

THE BUILD UP TO BIG RAIDS

A first of the year summary of recent raids appeared in a January 1, 1944, *The Flint Journal*:

ALLIED BOMBERS BLAST SIX FRENCH TARGETS

PRE-INVASION ASSAULT HITS PARIS SHOPS

Ball Bearing Plants,
Air Depots, Fields
Heavily Attacked

Heavy formations of American Flying Fortresses and Liberators Friday rained tons of high explosive bombs on six major targets in France, from Paris to the Bay of Biscay, during a day in which huge fleets of allied warplanes blasted a pre-invasion path of destruction across the occupied country.

The big, four-engine B-17's and B-24's attacked ball bearing plants and aircraft engine plants near Paris, airfield repair depots and the Chateau Bernard airfield at Cognac, 60 miles north of Bordeaux, on France's west coast.

Delivering the major blow of a great New Year's eve climax to 12 months of record breaking aerial assaults against Europe, the American heavy bombers, escorted by swarms of U.S. fighters, left great plumes of flame and smoke circling 5,000 to 10,000 feet in the sky over Paris plants and winged 410 miles from London to blast the Cognac airfield, about 25 miles from the Atlantic.

The big bombers, making their 10th raid of the month of December, attacked Chateau Bernard airfield for the first time, and in the day's operations struck heavy blows at isolated pinpoint targets important to the German aerial defense of France.

Possibly new record shattering Allied aerial armadas carried forward a mighty 36-hour long nonstop pounding of Northern France, shuttling to and from Britain almost without a break during the day, hammering the invasion

coast and other military objectives.

While U. S. heavy bombers blasted Cognac and Paris, 200 miles from London, where the Paris radio said there were more than 200 civilian casualties, British coastal observers said, the strength of Friday's air fleets was even more impressive than Thursday, possibly even than on Christmas eve when more than 3,000 planes hammered the French invasion coast.

All day, streets in coastal towns were crowded with gaping watchers.

American and RAF medium bombers, officially described as a "large force", which blasted Northern France, carried out their attacks without the loss of a single plane. "Bombing results were good," air authorities said.

It was also learned RAF and Allied fighters escorting the U. S. bombers, shot down four enemy planes for the loss of one.

Observers believed the great swarms of Allied aircraft pounding the French coast constituted first elements of a long softening up process opening the way for invasion, but cautioned against any interpretation that an invasion was imminent.

American fliers returning from the heavy bomber raid said they left a black and white smoke pall visible for 50 miles, and encountered heavy flak over the target.

They met some enemy fighters, but said most of them refused combat due to the strength of the bombers' escorting fighters.

The mighty assaults on France followed 24 hours, ending Thursday evening, in which more than 3,000 Allied planes blasted Berlin, Southwest Germany and France.

Then, during the first three hours of daylight Friday, a big force of Allied medium bombers struck at Northern France. No sooner had they returned than another great force roared out toward the French coast.

The heavy bombers followed and in early afternoon the day's aerial activity reached a peak with great new formations of mediums, tightly guarded by flocks of

fighters, streaming across the channel. (That was the end of the article.)

The new year started with an action that was intended to bring to a head a problem that had festered since last May. This action, when completed, was to result in long lasting resentment on the part of many enlisted combat men. The following set the wheels in motion:

1 January 1944

SQUADRON ORDER)

NUMBER

1)

EXTRACT

1. Pursuant to authority contained in Army Regulations 35-1480 the following named enlisted men of this organization, duty as indicated, are detailed to duty requiring them to participate in regular and frequent aerial flights commencing this date until relieved by competent authority:

(This paragraph was followed with a list of personnel that covered two and three quarters pages.)

2. Pursuant to authority contained in Army Regulations 35-1480, the following named enlisted man of this organization, duty as indicated, is detailed to duty requiring him to participate in regular and frequent aerial flights commencing 21 January 1944, until relieved by competent authority:

COLDIRON, EDWARD E. 35452621 Aerial Gunner

By order of Captain KOLLINER:

WILLIAM DOUGHTEN
1ST Lieut., Air Corps,
Adjutant

There is evidence that this document was prepared at a latter period of time and then back dated to January 1, 1944. The following items support that position:

1. The order was prepared on the direction of Captain

Kolliner. On January 1, 1944, Major Anderson was Commanding Officer of the 506th. Kolliner did not assume command until January 14th.

2. The order was signed by Lt. Doughten, Adjutant. On January 1, 1944, Captain John W. Rodgers was Adjutant of the 506th (Note: Rodgers was promoted to Capt. on this date.). Lt. Doughten did not leave his post as Ass't Engineering Officer, to assume the Adjutant post, until January 19, 1944.

It appears that the document was prepared on January 19th or after.

This episode started on May 14, 1943, when the 506th went to Kiel, Germany. On this raid Coldiron was wounded while flying with Lt. Graham on the Old Crow.

By the time that Coldiron was released by the medics, he had been replaced on Anderson's crew and the 44th Group had been removed from combat status. He was not included with the combat personnel that made the two trips to Africa.

After the second trip to Africa, Coldiron was scheduled to go on some combat missions. However, whenever this occurred, he was always sick and could not go.

Coldiron was offered to be reduced in grade and removed from combat status. Each time, Coldiron refused and said, "I'm a combat man and will go up the next time". However, the combat mission was never flown. It was during this time that Mark Morris recalls the rumor that "Coldiron permitted his name to be placed on combat status several times, just to draw flight pay". The January 1, 1944, Squadron Order formalized Coldiron's status as a combat man and gave him until January 21st to make a final decision. In reality, this period was probably 3 days.

Informally, Coldiron was told that if he persisted in claiming combat status and did not fly combat, he would be ordered to go. Refusal would result in court-martial. The story was continued on January 26th.

Mark Morris noted a raid on Kiel, Germany, on January 4th by saying, "My chance to get even." (Note: Mark was probably referring to the losses we had suffered on May 14, 1943.) "It was seven hours of cold--45 degrees. There was light flak and only a few fighters. We had P-38's and P-51's for

escort. We had no problems. But, I am so tired."

The combat records of both Mark Morris and the author reveal that they went on this mission with Lt. Laudig. They were on A/C #42-63 965, S. This was Sortie #149 and it lasted seven hours. The notation mentioned flak. (Note: McAtee's crew had begun to break up at this point. It is not known who the other crew members were that flew with Laudig that day, but it is known that McCash did not go with them.)

The Group put up 19 aircraft and led the Wing on this raid. Eight ships from the 506th participated. Ninety-eight 500-pound bombs were dropped on PFF markers with unobserved results. There were some indications that the strikes were north and east of the city. It was extremely cold and several crew members suffered facial and hand frostbite.

James Redus, who was flying with Borkowski, recalls:

We developed an engine problem on the return trip and could not keep up with the Group. Our gas was running low and night was coming on. Borkowski and Mikolajczyk (the navigator) decided we might have to ditch. They had me send an SOS. Air/Sea/Rescue was requested and given information as to our possible ditching area. It sure was heart warming to see them below as we came into the area.

We were fortunate to make it to the closest land base, Woodhall. When we landed we had very little gas left.

I was wearing only a heated suit under my fleece lined clothing. I must have been a sight after I removed the heavy clothing. I had to go to the mess hall dressed in my blue electric suit with dangling electric cord.

Waino Hannuksela was on this mission. Also, the records maintained by William Novak show that he went, perhaps with Bunce.

A newspaper account tells of an incident that occurred as the Squadron taxied out for this mission:

After the last Kiel raid, operations at a Liberator base got to figuring they ought to handicap Norman E. Purdy's B-24, Q, on future takeoffs. Purdy and his crew were taxiing for takeoff when the No. 4 propeller hit a parked truck and was badly damaged. Q sat idle while the other B-24's took off. Then the ground crew went to work.

T/Sgt. Alfred Peyrounat, of Concord, Cal., ground crew chief, and S/Sgt. Jack Brown, of Eustace, Tex., prop specialist, led mechanics onto the ship and in exactly 30 minutes Q had a new No. 4 prop and was racing down the runway. It caught the other Libs and bombed Kiel.

In spite of Norm Purdy's efforts, the Group had to return to Kiel on the next day, January 5th. Four of our ships took off with the Group. Two of them dropped twenty-four 500-pound bombs on Kiel, Germany. One aircraft jettisoned its bombs into the North Sea. One aircraft brought its bombs back. Bombing was visual and results were fair. Two attacks were made by enemy aircraft in the target area.

James Clements remembers:

I was flying the number four position in the lead box. We were on the bomb run when one of our engines was shot out. In order to keep up I was pulling 63 inches on the remaining three engines. Even then we were lagging. After bombs away Saylor came back to fly formation with me. He stayed with me until I landed at Krimington.

William Novak also was at Kiel on this date, probably with Bunce.

After an overnight stay, Lt. Borkowski and crew returned to base.

On January 6th Ray Marner noted "Don Orr was broke in rank and transferred. Rowell is the new 1st Sgt."

John J. Huber, bombardier on the Gordon Stevens crew, remembers the recalled mission of January 7th:

We were fortunate enough to be the lead plane for the 44th, and the 44th was the lead group of the 2nd Division which was leading the 8th Air Force. We crossed the English Channel on a 45 degree angle. It only took nine minutes. Rispoli was the navigator and he came up with a time and distance answer to a ground speed of 330 miles per hour. This translated into a winds aloft of 165 miles per hour. To continue to the target at Ludwigshafen would mean we could not make it back to England. General Johnson ordered a recall and we fired a red flare. One division of B-17's did not see the flare and their lead navigator must have been off in space. As a result, they fished B-17's out of the channel most of the night.

Six ships from the Squadron took off with the Group on this Ludwigshafen, Germany, raid. One ship returned early because the pilot was unable to find the formation. The mission was abandoned over Holland. Five ships received credit for a sortie.

Information furnished by Jack Warvel indicates that Lt. Albert and crew were on this mission flying in A/C #41-29 153, Z, Greenwich. Ollie Bowling was flying their tail guns. This was Sortie #151 and it lasted five hours. They were over enemy territory when they turned back.

Lt. William Doughton went to Krimington to oversee the battle damage repair of Lt. Clements' ship. They returned on January 8th

Also, on this day Norm Kiefer mentioned in a letter to his wife:

This morning I forced myself to write a letter to "Willies" (Richard Williams) folks. By the time I got through, I had six pages.

In explanation of this comment, in early December of 1943, a new Catholic Chaplain was assigned to the 44th. Father Harshaw was a Marion priest. Prior to his military career he was a professor of mathematics in a midwest college. After his arrival, Father Harshaw attempted to become acquainted with as many of the 44th personnel as he could. During the month of December Norm told his wife about a couple of long talks with Father Harshaw.

Late in December I was invited to a meeting with a couple of chaplains and their administrative assistants. They indicated that they were faced with the problem of receiving letters from relatives of 44th personnel who had been shot down, but no one on the chaplain staff knew the individual. They believed that the reply would be more meaningful if it was written by someone who knew the missing airman. They wanted me to help by answering some of those letters. They stated that I could write without concern about censorship. They would approve the letter without reading it. Thus the letter to "Willies" mother.

It never entered my head that the letter would lead to a number of exchanges. It soon became apparent that "Willies" mother was adopting me. I decided that since I was still flying combat that there was a good chance that she would

have to go through the pain once again. I stopped writing.

This was the beginning of a period of despondency for me. One day I heard Norm Purdy, say, "I will be glad when McAtee's crew finishes their tours. Maybe then we will be able to fly with our own crew and get back to fighting the war." This resulted in a definite feeling of not being wanted.

The statement by Purdy was probably warranted. Up to this point, the 506th had only four combat men that had completed their tour, two enlisted and two officers. They were all from Strong's crew (not a crew that was with the Squadron when it formed in the States). The original officers, that had survived, were being promoted. In their new positions they could not fly as frequently. Their crews were broken up. Among the original enlisted men, only Mike Davis, Frank Juskowski, George Hartney and myself remained. All the other original combat men were either casualties or had been transferred. It was probably common knowledge that McAtee was selecting the missions and the crews for these men. He was trying to get someone, who had started out with the Squadron, to finish.

On the wall in our hut, I had scrawled the names of men and ships of the 506th with the dates and places that they had gone down. There was also a notation regarding Coldiron. This faced me each morning when I got up and once again when I retired.

Now I would frequently look at my limbs in the morning when I dressed and wonder if they or even I would be there by evening. I frequently mentally said, "Lord, I am going to try to stay alive today. However, if that is not what you want, your will be done".

I had given up forming close friendships after "Willie" was shot down. You just get hurt! Now the rule was, be friendly with everyone and a friend to none.

In another letter to my wife, on January 10th, I wrote:

At three o'clock we did a remarkable thing. Now sit down before I tell you. We drilled! That is the first time in over a year. With the new order that is out, I guess that we will be doing it once a week.

Behind this drill session was a small rebellion.

As I remember it, a new Squadron Executive Officer was assigned to the 508th. He was fresh from Officer's Training School back in the States. This was his first assignment. He quickly decided that the Squadron personnel were not as military as he had been taught they should be. He was going to do something about it.

His first move was to post a notice that all personnel, except combat personnel scheduled to fly, would turn out for close order drill at 7:00 A.M.

The following morning he had the C.Q. go to the barracks and rouse all personnel. In most of the combat barracks there was a lot of grumbling. However, in one barracks, when the lights were turned on by the C.Q., one of the combat men reached for a 45-caliber pistol. He leveled it at the C.Q. and said "Turn out the God Damned lights."

Believing that discretion is the better part of valor, the C.Q. turned out the lights and went back to report to the Executive Officer. He in turn went to the barracks and was also greeted with the pistol and "Turn out the God Damned lights".

When the Executive Officer returned to the Orderly Room Captain McAtee was there. McAtee was listening to one of the ground men that had just been called out for drill after working all night on his aircraft. When he heard what had happened in the combat barracks McAtee told the Executive Officer, "If you want to drill, go ahead, but stay away from my combat men. They will kill you."

A face saving compromise was worked out and towards the end of February, I was able to write to my wife:

You go right ahead and laugh about our drilling that one day. Please don't split your sides because we haven't done it since then.

About this time there was a rumor that better food (the type that would not cause gas pains at high altitude) would be issued to the combat crews.

On the 11th of January, Ray Warner stated:

Our planes went out today and bombed a secondary target. I think a lot of American bombers were lost around Berlin. Things were screwed up. A lot of B-17's landed here. We

lost no planes.

In the morning, eight 506th aircraft took off with the Group to attack Brunswick, Germany. Two of our aircraft returned early. As the Group crossed into enemy territory, a recall was issued. The 44th, just before turning back, spotted an opening in the clouds and decided to bomb a target of opportunity. Meppen, Germany, was that target and it was bombed with an excellent bomb pattern being laid upon the factory and railroad area. The 506th specifically hit the locks in the Dortmund Ems canal north of the city of Meppen. Results were excellent. Slight, inaccurate flak was encountered, but enemy aircraft did not attack. Lt. D'Angelico was the Lead Bombardier of the second section and Lt. R. A. Johnson was Lead Pilot of the section dropping on this target.

Information furnished by Jack Warvel indicates that Albert and his crew were on this raid flying in A/C #153, Z, Greenwich.

Also, James Clements was along. Once again he was in A/C 642, N, and had his regular crew along. They dropped electronically on the leader with very good results. There was a cameraman aboard their ship, but it is not known who it was. They saw four unidentified enemy aircraft.

The *Flint Journal* reported the raid as follows:

GREATEST BOMB ASSAULT PASSES 72 HRS.

BRUNSWICK BATTERED
AFTER RECORD RAID ON
FRANKFURT SATURDAY

Over 800 U.S. Heavies in 1,800-Ton Smash,
First of 2 Giant Attacks; Berlin Is
Hit Second Straight Night

American bombers yesterday struck their second major blow in two days at Germany's war industry and carried the Allies heaviest air offensive of the war into its 72nd hour.

Brunswick, 120 miles west of Berlin, was sledge hammered by a force of Fortresses and Liberators almost as great as the record fleet of more than 800 heavy U.S. bombers which in daylight Saturday dumped a record 1,800 tons of high

explosives and incendiaries onto Frankfurt, in the southwestern Reich.

The two American attacks, bringing the USAAF's total for the month to ten, were coupled with two successive RAF raids on Berlin, stretching the Nazis' overworked defenses toward the breaking point. The great assaults by the heavies were supplemented by endless relays of Allied medium, light and fighter/bomber assaults on other targets in Nazi-occupied Europe.

The second major force of American bombers to strike the Reich in two days, yesterday pushed deep into central Germany to bomb the already battered aircraft manufacturing center of Brunswick.

The attack, covered all the way to the target and back by relays of American fighters, came before the Nazi defenses recovered from the biggest daylight raid in history--Saturday's assault by more than 800 Fortresses and Liberators on the railway and manufacturing city of Frankfurt in southwest Germany.

Bombing through clouds, yesterday's force flew in an overcast haze, through which German fighters slashed in desperate efforts to halt the serial armada. Almost as many planes were in the attacking force, it was estimated, as in Saturday's 1,800-ton assault, which included more than 700 fighters.

At a late hour last night USAAF headquarters had not announced the losses.

German radio said at least 53 planes were shot down, 41 of them four-engine bombers. "Despite bad weather conditions," the German News Agency said, "the German Air Force has been able to inflict another smashing blow at the American bombers which attacked southwest German territory."

The report on the Brunswick attack referred, for the first time in a communique, to the new administrative setup of the USAAF in the ETO--The U.S. Strategic Air Forces in Europe--official name for the heavy bombers whose task probably will continue to be the disruption of Germany's war manufacturing and transport machine behind

the invasion walls.

Yesterday's raid, like Saturday's, involved a round trip of about 900 miles. It was the second U.S. blow at Brunswick, which first was hit by the Americans in the widespread attacks of Jan. 11, when 60 bombers were lost in successful attacks on aircraft factories throughout central Germany. (That was the end of the article.)

Patrick Gallagher's flight records indicate that he flew in combat as copilot on this date. There is no indication of who he was with. However, his combat record does not have an entry for January 11th. This was probably the day that:

We took off with 2,000-pound bombs and just off the runway the #3 engine ran away. When it happened we were climbing to turn to the left. The engine would not feather. By reducing the throttle on the disabled engine we were able to gain enough altitude to turn. We landed at the first field we saw. When we got down, they found the reduction gear in the engine had broken and knocked a piece of the engine out. After the ship was repaired, we returned to Shipham.

For January 13th Ray Marner indicated, "A plane from the 68th crashed on the field today killing 10 men. It blew up and made quite a mess." (Will Lundy mentioned this incident in his writings.)

The following day, January 14th, the 506th went to bomb the military installations at Escalles-Sur-Buchy, France. Nine of our aircraft flew as a section leading the 67th Squadron. One of our ships returned early with mechanical failure. The bomb load was ninety-six 500-pound general purpose bombs. Bombs were dropped with excellent results. Capt. McAtee was the command pilot. About 15-to-20 enemy aircraft were encountered, but they only made a single pass. There was slight, inaccurate flak.

George Ramsey's combat record indicates that he made this raid on A/C #509 with Houghtby and Patrick Gallagher. Our formation encountered enemy aircraft. This was Sortie #154 and it lasted five hours.

The combat record of James Redus shows that he was on this mission flying with Henry Borkowski in A/C #153, L.

Jack Warvel reports that Albert and crew made the raid flying

in A/C #41-29 172, T. Also, John Huber was there, probably with Stevens.

Ground personnel made an outstanding contribution toward the war effort even before the ships were airborne. Ordnance was alerted at 0930 hours to load nine ships. Armament assisted ordnance in loading three ships as well as installing guns in all aircraft in ample time for takeoff. A Letter Of High Praise was received from Colonel Dent, Group Commander, for this fine work.

Also on this day, January 14th, Ray Marner wrote:

Our planes went out at noon today to Southern France. The 66th lost one plane. (Will Lundy reports that it was a ship from the 67th.)

We got a new C.O. today; Captain Kolliner. Major Anderson went to Group Headquarters. Capt. Kolliner has 30 missions and came over when the Group first came over. They're loading again tonight. Maybe this is it. (Note: Ray was probably referring to the expected raid by our Group on Berlin.)

James Redus vividly recalls when Kolliner assumed command:

Kolliner ordered all the enlisted men to fall in at the orderly room and proceeded to tell them that there was a lack of discipline in the Squadron. He stated that we would shape up or ship out. He followed that with the information that he would whip any one who didn't shape up. You don't dispute a Major; besides, he was a fine physical specimen who could more than likely back up his word.

There should have been another letter from our commander on the next day's activities by our ground forces. It actually started on January 14th when at 2130 hours the alert went out to load seven ships with 40 M47A1 bombs. The job was to have been completed by 0200 hours on the 15th of January. At 0230 hours they were called back to the line to change to 40 fragmentation bombs per ship. The mission was scrubbed at 0500 hours.

Mark Morris wrote in his diary for this day, January 15th, "I met Harry Grannon on the way to a leave in Scotland. We had a great time".

Lt. Lowenthal and Lt. Ellison were transferred to the 44th Bomb Group Headquarters on January 16th. Many years later, Lowenthal related that he requested this move because of all the politics that was taking place in the Squadron.

This unrest was also reflected among the combat personnel. Lt. Wulff was reclassified from pilot to copilot (Wulff was assigned to a newly arrived Bolin crew. The enlisted personnel were originally with Charles R. Conner who was indefinitely grounded.)

McAtee recalls:

One of the first things that Kolliner did after assuming command of the Squadron was to review personnel assignments. He noted that Michaels had held the position of Assistant Operations Officer for a long time, but that he was not flying regularly and had few combat missions. Kolliner directed that Michaels had to fly combat and he gave him a crew.

Capt. Robert L. Cardenas arrived on January 17th

There was an entry in the microfilm history that on January 18th Capt. Fretwell, (From Strong's crew); and Lt. Rispoli, (navigator on Stevens crew), both completed their tours of duty. (I can find no evidence that the 44th participated in combat on this date. Ray Marner reported Fretwell's completion on December 30, 1943.)

The next day, January 19th, Capt. John W. Rodgers transferred to the 50th Station Complement. 1st Lt. William Doughton was relieved of his assignment as Assistant Engineering Officer and was assigned as Squadron Adjutant.

On January 21st James Clements was back in combat. He recalls:

The 44th was the only group in the Wing to attack this target as preceding formations abandoned the mission due to 8/10th cumulus. There was moderate accurate flak. We were a section following the 67th Squadron. Over France we became separated. I led a our section of nine aircraft to the airfield at St. Jean D'Angely, France. Due to towering type cumulus cloud cover and difficulty in maneuvering at the I.P., it was necessary to make four bomb runs before a successful alignment and sighting was possible. The bombs blanketed the assigned MP, obtaining

excellent results.

James Clements was flying in A/C #642, N. His copilot was Lt. Orville L. Wulff. As usual, Boykin was the navigator and Bumbicka was the bombardier. Lt. John J. Huber flew as his nose turret gunner (the eleventh man aboard). They were carrying one hundred and eight 500-pound general purpose bombs. The bomb sight was used and bombs were released electronically with excellent results.

George Ramsey's combat record shows that he went on this raid with Houghtby and Patrick Gallagher. The notation shows enemy aircraft and flak were encountered. This was Sortie #159 and lasted five hours.

Information furnished by Jack Warvel shows that Albert and crew, including Edmund Donnelly, went out this day on A/C #153, Z, Greenwich.

Also, William Novak went on this mission, perhaps with Bunce.

This was the second raid for Ralph Golubock.

John Huber and Marion Paciorek recall that this was the 25th mission for Capt. Stevens and he flew as Command Pilot in the deputy lead aircraft of another section. Huber said:

After Stevens completed his combat tour he asked to be transferred to Fighter Command. There followed a short transition training period and Stevens was assigned to P-47'S. He went with Col. Zempke's bunch, but didn't come back. He wasn't over 25 years of age.

Ray Marner wrote for January 21st:

Planes went over France today. The Group lost six ships. The 506th didn't lose any. Major Anderson went down. It was his 25th mission. (Note: Will Lundy reported the loss of five ships from the 44th.)

A newspaper article told of the loss of Anderson:

We met little opposition. We had cloud cover anyway. We were trying to bomb through clouds and made five runs, but we could not make sure, so we turned back with our bombs. We never bomb in France unless we are dead sure.

As we were crossing the French coast we found Jerries

had moved in a bunch of mobile ack-ack. They must have been tracking us for quite a time. The first burst was so close I heard it.

I started evasive action. There were 12 of us in the formation, but 30 seconds after that first burst we got hit at 11,000 feet. It happened so fast we were thrown around completely out of control by the smack of the explosions. Jerry got us with seven direct hits in a bunch.

I put the plane into a dive as soon as I got some sort of control and went down fast as I could to 8,000 feet in order to get out of the area. We were not hit again. I realized at once that there was not much left to my ship.

One of the shells burst right inside the bomb bay ripping out the cat walk, which holds the bottom of the fuselage together. This shell killed the Command Pilot, Major Anderson, who was standing between the copilot and me. Major Anderson slumped to the floor and was lying in a heap.

Many years later General Johnson commented on the loss of Anderson. He related that Anderson believed that the formation was out of range of enemy guns and he had removed his cumbersome flak vest. The burst that killed him came seconds later.

James Redus recalls:

Major Anderson flew with us once as Command Pilot. Flak suits had just been issued and he was ever so put out that we had them, but were not wearing them. The two waist gunners, Donal Smith and Wade Lemon, had their floor area lined with them.

Also on January 21st Ray Marner wrote:

Oliver Germann (Strong crew) came back from the hospital in Africa. He was wounded over Foggia.

I just learned that Major Anderson and the ship he was on cracked up here in England. He and another were killed. (Note: Will Lundy reported that while over enemy territory the radio operator aboard this ship was blown free and became a POW. The ship did crash land in England.)

Mark Morris remembers that occasionally they played with the ratio of tracers to other shells in a belt.

Someone decided that we were too dependent on tracers and were being falsely lulled into thinking we were hitting the fighters when we weren't. Consequently, all tracers were removed. This of course left a large pile of tracers. Jack Edwards couldn't pass up that opportunity. He talked me and some of his armament buddies into helping him fill his ammo belts with nothing but tracers. I was grounded and did not go on the next mission. When they returned across the channel it was getting dark. Jack told me later that he fired off a few bursts for effect. Other gunners told me that upon seeing the sky light up with tracers, they thought the formation was under attack and everyone started firing wildly. It was widely rumored that one B-24 was struck by some of that fire.

On January 23rd Norm wrote to his wife:

Do you remember that old ambition of mine? I mean finding a town without any "G.I.s" in it! Well I almost found it. All the time that we were there we didn't see more than 15 American soldiers.

The people on the street would turn and stare at us. One woman came up and asked us what the wings were for. We told her that we were air crew. She said, "How can you be? You are wearing Army uniforms." We explained that our Air Force was different from theirs and that we didn't wear blue.

In one cafe we ordered a meal. The waitress stood in back and watched us eat. You know that we use our eating tools a good deal differently than the rest of the world. She watched us and asked questions about the food and the States. Then she would go to the other end of the room and say something to another girl. They would giggle and come back to watch us. (Note: I believe that I had gone to Newcastle upon the Tyne. The one thing that I still remember about this town was that each night the hotel chambermaid placed a hot water bottle in the bed to provide warmth.)

Information furnished by Jack Warvel, for January 24th, reveals that he and Donnelly were with Albert on A/C #153, Z, Greenwich, on a four hours mission that was recalled. Ralph Golubock also reports that he was in the air on this day.

The 506th put up eleven ships.

In accordance with Squadron Order 1, January, 1944, Coldiron was ordered, by an Officer, to fly on January 26th. He refused the order. He was reduced in grade to Pvt., placed under military arrest and remanded to the guardhouse. (The microfilm history shows that there were four others who were reduced in grade at the same time. It is not know what the circumstances of their reduction was nor what became of them.)

Robert Struble recalls:

Eddie Coldiron was 25 years old. We considered him to be the "old man" of the barracks. Eddie played a guitar as well as any professional. He sang Country and Western and even wrote his own songs. One has always stayed with me (At least the name, Match Box Blues). The melody I don't remember.

After the seventh mission he refused to go to the briefings. He would lie in bed and shake. At the time of the Kiel raid, when he was wounded, Coldiron had jet black hair. Now his hair was all white and he was a nervous wreck. He was a sick man. The apprehensions he had regarding returning to combat were too much. Eddie was no coward! He needed help at that point, not heavy discipline.

Dave McCash recalls how badly I felt when I saw Coldiron with the guardhouse gang, under armed guard, doing menial tasks around the base.

In due course of time, Coldiron's court-martial was held. McAtee, as the Squadron Operations Officer, was required to testify that Coldiron had been scheduled to go on a combat mission. Also, that he had to find a replacement for Coldiron when he refused to go. McAtee was not allowed to give any testimony in Coldiron's defense. He believed that Coldiron needed help and was being made a scapegoat to assure that others didn't chicken out. McAtee remembers that the sitting board was composed of young ground officers.

The only Field Grade Officer that could have testified in Coldiron's defense, Major Anderson, his former pilot and Squadron Commander, had been killed in action on January 21st. With the exception of George Hartney, a fellow gunner, all of Coldiron's former crew members were now dead or

prisoners of war.

The board found Coldiron guilty of cowardice in the face of the enemy. He was sentenced to death. Upon review, this sentence was commuted to life imprisonment.

Many years later McAtee revealed:

After the end of hostilities, when the 506th returned to the United States, an effort was made to right the injustice that Coldiron received. Then Lt. Colonel McAtee, Commanding Officer of the 506th, sent Captain Doughten to Washington to plead Coldiron's case. To the best of his knowledge, McAtee indicated that Coldiron was released from prison.

During the next few days Ray Marner reported:

January 26th--"Germann (Strong crew) just came in with all his medals on. He sure has a slug of them. He got them all at once. Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross with Cluster, Air Medal with 3 Clusters and a Purple Heart." (A few days later, an article on Germann appeared in the Stars and Stripes. This article is covered in this work on August 18th.)

January 27th--"The R.A.F. went out and a couple planes crashed near here. About 3 haystacks were on fire.

"Today we got our "Citation for Ploesti" and we can now wear the citation ribbon. We're getting one for Kiel too. We'll wear a Cluster on the ribbon."

Mark Morris reports:

On January 29th we went to Frankfurt, Germany. We hit a rail junction. We dropped fifty-two 100-pound incendiaries. There were about 50 fighters. They were with us from the coast till just after bombs away. Twelve attacks were made on us. They all broke off outside 500 yards. They weren't eager. There was light flak."

Ten ships from the 506th made this mission with Lt. R. A. Johnson leading the second section. We dropped 461 bombs on PFF markers with unobserved results. One aircraft returned early with three generators out and the nose cowling damaged by flak.

The combat records of both Mark Morris and Norm Kiefer show that they made this raid with Lt. Purdy on A/C #962, *Prince Ass.* This was Sortie #162 and it took eight hours. The notation showed that there was flak and enemy fighters. The Flight Record for Ollie Bowling shows that he flew this mission with this crew. However, his Combat Record indicates the plane number as 162, the same number as the Sortie number (a typing error). It is not remembered why Jack Edwards was not flying that day.

James Redus' combat record agrees with Norm's except for the length of the mission. The Henry Borkowski crew, flying in A/C #153, L, got back a half-hour earlier.

Information furnished by both John Huber and William Novak indicate that they went on this raid. It is not known who they went with.

Records maintained by Ralph Golubock indicates that he was on this raid.

Ray Marner noted:

Our planes hit Frankfurt today. The 66th and 67th each lost a plane. (In his writings Will Lundy confirmed these losses.) All 506th ships came back again. We're getting a terrific record. One of our planes crash landed. It was Lt. Duffy's crew. Two men were hurt. (Note: Will Lundy does not mention a second injury.)

Lt. Duffy made an excellent landing with a badly damaged aircraft. He had no hydraulics, no brakes, a flat right tire, the ball turret was down, and the tail turret was knocked out by enemy action. He incurred the battle damage shortly after entering enemy territory. However he continued to the target. S/Sgt. Victor J. Chopp, who lost an eye, displayed extraordinary courage and determination by repairing his turret after it had been hit. He was wounded again while firing the repaired turret.

The *Flint Journal* reported the raid as follows:

800 BOMBERS HIT FRANKFURT

RAID BY U.S. PLANES
HEAVIEST IN DAYLIGHT;
BERLIN POUNDED AGAIN

RAF Loses 47 Craft as Nazi Capital
Gets Second Blasting in 24 Hours;
London Has 700th Alert of War

The Eighth American Air Force sent the greatest number of heavy bombers in its history--more than 800--in a thunderous assault against industrial Frankfurt today even as Berlin smoked and burned anew from Friday night's second heavy RAF blow in a row.

Fighter escorts probably numbering several hundreds accompanied and assisted the Liberators and Flying Fortresses in the blow at highly industrialized Frankfurt. Losses were not announced immediately.

Swedish reports said the complete evacuation of burning Berlin was contemplated, and the Nazi clamped a tight censorship on details of the second successive devastating RAF blow to mop up the rubble strewn capital. (The article continued with other unrelated accounts).

Whenever possible, when Norm had been on a raid, he tried to write a quick letter to his wife to let her know that he was all right. In these letters he would mention that he had received communion in the morning, but had not gone to Mass. The letter written on the night of Jan 29 is a good example:

I am very tired! I received communion this morning, but could not get to Mass in the afternoon. Yes, everybody is all right today. You will have to excuse me for tonight. I am too tired to write any more.

Ray Marner also wrote on January 29th:

The R.A.F. has raided Berlin two nights in a row. You can hear them going out again tonight.

Klinge (Bunce crew) and Kooker (Bunker crew) finished their missions. (Note: Kooker was an original 506th gunner who had been transferred to the 67th.)

We just got another blackout alert. Some 40 German planes are over the Norfolk area. That's quite a few for "Jerries".

James Clements was the Squadron Leader on January 30th when the Squadron went to Brunswick, Germany. The 506th, with eight ships, was the second squadron in the Group. His

records reveal that there was moderate accurate flak and about 30 Me-109's and Ju-88's. Waino Hannuksela was his copilot. The crew observed huge columns of white smoke coming up through the overcast. They watched two Ju-88's being shot down by two P-47's. Several dog fights were seen. Seven Me-109's, that were bunched together, made a pass from two o'clock level, but did not close in.

The mission was briefed for visual bombing of Brunswick. However, due to high clouds and persistent contrails, our Combat Wing dropped on a target of opportunity, Hannover. We dropped ninety-four 500-pound general purpose bombs on PFF markers.

The combat records of both Mark Morris and Norm Kiefer show that they flew this mission with Norm Purdy on A/C #201, Baldy and His Brood. The notation indicated that we encountered enemy aircraft. This was Sortie #163 and lasted seven hours.

George Ramsey's combat record reveals that he went on A/C #172, T, flown by Ray Houghtby. The notation shows that they encountered enemy aircraft. Patrick Gallagher was the copilot. (There is a notation in the microfilm history that they dropped their bombs through the bomb bay doors due to a malfunction.)

Records of William Novak show that he was on this raid, but it is not known who he went with.

Ralph Golubock was on this mission. He may have been flying with Horne.

Records maintained by Ollie Bowling show that he made this mission with Harold Laudig on A/C 965, S.

Mark Morris noted for the day:

This was my 20th mission. I'm counting now as some fellows are finishing their tour. We went to Brunswick, Germany. We had an escort most of the way. There were quite a few enemy fighters, but only seven broke through."

Ray Marner reported, "Our planes went to Brunswick, Germany. We lost none. The rumor that is going around is that this Group is going home."

Mark Morris wrote on the last day of the month:

Up at 3:30. Mission to Frankfurt scrubbed. (I wonder if Mark was one of the enlisted men that failed to go to the lecture that was given by an Officer from the para-troops. The microfilm history noted that the enlisted combat men who failed to attend "Paid".)

During the month of January the following personnel received promotions: Harold Laudig to Captain; Lts. Blow, D'Angelico, Martin, and Wulff to 1st Lt.; T/Sgt Rowell to 1st Sgt.

Lt. Richard A. Parker and crew were transferred to the 93rd Bomb Group. It is believed that transferring with Parker were Lts. David R. Simons, Edward L. Rutherford, and John E. Coffey. It is also believed that the following enlisted personnel went with Parker; Sgts. Ivan G. Nyhoff, Harry D. Willey, David L. Lieck, Doy V. Whitlock, Joseph T. Covone, and Claude Sorrow.

In letters to his wife Norm Kiefer mentioned the following during the month of January:

"I am now flying with my old copilot, Lt. Harold Laudig. Captain McAtee is our Operations Officer and doesn't fly very often."..."If you want to buy a stove or anything else, and can find a place to store them, go right ahead. It is OK with me."..."I am writing this from the Club. It is too cold to write in the hut. From now on, whenever it is possible, I will be writing up here. "...Tomorrow morning I am going to try to send \$200 home to you. It is my base pay, flying pay and back pay. Now don't worry about me! That will leave \$118 to spend on the furlough which I am supposed to get the sixteenth of this month. On top of that, Mike owes me 20 some dollars. Do you remember how you laughed when I told you that I would make this much money while in the army?"..."Lt. Young has left us now. He has gone to a higher job."..."Oh! I forgot to tell you. Major Anderson went to visit "Willie" while we were on pass. It was his last one." (Note: I was telling her that Major Anderson had been killed in action.)..."They have four ducks here at the Club. There is a good sized spring out in front and that is where they live. Right now they are gathered here by the window waiting to be fed."..."Mark received the paper dolls and hung them on the wall at the head of his bed. He asked me to thank you girls for him." (Note: While in the rest home, Mark played this song over-and-over.)

On the night of February 1 Mark Morris stated, "They loaded

2000-pounders last night. Our pilot, Lt. Purdy, is grounded. I got a 24-hour pass. I asked Capt. McAtee if I could go tomorrow with someone. He said, 'No, go use your pass.'

On February 2, the day arrived that the author had been looking forward to. That morning I was woke up with the C.Q. shaking me and saying that I was going with Ray Houghtby in aircraft #172, T. This would be my last mission. Patrick Gallagher was the copilot.

At the briefing I learned that I would not be flying as radio operator. Instead, I will fly as nose gunner. Also, I would be the one that would trigger out the bombs. Therefore, I attended the briefing with the bombardiers. I was told to release our bombs when the ship ahead dropped. The target was to be the buzz bomb sites at Watton in the Pas de Calais area of France. The bombing altitude was to be 18,000 feet. We would be dropping 2,000-pound bombs. There were nine aircraft from the 506th.

McAtee's Jeep pulled up to the hard stand just before the signal flare was fired for taxi time. McAtee jumped out of the Jeep and climbed aboard. He shook my hand and wished me luck and then departed.

In the target area there was slight flak and some ice in the clouds that obscured the target. Twenty-eight bombs were dropped on the second pass over the target. Our aircraft suffered slight flak damage and returned to the base without incident. We saw no enemy aircraft.

George Ramsey recalls:

We buzzed the field for a sergeant we didn't know who completed his missions with us. We were assigned the hard stand next to the control tower.

The author was on the flight deck as Houghtby taxied into the dispersal area. I saw quite a few individuals were waiting on the hard stand. When I climbed out of the ship McAtee took my picture and once again shook my hand expressing great pleasure. Then the others repeated the procedure. This was Sortie #166 and it lasted five hours.

While all of this was going on, Captain Laudig was having a celebration of his own. This was also his last combat mission. Upon return, he did not get into the normal position for landing. After all the others were on the

ground, Laudig disappeared from sight. Then he came roaring in at low level and buzzed the control tower. This was an unauthorized maneuver. After he was down Norm joined him and they congratulated each other.

Glenn Hall was aboard the ship when Laudig buzzed the field. He recalls:

That mission was my first as engineer. Laudig had told us that there would be no buzzing. The boys in the back were all sitting down. I was down by the bomb bay to check the landing gear when we seemed to pick up speed. I went back up on the flight deck to see us heading for the enlisted men watching the planes come in. They just stood there until we were almost on them and then they scattered like flies, expecting us to crash. Laudig pulled up to miss the radio building and a big tree. He then yelled, "That's the way these damned things should be flown."

They said that the Group C.O. came over to Laudig after we got on the ground and said "Congratulations, Laudig, you're grounded." He was grounded for two weeks, but felt justified for his buzz job.

In order to understand why Laudig did this, I must tell of events much earlier. Some time before my first mission, a B-24 took off on a local flight, veered off to the left, hit some trees beyond the runway and burned. I was one of five or six men who ran down to the wreckage and Laudig was already there, his uniform burned when he tried to get someone out of the plane. There was nothing he could do but watch the plane burn. He was very upset and cursed us out for being bloodthirsty. Later on when Laudig's crew was formed and we went to the rest home, the enlisted men rode with the officers as far as London. During the train ride, Laudig talked about the "sweaters" who would come down to the line to watch the planes land or crash after the missions. Those were the ones he headed for on his buzz and that was why he felt justified.

Bob Grow (Bunce crew) and C. C. Fry (Stevens crew) also completed their combat tours that day.

George Ramsey's combat record mentions the flak that we encountered.

Information furnished by Jack Warvel reports he and Edmund Donnelly were with Albert who was flying in A/C #42-7 642, N

on this five-hour mission.

The combat record of James Redus indicates that the Henry Borkowski crew flew Sortie #166 in A/C #153, L.

John Huber's records show that he went on this raid. It is not known who he went with.

William Novak may have been with Purdy or with Bunce.

Another of the raiders that day was Ralph Golubock. He may have been flying with Horne.

Ollie Bowling's records show that he flew this mission with William Michaels on A/C 965, S.

Lt. James O. Bolin of the 506th Squadron was not as fortunate as Laudig, Fry, Grow, and Kiefer. He was flying in an aircraft that had been borrowed from the 67th Squadron, A/C #41-24 282, Bar Y, Ruth Less, (An original ship of the 506th). At some point in the return from the target he became separated from the remainder of the formation. In the low clouds that covered England that day, he crashed into a low hill near Bournemouth, England. Eight of the crew were immediately killed. Sgts. Wilson and Bales were taken to Princess Alice Hospital where they both died later that same day.

With Lt. James Bolin were Lts. Orville L. Wulff, Edward J. Ackerman, and Harold W. Schwab. Also, Sgts. James H. Bales, Chester W. Yurick, James L. Wilson, Aubrey J. Maloy, Ralph E. Strait, and George M. Dewald.

That day Ray Marner noted:

Our planes went to France today. Lt. Bolin's crew cracked up near London. They didn't get over the target, but came back because of engine trouble. That's the eighth crew that we have lost. G. Porter came back from Africa today.

Maurice G. (Glenn) Hall recalls:

Paul Blow was my pilot for two missions, but I don't recall which ones. He then took over as Operations Officer and we lost a good pilot.

On one of our missions we were warned of enemy fighters in the area and tension kept building as we approached the

target. After a long period of silence, Paul Blow inquired over the intercom, "Hey Wozniak, does your Old Man work for a living or does your Mother have to take in washing?" That question relieved the tension.

On this second day of February Norm sent a telegram. The telegram read as follows:

YOU CAN STOP WORRYING -- HAVE FINISHED -- FEELING FINE

The telegram was delivered on February 6th. It was brief and did not carry the feeling of relief that I felt that day.

The effect of that telegram on my family is still remembered by my younger sister, Marie. She was about seven at the time. She recalls there were two types of telegrams. One was dreaded and the fear of its delivery was always an unspoken family secret. This one was the cause of much joy and the family relayed the message from member-to-member.

My feelings continued to be expressed in letters that I wrote during next few days. That night I wrote:

How would you like a little bit of good news? I hope that long before you get this you will have received a telegram telling of my finishing. It is mighty hard to realize that it is through. Now I can start to sweat out the other boys and thank the Good Lord for taking care of me. You will never know how good He has been to me. There are a lot of things that have happened that we of this world can only explain as an act of God.

There are an awful lot of boys that I have to thank that this day has come. Mostly the boys on the crew including Charley Loftus.

I am going to go into town to celebrate, but first I want to write to Mom.

I had an added incentive for going to town that night. At some point in time, after we landed, Bob Grow and I were called to Group Headquarters. There a Lt. talked to us about the large amount of experience that we had acquired during the last year. We were offered an immediate extended leave of absence in the States, provided we would agree to return to fly another tour of combat.

This just did not appeal to me! I figured that I had used

all of the luck that had been allotted to my lifetime. I replied thanks, but NO THANKS! I stuck to this position even when the Lt. pointed out that he was not certain when I would be shipped back home. Bob Grow also told the Lt. no.

When we left the Lt. we both agreed that it was time to celebrate the completion of our tours and drown the the words of the Lt. We took our bikes and rode off to Shipdham.

On February 3rd Ray Marner wrote:

One of our crews is going to Africa. We're going to get a crew from there. It's Lt. Maine's crew. (There is no information on this crew.) Planes went out today, but were called back.

Information furnished to Jack Warvel by David Klause indicates that Albert flew on this recalled mission in A/C #153, Z, Greenwich.

The flight record of Patrick Gallagher shows he received operations time on the 11th. However, he did not receive credit for a mission.

Will Lundy mentions on February 3rd:

While the planes were warming up, S/Sgt. Hantober, Radio Operator (67th), seeking to obtain missing orders, ducked down out of the bomb bay to go to a nearby plane for a copy of the orders. He ran directly into the whirling blades of the propeller on #3 engine. He was killed instantly. This occurred on M/Sgt. George Baccash's hard stand.

This incident is probably the one recalled by Henry Fetherolf who wrote:

Early one morning a green radio man showed up without his throat mike and the pilot barked at him. The boy jumped out through the bomb bay and ran forward to get his mike. The props were turning over and he ran into the inboard prop. After checking the prop and engine, the ship made the mission with another radio man. It took me a long time to get over that incident.

Norm and Bob Grow didn't even get a chance to peacefully recover from their hangovers the next morning. They were told about 10:00 o'clock to pack enough clothes to take on a

temporary assignment. They were going to Attlebridge.

They were to train the newly arrived 96th Combat Wing (458th, 466th 467th Groups), APO 558 (Attlebridge), under Brig. Gen. Peck. This unit had gone through training together in the States and had come to England as a unit.

I remember soon after our arrival at the base we were invited to meet Gen. Peck. He was a West Point graduate and you only had to look at him to see that he was all military. He welcomed us and commented on the background and combat experience that each of us had. He pointed out that none of his men had been in combat. He wanted us to do everything that we could to prepare his personnel for what was ahead for them. However, he did not want them scared. There was not to be any war stories! Just give them the final polish that they needed. We all agreed. He then assured us that his personnel would cooperate and furnish whatever we needed to do the task at hand.

Success in avoiding war stories proved to be more difficult than I had anticipated. The first morning session for radio operators started with my being introduced by a Major from one of the groups. Not long after I started talking the door opened and a Sgt. walked in, apologized for being late, and took a seat.

I knew this man, but I could not place who he was. On the first break, I spoke with him and mentioned that he looked familiar. He stated that at first he thought that he knew me. We then started tracing our histories to see where we had met. It turned out that he had been with the 506th when it was at Wendover Field, Utah, the second time.

On the next break he started asking about people he had known. The first was Dobbins. Most of the rest that he asked about were also killed or down behind enemy lines. There was no need for war stories! The list was enough!

Ralph Golubock recalls:

There was a Lt. that refused to fly combat. He was a 1st pilot. One day McAtee called me in and told me of the situation and asked me if I would take the Lt. as a copilot if he could convince him to go. I very reluctantly agreed and took him as my copilot on the next mission.

He seemed to be okay until we took some minor flak hits and then he went berserk. He grabbed the controls and gave me severe problems in controlling the ship. Finally, he quieted down and just sat in his seat for the rest of the mission, doing absolutely nothing. My engineer had to take over the setting of the landing gear, flaps, etc.

After landing, the Lt. told me that he just could not fly combat and that he would so inform McAtee. Several days later McAtee again talked to me and asked me to take him on one more mission. I refused, but finally "Mac" convinced me to take him again.

The second mission was a repeat of the first, only worse. Upon landing the Lt. told me that he just could not fly combat. I told him to talk to "Mac". Not long after that the Lt. was transferred out of the Group. I always regretted being any part of this incident. He was a very likeable fellow and a competent pilot. I do not think he was a coward in the normal sense of the word. He was just a mixed up kid who could not take the pressure of combat. I understand that the Lt. was court-martialed, but I do not know what happened to him.

The microfilm history indicates that there was only local flying on February 4th. However, this entry appears to be in error. Roger Freeman's, *Mighty Eighth War Diary*, shows that the 44th was airborne on this date. However, the 14th Combat Wing failed to join the attacking force and abandoned the mission when a PFF ship failed to take off. The briefed target was Russelsheim.

Flying that day were Bunce, Blow, Sayler, Money, Houghtby, Larson, and Albert.

James A. Bunce was flying in A/C #201. With him were Capt. Robert L. Cardenas, and Lts. William H. Novak and John J. Huber. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Russel E. Overly Jr., Robert S. Struble, Marion S. Paciorek, Joseph J. Barnett, August A. Fritz, and Thomas E. Davis.

Paul Blow was flying A/C #962. With him were Lts. George B. Davis, Maurice L. Dyer, and Joseph W. Ray. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. John T. Coyne, Donal J. Smith, Marvis T. Bolton, Norbert L. Heger, Frank J. Rizzo, and Aristides G. Litras

David E. Sayler was flying A/C #642. With him were Lts.

Howard B. McCormick, Allen W. Williams, and Gerald G. Gille. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Raymond G. Moffett, Raymond T. Murray Jr., Beauford P. Fletcher, Garnell W. Myers, William I. McFarlin, and Wilbur H. Hiserote.

John D. Money was flying A/C #622. With him were Lts. Joseph C. Kodaj, John J. Horey, and Harold J. Wheatly. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Andrew C. Graff, Richard E. Clarno, Wallace E. Kirchner, Donald E. Young, Eugene W. Roop, and Herbert S. Hill.

Raymond C. Houghtby was flying A/C #172. With him were Lts. Patrick W. Gallagher, and George K. Ramsey. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Charles R. Loftus, Wayne M. Warren, Ladislao C. Castro, Frank P. Phillips, Norman L. Dye, Thomas M. Cannon Jr., and James W. Lewis.

Gail W. Larsen was flying A/C #535. With him were Lts. Ralph Golubock, Harry H. Putnam Jr., and Joseph A. Ebler. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Walter E. Dunlop, Glenn G. John, Frank J. Juskowski, Dale M. Scarborough, Alfonse A. Truono, and James D. Tolle.

Frank L. Albert was flying A/C #153. With him were Lts. Meredyth F. McGeary, Edmund R. Donnelly, and Paul E. Castellotti. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Beuford K. Walker, Lloyd J. Brady, James K. Warvel, David F. Andello, Edward C. Monteleone, and Carl C. Bolick.

Ray Marner wrote for this day:

Planes went out again and didn't drop their bombs. We got three new crews today. "Jerry" (German Air Force) was over all last night. Some of the surrounding towns were hit.

The new arrivals that Ray Marner referred to were Lts. Guy W. Johnson, Robert R. Lucas, and Frederick H. Rawson.

With Lt. Johnson were Lts. Leroy M. Williamson, Robert W. Kessler, and Charles L. Wiest. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Robert J. Hickman, Martin P. Goldman, Vernon L. Wycoff, Paul Manak, Wilbur B. Randall, and Jack J. Williams.

The Lt. Lucas crew consisted of Lts. Charles D. Waska, Bernard J. Capella, and Donald E. Kirchner. The crew was rounded out with Sgts. John C. Neely, Ernest C. Luther, Arthur W. Dubail, John F. Bass Jr., Clifford D. Powell, and

Lloyd W. Hammer.

Rawson's crew consisted of Lts. James R. Lewis, William P. Johnston, and William D. Fitzsimons. Enlisted personnel were Sgts. Gerald E. Reader, John B. Hoffman, Julian E. Winfree Jr., Richard J. McCoy, Robert E. Shultz, and Russell A. Wapensky.

On February 4th Norm wrote to his wife:

I am feeling very, very happy! By now you know why. Were you very surprised when you received the last telegram? I don't know about you, but I can hardly believe that it is true.

Who was with me? Well there was Bob Grow and Capt. Laudig. The rest of the boys still have to stay for a while.

Please have Father remember the "Poor Souls" at a Mass in each of the next six months.

In this same letter I tried to tell my wife that I had a new assignment and was on detached duty at another base:

I don't know about the mail situation. The boys will have to bring it over to me. Maybe I can meet them in town. I think that I am going to like it over here. We are only about a ten minutes bus (city bus) ride from the middle of town. The officers apparently are going to give us every bit of cooperation that they can. It is too good to last. Bob Grow and Capt. Laudig are with me.

Mark Morris noted on February 5th:

We went to Tours, France, airdrome. We had an escort halfway. We were gone eight hours. We ran out of oxygen after the target so we dropped to 17,000 and did without. I liked it since it was warmer there. We had no known damage."

Mark Morris was with Lt. Purdy that day on A/C #201, *Baldy and His Brood*. There were three other 506th ships with them. This was Sortie #169 and it took seven hours. The Group dispatched fifteen aircraft on this mission. A 506th aircraft was flying deputy lead. Aboard were Lt. Middleton, Captain McCash, and Lt. Dowsett. They took over the lead about half way to the target. They dropped forty-eight

500-pound general purpose bombs with poor results. There was little flak and only one pass by enemy fighters.

William Novak was credited with a raid on this day. He may have been with Bunce or with Purdy.

Tours of duty were completed by Capt. J. A. Bunce, 1st Lt. J. J. Huber, S/Sgt. J. C. Barnett. (Note: These men were all on the same crew)

Mark Morris remembers:

That morning I was given a K-2 camera to snap pictures of the coast (evidently in preparation for the invasion). It was handed to me just as we were boarding. The only instructions given me were, "Take pictures of the coast". In answer to my question on how to operate the camera I was told, "Just point it and press this trigger". I did as directed. I have no idea how many shots I took. However, on the return over the coast, a B-24 aircraft on our left wing position, but out of formation, had a bad fire between the #1 and #2 engines. I snapped pictures like crazy as it continued to burn. The wing buckled and broke up. I continued to take pictures in hope that I would have proof of survivors and the aircraft identification. As it fell and disintegrated I saw no chutes.

I asked several times in Intelligence about the outcome of my efforts. I never did find out if I got any pictures at all. I think someone finally said that the K-2 was probably out of film. They didn't even say if I got coast pictures.

Ray Warner reported for February 5th:

Our planes went over France today. The 68th lost a ship. There are lots of the boys finishing their missions. Kolliner made Major. (The loss of a 68th ship was confirmed by Will Lundy writings.)

On February 5th, Dan Underwood was promoted to Sgt. and assigned to combat status. Dan had joined the 506th on January 27th, 1944. Many years later, Dan was to tell Norm's wife:

Soon after the orders came out placing me on combat status, I saw Capt. McAtee and thanked him. He indicated

that I might change my mind the next day. He had scheduled me to go on a mission.

I was dumfounded! I quickly told him that I knew about 50-cal. guns and how to fire them, but I knew nothing about B-24's. I had never been aboard one. He said, "Come on with me. Kief just came in to get his mail. I'll have him take you down to the line and show you the ropes." That was my preparation for combat. I went up the next morning.

James Clements led the Squadron on a raid on military installations at Siracourt, France, on February 6th. He flew the lead of the second section. He was flying A/C #642, N. Once again Waino Hannuksela was with him. Also, Colman Bogart was in the nose turret. There were seven other 506th ships with him. One crew was flying a ship from the 68th Squadron. In total, there were 24 ships from the 44th Group. One of our aircraft jettisoned his bombs in the channel. Bombs were not dropped due to clouds obscuring the target. There was little flak and no enemy aircraft were seen.

Mark Morris flew this mission with Lt. Purdy on A/C #201, *Baldy And His Brood*. This was Sortie #170 and it took five hours. It is likely that William Novak was on this mission with them.

Information furnished by Jack Warvel shows that Albert and crew flew this mission in A/C #153, Z, *Greenwich*.

Ralph Golubock's information shows that he went on this mission, but it is not known who he went with.

Patrick Gallagher's flight record shows that he was on an operational flight on this date, but the flying time is only forty-five minutes. Therefore it is assumed that they aborted.

As the days passed Norm Kiefer spent a good deal of time thinking about what was ahead. What would happen if he did return to the States?

Back there, he would be just another returnee. He would be expected to become a part of the military establishment with its pomp and ceremony; its spit and polish. He would have no protection from field grade officers that he had won the respect of while in combat. Did he really want to go back? This was a decision that would have to be made, but not quite

yet. McAtee had assured him that he would have an assignment with the Squadron when the temporary duty was completed.

McAtee's assurances told Norm that he was not going to immediately return to the States. Because of censorship of mail, he could not write to explain this to his wife.. However, in his February 7th letter he tried to prepare her:

Just because you have had some good news, don't start looking for me to come right home. You know that I have had a lot of experience. There are a lot of boys that some day will profit from my experiences; providing I stay here a while and tell them about it. It might mean the difference between ten telegrams like you received and ten of another nature.

Mark Morris stated on February 8th:

I was up at 3:30 A.M.. We hit the rocket coast again near Watton, France. We were gone for four hours. This was the last mission for Albert Kerns and Mike Davis. There was plenty of flak and it was accurate. We took three hits. I only saw one Fw-190 in 6/10 cloud cover. I wore my flak suit about 10 minutes (I told Kearns I would if he would). They are too heavy to move around in.

Mark Morris was on this mission with Lt. Purdy flying A/C #201, *Baldy and His Brood*. There were seven other 506 ships with them. The 44th put up twenty-eight aircraft on this mission. This was Sortie #171 and it lasted five hours. One of our ships returned early. The remaining seven dropped twenty-eight 2,000-pound general purpose bombs using GH with fair results.

It is very likely that William Novak was once again with Mark Morris on Purdy' ship.

George Ramsey's combat record shows that he went on this mission on A/C #535 (*Peepsight*). They encountered flak. It appears that Patrick Gallagher was once again with his crew.

The combat record of James Redus indicates that the Henry Borkowski crew went on this mission flying in A/C #153, L.

Information furnished by Jack Warvel showed that Albert and crew, including Donnelly, made this raid in A/C #42-63 965, S.

Ray Warner wrote that February 8th:

Our planes hit France today. The 66th lost a plane. (In Will Lundy's publications no mention is made of any loss on this day.) One of our green crews was on a practice flight and ended up over France. They got back okay after Major Kolliner chased after them. They got into some flak.

Mark Morris remembers that after Albert Kerns last mission Harry Grannon replaced him, moving from hatch to right waist. I think that Bob Struble flew as hatch gunner later on. I remember one mission when his intercom cord was sliced in two by flak.

The author remembers when Lt. Horne transferred into the 506th. He was not only wearing the pilot wings of the United States, but also the wings of the Royal Canadian Air Force. He also recalls when another Canadian Air Force Flight Officer was given a check flight.

For some reason I had returned to the base that morning. Captain Laudig saw me and said "Come on, lets go fly". I had nothing else to do so I agreed. I got some flying gear and went down to operations. Laudig was there with the Flight Officer. After introductions, Laudig told me that we were going to check the Flight Officer out. There was a skeleton crew consisting of three officers and myself (this was not the first nor the last time that I flew as both radio operator and engineer).

When we arrived at the aircraft everything went as normal in preflight. Then we got into the aircraft and the Flight Officer took the pilot position with Laudig in the copilot. The Flight Officer had a little difficulty taxiing, but we made it out to the takeoff position.

When we received control tower clearance for takeoff the Flight Officer still had not put down the flaps. When he pushed forward on the throttles I reached for the flaps. Laudig slapped my hands away and we started to eat up the runway. We just cleared the farmer's fence. Then the Flight Officer started to climb sharply. Laudig shouted, "God Damn you! When are you going to put down the flaps?". The Flight Officer replied, "God damn you, when are you going to tell me something about a multi-engine aircraft. I'm a fighter pilot."

I recall another incident that I believe happened while flying with Laudig:

One of our crews was stranded at a field down around London. We went to ferry them back to Shipdham. After we were loaded to leave, Laudig called the control tower for permission to taxi. His instructions were to go to the end of the runway and wait for a green light.

When we taxied to the end of the runway we saw that it went up hill and seemed to disappear into nothingness. Off to the side at the end of the runway was a small trailer that was displaying a red light. Laudig pulled on to the runway proper and sat with idling engines.

After what seemed to be a long period with nothing happening, we suddenly saw fighters rising from a cross runway. That runway was located beyond the crest of the hill so we couldn't see it. The fighters quickly drew into formation and disappeared.

Then there was a pause followed by a green light from the van. Laudig pushed forward on the throttles and we were off. We had just nicely cleared the ground when a fighter was sighted taking off from the cross runway and we were on a collision course. Laudig dropped to the point that we were skimming the ground and the fighter pulled up to just clear our tail.

Once we had recovered and had our wheels up, Laudig had some very unkind words to say to the woman in the control tower. We later learned that this was a Polish Squadron that was going on a sweep in France. The one pilot had trouble starting his engine. He was anxious not to be left behind. When the engine caught, he took off without notifying the control tower. Thus the near scrape.

On February the 8th Lt. John W. Grow Jr. joined the 506Th. With him were Lts. Robert F. Parrish, Robert F. Westcott, and William G. Richardson. Their enlisted personnel were Sgts. William J. Greenlee, Stephen E. Jones, Jack L. Killian, George N. Smith, Lloyd A. Smith, and Edward A. Wernicki.

Ray Marner wrote on this day:

The Stars and Stripes indicated we can wear the citation ribbon permanently as long as we were in the Group when we had the action. The Kiel citation is approved. We're

waiting for the Ploesti one now.

I saw a B-17 burning south of here after it crashed. I guess all were killed.

We got another new crew.

About 65 men in our Squadron are being transferred to form a new group. Danny, Don Swem, Ryke and a lot of others are leaving. I could go if I wanted to.

On February 11th Ray Marner reported, "Our planes hit France. A man in the 68th was killed by flak." (This loss was confirmed by Will Lundy's works.)

That morning ten of our aircraft joined 19 other ships from the 44th to attack military installations at Siracourt, France. They dropped one hundred twenty 500-pound general purpose bombs with poor results. There were no enemy aircraft attacks. Sporadic moderate accurate flak was encountered.

The Mark Morris combat record shows that he was out on this day with Lt. Purdy flying in aircraft #201, *Baldy and His Brood*. However, the record and his diary record the target as Pas de Calais. This was Sortie #173 and it took five hours.

George Ramsey's combat record shows that he went on this raid on A/C #172, T, with Houghtby. The notation shows that the Group ran into some enemy ground fire. Edmund Donnelly also was with them.

Also, the mission was flown by the Henry Borkowski crew, in A/C #153, L, according to the combat record of James Redus.

Information furnished by Jack Warvel revealed that Albert and crew were in the air this day flying in A/C #42-73 506, X.

Both Waino Hannuksela and William Novak records show that they were on this raid. There was no mention of who they went with.

On February 12th the Group returned to Siracourt, France with 23 aircraft. Eleven of those ships belonged to the 506th. We actually had only nine aircraft drop on the target. They bombed with one hundred eight general purpose bombs using GH through 10/10 clouds. Bombing results were unseen. There

was some flak, but no enemy fighters.

T/Sgt. Thomas E. Davis (Bunce crew) and S/Sgt. George E. Hartney completed their tours. (Note: George was one of the original 506th combat men. He was the only one of Anderson's original crew that completed a tour.)

A/C #107 returned early due to a collision with a plane on the runway. It had a damaged right wing flap. A/C #642, N returned early due to vibration in #3 engine. This A/C was carrying long delay fused bombs which were jettisoned.

Mark Morris went on this raid with Lt. Purdy in A/C #201, Baldy and His Brood. However, once again his combat record shows that the target was Pas de Calais. His diary indicated that they had P-51 and P-47 escort.

The combat record of James Redus shows that Henry Borkowski was flying A/C #153 on this day.

George Ramsey's combat record shows that he went on this mission on A/C #506, X. They received opposition from slight flak. This was Sortie #174 and the flight took six hours. Patrick Gallagher flew with his crew on this day.

Information furnished by Jack Warvel reveals that Albert and crew were with the Group this day flying in A/C #41-29 172, T.

William Novak, Ralph Golubock and Waino Hannuksela went on this mission. However, they do not know who they went with.

Mark Morris was back in combat on February 13th. His note read:

I was up at 7:30. However, I was so tired I went back to bed. They called me at 10:30 and sent us to Pas de Calais with no briefing. We didn't need a briefing, we knew the way.

This time Mark flew with Capt. Cardenas in aircraft #201, Baldy and His Brood. Their's was one of seven 506th ships that joined the Group formation. The actual target was Petit Bois Tillencourt, France. Our ships dropped eighty-four 500-pound bombs with good results. No enemy aircraft were seen. Lt. Larsen's aircraft was hit by flak.

Myron Smith tells of events aboard that ship:

The raid was on the buzz bomb installations in the Pas de Calais area. We were hit with flak which resulted in the right waist gunner, Glenn G. John, being killed. The left waist gunner and tail gunner were wounded. Our number one and four engines were out with the propeller on number four windmilling. The hydraulic system was shot out.

We managed to make it back to the English coast and landed the plane, Peepsight, on a grass spitfire base at Hawkase. This was the last combat mission for Peepsight. It was later repaired and used as a cargo plane. Our crew was picked up at Manston about four or five days later and flown back to Shipdham. I believe it was Jim Clements who flew us back. After this raid I was grounded and subsequently worked in the Squadron Office as C.Q. and mail clerk.

Quite a number of our ships sustained battle damage on this raid. The next day aircraft #509 and #107 were still out with battle damage. Slight damage had been repaired overnight on #201, Baldy and His Brood; #522, Southern Comfort; #153, Greenwich; #985; and #305, I'll Be Back.

George Ramsey's combat record reveals that he was on A/C #305, I'll Be Back, on this day. They ran into flak over the target. This was Sortie # 175 and it took four hours and twenty minutes. Patrick Gallagher was their copilot.

Information furnished by Jack Warvel shows that A/C 153, Z, Greenwich was flown that day by Albert and crew.

The records of David McCash show that he was out this day. They do not indicate who he was flying with. Also, they show the target to be Raye Sur Authie.

Waino Hannuksela and Ralph Golubock were on this mission, but it is not known who they flew with.

This was the last raid for T/Sgt. W. E. Morrison and S/Sgt. F. L. Rodriguez (Stevens crew). They had completed all of their missions. Bob Struble recalls:

I flew with Rodriguez the day he completed his 25th mission. I have no recall as to who the pilot was. As our ship pulled into the dispersal area, Rodriguez deplaned and kissed the ground. He was so elated that he jumped over the farmers fence, fell, and broke his leg. It was a "green-stick" fracture. Ironic!

Mark Morris remembers "Blackie" Morrison was an enlisted bombardier. He was offered a commission if he would fly another tour. He said, "Shove it!"

The Flint Journal reported the attack as follows:

CALAIS GETS
43 ATTACK
IN 57 DAYS

6 Types of Bombers Hit
Area in Day-Long
Series of Blows

The much battered French department of Pas de Calais was the objective of every warplane reported flying from Britain yesterday. Eighty five miles long, 50 miles wide at its broadest point, the section has been pounded on 43 of the last 57 days to become one of the most frequently bombed areas in the world.

American Liberators, in strong force, made their fourth attack in five days on the unidentified targets.

The hard working Marauders, flying their 11th mission in 15 days, went across the Channel 200 strong, then fanned out in a dozen or so bombing forces to rip the fortifications in France that have been attacked every day in the last eight days.

P-47 Thunderbolt fighter/bombers also attacked two Nazi airfields in northwest France. In addition RAF Mitchell mediums and Boston Typhoon fighter/bombers showered bombs on the area.

From all these operations, two medium bombers and four fighters were reported missing.

All of the returning Allied fliers again reported that Nazi fighter opposition was practically nil, though flak was intense throughout the area.

"The flak was so heavy it looked as though someone had built a flak Macadam dream highway right up there into the sky," said 1/Lt. Eldon Jamison, of Kansas City, Kan., pilot of Mississippi Mudcat, a B-26.

"We stirred up a hornets' nest, then did all the

stinging," said S/Sgt. William Mitchell, of Salon, Conn., engineer-gunner on the Marauder, Bonnie Lee. It was his 36th mission.

Meanwhile, Eighth Air Force headquarters announced that photographs taken by reconnaissance planes showed great damage to the nine Nazi airfields in northwestern France which were attacked by Forts and Libs Feb. 5 and 6.

Hangars, workshops, barracks and other buildings were destroyed, and numerous bomb craters were observed on the fields themselves. At one fighter training field, Chateauroux, there were ten direct hits on taxi strips and servicing areas and 130 bursts on the landing areas. Other fields hit included Chateaudun, Caen, Parçay Mesley, Villacoublay, Avord, Orlean-Bricy and St. Andre de Eaux. The ninth field was not named.

RAF and RCAF Spitfires escorted the B-24's yesterday. Renewal of the heavy bomber offensive against the secret emplacements across the Channel from Britain marked the 16th day of operations for the U.S. Strategic Air Force in the last 19 days.

Mark Morris relates that just before he completed his combat tour Charley Loftus went to another crew to fly nose gunner on one of the Model H aircraft:

I vividly remember his return from his first mission in that capacity. I went to meet him as they landed that day. When I saw the ship it had most of the plexiglass shot out of Charley's nose turret. Loftus had always gotten air sick when he flew with us in the hatch gun position. This time, he didn't get sick and what's more he was glad to be alive.

George Ramsey recalls:

Loftus flew nose gunner with Houghtby's crew several times. I believe he completed his missions with us. We took one Fw-190 frontal attack that almost took us out.

James Redus remembers an incident that "scared the hell out of me", but he does not know when it happened:

I was looking down into the bomb bay and discovered that we had about six or eight inches of gasoline in it. The cover on the left #2 gas tank was not tight. Gas was

siphoning out, coming across the wing and down the fuselage into the bomb bay. It goes without saying, the bomb bay was emptied and we aborted to get the hell home.

The February 14, 1944, issue of the *Tin Lizzy Times* carried the following article:

**HEAVIES HIT PAS de CALAIS AGAIN;
JANUARY'S 22,000 TONS A RECORD**

**Raids' Peak Month
Includes Italy; 930
Planes Bagged**

The U.S. Strategic Air Forces in Europe, comprising the British based Eighth and the Italian based 15th, reached a new peak in their mounting air attack on Nazi targets in January by dropping more than 22,000 tons of bombs and destroying 930 German planes in the air against a loss of 325.

An official review of operations for the first month of 1944 showed yesterday that Lt. Gen. Carl A. Spaatz, who assumed command of the USSTAFE early in January, sent his heavy bombers and long-range fighters out in unprecedented force. In 13 operational days the Eighth dropped 11,789 tons, while the 15th, engaged part of the month in supporting the Nettuno landings near Rome, dropped 10,704 tons in 25 days, the summary disclosed.

Notable among the records, established was that achieved by Mustang, Thunderbolt and Lightning pilots of Eighth Fighter Command, who shot down 220 enemy aircraft, 100 of them in three days, bettering the previous month's high of 111 knocked down last November.

In January, occurred what probably was the greatest air battle in history, waged in daylight over the heart of Germany Jan. 11 when Liberator and Fortress gunners, together with P51, P47 and P38 fighters, shot down 152 German planes against the loss of 60 bombers and 27 fighters.

Targets bombed in the fierce, day-long assault were important aircraft/manufacturing plants at Oschersleben, Helberstadt and Bielefeld and the manufacturing town of Meppen on the Dortmund-Ems canal.

While USAAF headquarters did not acknowledge reports that Berlin was bombed for the first time by American bombers that day, travelers arriving in Stockholm from the German capital said it was bombed by isolated planes.

Another red-letter day in the month's operations was Jan. 5, when U.S. heavies ranged from the Baltic to the Bay of Biscay. Fortresses and Liberators raided the Nazi major naval base at Kiel for the second day running, B17's hit the industrial and rail center at Neuss near Dusseldorf, while other Forts and Libs hammered enemy airfields at Bordeaux and Tours in France. Ninety-five German aircraft were destroyed for the loss of 25 bombers and 12 fighters.

Following four days of attacks on installations in the Pas de Calais "invasion" or "rocket coast" area, between Jan. 14 and 28, the greatest daylight aerial blow ever delivered was mounted on Jan. 29, the target being Frankfurt. Considered the foremost distribution center in southwest Germany, Frankfurt was hit that day with 1,900 tons of bombs, dropped by over 800 heavy bombers, escorted by 700 fighters.

The month's operations were concluded Jan 31, when Liberators, which once flew as part of Fortress striking forces, but now operating on independent missions, gave Pas de Calais its fifth bombing by heavies in two weeks.

The summary revealed that fighter pilots flew approximately 6,400 sorties in January.

Ralph Golubock recalls on February 15th he flew as copilot when Lt. Purdy brought Lt. Larsen's crew back to Shipdham.

On February 15 Norm Kiefer returned to his home base from the temporary assignment at Attlebridge. General Peck forwarded to the 44th, for inclusion in Norm's records, a letter of commendation for the training of radio operators under General Peck's Command. Then I started to work on briefings for combat missions and helping with training of radio operators at Shipdham.

John Huber recalls the close look that a crew got before it was designated as a lead crew:

Colonel Johnson sometimes flew in the waist with a diagram of the Group pasted on the armor plate. He closely

monitored the formation to assure that it was tight. The ability of a pilot to fly a tight "wing-in-waist window" formation was a first requirement to become a lead plane. The balance of the crew, of course, must qualify in order to get the slot.

Huber also recalls an incident that scored points for their radio operator:

One time when General Johnson was with us, Marion Paciorek discovered that the Germans had broken our code. He reported it to the General. The enemy tried to direct us to strike the alternate target, but General Johnson disregarded the message.

On February 17th Ray Marner wrote:

Lt. Vaden (Rebich/Hobson crew) got a card from Nick (Popovich). Tuttle, Cutshall, Hyde, Hobson are all in prison camp and okay. The rest are dead.

Edmund Donnelly recalls:

We delivered two planes to a repair depot. Everybody came back stuffed into one plane.

This probably occurred on February 19th when Lts. Sayler, Albert and Houghtby and their crews were called to ferry ships.

The diary entry by Ray Marner on this day is a good example of the unfounded rumors that frequently spread at Shipdham:

I found out that Capt. Swanson, Myers, Bell, Goodson, Hearne, Ferkauff, Hanson, and some others are out of prison camp. They must have escaped.

It was no rumor that Ray Marner mentioned on the next day, February 20th:

Our planes went into Germany today. We lost Lt. Rawson's crew. This was their first mission. The 67th lost a ship also. (Note: Will Lundy reports that this was a 66th aircraft.)

We were alerted this afternoon, but it was scrubbed.

Ten aircraft from the 506th joined 27 other 44th aircraft on

this mission. Targets of opportunity at Helmstedt and Oschersleben were attacked. One hundred twenty 500-pound general purpose bombs were dropped with fair results. Enemy aircraft did not attack the formation. Flak was inaccurate except at the target where it was moderate and accurate.

In Will Lundy's works, Gerald Reader told of the loss of the Lt. Rawson crew:

We were on our first mission and were put in formation as "Tail end Charlies". We got our bombs away and were leaving the target area when flak got our right engine. The rest of the formation was leaving when the Me-109's showed up. I shot flares to alert our fighter cover, but they were all busy. One Me-109 hit us in the tail and set that section on fire. Our tail gunner, Rus Wapensky was burned. His chute, which was just outside of his turret, was damaged and partially burned.

Copilot, Lt. Lewis got up from his seat and motioned for us to get out. Engineer, Dick McCoy then bailed out from the front. I don't know what happened to him. Our waist gunners, Winfree and Shultz bailed out from the rear, followed by Sgt. Hoffman, ball turret gunner. Wapensky then came forward looking for a spare chute to replace his damaged one. Lt. Louis got Wapensky on his back and jumped out, both hanging on to each other. But when the chute opened, (Wapensky was torn loose and fell to his death. I, then went out from the front, too. Both our navigator and bombardier were in the nose so I don't know what happened to them or what took place there.

The bombardier, Lt. William Richardson relates:

I was not their regular bombardier. All went well until we reached our destination. There we encountered heavy antiaircraft fire and at least one of our engines was knocked out. After passing over the target the formation started their ascent to the altitude briefed for our return. In our crippled condition, we were unable to keep up.

Shortly after we were alone several enemy fighters moved in and shot the hell out of us. One Fw-190 flew up, right in front of my turret, so close I could look right into the pilot's face. Had my guns been operating, I could have given him a bad time.

My intercom was out so I didn't hear any bail out order, but I was sure it was getting near that time. I couldn't open the door to the turret, but the navigator, Lt. Johnson opened it for me. Had he not done that, I would have been a casualty. At this point our ship was in a pretty violent attitude and heading down. Lt. Johnson went out through the nose wheel door and I followed.

With Lt. Frederick H. Rawson (POW) were Lts. James R. Lewis (POW), William P. Johnson (KIA), and William G. Richardson (POW). The enlisted men on the crew were Sgts. Richard J. McCoy (KIA), Gerald E. Reader (POW), Julian E. Winfree Jr. (KIA), John B. Hoffman (POW), Robert E. Shultz (KIA), and Russell A. Wapensky (KIA).

George Ramsey's combat record shows that he was on this mission. He flew on A/C #172, T. They encountered enemy flak and fighters. This was Sortie #179 and it covered eight hours. Patrick Gallagher was their copilot.

Information furnished to Jack Warvel by David Klaus indicates that there were two raids on this day. Albert and crew flew one mission on A/C #153, Z, Greenwich and the other on an A/C for which no record is found. Edmund Donnelly cannot confirm that Albert flew two missions on this day. (Note: Will Lundy's records show that the Group hit two targets of opportunity on a mission that was briefed for Halberstadt. However, the Ray Marner entry for this day clearly states that the second mission was scrubbed.)

Waino Hannuksela and William Novak were on this mission. It is not known who they went with.

Mark Morris was on this raid flying with Lt. Purdy. In his diary Mark wrote:

This was my 25th mission. We went to Oschersleben, Germany. It was a long, long ride of eight hours.

Mark wrote in a recent letter:

I remember during the briefing, when they taped the route on the map. I thought they were using an awful lot of tape. The good news was that we were to have P-38 escorts. That made me feel better.

As we flew deep into Germany there was cloud cover beneath us most of the way. The flak was accurate particularly in

the target area.

After the target the P-38 escort joined us. It was then that I began to hear comments on the radio from our ship, "Bring em in close." The response from the fighter leader was, "No, we can do a better job up here." Once again from our Group, "I don't give a damn, I want you in close!" I then saw P-38's moving into our formation.

Over the radio I then heard the fighter leader ask, "Close enough?" The sharp response was, "No, I said close!" Then a P-38 almost stuffed his wing into my waist window. Over the radio came, "Close enough?" The answer was, "Yea, perfect!" What was this all about? It was the Group Leader's last mission.

We flew along that way for about five minutes. Then I saw a hole in the clouds about ten miles south and well below us. Suddenly it looked like a swarm of bees coming up through that hole. It was German fighters.

Of course, the P-38's had gone for altitude before the Germans got to us. They were set for the Germans when they came in. About 15 challenged us. We were so well protected that I never had reason to fire a shot. As the dog fight went on they worked well away from us. Once again I had reason to believe that someone up there liked me.

David McCash also flew this mission:

I do not remember who I flew with, but my record indicates that we were leading the Group. The weather was fine, but there were broken clouds below us that got thicker in the target area. We could not see the target so we headed for the secondary, which was clear. Our radio operator sent back the code indicating we had hit the secondary. The other group, I believe the 93rd, sent back the code that they had hit the primary as briefed.

Upon landing a Jeep met the plane and took me to the tower. Colonel Dent was waiting and a little hot under the collar. He wanted to know why we didn't hit the primary, but the other group had. I sputtered a little before saying, "No Way! Not with that cloud cover". Later we found that the other group's radio operator sent the wrong code.

James Clements led the Squadron to a target of opportunity at the Diepholz, Germany, airdrome on February 21st. He was flying in A/C #962, W, Princ Ass. Joseph Kodaj was the copilot. Bombs were observed to drop thru the middle of town and straddling the marshalling yards. In the Dummer Lake area they saw seven Fw-190's which circled to the rear/left out of range. Clements remembers:

We were the third or low squadron in the Group. The target was a railroad junction that was attack visually through intense generally inaccurate flak with good results. We encountered 10-to-15 enemy aircraft making intermittent eager attacks.

The Group sent 37 aircraft on this raid with eleven of them being from the 506th. Our Squadron ships dropped 572 M47AS's with poor results.

George Ramsey's combat record indicates that he was aboard A/C #172, T, on this day. The notation mentions enemy flak. This was Sortie #180 and it took six hours. Patrick Gallagher was their copilot.

Information furnished by Jack Warvel indicates that Frank Albert went on this mission flying in A/C #153, Z, Greenwich.

Ollie Bowling made this mission with Paul Blow as the pilot. They were flying in A/C #305, P, *I'll Be Back*.

The records of Waino Hannuksela and Ralph Golubock show that they went on this mission, but there is no mention of who they were with.

Mark Morris noted in his diary, "My tour is done and I logged 205 hours of combat."

Raymond McCormick remembers it was about this time that the Mendenhall crew arrived. With Lt. Max Mendenhall were Lts. Phillip Quirk, Raymond McCormick, and Herman Flugman. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Marshall Mann, Paul McGee, Nick Adice, Abe Hertzberg, Les Toothacker, and Nate Bernstein.

Ray Marner reported on February 22

Our planes went out today. The 67th lost a couple of crews. (These losses were confirmed by Will Lundy.)

The Group dispatched 35 aircraft on this mission to destroy

the aircraft factories at Gotha, Germany. Thirteen of the ships belonged to the 506th. The mission was recalled in the area of Munster. Our bombs were brought back with us. Flak was generally inaccurate and not on our formation, except at Declen where the enemy gunfire was accurate.

George Ramsey's combat record shows that he made this mission on A/C #172, T. Flak and enemy aircraft were encountered. This was Sortie #181 which covered six hours. Patrick Gallagher was the copilot.

Records maintained by Ralph Golubock, Waino Hannuksela, and Robert Struble show that they went on this mission.

Once again, Ollie Bowling was in the air with Paul Blow. Also, they made the mission in A/C #305, P, *I'll Be Back*.

The outstanding work of our ground crews was highlighted when aircraft #107 was late in taking off due to a broken starter. It was repaired in one-third the normal time. The aircraft was able to intercept the formation and fly the mission. Another example happened when the mission returned. Aircraft #506, X, ran off the end of the runway on landing, but was towed without damage.

William Novak remembers the February 24th raid on the aircraft factories at Gotha, Germany:

The weather was perfect and I was confident and beginning to feel like Jimmy Doolittle wanted us to. That means we could go anywhere and beat the hell out of anyone who got in our way.

The young bombardier, whose name I don't remember, was having trouble with the bomb release mechanism. When the other planes started to drop their bombs, I jumped forward to push the salvo lever to get our bombs on the target. Maybe I was getting cocky because I had only one more to go.

The Group dispatched 37 aircraft on February 24th, eleven of them from the 506th. Lt. Clements was the pilot of the ship flying lead of the second section. The Squadron dropped four hundred forty two M47AL's on the target with excellent results. There were intense and vicious attacks by enemy aircraft on the formation ahead and behind, but only a single pass was made on our formation. Flak was generally inaccurate on the entire mission.

James Clements was flying A/C #642, N. Once again Joseph Kodaj was the copilot. Also aboard were Lt. Boydin, navigator, and Lt. Bumbicka, bombardier. W. J. Mulholland flew in the nose turret. On the way back, near the Dutch border, they saw two Fw-190's go through our formation after attacking the B-17's ahead of us.

Aircraft #429, L, returned early because the waist gunner shot a hole in the horizontal stabilizer. A/C #423 was late in takeoff due to primary and booster coil failure on #3 engine. Another ship returned early because the nose and tail turret guns froze. A/C #305, P, returned early after not being able to keep up with the formation.

S/Sgt. A. A. Fritz (Stevens crew) completed his tour of duty.

George Ramsey's combat record shows that he engaged in combat on this day on A/C #172, T. Once again they ran into enemy fighters and flak. This was Sortie #183 and they were in the air a total of eight hours. Once again, Patrick Gallagher was their copilot.

Information furnished by Jack Warvel indicates that Albert and crew flew this raid with the 68th Squadron. They were in A/C #41-29 156, R, V Packet. (This ship was borrowed from the 68th Squadron.)

Ralph Golubock's records show that he made this mission.

Waino Hannuksela was also on this raid. He does not know who he was with.

Ollie Bowling's Flight Record shows that he was out on an operation on this date with William Michaels. However, they must have aborted since they only logged four hours and were not given operations time.

On this 24th day of February Ray Marner wrote:

The planes went into Germany today. The 67th and 68th lost planes. They went to Gotha. (Note: Will Lundy writings indicate that the 66th and 68th each lost a ship.)

Robert Struble recalls they went to Furth, Germany on February 25th:

I was with Middleton on A/C #962. I was flying left waist

gunner and William "Willie" McFarland was the tail gunner. I don't recall the others.

On the way to the target we were hit by one piece of flak while in the Saar area. Gas was flooding back between the #2 engine and the fuselage. It was determined the main tank was hit.

We all prayed for no sparks. The crew debated briefly whether or not to go to Switzerland. It was decided to chance it and return to the base alone. On the return we picked up a lone Spitfire escort which stayed with us until we reached the English coast.

After landing it was discovered our auxiliary line to the main tank had been hit. Our decision to abandon the mission was the correct one. If we had tried to go to the target, we would not have had fuel enough to complete the mission.

Ten of our aircraft took off with 23 other of the Group's aircraft. Lt. Saylor, pilot, Captain McCash, navigator, and Lt. Dowsett, bombardier, were leading the Group, Combat Wing, and Division. Lt. Colonel Dexter L. Hodge, Group Operations Officer, was flying as Command Pilot. Ninety-six 500-pound general purpose bombs were dropped on the aircraft factory with excellent results. Accurate flak was encountered at the target, Karlsruhe and Juvincourt. The lead crew was given high praise for their excellent performance.

Aircraft #423, piloted by Captain Cardenas, was struck with flak at Karlsruhe. The #4 engine was knocked out and the #3 engine was damaged. He was again hit at Juvincourt. The pilot did an excellent job of keeping his ship in formation until leaving the enemy coast, landing at Manston.

Being short of gas Lt. Horne landed at Ford. He refueled and arrived at the base later in the evening.

Aircraft #400, Y, returned early and then took off again. It was unable to find the formation. They encountered flak at the French coast and returned once more to base.

Also, aircraft #962, *Princ Ass*, sprung a gas leak while over France and returned early.

Lt. W. H. Novak (ordinarily flew with Stevens) completed a combat tour.

Dave McCash remembers:

This was the only time that I led the Division. It was a beautiful flight into the target. The briefed track was almost free of flak and little fighter opposition. The target was clear and we clobbered it.

We then took a big swing south and wound up 12-to-15 miles south of the briefed track for the return home. I didn't catch it until we hit the Rhine and flew directly over Karlsruhe with its briefed sixty guns. As we zigged and zagged I said some silent prayers that no one was lost as a result of my error. After that the rest of the return flight was uneventful.

I received a Distinguished Flying Cross for displaying exceptional skill in navigating the formation to the assigned objective, maintaining the exact briefed course. I guess that I am lucky they didn't count the return course.

James Redus recalls:

On another occasion, the 44th was leading the 2nd Division and our crew was in the deputy lead ship. The lead ship cracked up on takeoff so we became leader of the 2nd Division.

Our navigator was sick, so we had a replacement navigator. We followed the PFF ship to the target, had a good bomb run and I sent a strike message to 7BV per the Command Pilot. As you remember, after leaving the target area we were supposed to send an ETA. The navigator who was with us had not checked his navigational material before takeoff and he hardly had anything to work with. He gave me an estimated time of arrival to send and would you believe it, he was only one minute off.

George Ramsey's combat record reveals that he was on this mission on A/C #172, T. Along the way they were subjected to enemy flak and aircraft. This was Sortie #184 and it lasted nine hours. Patrick Gallagher was with them. In five of the last six days this crew had been in combat. Over the period they were credited with 35 hours and 50 minutes of operations time.

Ollie Bowling went with Knight on this mission. They were in A/C #506, X.

Information furnished by Waino Hannuksela and Robert Struble indicates that they were on this raid.

Ray Marner wrote for this day:

Our planes went into S.W. Germany. Some of the planes are not accounted for yet. A lot of the boys are finishing their missions. All of the 506th planes got back. (Note: Will Lundy reports that a number of our aircraft landed at other fields because of poor visibility and the ships were low on gas.)

A few days later Ray Marner noted, "Today marks one year's foreign service. A year ago today we boarded the *Chantilly*."

On February 28th 1st Lt. Michaels was transferred to the 91st Air Depot Group.

McAtee recalls:

After Kolliner ordered Michaels to fly combat, I scheduled Michaels to go out three times. Each time Michaels aborted. The last time that it happened he was met at his plane and told that he would be shipped out of the Group. I believed that was rather lenient treatment in view of what happened to Coldiron.

Ralph Golubock remembers:

There was an officer in the Squadron who was already a 1st Lt. and was reportedly a highly competent, high time pilot. He did not fly any missions while I was there, but he did abort a few.

He had a penchant for unusual uniforms in that he wore many ribbons on his blouse. However, none of us could ever identify any of them. We assumed that they were all foreign decorations. Once in an edition of *Life Magazine*, there was printed a full color page of every U.S. decoration in existence. One of the pilots cut this out and pinned it on the officer's blouse just as a joke. I am not certain that the 1st Lt. thought that it was funny.

Eventually, the 1st Lt. was transferred out. We all thought that he had been transferred to Africa to fly B-25's.

Lts. Irwin, Marx, Hawkins, and crews assigned and joined the

Squadron. (Note: Records maintained by Uriah Hartman show that the arrival of the Hartman crew was actually February 14, 1944.)

With Lt. Winston C. Irwin were Lts. Uriah G. Hartman, Wallace D. Northfelt, and Robert W. Libell. Their enlisted personnel were George Boatman, Peter E. Merisotis, Grover L. Lawson, James Hunter, James L. Beuoy, and Paul M. Laux.

With Lt. Robert H. Marx were Lts. Vernie R. Brockman, Leon A. Mascolo, and Raymond L. Poljanec. Enlisted men consisted of Sgts. Robert C. Franklin, Ronald J. Taylor, Theodore F. Zimmerman, Deward F. Johnson, Esley E. Nelson, and Edward J. Applegate.

With Lt. Eustice L. Hawkins were Lts. Henderson K. Bennett, Joe (NMI) Bearden, and Albert E. McCloud. The enlisted men were Sgts. Peter E. Gardner, William H. Wright, Jeane M. Hicks, Henry A. Hopkins, Wallace R. Robinson, and Henry O. Siteman.

Promotions were given to the following officers during the month: Captain Robert E. Kolliner, Squadron C.O., promoted to Major; 1st Lt. McCash to Captain; 2nd Lt. Larsen to 1st Lt.

Promotions were given to the following enlisted men during the month: T/Sgt. Paul E. Kubitschek, Carl C. Bolick, Wallace V. McFarlin, Eugene W. W. Roop, Anson G. Daniels, Wallace E. Kirschner, Elmer R. O'Gara, Donald L. Young, Edward I. Kelly, Ladislao C. Castro, Wayne M. Warren, and Frank P. Phillips.

Lt. McCash was appointed Squadron Navigator, Lt. Dowsett Squadron Bombardier, and Lt. Blow Assistant Operations Officer.

The following personnel were transferred out of the Squadron during the month: 1st Lt. Novak and Lt. Huber transferred to the 12 RCD; Lt. Wayne and crew transferred to the 15th Air Force. (It is unknown who was with Lt. Wayne.); Captains Laudig, Stevens, and Bunce went on detached service to the 96th Combat Wing; Lt. Caldwell on detached service to RAF Station, Highgate.

The following personnel were transferred into the Squadron during the month: 1st Lt. Sidney W. Paul transferred from the 67th; 1st Lt. Trumbo; Captain Mervis returned from detached service; Private William L. DeSantis joined. Lt. William C. K. Brown was suspended from flying.

Leaves of absence were granted to Lts. Robert A. Johnson, George I. Berger, Estie W. Conningham, and Michaele D'Angelico, Willard L. Michaels, Robert J. Bauman, and Robert E. Gutknecht. Captain Meiner, Squadron Engineering Officer, attended a meeting of all Squadron engineering officers conducted by the Group Engineering Officer.

Baldy and His Brood was transferred out of the Squadron. This was the last of the aircraft which the Squadron brought overseas.

Lts. Duffy and Miller brought A/C #423 AND #429, Bar L, from Watton.

In letters to his wife during the month of February, Norm mentioned the following:

"Don't you worry about your letters being too old or too dull. I have had quite an exciting life in the last year and that homespun dullness sounds pretty good"... "When I referred to chips, I meant the kind potato that we call shoe string potatoes fried in lard. They have a number of little hole in the wall stores that specialize in these potatoes and occasionally fish patties."..."I think that they ought to make a new medal for the folks that stayed at home and waited. I don't know, that may have been rougher than combat."..."The only ones that we have left to sweat out now are Mark, Edwards and Loftus. The rest of the boys are through. Charley Loftus has the most to go. He is wearing my clothes. He claims that I finished in them and they will bring him luck. Kearns is supposed to return to the States. Davis is trying for a commission."..."I stopped in to see Capt. McAtee tonight. He is very pleased with the radio that we sold him." (Note: With Kearns leaving, Morris close to it and my future uncertain, it was necessary to sell the things that we held in common.)..."I went out and swiped part of a tree to burn. I had a chopping good time. I even got blisters to prove it. I got enough hot water to wash and shave in. Was it worth the blisters? No!"..."Kerns has left us. He has taken the first step on the way back to the States."..."I spent the biggest part of yesterday reading in front of the fireplace at the Red Cross Club. I was sweating out Morris. Yep! He made it. Now that leaves Edwards and Loftus."

It was some time in February that the William E. Smith crew arrived. With Lt. Smith were Lts. Roy Owens, Sid Lovett, and

Pete Masonis. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Carl Jacobson, Tommy Tompkins, Fred J. Marzolph, Ernie Babek, Eddie Tracik, and Marion W. Jones

Also, it was some time in late February or early March that McCaslin remembers that he was given his own combat crew.

Early in March Raymond H. Baker arrived from the States to join the 506th. He remembers:

We were put in temporary quarters. The building was an old, unused mess hall. They put double bunk beds in rows. This was just fine as long as the lights were on. None of us had flashlights and the nonsmokers had no matches to light the way after lights out.

Whenever anyone had to go to the bathroom, which was a latrine just outside our building, it was worse than a bad dream. We had to get out of our sack and as our feet hit the cold concrete floor the urge of nature was even worse. We had a rough time finding the door to go outside. I'm not certain that everyone found the actual latrine. Later trying to find our bunk in the dark was something else. In desperation we would wake someone up and ask their name. With that information, we went groping back to our own bed.

My first assignment was to help build the base theater. My job was pouring cement. Then I was transferred to the 506th Operations Office and finally to the Orderly Room.

The Base Theater, that Ray worked on, made at least one newspaper clipping:

Capt. Carlisle Crutcher, public relations officer for a Liberator group vouches for this yarn. The group recently opened a new servicemen's club, complete with one of the longest bars in England. A neighboring farmer dropped in for the christening party, had a few stiff snorts and stalked out muttering, "That's the trouble nowadays. Every time you find a good pub it's full of Americans."

Another early in March arrival for the 506th was Carl Hvamsal. He was a radio mechanic. He recalls:

I worked under a real gentleman, "Pappy" Hunter, who was in charge of the 506th Radio Section. We worked out of the radio shack along with all the other radio guys of the

other squadrons. "Pappy" was a Master Sergeant.

Two engine mechanics and I lived with the armament guys. They were a great bunch and hard workers. The sergeant in charge of the Armament Section, I believe, was one of the original 44th ground men.

I came from North Dakota, a dry and windy climate. It took me six months to be "climatized" to the English weather.

Whenever the opportunity presented itself, I would hook a ride in our aircraft. In addition to engine test hops, I also went along on some flights in which they were flying formation. I also went on the "trolley" operation on May 12, 1945.

Will Lundy reports in his *HISTORY OF THE 67TH BOMB SQUADRON*, "On March 2nd the Group went to Frankfurt/Main, Germany. The target was attacked by only a portion of the Group because of poor weather conditions. bombing results were unobserved. The remainder of the ships brought back their bombs since a target of opportunity could not be found."

The James Redus combat record indicates that Henry Borkowski crew was on this March 2nd mission. It was Sortie #187 which lasted seven and a half hours. They were in A/C #153, L, and encountered some flak.

Knight, accompanied by Ollie Bowling flew this raid in A/C #305, P, *I'll Be Back*.

Records maintained by Ralph Golubock show that he was out on this day.

Ray Marner wrote in his diary on this day:

Orders came out transferring 180 men out of our Squadron. All ground men. We're getting a lot of new personnel. Keefe and I are staying in the 506th. The rest are going to the 856 Squadron, 492 Group at North Pikington. Some have already left.

On March the 3rd, Will Lundy's writings indicate, "Bad weather intervened with a raid to Oranienburg. The formation was forced to return as weather conditions worsened over the North Sea. There were no bombs dropped nor any enemy encounters."

George Ramsey's combat record reports that he was out this day on A/C #172, T. They were recalled. This was Sortie #188 and he was in the air six hours. The copilot was Patrick Gallagher.

Ollie Bowling's combat record shows that he made this flight with Knight in A/C #305, P, *I'll Be Back*.

The James Redus record indicates he was with Henry Borkowski flying in A/C 153, L.

Dave McCash's records indicate that he was on this raid. It shows the target as 58 58'N 08 23' E. It is not known who he was with.

It is not known how many other 506th ships participated.

On March 4th Will Lundy indicated, "a mission was scheduled for Oranienburg, then it was changed to Potsdam, and finally it was scrubbed due to weather conditions.

However, on March the 5th the Group took off in snow flurries that hampered assembly. Cloud cover was 10/10 so runs were made on Cognac and Bergerac with respectively good and fair results. Enemy aircraft were seen but no attacks were made. Flak was moderate but inaccurate.

James Redus flew this mission, which was Sortie #190. He was flying with Norm Purdy On A/C #305, P, *I'll Be Back*. (Note: Records maintained by Webb Todd show that this was an aircraft belonging to the 458th Bomb Group, Z5-N, that was on loan to the 506th.) The Redus record shows the mission covered ten hours and flak was encountered..

Lt. Money went on this mission. Records kept by Waino Hannuksela indicate that he probably flew this mission with Money. Both of their records show the raid to have been Cognac (Bordeaux).

Ray Marner reported on March 5th:

Our planes went out into Germany. There were no losses. Lt. Duffy crashed on takeoff. Colonel Dent was with him. No one was hurt. (Note: The aircraft that Duffy was flying was 42-63 965, S, Name Unknown. This may have been the ship that McAtee and crew brought back from the bone yard in Tunis. The ship was salvaged that same day. A picture of the wreckage appears in Ursel P. Harvell's book

titled *44th Liberators Over Europe*. However, the published date of the crash is in error according to records maintained by Webb Todd.)

Will Lundy's works indicate that on March 6th, "The Group made it's first attack against Berlin. Ground fog at takeoff time caused some difficulties. The target was Luckenwalde, but it was covered with clouds. After two passes, our aircraft turned to Berlin itself and selected a target of opportunity along the river in the southwestern area. Rail lines and an industrial area were visible and were bombed. Accurate flak was encountered in the target area. Enemy aircraft were seen, but no attacks were experienced by our aircraft. Although the 44th lost no ships on this day, 16 B-24's from other groups and 53 B-17's were lost.

James Clements flew as Deputy Group Lead. Joseph Kodaj was the copilot and they were on A/C #642. N. Once again, William J. Mulholland was with them. Clements records show:

The target, at Genshagen (Berlin), was the aircraft manufacturing and component part factory. It was attacked visually. On the first two passes over the target we were taking evasive action because of the flak. On the third pass over the target the flak continued intense and accurate, but we dropped with good results. Moderate flak was encountered along the route and we were intercepted by 30-to-40 enemy aircraft in the Berlin area. We saw our escort come up after them with at least one enemy going down.

Ollie Bowling's records show that he was aboard A/C #305 on this day. The pilot was Earl B. Knight. With them were Lts. Stockton R. Bartol, Robert J. Bauman, and Robert E. Gutknecht. Other enlisted personnel were Sgts. Maurice G. Hall, William A. Wallace Jr., Melvin P. Peterson, Daniel Wozniak, and Joseph F. Meyers.

Patrick Gallagher's flight record shows that he made an eight hour operational mission on this date. The Combat Record shows that he received credit for a sortie. He was in A/C #172 He believes he was with Ray Houghtby.

Robert Struble believes that he was on this mission.

Ray Marner wrote:

March 6th--"Our planes hit Berlin for the first time. No

losses in the 44th although 68 bombers went down."

March 7th--"A P-47 collided with a B-24 from the 66th Squadron. They exploded and all were killed. It happened over the field." (This accident was confirmed by Will Lundy.)

On March the 8th Will Lundy reports, "For the second time in three days Berlin was attacked by the 44th. The target was a ball bearing factory at Erkner. Colonel F. R. Dent, Commanding Officer of the Group, led the Group on this mission as well as the 14th Combat Wing. Moderate to intense flak was encountered over the target with little damage to our aircraft. Enemy aircraft were seen, but excellent fighter coverage resulted in few attacks on the formation."

One enemy aircraft was shot down by a gunner from the 506th, but it is not known who it was.

This was the 100th mission for the 44th.

George Ramsey was on A/C #172, T. They reported flak and enemy aircraft along the way. This was Sortie #191 and it lasted eight hours. He probably was with Houghtby.

Records maintained by James Redus indicate that the Henry Borkowski crew was on this mission. They were flying A/C #642.

Lt. Money made this trip to Berlin. It is likely that Waino Hannuksela flew with Money on this day. Waino's records show the target to be Berlin (Erkner).

Robert Struble believes that he was on this mission.

Another ship on this mission was A/C# 305, P, *I'll Be Back*. It was flown by Knight and Ollie Bowling was with him.

Norm Kiefer is reasonably certain that Captain Harvell recorded portions of this 100th mission on black and white movie film. He later marketed that material, along with other moving picture materials of 44th aircraft, under the title *THE MISSION*. Shots of aircraft taxiing and landing for this 100th mission are incorporated in the beginning and toward the end of the film. A sequence showing Colonel Dent upon return from a mission was likely taken this day.

Robert Petkoff reports that it was about this time that Lt.

Richard H. Hruby and crew arrived. With Hruby were Lts. Thomas L. Smith and Edwin H. Rosenburg. The enlisted personnel included Sgts. Boyd Bartley, Lloyd Bartley, Robert Petkoff, Cletus C. Clark, Everette E. Foster, and Euclid F. Blanchard.

Lloyd and Boyd Bartley were twin brothers. In spite of the War Department order that members of an immediate family were not to engage in combat together, the Bartley twins insisted that they be kept together. They flew thirty missions together at the waist window. On that 30th mission, one of the twins was wounded in the leg. The other twin flew one mission alone in order to complete a tour.

On March the 9th, Will Lundy's work indicates, "The 44th attacked the airframe factory at Brandenburg, Germany. Only three enemy aircraft were met and no attacks were made on the formation. The flak was meager and inaccurate.

Lt. Money departed on this trip. It is also likely that Waino Hannuksela was with him. Waino's record shows that they aborted.

Ollie Bowling's records show that he was with Knight on this mission and they were flying A/C #305, P, *I'll Be Back*. This was Sortie #194 and it lasted eight hours. Flak was encountered.

Ray Marner wrote on this day:

Our planes were out again without a loss. The 44th is doing all right. One of the pilots was wounded pretty badly. (Note: Will Lundy indicates that this was Lt. Kenneth Jewell of the 66th Squadron who lost his leg in a burst of flak. The copilot was inexperienced and Jewell had to assist in flying home and landing the plane. Jewell later became the first Air Force amputee to receive permission to fly with a wooden leg.)

On March 12th the Group made a mission to the rocket coast. The target was Siracourt. There were 10/10 clouds and bombing results were unobserved. There were no enemy aircraft, but some of our aircraft suffered flak damage.

George Ramsey's combat record reveals that he was on A/C #172, T, on this day. There was slight to moderate flak. This was Sortie #195 and it lasted six hours.

Patrick Gallagher made this mission with Ray Houghtby in A/C #107.

This was the raid that James Redus had been looking forward to. His last! Once again he flew with Henry Borkowski, but this time they were in A/C #107.

Another raider that day was Knight. He was flying A/C #305, P, I'll Be Back. Ollie Bowling was with him.

Lt. Money was on this raid. Waino Hannuksela was probably with him.

On that day, March 12th Ray Marner wrote:

Our planes went to rocket coast again. There were no losses. Our field is closed in so they landed at another field. (This explains the various operations times recorded for this mission. Will Lundy reports that they landed at Ford and Thorney Island in southern England).

After his combat tour, James Redus recalls:

When I finished my tour I was assigned to the 489th Group as a radio instructor. This was a new group, fresh from the States. I wanted to make Master Sgt. and thought this was the opportunity.

Colonel Dent went to the 95th Wing, which was on the 489th Base (Halesworth), and took with him Henry Borkowski and Henry Mikolajczyk. I rode in on their coat tails. I remained there from April until the end of August. I was then supposed to become an Aerial Gunnery Instructor at Laredo, Texas. Instead, I was given a refresher course in Aerial Gunnery and Radio Operation with the intent that I would be sent to the Pacific in B-29's. I never made it. The war ended.

On March the 13th Will Lundy reports, "There was no mission scheduled. The majority spent their time returning to base, catching up on repairs, reports and other activities."

Ray Marner wrote on March 14th:

There was quite an air raid tonight. Jerries were over for some time. (Will Lundy's writings stated "the evening hours were livened up by 140 enemy aircraft that operated in four waves over East Anglia and London areas. Our

field spent a comparatively sleepless night with the sky ablaze with huge slices of white rays from searchlights that crisscrossed the skies seeking out the enemy intruders.")

Will Lundy reports, "The 44th went to Brunswick, Germany on March 15. Their targets were bomber aircraft component factories and construction engineering works. Cloud cover was heavy. Enemy fighter opposition was heavy but ineffective due to excellent cover provided by friendly fighters. Bombing results were unobserved.

James Clements flew as Group Lead on this mission. His records indicate that the target was the marshaling yards. The attack was made through intense accurate flak with results unobserved. They were intercepted by 10-to-15 enemy aircraft. They observed five-to-six enemy aircraft queued up to left rear. One Me-109 attacked from the opposite direction and then turned in at nine o'clock attacking an aircraft that was straggling slightly at six o'clock. That aircraft was hit in the #3 engine and set it on fire. Seven chutes were seen to come out as bomber peeled off and blew up.

This was Sortie #196. Ollie Bowling was with Knight aboard A/C #172, T. The raid lasted seven hours with flak being encountered.

Lt. Money was on this raid. It is believed that Waino Hannuksela was with him.

This mission was Henry Siteman's first. He was with Lt. Hawkins. He saw enemy fighters and flak.

Ray Warner related, "Our planes went to Brunswick. The 66th lost one ship." (Note: Will Lundy's writings confirm this loss.)

The next day, March 16th, Will Lundy indicated, "The 44th went to Friedrichshafen, Germany. The Group encountered little flak and few fighters. Aluminum chaff was released in large quantities in the target area in order to confuse the enemy radar that controls their flak guns."

Waino Hannuksela's records show he took off on this mission but, they aborted.

George Ramsey's combat record indicates that he was on A/C

#172, T, on this day. They ran into slight flak. This was Sortie #197 and it covered eight hours.

Information furnished by Jack Warvel indicates that Albert and crew flew this mission aboard A/C #42-52 305, P.

Edmund Donnelly was with them and recalls:

The flak was fairly heavy, but about a half-mile to the right and 2,000 feet low. It was an overcast day and bombs were dropped on Pathfinder.

Henry Siteman's diary indicates he flew this mission with Hawkins. It also shows:

It was a deep trip into Germany, about 18 miles from the Swiss border on Lake Constance. A Dormier Aircraft Works was our target. We saw the Alps in Switzerland.

Uriah Hartman reports that this was the first raid for Winston Irwin. Irwin and one of the enlisted men flew with another crew, but it is not known who.

Ray Marner wrote for March 16th, "Our planes hit into Germany. The 67th had a crack up killing six men." (Will Lundy's works confirm this loss.)

On March 18th Henry Siteman wrote:

We lost five crews over the same target as on the 16th, Manzell Air Armament at Friedrichshafen. I did not go on this one, but 10 men were missing from our barracks, alone. Some reports say some planes went to Switzerland. Some others bailed out over the target. It was a very sad day as news is only what the other crews bring back with them. One crew that came back (came into the Squadron at the same time that we did) had 16 big flak holes in their plane.

On this day the Manzell Air Armaments facilities at Friedrichshafen, Germany was the target. Bombing results were good. Enemy opposition, both fighters and flak, were stronger than expected. The Group lost eight aircraft. The 506th lost four of that total (A/C #42-100 400, Y, piloted by Lt. R. R. Lucas; A/C #41-29 431, Q, piloted by Lt. W. C. Irwin; A/C #41-29 172, T, piloted by Lt. R. C. Houghtby; and A/C #42-52 305, P, piloted by F. L. Albert.

Lt. Albert's plane did not make it to the sanctuary of Switzerland. At just after bombs away and near Friedrichshafen, this aircraft was hit in #1 and #4 engines by flak. It slid under the formation and to the right for about a minute, seemingly under control. Two chutes were seen, then the left wing tore off and the plane exploded.

Jack Warvel remembers:

We couldn't release our bombs on the first pass over the target because another squadron flew in right under us. Colonel Dent gave the order to go around a second time. We did! The air speed and altitude remained the same. The German ground guns had us. We had our first hit on the first pass. The Germans did not have to make any changes in their gun positions. There were four direct hits. Later, a German antiaircraft Sgt. asked me why we didn't change our altitude or speed.

After I was captured, the Germans treated me well during the first couple of days. I even had my own personal guard. The reason for the special treatment was that they were interested in knowing why Colonel Anderson was flying with us in a bomber. They knew that he was an ace fighter pilot.

Edmund Donnelly was also with Albert. He recalls:

The Friedrichshafen raid was one of the highest loss missions that the 44th had (especially for the 506th). Lt. Albert gave his life to place the bombs on the target and to assure that the four of us that survived could live. The Pennsylvania State Police have named their recreation building, in Wyoming, Pa., after Frank. Lts. Albert and McGeary were to receive their Captain bars when they returned from this mission, but the orders were never cut.

Flying with Lt. Albert (KIA) that day were Lts. Meredyth F. McGeary (KIA), Edmund H. Donnelly (POW), and Paul E. Castellotti (KIA). The enlisted personnel consisted of Sgts. Beauford K. Walker (POW), James K. Warvel (POW), Lloyd J. Brady (KIA), David F. Andello (KIA), Carl C. Bolick (POW), and Edward G. Monteleone (KIA).

Will Lundy's material relates that, "Lt. Houghtby's aircraft was last seen at 1446 hours peeling off for Switzerland, under control."

George Ramsey recalls that Bob Kolliner led the 506th that day and that the 506th led the 44th. Also, that Sgt. Bogart was the nose gunner. Brown, the bombardier had not flown with us for quite a few missions. Pat Gallagher did not fly with us that day since he was scheduled to receive his own crew.

An account by Houghtby of what happened to them was furnished by George Ramsey, it revealed:

The Friedrichshafen raid was our 25th. One of the newer replacement squadrons had missed their target sequence and made a run directly beneath the 44th. We held our bomb drop and circled, falling in behind the last group in the bomber stream. Apparently, the German antiaircraft guns had "zeroed in" on our flight parameters. The first flak burst was in the center of the Group and continued very accurate, especially as we were on our bomb run and had to hold steady on course and altitude. Our flight took several hits, but no apparent damage.

After one burst, a waist gunner (Castro or Lewis) reported a stream from under our wing (it had to be fuel). I advised the flight engineer (Warren) to transfer fuel to the opposite wing. Also, after a quick consultation with Ramsey and an intercom check with the crew, we decided to try to make it home. I noted that we could see several B-24's crossing Lake Constance to Switzerland. I also remember German fighters working them over as they left the formations. We did some flight planning and concluded that we couldn't make it to England if we tried to keep up with the Group so I established minimum power and had the crew jettison guns, flak vests, ammo., etc. I radioed a request for individual fighter protection and two P-51's joined us.

We then started a very slow descent in order to hold adequate flight speed. Ramsey and Bogart (a substitute bombardier) were in the nose scanning for any visible towns or other possible antiaircraft installations which we flew around. This procedure worked okay all the way to the Pas de Calais area. As we approached that area, knowing that it was heavily fortified with antiaircraft and other artillery, we discussed the advisability of dropping to the deck. The P-51's dropped down, but I decided that with the fuel gages showing empty, we'd better hold what altitude we could in order to continue our power glide to Ford field on the coast of England. At

that time we were at 11,000 foot.

As we approached the coastline of France, the first four shell burst pattern took about four foot off our left wing tip. I immediately started violent evasive action. However, the enemy fire stayed close to us with numerous close bursts. After one burst I jammed in maximum right roll/turn controls and almost wound up in the copilot's lap. Apparently my control cables had been damaged. I tried differential power and auto pilot, but couldn't stop a shallow right turn. I lowered the landing gear and the Germans stopped firing.

We could look across the channel and see the white cliffs of Dover, but there was no way to get there. Reluctantly, I ordered the crew to bail out. I believe Castro went first. (I understand that he evaded capture and was picked up by the French underground. He remained with them until liberated by the Canadian 2nd Armored Div.) One of the gunners had to be thrown out of the bomb bay (he pulled his rip cord and landed safely).

I was the last one out, after checking forward in the nose area. There was a strong westerly wind blowing and I drifted east rapidly. While floating down I recall our aircraft circling in the distance with all four engines still running.

In a letter to Patrick Gallagher on December 19, 1944, Ladislao Castro related:

I do not believe that anyone of us knew about it, but I believe that we were hit, either at the French Coast on the way in or over the target. We made two runs before we dropped our bombs.

Anyway, on the way back our fuel shortage was noticed. We had seen at least five of our planes turn back to Switzerland. Ray Houghtby asked us what we wanted to do; either turn back or try to make it to the channel and ditch. We told him to stick to the ship till the last moment. We thought that we would at least make it to the channel.

Bomb group after bomb group passed us while we were struggling. After a while we stripped the ship, We threw out our waist guns, all the ammunition except a few rounds in the tail and top turrets, all the flak suits, oxygen

bottles, extra flying clothing, and almost anything else that was not fixed to the ship. Of course we kept our parachutes.

When we were about three-quarters of the way home, we were alone in the sky except for our escort of eight or nine Mustangs. Later we were told to be ready to bail out at any moment. However, we already had our chutes on and the fellows in the back were all praying that we would make it.

At about sixty or seventy miles from the French coast and about fifty miles southeast of Abbeville, we ran into intense and accurate flak. We were at about 10,000 feet when Houghtby gave us the order to bail out.

I was the first one out of the camera hatch. After I jumped out I didn't see the ship any more. I had already made up my mind that I would delay pulling the rip cord. I was coming down in a vertical position with my feet down and my face and head up. My hand was on the rip cord handle and when I could see the ground coming up at me I pulled.

I saw the pilot chute go by and then I was sitting on the straps waiting for the main chute to open. With an ejaculation, I found myself guiding my chute between some woods. Then I was on the ground.

I hid my chute along with my gloves and helmet. I then took off, limping. I could see that I was about forty yards from a street that passed through a farm village. There were about twenty houses on both sides of the street. I started to walk into town when I heard some shots. I quickly walked back to hide in a haystack. Along the way, I saw seven parachutes coming down. The lowest one looked like it was Dye. Right after I was in the haystack, there was lots of commotion--motorcycles, cars, trucks, Germans hollering, dogs barking and kids crying. My head was going round and round and I was certain that they were searching for me.

The search lasted for about thirty minutes. During that time I realized that I had not only sprained my ankle, but had also broken a small bone above the ankle. It was so painful that I was on the verge of giving myself up. However, I was afraid that they would make me walk, so I kept to my hiding place. I then gave thought to using the

Morphine that I had in my escape kit. I didn't because I didn't want to fall asleep.

About forty minutes later, a French woman came by looking for me. It was around six P.M. when I showed myself to the French woman. She told me to wait till seven thirty. Just a little later than she had promised, she returned with her husband. They opened the back door to a barn and motioned me in.

They had some bread, butter, bacon, and a bottle of cider. They also gave me two raw eggs. The last that I had eaten was our breakfast at three o'clock. By now I was really hungry and I feasted on everything but the raw eggs.

The French couple also brought some old clothes and told me to change out of the two piece electric heated suit that I was wearing. I changed, but kept on my long johns. They felt good that night since it was very cold.

I was told to stay in the barn till morning and then leave. I got into the hay and covered as much of my body as possible, but I didn't sleep. My arms were so sore, from the vaccination and immunization shots that I had received the day before, that I couldn't move them.

The next morning I got up around eight o'clock and went outside. I saw an old Frenchman, pushing a wheelbarrow, approaching the barn from the direction of the village. I went back into the barn. When the Frenchman reached the barn, he looked all around before coming in.

I didn't know exactly what he was saying, but he was praising all the Americans and their airplanes. He then left. From then on, every few minutes a villager or two would come into the barn and praise the Americans. Most of the women kissed me (on the cheek of course). One brought bread, butter and some coffee for my breakfast. From the rest, I got about 14 eggs.

One lady could speak a little English. She gave me directions on where to go from there. I told her that I wanted some bandage to wrap my ankle. She got a roll and bandaged it for me. While she was doing this, I told her that I did not understand her instructions. She then said that she would take me part way.

When it was time to leave, a young girl of about eighteen

went with us. After about three miles the young girl had to return to the village. I thanked and kissed her. The older lady walked a few more miles with me and then we arrived at another village.

We went to a farm house and I was taken to a back room. The lady took the eggs and left me in the room.

After a while the folks from the house and the lady returned with about four fried eggs, some bread, and cider. They then brought me hot water and I bathed my foot. I stayed at that house for ten days.

The French Underground came and picked me up and took me to the large town of Amiens which is south of Abbeville and north of Paris. I stayed with the one that picked me up for about one month and a week. He was a chief of the Underground. He then took me to another house in the same town. There I met some sixteen other Allied aviators that were evading capture. I stayed there from May 1st till September 1st.

The German lines went over us on the 30th of August. The town was liberated on the 31st and we made our way back to Bayou in two days via Vernon, Borais, Ereaux, and Caen. We flew to England on the 4th. I was in London for about 22 days.

Flying with Raymond C. Houghtby (POW) that day were Lts. Louis A. Safranek (POW), and George K. Ramsey (POW). The enlisted personnel included Sgts. Colman D. Bogart (POW), Wayne M. Warren (POW), Frank P. Phillips (POW), James W. Lewis (POW), Ladislao C. Castro (Evadee), Norman L. Dye (POW), and Thomas M. Cannon (POW).

In his works Will Lundy reports, "Lt. Irwin's ship was last seen at 1446 hours near Friedrichshafen, peeling off and heading toward Switzerland. It was reported that one engine was feathered and one was windmilling. They were also losing fuel."

This was the first mission for all members of this crew with the exception of Lt. Irwin.

Uriah Hartman remembers:

We were flying in a B-24 J called *Sho Sho Baby*. The flight to the target was uneventful except for a few

scattered flak puffs. At the IP things changed. Flak over the target area was intense. I thought that a black thunder cloud lay over the target. Our bomb run was down the middle of Lake Constance from the northeast. Dropping chaff on the run, we arrived over the target unscathed. At drop time, a group of B-17's crossed directly beneath us by about 1,000 feet. We could not drop.

We made a 360 degree turn and came over again. We had no chaff to throw out on our second pass. We really got plastered. I believe that seven or eight ships of the lead echelon were hit, including us.

We took a hit in #4 engine, which promptly ran away and caught fire from severed fuel lines. Also, we lost the turbos on #1 and #2 engines. Our hydraulic system was out and part of the electrical system. While we were ablaze, our tail gunner left his guns to advise us of the fire. His turret took a direct hit while he was gone. How the hell no one was injured by flak I will never know.

The Group pulled away from us and we lost altitude rapidly. A decision had to be made and quickly. We decided that there was no chance of returning to our base. We knew that Switzerland was a very short distance away. This looked like a better alternative to bailing out somewhere over France with the certainty of capture and sitting out the war in a Stalag. We swung around and headed for the Swiss border.

We crossed at about 8,000 feet and were picked up immediately by one Me-109 of the Swiss Air Force. He dropped flaps and wheels (out of range of our 50's) and showed us his Swiss wing markings. We followed him in to Dubendorf where we landed our plane on a taxi strip (after kicking out our gear). As we came to a halt, all our engines ran out of gas and quit.

We were boarded by a Swiss Army guard who prodded us out at bayonet point. All the time he was saying, "Switzerland, no more war for you."

We were quarantined and sent to internment camps throughout Switzerland. The officers went to a camp separate from the enlisted men. I have not seen any of the enlisted men since then.

My last internment location was at Davos. In October,

Northfelt and I decided to try to get back to France. The Maquis had taken control of the area South of Geneva and a contact had been established.

The night we were to cross the border, we were halted by Swiss Guards right at the fence between France and Switzerland. Somebody had screwed up. So it was back to jail in Geneva, then to Warvwil, a prisoner of war camp, where we were quartered with two Russians, two Italians, French, etc. and next to a German POW barracks.

One night myself and another officer, Eddie Kozel, saw our chance and broke out. We walked all night. Somehow we became separated, and didn't see each other until some days later. We then made another try with the aid of the Military Attache's Office and General Legge.

This time we crossed the river at Montreaux and accompanied by a smuggler walked out over the mountains into France. We located the Maquis, who trucked us to Assnecy and then to Lyon, where we were flown back to our base and to the 506th on 10/27/44. I was returned to the U.S.A. on 12/7/44 and classified as an Escapee.

With Lt. Winston C. Irwin (interned/returned) were Lts. Uriah G. Hartman (interned/returned), Wallace D. Northfelt (interned), and Robert W. Libell (interned). The enlisted personnel were Sgts. George Boatman (interned/returned), Peter E. Merisotis (interned/returned), James L. Beuoy (interned/returned), Grover R. Lawson (interned/returned), James Hunter, (interned/returned), and Paul M. Laux (interned/returned).

Will Lundy's materials show:

Lt. Lucas' aircraft, just after bombs away at 1446 hours, peeled off from the formation under control and started across Lake Constance for Switzerland. It then turned back toward Germany and was last seen going down at 1500 hours in that vicinity.

However, the Swiss records show that Lt. Lucas was the last to land at Dubendorf at 1538 hours.

With Lt. Robert R. Lucas (interned/returned) were Lts. Charles D. Waska (interned/returned), Bernard J. Capella (interned/returned), and Donald E. Kirchner (interned/returned). The enlisted personnel included Sgts.

John F. Bass (interned/returned), Jacob F. Stambaugh (interned/returned), Arthur W. DuBail (interned), Douglas D. Brice (interned), Lloyd W. Hammer (interned/returned), and Ernest C. Luther (interned).

Ray Marner reported on March 18th:

Our ships went to southern Germany and 13 planes are missing. Only 2 of ours came back. Albert's ship blew up. We don't know all the details yet. Capt. Cardenas (Note: flying as Command Pilot) went down with LaCombe. Houghtby's, Lucas's and Irwin's crews all went down. The 506th lost 4 ships and 41 men.

Lt. Raymond J. Lacombe, flying with the 67th Squadron also made it to Switzerland and was interned and then released. The author remembers that Lacombe was at some point attached to the 506th (flew the Ploesti raid with Slough). I saw Lacombe in the 1960s when Lacombe was Base Commander at Wurtsmith Air Base in Michigan.

Many years later, McAtee and Cardenas were talking. McAtee related how disappointed he was that Cardenas was lost. Cardenas had been sent to the 506th to get some battle experience. Cardenas had a good deal of flying experience, having been a test pilot. He transferred into the 506th from a staff job higher up in the Air Force. He had been identified as a future General. Both Lacombe and Cardenas remained in the service after the war and became Generals.

In a letter to his wife on March 19th Norm mentioned:

A lot of our boys went to see "Willie" yesterday. It was the biggest group to go over there in some months. (Note: I was trying to tell her that we had lost a number of crews.)

Henry Siteman spent the next few days at the skeet range and hanging around the barracks. His pilot, Hawkins, was grounded.

On March the 20th, Ray Marner wrote:

The Group lost 8 planes a couple of days ago. Bolick (Albert crew) was on his 26th mission.

Capt. Johnson's crew went to the 66th. Major Kolliner transferred to the 67th. Lt. Colonel Brandon is new C.O.

He just came back from Sweden. Escaped!

Will Lundy's writings show, "The 44th went to Pas de Calais on March 21. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. Meager to moderate flak was thrown at our formation. The Group lost no aircraft."

On this day, Ollie Bowling completed his combat tour. He was flying with Patrick Gallagher on A/C #827, Bar Q. This was Sortie #200 and it lasted five hours. Flak was encountered.

Lt. Money went on this raid. It is likely that Waino Hannuksela was on the same aircraft.

Lt. Marx also went this day. Siteman went with him in place of Johnson who was ill. The Siteman diary indicates:

The target was the rocket installations in France. We had a runaway prop and had to feather #1 engine. We had four 2000-pound bombs and couldn't get any altitude. We couldn't land with such a heavy load, so we were forced to dump them in the Channel. We then came home on three engines. I was plenty scared, as was everyone on the ground. We didn't get credit for a mission. Hawkins is still grounded.

Ralph Golubock reports that he was on this raid.

In a recent letter, Fred Marzolph recalled:

I can't find my record of missions, but I do remember that we landed at Shipdham with the Group only three or four times out of our first 14 missions. It sure got tiresome looking up our clothes and personal items when we didn't get back the same day.

I also remember early one morning, while waiting for the flare to start engines, the crew was moving about underneath the ship. The pilot and copilot were doing their thing up in the cockpit. Our bombardier was watching our engineer looking about the top of the wing with a flashlight. First he would look the wing surface and then at an engine. As he did so, we could see the flashlights of other engineers doing the same thing on other ships. Curious, the bombardier yelled up to our engineer, "Jake, I see you up there looking around before each mission. What are you looking for?" To which our engineer, a former cowboy from Montana, yelled back,

"Hell, I don't know! Everybody else is looking at something, so I do it too."

On another occasion our tail gunner was having trouble with his guns before takeoff. He yelled for an armament man. The armament man fiddled with the guns for a few minutes and then said that it was a feed problem that should be all right now. Try the guns. The gunner asked if he really was to try the guns. The armament man said yes. Naturally, our gunner, instead of using the charging handle, reached for the triggers. That time they shot the chimney off the farm house 50 feet away.

Other memories include---"attempting" to find hot water in the hut that had a kerosene heater designed to provide shaving and washing facilities.---The crew that came in from the States with a bottle of bourbon that they raffled off at the "Picket Post". I'll bet they made enough off that one bottle to spend a week at the Regent Palace Hotel in London.---The MP's on the base selling re-spooled aerial film in different sizes; 127, 116, 120 etc. They also did a weird job of processing the film.

Will Lundy's works show for March 22nd, "The 44th bombed Berlin using PFF with unobserved results. The flak over the city was intense and accurate. The enemy used both barrage and directed anti-aircraft fire. Many of our aircraft received flak damage. Fighter support was excellent and no enemy aircraft were sighted."

This raid completed the operational tour for Patrick Gallagher. He was flying in A/C #153, L. This was Sortie #201 and it lasted nine hours. Gallagher recalls:

There was heavy flak, but we seemed to have made it all right. That is until we got into the landing pattern. When we tried to lower the wheels, the main gear dropped, but did not lock into place and the nose wheel would not come down. What's more, we did not have any flaps. We were not short of fuel, therefore, the tower put us into a holding pattern while the rest of the planes landed. The engineers on the ground were trying to figure out how they could help us.

On instructions from the ground, we managed to manually lock the main gear and to push the nose wheel up, out and locked. The copilot manually pumped the flaps down. We then started our descent without knowing if our brakes

would work. We landed about half-way down the runway and thank goodness the brakes did hold. Thus, the assembled fire trucks and ambulances had to return to their stations without any customers.

We managed to slowly taxi to the parking area where they found that one of our hydraulic lines had been hit and that we had lost most of our fluid.

Money was at Berlin on this day. It is believed that Waino Hannuksela was with him. Also, Ralph Golubock was on this mission.

Ray Marner wrote for March 22nd, "Our planes went to Berlin today. No losses. We got six new combat crews. Our new A.P.O. is 558."

One of those new crews belonged to Jack J. Wind. With Lt. Wind were Lts. Edwin L. Waldo, Ben K. Mazza, and Arthur C. Stanton. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Charles R. Eccleston, Harold D. Emch, Deno C. Tulini, Garnet A. Stoltenburg, Harold E. Lightcap, and William A. Gurt.

It was about this time that Lt. Jack M. Winn joined the squadron. With him were Lts. James H. McEver, Max Finesmith, and Alfred C. Walker. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Louis A. Turansky, Charles W. Vaughan, Allen T. Matthews, Richard L. Albert, Leon Preston Isaccs, and Sidney I. Goldberg.

Another of the new crews was led by Lt. Gerald S. Westcott. With him were Lts. Robert H. Reeves, Thomas L. Hine, and Arthur C. Toepel. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Fred A. DuBose, Edward J. Thompson, Frank Artym Jr., Joseph A. Gorski, Walter V. Lawrence, and Joseph I. Morris.

Fred DuBose recalls:

We were assigned A/C #41-28 829, *H, My Ever Lovin Girl*. The ship already had that name when we got it. The crew chief was S/Sgt. Boyer.

Another crew was with Bernie L. Scudday. With Lt. Scudday were Lts. John A. Farrell, Charles W. Hansen, and Paul Richardson. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Joseph E. Wycheck, Anthony J. Ventura, Robert P. Ries, Coyle J. Acuff, Carl W. Tepe, and Lester D. Warren. They brought with them A/C #42-110 029.

Raymond McCormick remembers that:

Bernie Scudday was a big Texan--half Cherokee--who handled a B-24 like a Brahman bull. He landed a B-24 on fire in the States and walked away. John Farrell hated flying. On local flights in England, I flew as copilot and John rode a bicycle. I think the T.V. actor from "M*A*S*H", Mike Farrell, is his son.

The last of the known crews that came in at this time belonged to Lt. Dallas L. Sprinkle. With Lt. Sprinkle were Lts. Robert E. Neutze Jr., Joseph R. Smith Jr., and Robert E. Schuyler. Enlisted personnel consisted of Sgts. Charles Radu, Charles Winn, Jack B. Freeman, Charles F. Springs,, and Stanley Murach. They brought with them A/C #42-110 045, Banana Barge.

It is believed that the following crew also joined about this time.

Lt. Conrad Scheer accompanied by Lts. James Tucker, John A. Hess, and Alfred R. Wilson. The enlisted personnel joining were Sgts. Santo Romeo, Raymond Khoury, Thomas J. Reeves, Leron M. Whiteside, Ivan C. Millican, and Karl D. Breakey.

Henry Siteman recorded for the 22nd of March:

We didn't fly today. We are just waiting around with nothing to do.

Ralph Golubock remembers:

One night an R.A.F. Lancaster made an emergency landing at our base. The next day we all went out to see it. I thought at the time that it sure looked fragile compared to the B-24.

Will Lundy's writings indicate, "The 44th was on another PFF mission with the airfield near Osnabruck and Bransche, Germany, being hit on March 23. Fighter support was almost completely lacking, probably due to very adverse weather conditions. Clouds were 10/10 over the target Bombing results were unobserved, but reported to have been good. There was little flak and no enemy aircraft were seen."

Money made this mission. It is likely that Waino Hannuksela flew this, his last, combat mission with Money.

Ralph Golubock was also out on this day.

Siteman didn't go. He spent the day around the barracks. He then went to a dance, in the evening, at the Red Cross Club, where a bunch of WAAF's were brought in from another base.

Will Lundy's records reveal, "On March 24th the group was scheduled to go to Metz, Germany. However, cloud conditions turned the formation to St. Dizier/Robinson Airdrome in France. All of the vital installations of the field, except for one barracks area and one dispersal area were covered with bomb bursts."

The records of Dave McCash shows that he went on this raid. It is not known who he went with.

Siteman spent the 24th hanging around until evening when he went to town for a few beers.

Will Lundy reports, "There was no flying activity on March 25. However, on this date, Captain Wayne Middleton was assigned to the 67th. His former assignment was with the 506th."

Siteman also reported that there was no activity on this day, "About the same as yesterday, except no trip and no beer."

Will Lundy recorded, "On March 26th a mission was scheduled for Oscherleben, but it was scrubbed. Then a raid was mounted to go to Petit-Bois-Tillencourt. The briefing revealed that the target was a secret installation in the woods south of Abbeville. The target area was clear and bombing was visual with good results. Antiaircraft fire was moderate to heavy and very accurate. Many of our ships sustained minor damage."

Ralph Golubock went on this mission.

Ray Marner's diary entry for this day was:

Our planes came back pretty well shot up, but we had no losses. I've been made Squadron Supply Sgt.

Ray remembers one aspect of this new assignment that was particularly distasteful:

After a combat loss, it was my job to immediately gather up the belongings of the lost airman and store them for

safekeeping. Later, these belongings were sorted into personal things (that should be considered for shipment to the survivors) and things that would be returned to the Air Force. At one time, Ray had one end of a Nissen hut filled with these belongings.

Combat personnel frequently resented the appearance of a "paddle foot" (ground person) appearing in the barracks immediately after a loss. They looked upon this as the act of a vulture picking over the bones of their fallen comrade.

When they verbalized these feelings, it frequently was vehement. These expressions often were a means of venting their sorrow at the loss and a knowledge that tomorrow it might be their things that were being picked over.

The picking over process was also a matter of misunderstanding. In some cases there were letters, notes or other items that were best not forwarded to the next of kin.

There was also the problem of timing. Just think what happened when a ship was reported as lost, but made it back. The crew man's belongings, that had been confiscated, had to be returned. It had better all be there just as he remembered them.

Will Lundy also recorded a March 26th event that was of significance to combat crews:

Each crewman must now fly thirty missions, not 25, before his tour of combat was over.

On March 27th Will Lundy shows, "The group flew one of its longest missions. The target was Mont De Marsan Airdrome. It is located almost on the Spanish border. German long range reconnaissance aircraft were stationed there. The airdrome was hit visually with good results. Antiaircraft fire was moderate and accurate using directed fire. Fighter support was excellent and no enemy aircraft were observed. Upon return, the weather in England was bad and one 506th ship #42-100 107, J, crash landed in Sussex." (Webb Todd reported this loss as occurring at Tangmere, Suffolk). (The fate of the crew is not mentioned in either Lundy's nor Todd's works. Therefore it is assumed that there were no casualties.)

The Siteman dairy recorded this long mission:

Today was my third raid. I was with Lt. Blow. We went deep into southwestern France - an airfield for German Cadets - Mont De Marsan. We made good hits and destroyed the target. It was the longest trip yet, over 10 hours. I was up and ate at 0300 hours and didn't get back to the field till 1930 hours - About 17 hours without food or drink. And was I ever tired. I was credited with eleven hours.

This mission was flown by Ralph Golubock.

The entries in the Siteman diary indicated there was little activity on the next two days. On the 28th he wrote:

I didn't get up till 1300 hours and was plenty tired from yesterday and that long mission. We had 11 flak holes in our ship. Our bomb load was 340 fragmentation bombs. Today I just hung around the barracks and rested up.

The next day there still was no mission so I just hung around the barracks.

On the March 28th Ray Marner wrote:

The Presidential Citation for the Kiel Raid came through today. We can wear a cluster on our ribbon now.

The entry by Will Lundy for March 30th was, "A mission was planned for Berlin today, but was scrubbed. Later another mission to Landsburg and Lech was planned and they too were scrubbed. The monotony of the two previous days was interrupted by enemy aircraft over East Anglia. These intruders came over at about 0430 hours, but dropped no bombs on the airdrome. However, nearby areas were hit."

Siteman's diary reported on that day:

About the same lying around as yesterday, but I did borrow a bike and toured the countryside with Lts. Bennett and McCloud. We managed to get 3-1/2 dozen eggs.

The Siteman diary entry for March 31st seemed to indicate that there was some activity in the air:

Lt. Hawkins is still in the hospital with ear trouble. Hicks has an infected toe and is grounded too. He is

seeing the doctor daily. Otherwise, no change in the day. The boys are out there flying--25th mission of the month. This is a new record for missions over enemy territory for the 44th. (Note: I can find no evidence that the group engaged in combat on this date.)

During the month of March, Colonel Dent left the group to go to the 95th Bomb Wing. He was to be the new Commanding Officer over two new groups, 491st and 489th. William Duffy, Dave McCash (his orders were not cut until April 26th) and Bob Kolliner went with him.

Dave McCash recalls:

At some point prior to the transfer, I accompanied Duffy on a visit to a British airfield where Duffy's brother was flying the single-tailed version of the B-24. I remembered the breakfast that they were served. Included was little squares of fried bread. This fare was a new experience to me.

The 506th had now completed its first year of combat. While chalking up 88 missions into enemy-occupied Europe, they had ranged from Norway to Sicily; from the lowlands along the English Channel to the oil fields of Romania. They had been to the very core of Germany, Berlin. They had put the truth to the words of the President of the United States, "There is no place in Germany that is safe from our bombers."

During these twelve months the Squadron had been very lucky. Only 12 crews were shot down while flying with the Squadron. There were individuals in the squadron that were killed in action or wounded, but in general our combat losses were light. We had also lost a number of former members while they were flying with other organizations. They didn't take our luck with them.

During the month of March Norm wrote the following to his wife:

"Gee there was a nice snowfall last night and the ground is all covered. Almost like home."..."I just looked down at my hand and arm. You should see how white they are. It doesn't seem possible that I could lose that tan so completely. Maybe the most of it was African dust that came out when I washed!"..."Did I tell you that Edwards is the last of the boys that we have to worry about? Loftus is finished."..."Dinner last night was fried chicken and

ice cream. It was the first time that we have had the latter since I came to this island."..."Edwards can now be added to the list that we do not have to worry about."..."I have a sore arm. I had three shots this noon."..."You may not know me when I get home. There isn't quite as much hair up on my head as there was when you last saw me. Also, there is a number of gray ones in with the black."..."Do you remember last spring that Lt. Graham wrote a story? Well I have found a part of it has been published by the Eighth Air Force in their booklet called Target Germany."..."The envelope of sugar that you sent wasn't even broken. Now I have the jello and the sugar. All I have to do is figure out what to make it in. We are going to have a feast yet."..."On the way home tonight I passed a pond and the Pussy Willows are starting to break out. It reminded me of home."..."Frank Juskowski finished up the other day. The enlisted men are now all through. Not so with the officers, with the exception of Laudig."