	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAC. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. M.P.H. K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.A.
					PERSONAL REMARKS —										
					PILOT (FORESMAN) NEIGHBORING SHIPS RECEIVED SLIGHT BATTLE DAMAGE DUE TO INTENSIVE FLAK. NEAR FLAK BURSTS OBSERVED AND HEARD. CONCUSSION NOT NOTICEABLE ON CONTROL SURFACES. NO APPARENT DAMAGE										
					CO PILOT (BOLTON): OBSERVED BRIDGEMAN SHIP WITH FEATHERED PROP FALL BEHIND FORMATION. RECEIVED MESSAGE OVER U.H.F. THAT HE WOULD ATTEMPT TO MAKE BELGIUM. (SWEAT OUT NO. 13)										
					NAVIGATOR (FRICSON): CONFIRMED BOMBARDIER HITS.	NOSE GUNNER'S EFFECTS ON BMB									
					ENGINEER (KEARNEY): NONE										
					RADIO (McCANN) NONE										
					ARMORER (COLE) DISCHARGED EXCESSIVE AMOUNT OF CHAFF (NINE BOXES)										
					NOSE GUNNER (BOYDSTON) OBSERVED ENEMY AIR STRIP UNDER CONSTRUCTION: ALSO LARGE BUILDINGS BEING BUILT. SAW LARGE BLACK PUFFIES OF SMOKE OVER TARGET, ALSO FLAKS										
					TAIL GUNNER (SCHAFER): KEPT CONTACT ON LOCATION OF FORMATION										
					LOG CLOSED										

SIGNED Donald L. Ericson 2nd LT. A.C. NAVIGATOR

MISSION #7

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT Jacksman, DW NAVIGATOR Ericson, DR DATE 24 Nov 1944

STATIONS	ENGINES	TAXI	T.O.
LEAVE BASE	SPL #10	1014	
COAST OUT	BEACHY HEAD	1034	
ENEMY COAST	POINT HAUT	BANC 10W	
I.P.	11W		
TARGET	1110	BINGEN	MTP
ENEMY COAST	OSTENDE	1402	
RETURN	1443		

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE.....secs./hour Gaining / Losing

At..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH / K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINT & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS		
Alt.		
Surf.		
5		
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15		
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25		
30		

FLIGHT RECORD

Bombs TIME Hours	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	C.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.
1YY0		On headship (Malfunction on usual SAE VOR)			FLAK – Very light & Inaccurate	Fighters		-40 DW 10				202			
						NONE									
						BATTLE DAMAGE									
						NONE –									
						REMARKS –									
						Early release due to lead ships error (18 a/c) Prob. target area, HIT open terrain. Target severely damaged by preceding groups –									
						LOC CLOSED –									

Mission No 13

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT Forrestmansell NAVIGATOR Ericson, D.R. DATE 11 Dec. 1944

STATIONS 0800	ENGINES 0810 TAXI 0850 T.O. 0830
LEAVE BASE	Sun 74 0907
COAST OUT	Gt. Yarmouth 0914
ENEMY COAST	Ostende 1002
I.P.	1140
TARGET	1200 Hanau 4117
ENEMY COAST	1420
	RETURN 1730

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE..... secs./hour Gaining / Losing

At..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINT & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.		
Surf.		
5		
10		
15		
20		
25		
30		

FLIGHT RECORD

Bombs Away TIME	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH /K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.
1140		On time on lead ship (results unobserved due to undercast)			FLAK Very light - Rocket flak	FIGHTERS NONE BOMBS DAMAGE - NONE REMARKS - Bombs dropped on target to reveal		-30 >NTHO				202			
									Second run			(Radar fault			

Mission - 14

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT Foresman, D.W. NAVIGATOR Erickson, D.R. DATE 12 Dec. 1944

STATIONS 0810	ENGINES 0820 TAXI 0830 T.O. 0820
LEAVE ~~BASE~~ Run 24	0920
COAST OUT	Gt. Yarmouth 0924
ENEMY COAST	Ostende 1000
I.P.	1122
TARGET	1200 Hanau M/Y
ENEMY COAST	Ostende 1410
Return	1204

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH................ Fast / Slow RATE............secs./hour Gaining / Losing

At................G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G. S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINT & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.		
Surf.		
5		
10		
15		
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25		
30		

FLIGHT RECORD

Bombs TIME Away	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH /K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G. S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.
1210		On time on lead ship (Very good results observed)			FLAK - Light, scattered. Inaccurate) More rocket flak than usual	FIGHTERS None -		-38 22000				246			
						BATTLE DAMAGE None -									

REMARKS -
Visual run on target beginning ½ way on bomb run. Direct hits on tgt. by preceding groups observed.
Concentrated bombing hits (observed) by our group & following groups -
Smoke rose to approximately to 10. feet & continued for about 20 miles forming complete cumulus looking overcast on target area.
Ship preceding us on takeoff ground looped washing out landing gear.
Made instrument approach & landing. K-King landed off runway. result. in minor damage -

TIME	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. M.P.H. / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T
					PERSONAL REMARKS —										
					Pilot (Foreman): Returned to base on 3 engines, ship maintained good control & remaining 3 engines allowed us to hold or gain altitude as so desired — Engineer went through proper procedure for loss of #3 engine —										
					(C) PILOT (Long): Flew first mission today, (Pilot) — Comb & actions very satisfactory										
					NAV (ERICSON): Plotted course for Calais Peninsula avoiding flak installations along route & near DUNKIRK —										
						COL CLOSED —									

SIGNED: Donald R. Ericson

MISSION 15

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT Foresman, D.W. NAVIGATOR Ericson, J.R. DATE 24 Dec. 1944

STATIONS 0830 ENGINES 0845 TAXI 0900 T.O. 0915
LEAVE BASE 0915
COAST OUT Bun #24 1020
ENEMY COAST Ostende 1050
I.P. 1115
TARGET Ahrweiler 1203 (T-T-T)
ENEMY COAST Ostende 1410
Return 1505

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH.............................. Fast / Slow RATE............ secs./hour Gaining / Losing

At.................. G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.AS MPH /K	T. A. S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G. S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINTS & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.		
Surf.		
5		
10		
15		
20		
25		
30		

FLIGHT RECORD

Bombs TIME Away	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH /K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T. A. S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G. S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.
1205		On time on			FLAK –	FIGHTERS		-28 25000							
		lead ship –			Moderate & excep-	None –									
					tionally heavy– Entire division										
					suffered moderate to heavy battle										
					damage	Battle Damage									
						Slight									
						Remarks –									
						Maximum effort – 6000 aircraft penetra									
						enemy territory – attacking centers of									
						communications behind Rundstedts b									
						through. Combat wings split up int									
						groups & attacked individual targets.									
						targets were accurately hit today									
						sulting in apparent devastation to									
						small towns harboring these chokepo									
					Log Closed –										

MISSION #10

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT FORESMAN DFC NAVIGATOR ERICSON, D.R. DATE 29 Dec. 1944

STATIONS	07W ENGINES 07W TAXI 0744 T.O. 0800
LEAVE ~~BASE~~	Bor #74 0900
COAST OUT	" 0940
ENEMY COAST	OSTENDE 0950
I.P.	1107
TARGET	SCHLEIDEN 1110 (T-TGT)
ENEMY COAST	OSTENDE 1137
	RETURN 1330

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE.....secs./hour Gaining / Losing

At..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T. A. S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G. S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINT & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.		
Surf.		
5		
10		
15		
20		
25		
30		

FLIGHT RECORD

Bombs Away TIME	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH /K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP	T. A. S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	C. S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.
1110		Bombs Away 08 Seconds late due to malfunction in racks			FLAK - Scattered over wide area (4 to 8 gun batteries) unbelievably accurate, but light - few shells burst more than 30 feet from aircraft - most bursts were within 5 to 10 feet from individual ships —	FIGHTERS		-57 Wood							
						NONE									
		SALVOED —				BATTLE DAMAGE									
						NONE (PERSONNEL)									
						DIVISION BAD hit —									
						KEMNA, KS —									
						Small towns in target area received terrific punishment									
					Log Closed —										

MISSION 17

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT FORESMAN, DW NAVIGATOR ERICSON, DR DATE 30 DEC. 1944

STATIONS	06W
ENGINES	0630
TAXI	0644
T.O.	0700
LEAVE BASE	DON 74 0810
COAST OUT	" 0810
ENEMY COAST	OSTENDE 0840
I.P.	1045
TARGET	MECHERNICH 1100 (T+16)
ENEMY COAST	OSTENDE 1320
RETURN	1400

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE..... secs./hour Gaining / Losing

At..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINT & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.		
Surf.		
5		
10		
15		
20		
25		
30		

FLIGHT RECORD

Bombs TIME AWAY	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH. /K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.
1104								-17							
1106		EARLY RELEASE FOR SPOTTING PURPOSES, ANY SINGLE RUN WITH NO BOMBS. SIGHT. HITS VERY SATISFAC TORY			FLAK MODERATE - FAILED TO CONCENTRATE ON US	FIGHTERS		9/1000							
						NONE									
						BATTLE DAMAGE NONE									
						REMARKS - Lost #1 Engine over Belgium due to failure & loss of oil pressure. Fell behind formation, continuing on to target area on 3 engines. Bombed target of opportunity. Returned to Base									

FLIGHT RECORD

TIME	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. M.P.H. / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	C.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.A.
					PERSONAL REMARKS—										
					PILOT (FOREMAN): After losing #1 Engine was unable to maintain position in formation & hold altitude. Continued on into target area alone after consulting crew members— Greatest danger from possible collision with bombs dropped from other groups from higher altitude. Was very much surprised we were not attacked by enemy aircraft while circling around target area. Remaining 3 engines were not functioning properly. Returned to base with minimum power settings making instrument approach & uneventful landing										
					CO-PILOT (HANSE): JUBILANT OVER escapade & results										
					NAV. BOMB (ERICSON): Plotted course to target area after loss of #1 engine - were unable to pick up briefed target so chose target of opportunity (City of Hamm) IP #1 was Autobahn & railway junction. Ship did not have sight installed so toggled out eight (8) bombs on town in line with drift to determine drift, range & dropping angle— Continued on to Hamm giving minor course corrections to Pilot; set up No 1 foot altervalometer setting with hopes of dropping at least a few in target area— Judging from results of preceding bombs dropped, our bombs Now. 1 hit main switch & held Breath — 1st bomb hit on edge of town, others followed in trail through main part of business district with last bombs striking autobahn & railway junction resulting in maximum desired results— Plotted course out of enemy territory skirting flak installations & across Zuider Zee Peninsula to avoid ditching in event of second engine failure										
					Gunners Corroborated bomb hits & apparent damage										
					UPPER TURRET (SCHAFER): Nothing										
					Pilot - After bombs away circled target to observe damage, upper turret gunner remarked - "Let's get the hell out of here" which was a feeling shared by the engineer due to a similar overall response. Entire crew showed exceptional ability & calm reactions & apparently should my pleasure "a" hauling "Rolled & gotten away with b last one" —										
					Log Closes—										

SIGNED Donald R. Ericson

Mission "D"

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT FORESMAN, DW NAVIGATOR ERICSON, AR DATE 7 JAN. 1944

STATIONS 073 ENGINES 07W TAXI 0800 T.O. 0870	
LEAVE BASE Duxford 0930	
COAST OUT Southwold 0941	
ENEMY COAST IJMUIDEN 1047	
I.P. 11K8	
TARGET 1YN KOBLENZ (BRIDGE NORTH)	WATCH ..... Fast / Slow
ENEMY COAST OSTENDE 1355	At ..... G.M.T.
RETURN 1YN	RATE ..... secs/hour Gaining / Losing

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINT & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS		
Alt.		
Surf.		
5		
10		
15		
20		
25		
30		

FLIGHT RECORD

Bombs TIME AWAY	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH. / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T. A. S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	C. S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.
1YN		On time on Lead ship —			FLAK —	FIGHTERS		-5° 23000							
					NONE	NONE									
						BATTLE DAMAGE									
						NONE —									
						REMARKS									
						NONE									
					LOC CLOSED —										

MISSION 19

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT FORESMAN, DW NAVIGATOR ERICSON, DR DATE 8 JAN 1944

STATIONS 064 ENGINES 07W TAXI 07W T.O. 0730	
LEAVE BASE	0730
COAST OUT	SVL 8 0940
ENEMY COAST	1013
I. P.	11W
TARGET	OSABLE 11W
ENEMY COAST	1309
RETURN	1410

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE.....secs./hour Gaining / Losing

At.....G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T. A. S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G. S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINT & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.		
Surf.		
5		
10		
15		
20		
25		
30		

FLIGHT RECORD

Bombs Away TIME	COURSE	W/V USED & / OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH. / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T. A. S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G. S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.
11W	On time	On course Slip —	Head	FLAK —	FIGHTERS —		-V 26000	130							
				None	None										
					BATTLE DAMAGE										
					REMARKS —										
					Lost #1 turbo causing difficulty in holding position in formation										
					NAV. froze ears / Mild Case										
				LOG CLOSED —											

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT Foresman, DW NAVIGATOR Ericson, DR DATE 17 Jan. 1945

STATIONS 0745 ENGINES 0800 TAXI 0815 T.O. 0830
LEAVE BASE Bun #74 1027
COAST OUT Cromer 1035
ENEMY COAST 1158
I.P. 1158
TARGET Harburg 1210
ENEMY COAST 1305
Return 1530

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH.......... Fast / Slow RATE.......... secs./hour Gaining / Losing

At.......... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINT & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.		
Surf.		
5		
10		
15		
20		
25		
30		

FLIGHT RECORD

Bombs TIME Away	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.
1210		Vis - On Time on Lead Ship			Flak - Heavy Barrage & Extensive Tracking Very Acc.	Fighters None		-37 23000	180						

Battle Damage -
Electrical equipment shot out. Received [illegible] damaging hits, resulting in partial [illegible] one control cable and [illegible] [illegible] oxygen lines in Bomb Bay. Four flak holes in tail turret. No 3 eng hit - Navigator's nose section hit large piece of flak entering upper center section of fuselage penetrating heavy bracing & sticking [illegible] in right foot.

Remarks -
Very good bomb results observed. Lead ship had late release due to [illegible] bombs [illegible] up approach to [illegible] highway bridge.
We lost our Bombardier (Eisele) who was flying Pilotage Nav on a lead ship

FLIGHT RECORD

TIME	COURSE	W/V USED &OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. M.P.H. K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	C.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.
					PERSONAL REMARKS —										
					PILOT (ROBERTSON) - Lost contact with rest of group in the Clear after take off. Circled for formation										
					CO-PILOT (RICHARDSON) - I don't care to go back to Hamilton,										
					NAVIGATOR (ERICSON) - Administered first aid to Radio Operator who was wounded. Returned to base & landed safely at Base, as we had left formation										
					BOMBARDIER (TORMEY) - Followed through on bombing run & navigator navigated us back to base										
					RADIO OPERATOR (McCANN) - None										
					(PILOT) - Apparent passage of light flak. Suffered slightly from shock. Assisted wounded Radio Operator (gunner) in first aid. Suffered flotation gear (Mae West) & dinghy (Rope Line) when left plane										
					ARMOURER GUNNER (COLE) - Made several passes at enemy aircraft & 20 cannon & machine guns, but was struck by various enemy installations.										
					PILOT - Continue under fire (enemy) Recommend dash way "Lead to Gay" if you don't like dawn Mae, & hit you with that from Sept 6th, etc. —										
					TAIL GUNNER (HALLISEY) - Operated turning flak & several attacks during course of flight area.										
					PILOT: —	Action was fast & furious & very dangerous at times &									
						COC (Closed) -									

SIGNED Donald K. Ericson 2nd Lt. NAVIGATOR

MISSION #71

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT BOLTON, H.F. NAVIGATOR ERICSON, D.R. DATE 14 FEB. 1945

STATIONS 07 ENGINES 04 HOT AX NO T.O. 0840	
LEAVE ~~BASE~~	BUN 0910
COAST OUT	"
ENEMY COAST	BERLEN 0935
I.P.	1450
TARGET	MAGDEBURG 1315
ENEMY COAST	BERLEN 1510
RETURN	1545

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE..... secs./hour Gaining / Losing

At..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINTS & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.		
Surf.		
5		
10		
15		
20		
25		
30		

FLIGHT RECORD

BOMBS AWAY TIME	COURSE	W/V USED & / OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.
1315		ON TIME ON LEAD (10/10 THIN)			FLAK	FIGHTERS		-34 / 31000							
					LIGHT & UNACCURATE	NONE-									
						BATTLE DAMAGE									
						NONE									
						REMARKS-									
						LACK OF FLAK HERE USE TO BE ONE OF THE				WAS A COURIER		ODD	AS THIS TARGET		
					LOG CLOSED										

MISSION "VV"

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT BOLTON, H.F. NAVIGATOR ERICSON, D.R. DATE 15 FEB. 1944

STATIONS N ENGINES 8 / 0 TAXI 08 / 0 T.O. 0830	
LEAVE ~~BASE~~ BUN "Y" 0945	
COAST OUT	"
ENEMY COAST	BERGEN 1015
I.P.	1315
TARGET	MAGDEBURG 1330
ENEMY COAST	BERGEN 1510
RETURN	1540

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH ..... Fast / Slow RATE ..... secs./hour Gaining / Losing

At ..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH / K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINTS & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.		
Surf.		
5		
10		
15		
20		
25		
30		

FLIGHT RECORD

BOMBS TIME AWAY	COURSE	W/V USED & / OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH. / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	C.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.
1330		ON TIME AND LEAD SHIP (8/10 ths)		ON	FLAK — Light & inaccurate (slightly more today than pre-ceding mission)	FIGHTERS		-35 WWW							
						NONE									
						BATTLE DAMAGE									
						NONE									
						REMARKS — (Pilot) Ship acted very sluggish due to "A" engine being bad. Unable to stay with formation on Bomb Run. Ship was taken off operational status when we landed. Was co-pilot with us today. Surprised at our tactics of bunching when flak was encountered									
					LOG CLOSED —										

MISSION #3

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT BOLTON, H.F. NAVIGATOR ERICSON, D.R. DATE 21 FEB. 1944

STATIONS	ENGINES 0740 TAXI 0 No. 0800
LEAVE ~~BASE~~	Jun " '44 0910
COAST OUT	" "
ENEMY COAST	OSTENDE 0930
I.P.	IVV-0
TARGET	NUREMBURG 1300
ENEMY COAST	OSTENDE 1440
	RETURN 1505

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE.....secs./hour Gaining / Losing

At..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH / K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINTS & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

			T
Alt.			
Surf.			
5			
10			
15			
20			
25			
30			

FLIGHT RECORD

TIME (Zulu)	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T
1300		ON TIME ON LEAD SHIP (10/10THS)			FLAK at the lines extremely heavy & accurate due to visual skies. We were out of formation & they tracked us across for about 45 miles until we gained altitude & changed course repeatedly. TARGET - Light & inaccurate.	FIGHTERS - NONE BATTLE DAMAGE - NONE REMARKS - Maximum effort today - entire 8th A/F force. Approximately 2500 planes tak... part. More bombs fell on this target in 5 minutes than did on London in 5 years. - Yesterdays mission recalled due to ad... below weather conditions after we w... 1/4 of the way there. Jo-Left Flak Sos strayed off cou... & passed over DUNKIRK. LOGGED 4 HOURS 30 MINUTES -		-3Y 21000							
					LOG CLOSED -										

MISSION #4

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT Bolton, Hoe NAVIGATOR Ericson, Duke DATE 22 FEB. 1944

STATION	911
ENGINES	0730
AXIS	0744
T.O.	0800
LEAVE BASE	Bun 44 - 0900
COAST OUT	" "
ENEMY COAST	BERGEN 0930
I.P.	1130
TARGET	KNEISEN 1140
ENEMY COAST	BERGEN 1430
RETURN	1500

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE.....secs./hour Gaining / Losing

At.....G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINTS & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.			T
Surf.			
5			
10			
15			
20			
25			
30			

FLIGHT RECORD

Bombs Away TIME	COURSE	W/V USED & /OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T. A. S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G. S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T
IN 0		On Time on Lead ship (Visual 9600)			FLAK very intense & accurate on one leg, but our leader went around it. The preceding group went through this & Eric saw one ship spin in in flames. None at the target -	FIGHTERS - NONE - BATTLE DAMAGE NONE - REMARKS - Very unusual mission due to our bombing at such low altitudes. 8th 9th 11th E. Maximum Effort of the 8th, 9th & 11th Air forces today (A) 60 RAF approximately 6000 ships - Flak starts, stopped 3000 along on small marshalling yards all located in the RUHR., this territory was very beautiful & reminded us of the NW part of the states. First time we have ever been able to smoke on the bombing run - Excellent navigation & decisions by the lead ships enabled this mission to be such a success!.		-14 18000 (T/O 9600)						
						LOG CLOSED -									

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT BOLTON, H.F. NAVIGATOR ERICSON, D.K. DATE 23 FEB. 1944

STATIONS	085 ENGINES 0810 TAXI 0850 T.O. 0880
LEAVE ~~BASE~~	Bun 44 0950
COAST OUT	"
ENEMY COAST	BERGEN 1015
I.P.	DX45
TARGET	BUTZBACH 1300
ENEMY COAST	BERGEN 1510
RETURN	1545

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE..... secs./hour Gaining / Losing

At..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINTS & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.			Ten
Surf.			
5			
10			
15			
20			
25			
30			

FLIGHT RECORD

BOMBS TIME	BOMBS COURSE	W/V USED & / OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	C.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.A
1300		On Time on Logd Ship (Usual)			FLAK Intense barrage over LEIPZIG but as we were on course it didn't bother us.	FIGHTERS		-38							
						NONE-									
						BATTLE DAMAGE									
						NONE									
						REMARKS									
						Briefed to bomb at minimum altitude a 6000 ft. again, however due to bad weath one bomb run at ten thousand feet o Hy was abandoned & Target of Opport Hy was selected. T/O was visual & excellent results w obsgbued. Another NIL of about Swoo ships — ran low on oxygen & left formation at enemy coast — Instrument let-down from 10,000 to Two feet.						
					LOG CLOSED —										

MISSION 28

PILOT Bolton, H. F NAVIGATOR Ericson, D. R FLIGHT PLAN DATE 1 MARCH 194[illegible]

STATIONS 06[illegible] ENGINES 071 0 TAXI 0710 T.O. 0730	
LEAVE ~~BASE~~ Bja-74 083[illegible]	
COAST OUT Bja-74 083[illegible]	
ENEMY COAST OSTENDE 0910	
I.P. 1140	
TARGET 11[illegible] AMSGARD	
ENEMY COAST OSTENDE 1410	
RETURN 160[illegible]	

SUN		MOON		TWILIGHT	
Rises	Sets	Rises	Sets	AM	PM

WATCH ..... Fast / Slow RATE ..... secs / hour Gaining / Losing

At ..... C.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT	I.A.S. M.P.H. /K	T. A. S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G. S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	CELESTIAL DATA TIME	BODY	ALT.	AZ

FLIGHT RECORD

BOMBS AWAY TIME	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR D.R. DRIF.	TRUE HDNC.	MAG. HDNC.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. M.P.H. /K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T. A. S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G. S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.
11[illegible]		On Time / lead ship —	011		FLAK - Meager & Accurate	FIGHTERS		-37 Y3000							
						NONE									
						BATTLE DAMAGE									
						NONE									
						REMARKS									
						NONE									
					LOG CLOSED —										

MISSION 29

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT BOLTON, H.F. NAVIGATOR ERICSON, D.R. DATE 4 MARCH 1944

STATIONS 06 ENGINES 06	TAXI 0700 T.O. 0710
LEAVE BASE	0710
COAST OUT	0740 LOWESTOFT
ENEMY COAST	0745 OSTENDE
I.P.	1004
TARGET	1014 ULM
ENEMY COAST	OSTENDE 1314
RETURN	1345

SUN		MOON		TWILIGHT	
Rises	Sets	Rises	Sets	AM	PM

WATCH ..... Fast / Slow RATE ..... secs / hour Gaining / Losing

At ..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT	I.A.S. M.P.H. /K	T. A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G. S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	CELESTIAL DATA TIME	BODY	ALT.	AZ

FLIGHT RECORD

BOMBS TIME / AWAY	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR D.R. DRIF.	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. M.P.H. /K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T. A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G. S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.
1014		On Time on Lead Ship			FLAK LIGHT, INACCURATE	FIGHTERS		-36 Height							
						NONE									
						BATTLE DAMAGE									
						NONE									
						REMARKS - Mission very hazardous due to extremely bad weather conditions, flying was done entirely in haze clouds, some persistant contrails. Alertness & keen observations undoubtedly aided a great deal in being able to successfully complete mission. It was only through exceptional good work of navigator that enabled us to find where there was off the formation, (forming was done over the Continent.) Bomb run was very hurried as flak & bombs were dropped while we were in a turn. Bomb aimer was heard to remark - "Bomb bay doors open, bombs away - Bomb doors closed - all in one breath							
						LOG CLOSED -									

INVASION 78

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT BOLTON, H.F. NAVIGATOR ERICSON, D.R. DATE 7 MARCH 1944

STATIONS	ENGINES	T.O.T.	A.X.N.	T.O.T.	O.B.D.
	0740			0800	

LEAVE BASE	BUNGAY 0910
COAST OUT	BUNGAY 0910
ENEMY COAST	ORMOND 0940
I.P.	1140
TARGET	1130 BIELEFELD
ENEMY COAST	OSTENDE 1345
RETURN	1540

SUN		MOON		TWILIGHT	
Rises	Sets	Rises	Sets	AM	PM

WATCH ..... Fast / Slow RATE ..... secs / hour Gaining / Losing

At ..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT	I.A.S. M.P.H. /K	T. A. S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G. S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	CELESTIAL DATA TIME	BODY	ALT.	AZ

FLIGHT RECORD

Bombs TIME Away	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR D. R. DRIF.	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. M.P.H. /K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T. A. S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G. S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E. T.
1130	On time on lead ship				FLAK	FIGHTERS		-35							
					NONE !!	NONE		18000							
						BATTLE DAMAGE									
						NONE									
						REMARKS -									
						Exceptionally good mission !!!									
					LOG CLOSED -										

1VIIIDIVISION - 29

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT BOLTON A.F. NAVIGATOR ERICSON D.R. DATE 18 MARCH 194-

STATIONS 073	ENGINES 2 NO	TAXI 08	T.O. 0810
LEAVE BASE BUNGAY	1000		
COAST OUT BUNGAY	1010		
ENEMY COAST EGMOND	1040		
I.P. 1910			
TARGET 1910	BERLIN		
ENEMY COAST EGMOND	1940		
RETURN 1940			

SUN		MOON		TWILIGHT	
Rises	Sets	Rises	Sets	AM	PM

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE.....secs / hour Gaining / Losing

At.....C.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT	I.A.S. M.P.H. /K	T. A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	C. S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	CELESTIAL DATA TIME	BODY	ALT.	AZ

FLIGHT RECORD

BASED TIME / GMT	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR D.R. DRIF.	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. M.P.H. /K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T. A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	C. S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.
1910	On Time on Load Ship (NY-100th MHJ incendiaries) U.S.A.				FLAK	FIGHTERS		-30 / 21000				140			
					Moderate & accurate after bombs away	None									
						Battle Damage — Hole in left sta. bilger by stack also right a... 8" hole in nose turret "Y" hole in sta. bilger... "Y" slice on top of Navigators compartmen... (busting free air temp. guage) Large dent in cowling (just missing "Y" ... From tail turret in ship above & where... of U.S. Cross negligence on part of gunn...								
						Personal Remarks — (Pilot) Bolton — Nose Gunner remained at h... station despite the large hole in his turr... submitting them to an 180 mph. wind... blast with a temp. of -30°. Left formation about 10 min. east of... enemy coast due to lack of oxygen in Navigators compartment —								
					LOG CLOSED —										

MISSION 30

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT BOLTON, H.F. NAVIGATOR ERICSON, D.R. DATE 11 MARCH 1944

STATIONS 0600 ENGINES 0607 TAXI 0630 T.O. 0640	
LEAVE BASE Bun 2XX	0811
COAST OUT	" "
ENEMY COAST	BERLEN 0901
I.P.	0913
TARGET	0935 HESEPE
ENEMY COAST	BERLEN 1011
RETURN	1150

SUN		MOON		TWILIGHT	
Rises	Sets	Rises	Sets	AM	PM

WATCH ..... Fast / Slow RATE ..... secs / hour Gaining / Losing

At ..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT	I.A.S. MPH /K	T. A. S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	C. S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	CELESTIAL DATA TIME	BODY	ALT.	AZ

FLIGHT RECORD

Bombs TIME AWAY	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR D.R. DRIF.	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. M.P.H. /K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T. A. S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G. S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.
0936	On Time on Ship, (31 V-70 Flags) Visually			Land	FLAK — very light & accurate	FIGHTERS			220			235			
						NONE									
						BATTLE DAMAGE									
						NONE									
						REMARKS —									
						Results on this jet field looked very good —									
					LOG CLOSED —										

MISSION 31

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT BOLTON, H.F NAVIGATOR ERICSON, D.R. DATE 23 MARCH 1944

STATIONS	063 ENGINES 06V TAXI 0700 T.O. 0710
LEAVE BASE	SOUTH AREA 0837
COAST OUT	BEACON "V" 0907
ENEMY COAST	EGMOND 0935
I.P.	1105
TARGET	11Y0 MUNSTER
ENEMY COAST	EGMOND 1Y00
RETURN	1310

SUN		MOON		TWILIGHT	
Rises	Sets	Rises	Sets	AM	PM

WATCH ..... Fast / Slow RATE ..... secs/hour Gaining / Losing

At ..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT	I.A.S. M.P.H. /K	T. A. S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G. S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	CELESTIAL DATA TIME	BODY	ALT.	AZ

FLIGHT RECORD

BOMBS TIME & Alt	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR D.R. DRIF.	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. M.P.H. /K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T. A. S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G. S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.
11Y0		On Time on Lead Ship (Pilot) Usually —			FLAK, very heavy & accurate barrage & tracking —	FIGHTERS None		-30 3400				190			
						BATTLE DAMAGE One hole in #3 engine nacelle									
						REMARKS — The flak was very intense & accurate as target. Lead ship released almost directly over head & was injured. Many other bombs were also released after bombs were away, causing him to explode & go down in flames. No chutes were seen. (Also 7 other ships went down in flames) — Feathered #4 engine upon leaving enemy coast, due to internal mechanical failure. Proceeded across channel, alone, on 3 engines, retaining altitude. Circled field to lose it. Finally, then came in at the very last of our final approach we were forced to go around due to our own CUT OUT by another ship —								
					— LOG CLOSED —										

MISSION #32

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT BOLTON, H.E. NAVIGATOR ERICSON, D.R. DATE VV MARCH 194V-

STATIONS VV	ENGINES VVV TAXI 0V3V T.O. 0V4V
LEAVE BASE	SOUTH AREA 07YV
COAST OUT	PUP* Y4 0730
ENEMY COAST	BERGEN 0908
I.P.	09YV
TARGET	093V BUCHEN
ENEMY COAST	BERGEN 11Y0
RETURN	1310

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH ..... Fast / Slow RATE ..... secs./hour Gaining / Losing

At ..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH / K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINTS & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS		
Alt.		T
Surf.		
5		
10		
15		
20		
25		
30		

FLIGHT RECORD

Bombs TIME Away	COURSE	W/V USED & OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	C.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.
1018	On time on Last Stop (Y-Hour) (K.P.) Visibility				TEAM - LIGHT & MEDIUM FLAK AT I.P. LARGE BARRAGE AT HANOVER (RAF Bombing Tactics)	FIGHTERS 3 ME 109's HIT FORMATION ATTACKED FROM V-80 O'CLOCK HIGH PASS THROUGH FORMATION, BAIL OUT DOWN TO THE RIGHT One Chute passed 100 FT OVERHEAD Our left wing Turned to the right (One tail gunner on our squadron given one E/A probable credit) BATTLE DAMAGE - NONE REMARKS - TAIL GUNNER REPORTED ONE B-17 GOING DOWN IN FLAMES; PROBABLY HIT BY E/A OBSERVED SEVERAL PARACHUTES." LINE V'S SHOT V BURSTS OF RED FLAK AT IN THE TARGET AREA -	-30 10700				YVV			
					LOG CLOSED -										

33

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT BOLTON, H.F. NAVIGATOR ERICSON, D.K. DATE 30 MARCH 44

STATIONS ~~BASE~~ ENGINES/ CONT TAXI VOYO T.O. 1030	
LEAVE ~~BASE~~ NORTH AREA 1100	
COAST OUT BEACON #3 1906	
ENEMY COAST ANGELAND ISLAND 1309	
I.P. 1335	
TARGET 1340 WILHELMSHAVEN	
ENEMY COAST " "	
RETURN INVO	

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE..... secs/hour Gaining / Losing

At..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINTS & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.		
Surf.		
5		
10		
15		
20		
25		
30		

FLIGHT RECORD

BOMBS TIME AWAY	COURSE	W/V USED & / OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.
1340		On Time On Lead Ship (No Coverage)			FLAK Light & fairly inaccurate over the Island (in)- Moderate & accurate at TARGET	FIGHTERS NONE BATTLE DAMAGE One 10" hole in nose Turret due to an empty 50 cal. ore passing-		-31 / 1500				250			
						REMARKS - Mission unusually hazardous due to condition of the aircraft. Lost control of #2 prop on take off & had use feathering switch to main tain control. #3 & #4 prop governors failed to function & had to use feathering switch again to gain cont. Left formation early because of these mal functions -								
					LOG CLOSED -										

MISSION 34

PILOT BOLTON, H.F. NAVIGATOR ERICSON, D.R. FLIGHT PLAN DATE 31 MARCH 1945

STATION	044 ENGINES OV NTAX 10 v 30 0.0 v 40
LEAVE BASE	SOUTH AREA 0701
COAST OUT	30,000 0730
ENEMY COAST	BERGEN 0810
I.P.	0910
TARGET	09XV BRUNSWICK
ENEMY COAST	BERGEN 1110
	RETURN 1140

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE..... secs/hour Gaining / Losing

At..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINTS & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.			T
Surf.			
5			
10			
15			
20			
25			
30			

FLIGHT RECORD

TIME (Bombs Away)	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH /K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.
0976		On Time on Last Shot (10/10ths)			FLAK - Light & Inaccurate over TARGET	FIGHTERS - 3 ME 109's from YOBLACK		-30 / 30000				WS			
						BATTLE DAMAGE - NONE									
						REMARKS - 109 "T" 3 pcs OUT OF FORMATION AT 1000 Ft. WHILE FORMING, & CRASHED - ALL OCCUPANTS KILLED -									
						LOG CLOSED -									

MISSION # 35

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT BOLTON, H.F. NAVIGATOR ERICSON, D.R. DATE 4 APRIL 1945

STATIONS	ENGINES 3V TAXI 4N T.O. 0600
LEAVE BASE	DUNSY4 " MYY
COAST OUT	" "
ENEMY COAST	HEISE 0909
I.P.	0927
TARGET	0937 PIRCHIM
ENEMY COAST	WESTKAPELLE
RETURN	1340

MORNING TWILIGHT	SUN Rises	SUN Sets	EVENING TWILIGHT

MOON Rises	MOON Sets

WATCH..... Fast / Slow RATE..... Gaining / Losing secs/hour

At..... G.M.T.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT Temp.	I.A.S. MPH /K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	G.S.	DIST.	TIME	E.T.A.	TIME CONTROL POINTS & Rendezvous

FORECAST WINDS

Alt.		
Surf.		
5		
10		
15		
20		
25		
30		

FLIGHT RECORD

Dom'd TIME / Event	COURSE	W/V USED & / OR DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. MPH / K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.
0936	Accidental re-				FLAK -	FIGHTERS		-3Y				Y90			
	leased 1Y way down				Moderate & accurate	four ME 163's		7150							
	the bomb run -				at point just	breaking up		coming		in from 9		E & E of			
	(Group dropped				the Rally Point	at our altitude -		to make		individual		attack			
	on JET AIRFIELD				(Near STENDAL)	These Eff'd		Shot		down 2 B-24's		from the			
	at WESENDORF					Groups behind		down							
	(No coverage)					us. -									
						BATTLE DAMAGE									
						NONE									
						REMARKS -									
						Gunners exceptionally observant today &									
						aided very much to the protection of									
						entire squadron -									
						Left formation at enemy coast line									
						returning to base did a very thorough									
						of buzzing & firing of flaps to announce									
						the completion of a successful									
						Tour of combat duty -									
						"GO GET 'EM TUNK!!"									
					LOG CLOSED										

A/C #533 PG 1

FLIGHT PLAN

PILOT Bigolin NAVIGATOR D.K. Erickson DATE 30 Oct 1941

STATIONS	ENGINES OFF TAXI 0900 T.O. 0920
LEAVE BASE	Bun #24 1042 1/10000
COAST OUT	SPL #J 1049 1/10000
ENEMY COAST	TEXEL ISLAND 1148
L.P.	1207
TARGET	1316 Hamburg
ENEMY COAST	1381
RETURN	1448

SUN		MOON		TWILIGHT	
Rises	Sets	Rises	Sets	AM	PM

TANGO 30.09 WESTON 30.12

WATCH ..... Fast Slow RATE ..... secs / hour Gaining Losing

RECALL "FOOL" At ..... C.M.S.O.

FROM / TO	W/V USED	HEIGHT	I.A.S. M.P.H. /K	T.A.S. (K)	COURSE	DRIFT	TRUE HDNG.	VAR.	MAG. HDNG.	C. S.	DIST. N.M.	TIME	E.T.A.	CELESTIAL DATA TIME	BODY	ALT.	AZI.
Bun #24	090 / 10	-9 / 10000	149 / 139	161	314	+5	319	+10	329	17	14	✓	1044				
SPL "J"													1044	0	Jewolee		
3-30 " 09-20 DAD	090 / 10	-7 / 10000	150 / 139	161	07	+7	014	T09	023	N5	28	✓	1100	W	Wimmerella		
3-08 " 09-08	160 / N	-26 / 10000	164 / 153	186	96	+1	97	+8	105	162	121	✓	1148	N	Kassel		
2-52 " 08-08	140 / 30	-40 / 10000	169 / 159	204	106	+5	111	+8	119	199	173	✓	1215	E	Wilhelmine		
2-53 " 08-10			169 / 159	204	149	-1	148	+8	N2	174	111		1239	R	Alkese		
2-51 " 09-57			169 / 159	204	79	+8	87	+7	94	188	117		1257	S	Nienburg		
3-02 " 10-52	140 / 30	-40 / 10000	169 / 159	204	48	+9	57	+6	63	204	117		1314	H	Hamburg		
3-30 " 09-29	130 / 30	-38 / 10000	169 / 159	198	352	+3	355	N	340	228	83		1316	V	Hamburg		
3-40 " 09-33	130 / 30	-38 / 10000	169 / 159	198	304	-1	304	+5	309	227	17		1321	P	Hamburg		
3-46 " 08-32	130 / 30	-38 / 10000	169 / 159	198	279	-4	275	+6	281	222	86		1381	V	Texel Island		
4-05 " 07-40	140 / 30	-38 / 10000	169 / 159	198	302	-3	299	+7	306	226	36		1341				
3-59 " 07-49	130 / N	-30 / 11400	179 / 148	198	360	-5	355	+8	363	214	66		1347				
3PL "J"	090 / 10	-09 / 10000	179 / 148	171	347	-2	345	+9	354	189	171		1453				
BASE	090 / 10	+4 / 10000	169 / 139	141	187	-4	183	+9	192	142	25		1457				

Enc. Wyoming Sea Valley C
Ell Lumby Sea Valley Dulve
Cll Lumby Sea Valley Dulve

FLIGHT RECORD PG 2

TIME	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR D.R. DRIF.	TRUE HDNG.	MAG. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. M.P.H. /K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP.	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	G.S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.A.
0924					T.O										
0940			SE	NW	FORMING		160	-3 9400							
0957				170	NORTHERN FORMING KEN		NW	9850							
1008				140	FORMING		NW	-7 10060							
1020				SW	"		NW	-7 10220							
1030				W40	"		NW	-7 10000							
1040				W60	DEPARTURE	Bun #24	NW	-7 10050							
1040				W0	"		160	-7 10050							
1050				34	A/C	SPL "J"	160	-7 10130							
1052				SW		"	160	-7 10180				N7	28	07	1059
1059				30			162	-7 10100							
1101				29	A/C CPA	53-18N 01-30E DR	162	-7 10170							
1201				10	"		162	-7 10120						171	
1110				11W	ST. CLIMB		155	-8 17400							
1121				09	108		NW	-13							

FLIGHT RECORD

ME	COURSE	W/V USED &/OR D.R. DRIF.	TRUE HDNG.	MAC. HDNG.	NAVIGATIONAL OBSERVATION	GENERAL OBSERVATION	I.A.S. M.P.H. /K	HEIGHT & AIR TEMP	T.A.S.	RUN DIST.	RUN TIME	C. S.	TO RUN DIST.	TO RUN TIME	E.T.A.
1124			89	102	53-13N 02-53E GEE		174	-11 N600							
1130		172 24K	92	100		A.P. 53-08N 03-32E	174	-21 1690	170	66	73	(170) N.C.	54	71	1141
1140			93	101	TEST FIRING —		174	-28 1800							
1146			101	110			174	-28 1800							
1151			100	108	A/C	53-07N 04-03E 3685	174	-31 2150							
1157			110	118			174	-32 2150							
1157			113	120	53-01N 05-19E S-P		170	-34 2370		18	06	(170) 18	108	36	1235
1207			114	121			164	-36 2500							
1215			108	118	52-44N 06-35E S DR	PST 5 PR 73	164	-35 2334	701	69	18				
1224			111	118			163	-37 2000							
1238			109	115	A/C	52-30N 07-42E S DR	164	-32 2370	710	43	13				
1239			173	180	"		164	-35 2370							
1246			169	176	A/C		164	-37 2000							
1254			91	94	W/V 53-30N 08-08E	A/C LOW	164	-32 2370							
1302			91	98		OXYGEN LOW	164	-32 2300							
1314			94	100	A/C		164	-35 2340							
1324			73	78	"		164	-35 2500							
1332			70	75		113 GEEing 200	164	-34 2400							
1344			68	73	A/C (HP)	CRASH	163	-34 2400							
1356			335	340	"		163	-34 2400							
1408			333	338			163	-34 2400							
1414			ON	110	BOMBS AWAY A/C 12,000		164	-35 2400		Bombs away at 1418					
					Sea dimming out										
					Myerhoff Ruhrstadt to Cuxhaven										
					Heading towards (Sunken)										
					(Not wanted by pilot)										
					Starting to climb Climbing & Turning to Starboard										
					A/C										
1410			230		Calling right		164	-26 5110							
1415					Attention from Air control - Course plotted to Ennepetal										
					Fuel NE 16 Tons (at Mülheim)										
1420			210				164	10000							
1426			210		Over the field	Calling	164	-12 13700		Attempted to land but crashed					
1535					LANDED										
					LOG CLOSED										

SIGNED D. Ream Lott F/Lt NAVIGATOR

Appendix C

On the following pages is the guidebook prepared by the S-2 section of the 93rd Bombardment Group used as part of the post-war "trolley missions" over Germany that allowed all personnel to see the effects of the war.

THE LIBS TOUR OF EUR PE

THE LIBS TOUR OF EUROPE

GOOD MORNING MEN!

Two years ago it would have been hard to realize that this trip could have been possible. There have been a lot of high sounding phrases used about the "ground pounders" part in air destruction of Europe. All that they have said probably has been a little difficult for you to realize because of your physical remoteness from actual combat and the thrill of seeing targets go up in smoke. Today for the first time you can actually see the results of those long, tedious hours of work you have spent getting the Libs ready, which after all if you hadn't done and done well, what you are going to see today wouldn't have been possible.

The route for today takes you over targets such as Ludwigshaven, Mannheim, Coblenz, Cologne and many others. Targets that a year ago today were termed in the fly-boy language as "Rough". You will pass over the city of Brussels, see the Ardennes forest, the famous Rhine River, and, ...well, at the end of the trip you can honestly say that you have seen Belguim and Germany from a vantage point few other people have ever had.

Most of you have seen England from the air so lets skip any fluent description of the terrain. I doubt if you can recognize your favorite pub from 1,000 feet anyway. 1,000 feet will be the altitude during the entire route; thought you might like to know.

You are leaving the Coast of England at Southwald just south of Lowestoft. Crossing the channel you will hit the Belguim coast at Ostend. In the old days when the Libs were flying combat they used to go in between Ostend and Dunkirk, Dunkirk is off to your right and even now the Jerries are still there, bottled up like rats in a trap but the flak guns are still there. Give that navigator holl and keep him on his course.

Ostend was quite a town before the war. It is the second largest sea-port in Belguim and was famous before the war for the passenger traffic from Belguim to London. It has an interesting historical background and is famous as an old fortress town dating back to the 17th century. Incidentielly before the war it was quite a resort town and was in our language known as an "uptown spot". It was considered the thing to do before the war to take your girl on the night boat to Ostend, spend the day in Ostend and return on the boat the next night. In case you guys didn't know it it is an all night trip.

After leaving Ostend the next city of any size is Bruges, just off to your left. Bruges is the capital of West Flanders, Whatever that means. The outstanding thing about this town is that it has preserved its medieval characteristics more than any other city in Belguim. Its doubtful if you can pick it up but the cathedral in the center of the city dates back to the 14th century.

The large city of Ghent will pass directly beneath you shortly after you spot Bruges. Ghent has never been bombed by this Group but it no doubt will bear evidence of Allied bombing. The citizens of this historic old town are what might be

called "stout fellers". In the 12th Century they repulsed an English Army of 25,000 troops. Best we have them on our side. Directly in the center of the city is the historic Cathredal "St. Bavon" dating back to 941 AD.

After leaving Ghent it should not be too long before Brussels will come into view. This Group has never actually bombed Brussels but this city has been bombed by both the Allies and the enemy. Before the Allies occupied the city the bombing was done by our forces. After the Allied occupation the Germans turned their V1 and V2's on the city trying to keep us from using the facilities of the city.

Brussels is the capital of Belguim and is located on the Seine River.

After leaving Brussels you will pass over a small forest, this probably will be just off to your right. At the south end of this forest is where the famous battle of Waterloo took place on 18 June 1815. The famous Wellington monument is here. It is built on top of a hill and is a dirty marble color. You should be able to see it plainly. All along in this area you will see huge gray and black conical piles. All of these are "slag piles" from the steel and coking plants in the Brussels and Liege area.

After leaving Brussels the next city you will be able to pick up is Namur about 10 miles off to your right. The importance of this town in this war was the fact that it is located on the Muese River and is easily defendable. This was one of the objectives of the Germans in their counter-offensive in the battle of the Ardennes forest. As you already know they didn't make the grade.

The city of Liege will show up off to your left about this time. This Group has bombed Liege with damm good results. Liege is located on the Muese River, and is highly industrial.

When you see Liege you will be crossing the Meuse River which runs between Liege to Namur to Dinant. These three cities more or less formed the northern boundaries of the Ardennes bulge. All of this terrain below you now has seen one of the fiercest battles of the war. It was in this territory that Runstedts counter offensive took place. You will probably be able to see some evidence of what took place there. Perhaps the names of Malmedy and St. Vith will be familiar, you pass directly over St. Vith and Malmedy is just off to your left. This Group has hit St. Vith and the RAF totally destroyed this small town during the counter offensive. The aftermath of war is well represented throughout this area. It is at this point that you pass from Belguim into Germany.

Passing out of the Ardennes area, the next place of importance on the route is the famous Moselle River which you cross. There are no built up areas at your point of crossing but just to the north is a bridge which this group has bombed. Lets hope that you can't see it, for it shouldn't be there any more. This entire area has played an important part in the war and has seen heavy fighting by the American 9th Army in their drive to the Ruhr and Rhine...

Just after crossing the Moselle another river will come into view. This is the Nahe river. You will cross this approximately 15 miles south of Bingen which has felt the weight of this group's bombs more than once.

THE LIBS TOUR OF EUROPE. (Cont'd).

You are now approaching the Ludwigshaven-Mannheim area and from here should be able to get a beautiful view of the famous Rhine river...

You come now to the twin cities of Ludwigshaven-Mannheim on the Rhine River. Ludwigshaven on the west bank had a peace time population of 150,000 and Mannheim on the East bank had 450,000. These two cities were very important to the enemy's war effort as they were not only great railway centers but factory centers as well. They have been repeatedly bombed by the RAF and AAF. They were heavily defended and the AA batteries have cost the allies over 100 heavy bombers.

The chemical works at Mannheim have been especially heavily attacked, as they were the largest in Germany. Just north of Ludwighsafen you will see what remains of the I. B. Ferben chemical works. Just across the river you can see the damage to the huge Daimler Benz engineering concern. To the south of the cities you will see other chemical and engineering works all extensively damaged. You will also note much damage in the heart of the city.

The Rhine at this point is about 900 feet wide. Just to the north of Mannheim you will see the damaged docks. You can see the bridges which were destroyed by the enemy in his hurried retreat. Coming into Mannheim from the East is the River Neckar along which Patton's armies had much bitter fighting.

On either side of the Rhine you will note the trunk line railroads paralleling the river. Just east of the river you will see one of Hitlers' many Autobahns which he built to augment the movement of his troops. These trunk line highways kicked back on the Germans as they aided the Allies in reaching the heart of Germany once they had crossed the Rhine.

After passing over these two cities you will head NE to Aschaffenburg 40 miles away. By glancing and to the right just as you turn NE you can see the old University town of Heidelberg 10 miles up the Neckar River to the ESE of Mannheim. Your route to Aschaffenburg takes you over a beautiful forested area which is thinly populated and has no cities of military importance. Eight miles to the left of your course you can see the industrial city of Darmstadt population 120,000 which has been frequently attacked especially by the RAF. Nearing Aschaffenburg you will be able to pick out the Main River which is paralleled by another of Hitlers' famous autobahns running in a NW - SE direction. Aschaffenburg a city of 45,000 is an important railway center which was attacked most successfully by the 93d on 25 Feb. Damage to the Marshalling yards may still be visible.

You turn left at Ashaffenburg and in about 5 minutes you will be over Frankfurt on the Main. For the next twenty minutes you will be passing over the important Frankfurt Wiesbaden, Mainz and Bingen area which has been so heavily bombed. Frankfurt was especially heavily defended and approximately 200 heavy bombers have been lost in attacking this area.

From Frankfurt down the Main to the Rhine and down the Rhine to Bingen is practically a continuous city. Frankfurt with a population of 600,000 is the largest and most important city but the area in this highly industrialized district is well over 1,000,000 in normal times. Frankfurt was a great industrial center but has been heavily bombed. Most of the bombing has been done by the RAF at night but the 8th AF has been there several times. The 93d twice. You will see extensive damage all through the area and will get a chance to see the damage and craters made by the

12,000 lb bombs. The airplane factories, marshalling yards, harbor facilities and the extensive military barracks have been especially hard hit. You will notice extensive damage at Weisbaden off to the right and at Mainz its sister city over which you pass. You now pass west down the Rhine to Bingen where the river turns to the North.

As you approach Bingen you will note that the Rhine River flows from the NNW with the city on the south side of the bend in the river. To you it will be located on the left bank of the Rhine and is divided from the town of Bingerbruck by the river Nake which flows south from the bend of the Rhine. The town contains a small number of industrial firms but of little importance as a target, however the main railway from Cologne to Frankfurt passes through the town making the marshalling yards of Bingerbruck a high priority target. The 93d was last assigned this marshalling yard as a target on 10 Dec 44, which incidently was #300 for the group. This mission was in coordination with the ground troops to prevent supplies going up to the front. The M/Y had also been attacked previous thereto by the 93d on 25 Nov and 2 Dec. Photo Recon showed that considerate damage was accomplished mainly in the east end of the yard with several tracks cut, a few cars derailed and damage to the depot. At this time the tracks have undoubetedly been repaired but check the buildings. Much of this bombing was done through clouds.

As you leave Bingen your route carries you over the famous Rhine River in a NNW direction. From Bingen to Koblenz there are no targets which the 93d has bombed but it is probable that fighter bombers have attacked several points between these cities. It will be of interest to note bridges along the Rhine and watch for destruction. From Bingen to Koblenz there are many points of interest which will be taken up in their order as you pass them, but all cannot be discussed due to the lack of space. Lorch is the first village on the right bank and is inhabited by 2,200. In the middle ages it was a residence for nobles, and its outstanding landmark is the lofty Gothic Church of St. Martin. Note that Lorch is located at the mouth of the Wisper River where it enters the Rhine.

Across the Rhine from Lorch and slightly north is Bacharack with 1900 citizens and were you walking there is a long esplanade laid out as a pleasure ground.

Across the Rhine from Bacharack and north a couple of miles is Kaub with 2370 citizens. It is still partly surrounded by medieval fortifications. Were you on the solid earth some of its famous wine would be tasty or you could go to the slate quaries. At the back of the town rises the castle of Cutenfelds with a lofty pinnacled tower.

Next comes Obervesel which is on the left bank of the Rhine and further north of Kaub. It has 2900 citizens and is rated as one of the more picturesque spots on the Rhine. A fine Gothic edifice of red sandstone is the Church of Our Lady.

Next comes St. Goar on the left side of the River and St. Goarhausen directly across the Rhine. At St. Goar the castle of Rheinfels rises at the back of the town 375 feet above the Rhine and is the most imposing ruin on the river. At St. Goarhausen halfway up the hill rises the castle of New-Katzenelnbogen erected in 1393 by Count Johann.

Kistert Camp will then be observed on the right side of the river but Boppard is next on the left side and will be discussed. You will note how it is located [illegible]

LEBS [illegible] OF LUNOF (Cont'd)

directly south of a "U" turn in the river, extending well along the south bank. The old town is still partly surrounded by a medieval fortification. On the Rhine near the flying bridge, rises the old castle of the Archbishops of Treves with a tower which is now occupied by the law courts.

Braubach is the next town on the right side of the river with the old fortress of Marksberg still standing.

Oberla hnstein, a town of 8000 is next on the right side of the river and from its Victoria-Brummen Orchards comes famous mineral waters. It is located at the point where the Lahn River enters the Rhine .

Further north with the Moselle River running directly through the center and the Rhine running on the east is the famous and much bombed city of Koblenz. Ehrenbreistein is located opposite Koblenz. The 93d has bombed Koblenz 6 times with highly successful results. Our main targets were the three marshalling yards. One is directly north of the point where the Moselle branches west from the Rhine and the other two are located between the Moselle and the Rhine south of the point where the Moselle enters the Rhine. Note the destruction to the city. Points of interest in Koblenz cannot be discussed as we do not know which buildings are still standing. Koblenz has a population of 53,000 according to pre-war records.

Following the Rhine north you will note Vallendar on the right side with Bendorf next on the same side.

Neuwied comes next with its well built streets and several factories. It has a population of 18,000 and its schools attract students from England. On 2 Jan 45 the 93d attacked the RR Bridge NW of Neuwied over the Weide River. The Weide River enters the Rhine NW of Neuwied; Across the river is Anderach, a village of 7900 located south of the Rhine. At the upper end of the town is the once fortified Castle of the Electons, while at the lower end of the town is an imposing round Watch Tower.

Further north and on the right side of the river is Rheinbrahl then on further on the left side is Breisiz.

Sinzig is a town of 3600 still partly surrounded by walls lying at the foot of the hills 1 mile from the river. Its outstanding landmark is the Parish Church. On 26 Dec 44 the 93d attacked the railroad bridge on the River Ahn just north of Sinzig and west of the mouth of the Ahr.

Next you come to the most important point on the Rhine, that is speaking from a military standpoint and that is Remagen where the Remagen bridgehead was established. Remagen is a town of 4500 with the Roman Cathclic Church in the lower end of the town. From where you sit you have a good view of the Eifel Mountains. The bridge over which our troops passed is a railroad bridge running north across the Rhine.

The next village is Honnef a scattered village of 6000 containing numerous villas, beautiful gardens, shady avenues and is one of the sunniest villages on the Rhine. Abutting the main street stands the Roman Catholic Parish Church dating from the 12th Century.

Next on the left side of the Rhine comes Mehlem studded with fine old county houses surrounded by parks and gardens.

Again crossing the river is Konigswinter a town of 4000 lying at the foot of the Seven Mountains. At the upper end of town is a War Monument and a monument to Wolfgang Muller the Rhenish poet.

Again crossing the Rhine you will note Bad Godesberg founded as a watering place in the 18th century. It is a famous summer resort of the wealthy merchants of the lower Rhine. It has increased in population and now is 15,000. The older villages are distinguished by their luxuriant gardens. The Castle of Godesberg is one of the outstanding landmarks, representing the art of fortification. As you leave this city you will be approaching the famous University City of Bonn located on the left bank of the Rhine.

Bonn might be called the first city of the Ruhr region approaching from the south. Bonn has not been hit as heavy as the other Ruhr cities as it is not as highly industrialized. It has been bombed however on several occasions by this group but the main job has been done by the R.A.F.

As mentioned before it is primarily a University town. Its primary military importance is its transportation facilities. It is one of the main junctions between Cologne and southern Germany. Before the war it had a reputation for its beauty and a center of German culture.

Leaving Bonn and continuing on up the Rhine into the Ruhr, you will be flying almost parallell with the river. The main rail lines will also parallel your course. This particular stretch of the Rhine between Bonn and Cologne which is the next big city on your route was very pupular as an excursion route for steam boast. This trip could be compared with the excursion up our own Hudson river..On both sides of the Rhine in this area are small colorful villages and picturesque castles....

The spires of the beautiful city of Cologne will be the next thing you will see. Although the city has been almost leveled due to bombardment and shell fire, the Cologne cathedral is still standing. This famous cathedral is located almost on the river bank with the Hohenzollern rail bridge going over the Rhine just in back of the cathedral.

Before the war it had a population of 912,000 and was the center of trade, traffic, and political activity in the Rhine Province. The built up area of Cologne itself is composed mainly of residential areas. As is characteristic of many German cities, the center part of the city (old inner city) is roughly round in shape and very compactly built with the newer additions constructed around the inner city. The small towns just outside of Cologne all contain many varied types of war industries.

Cologne obviously has been a favorite target in the pastifor both the 8th AF and the R.A.F. This group attacked targets in Cologne on 15 Oct 44 and again on 17 Oct 44. Our targets on both occasions were the large railway centers which combined to make Cologne the target and most important railway center in the Ruhr.

An interesting comparison of the size of Cologne can be drawn from the following: total population of the district of Columbia 663,000. Combined population of Minneapolis, St Paul Minnesota and their suburbs is 911,000.

THE LIBS TOUR OF EUROPE (Cont'd).

After leaving Cologne you will fly NW directly above the Rhine River for the next 18 miles. The first city will be Leverburen which has a population of 80,000. It is located on the east bank of the Rhine. Immediately south of the town is a very large chemical and explosive industry that covers an area almost as large as the town itself. Going on up the Rhine, which is bordered on both sides by mainline railroads and highways and on the east side you will be able to see one of the German super highways or autobahn. It runs North through Cologne roughly parallell to the Rhine and 4 - 6 miles east.

The next city will be Solingen which will be approximately eight miles east of course and is 18 miles north of Cologne. The Solingen district includes 4 other small towns, covers an area of about thirty square miles, and has a total population of 153,000. Solingen is known as "The Pittsburg of Germany" on account of its world famous light engineering industry. This has been the target for both the 8th AF and the RAF several times. The 93d attacked it on 10 Dec 43.

Following the Rhine northward, the famous Ruhr city of Dusseldorf (560,000 pop) comes into view. It lies mainly on the Eastern side of the river. You will note the devastation wrought in this area by the combined attacks of the US Air Forces, the RAF and the ground forces. Dusseldorf marks the Southern approach to the heavily industrialized Ruhr area which at one time was protected by 1000 heavy anti-aircraft guns. At one time this was the heaviest defended territory in the Reich. This is the leading commercial city of western Germany, being the third largest inland port in of the country. Its chief importance was in the production of armaments and general engineering products. Here was located the General Administrative Dept for all the iron and steel production in the Rhine and Ruhr districts.

The inland harbor area lies to the Southwest of the city around which lie engineering and chemical works, oil storage and refinery, electrical works and lead and zinc fabricators. Note the important marshalling yards throughout the City - extending North/South in a long line of some three miles. These yards have been the target of our heavy bombers on many occasions with the object of bottling up transportation North to the Ruhr and South to the Frankfurt area.

The city of Neuss lies directly across the river from Dusseldorf...

You are making a left turn over Dusseldorf and off to your right - north of Dusseldorf, lies the center of the Ruhr, the most industrialized area of the world. You are flying over the city of Munchen - Gladbach (180,000 pop) which lies ten miles due west of Dusseldorf and is important as a production center of Rhenish cotton, woolen, iron and engine making industries. This particular city, next to Aachen, was the first large city in Germany to fall into Allied hands. Six miles NNE of Gladbach lies Krefeld (170,000 pop) which was famous for its production of specialized steel for aircraft parts. This city has been heavily damaged by bombing with the concentration of craters in the center of the city.

Traveling west upon withdrawal the Maas River flows roughly in a N/S direction about 20 miles west of Munchen.- Gladbach. It was this river whose flooded condition acted as a temporary stumbling block to the British Second Army. Immediately south of course on the Maas lies the small town of Roermond which was a much contended military point on this front. About 25 miles to the north along the Maas River lies Venlo which was the area of the last German bridgehead west of the Maas.

THE [illegible] OF EUROPE (Cont'd.)

About four miles East of the Maas River you cross the German border into Holland and about ten miles on the West side of the Maas River you will cross the border into Belgium. Your course from the Maas River westward is over partly wooded area which leads into Antwerp. About 15 miles past the River Glance off to the right where about 12 miles to the North lies the Eindhoven-Arnhem area where the great Airborne Operations of the 18 Sept 44 took place. On this occasion not only gliders and parastroopers took part but also the fighters in their straffing role and the heavy bombers in dropping supplies.

The city of Antwerp (approx. 350,000 pop) which is playing the largest part in the handling of the embarkation of war materials is the second largest inland port on the continent. You will undoubtedly see many ships in the harbour and much activity. This city has been under the heaviest V-1 bombardment of any city during the war. Anywhere from 100 to 200 V-1's per day fell in and around the city. The damage you see is due mainly to this weapon. The Straits of Westernschelde lie to the N of Antwerp with Walcheren Island bordering it on the north. You will note that this island is flooded in many places due to the RAF bombing of several dams in the area. The area is now in Allied hands. Immediately to the north is Schwerin which is still in enemy hands.

From Antwerp out you will note Ghent to the South and Bruges on course. You will leave the Continental Coast at Ostend, the point of entry, remembering that Dunkirk lies about 14 miles to the South. Lets hope the NAVIG.TOR is on course!!!

BON VOYAGE.....

NOTE:

This travelogue was prepared by the S-2 section of the 93d Bombardment Group (H) AAF. It may be kept as a souvenir as it is not classified.

Appendix D

The following pages show a hardcopy of my current web page. At the time of printing the web page itself is at:

http://www.cis.rit.edu/jaf/caf/caf.html

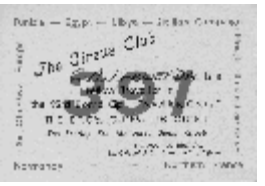
Arthur Ferwerda's Home Page

http://www.cis.rit.edu/jaf/caf/caf.html

Hello, I'm Arthur Ferwerda.

I was an original member of the 409th Bomb Sqdn. 93rd Bomb Group. I spent 33 months overseas, part in England and part of the time in North Africa. I was a Crew Chief and had three aircraft. The first two were shot down over the target, and the third as you can see in the picture above had 72 missions on it and I flew home to Bradley Field Conn. in it. With all three aircraft I amassed a total of 135 missions without a mechanical failure or a ship aborting.

Below are some interesting pictures. Click on the image to see a larger version.



93rd Bomb Group "Travelling Circus" 391 Mission Card

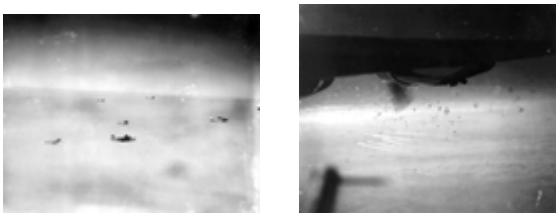
Getting filled in by the pilot, Howard Bolton about possible mechanical problems during the mission.

Bolton signing off the 1A form prior to mission take off.

Picture that Howard and Eric had taken in London and presented to me upon completing their tour of duty.

Briefing about the Ploesti mission. I'm at the lower left in pith helmet and sunglasses.

Actual target pictures of low level Ploesti mission August 1, 1943. Initiated from Benghazi, Libya. Taken from the flight deck of the "Tupelo Lass" by Ray Weir with my box camera.



A 409'th squadron formation over Germany.

The "Moose" flying into FLAK. Note the low squadron already in it.

The Flyin Moose at Hardwick Air Base, England.

Picture of old 578R "The Moose" taken from the #2 engine.

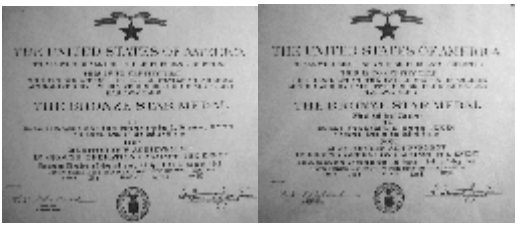
Pilot Carl Todds crew and my guys taken just before take-off one week after V.E. Day. GOING HOME!

Me congratulating Ben Kuroki after he had completed his missions.

This tag was attached to the keys that opened the bomb bay doors from the outside of the ship. There was a little door just forward of the bomb bay, which was locked, and when opened with the key there was a handle that when pulled, opened the doors.

For serving as crew chief on 135 missions without a single mechanical failure I was awarded the Bronze Star with Oak Leaf

Cluster. Here's the letter I received with the award.



Awards accompanying the bronze star with oak leaf cluster medals I received.

Recently the Fair Lawn News interviewed me for a Veteran's Day story. It's available at: http://www.fairlawnnews.com/2005/Winter/vet-ferwerda.htm

You can find more information on this subject in the Internet B-24 Veteran's Group , or in the World War II Web Ring.

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