

DRIVING THEM BACK FROM BEACHES

The (Muddy) Waters crew arrived some time late in June or early July. With Lt. Thomas Waters were Lts. Victor Louise, Amondos Boyle, and Robert Daniels. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Michel Yuspeh, Robert Funke, Patrick Colucci, Alfred G. Hawkins, Charles Walsh, and Eugene McMahon.

On the first of July Henry Siteman wrote:

I went to Romeo's funeral and it was very nice. Came back and flew with Lt. Henderson Bennett on a practice mission shooting landings and takeoffs. He let Wallace Robinson and I get in about 20 minutes flying time each. While in London, I saw four buzz bombs or doodle bugs, and heard about 14 of them go off. I also saw a church where nearly 500 people were killed by one of these pilotless planes.

The Lt. George M. Beiber crew arrive on July the 3rd. With Beiber were Lts. Gerald W. Folsom, Willis A. Edgecomb, and Paul A. Boensch Sr. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Nathan L. Woodruff, William A. Uvanni, Carl K. Miller, Harold H. Maggard, William I. Rebhan, and Perry A. Morse Jr.

William Uvanni remembers:

The fellows in our barracks seem to be a swell bunch. No loudmouthed ones at all. Honesty seems to prevail as no one takes any precautions to protect their belongings. The barracks are crowded and very dirty. I sleep near the door and every time it is opened at night it bumps my bed and wakes me up.

We all had to attend school for a few days before we can become operational; that is to fly missions.

The field is very pretty. It reminds me of life on a farm. Everything is so spread out and our Squadron is on the outer edge of the field. Things are so far apart that during a normal day we travel from 5-to-10 miles just going to and from the mess halls, schools, briefing rooms, etc.

Almost everyone has a bicycle. I paid 2 pounds for mine (approximately \$40). It is black and as old as the hills. I call it *The Black Queen*. It is very hard to pedal, but it beats walking. They have a flat-bedded wagon they pull

around the post for transportation, but you have to wait for it as it makes its rounds.

Two crews that trained with us at Biggs Field have also been assigned to the 506th. I know the radio operators very well. They are Bob E. Mann on Lt. Butler's crew and Gene Maschmeyer on Lt. Bentcliff's crew.

In celebration of our nations birthday, Henry Siteman reported on July 4th:

I was up at 0100 hours and briefed at 0200 hours for a 0400 hours takeoff. However, the mission was set back two hours, so takeoff was at 0600 hours. Target was an airfield about 30 miles southeast of Caen, France (Beaumont Le Roger Airfield). We bombed using the GH method at 24,600 feet. We came back at 1030 hours. The pilot was Henderson Bennett and we were carrying fifty-two 100-pound general purpose bombs.

Garnet Stoltenburg's notes show:

The weather was bad and the bombing results were unobserved. The condensation trails were especially heavy. There was no flak on our formation. The mission took five hours to complete. It was 31 degrees below zero.

There were nine 506th ships took off that morning. However, only three of them flew with the 44th. The remainder went with the 492nd Bomb Group as the third squadron. All of our ships bombed their assigned targets and returned to base.

Merritt Derr flew this mission in A/C #952, A, Shack Rat. He probably was with Fred Stone, and Robert Foust was likely aboard. Merritt's notes show:

The mission was to Beaumont, France. Our target was an airfield.

We were all very tired after returning to base (from the day's operational mission) and I hit the sack. Suddenly the Adjutant burst into our quarters to announce that Stone, Derr and Patrichuk were promoted to 1st Lt. At the moment I could have cared less.

On July 5th Henry Siteman reported:

I got up late. I went to the show in the afternoon. Then I went to the Red Cross club in the evening and wrote a letter.

However, Henry Siteman was on a mission on July 6th and reported:

I was up at 0145 hours and briefed at 0245 hours for a target in Germany--Kiel submarine pens. We took off at 0600 hours and rode two hours out over the North Sea. We hit the target at 0946 hours. Flak was heavy and very accurate. There were 44 guns there. Our pilot was Henderson Bennett and we were carrying six 500-pound bombs and 100 incendiaries.

The 506th put up nine ships for the trip to Kiel. We were joined by three aircraft from the 67th Squadron to make up the second squadron in the formation. Lt. Max Mendenhall flew lead with Lt. Scott as his deputy. The target was obscured so we started to use PFF assistance. However, actual bombing was visually sighted with bombing results unobserved. All of our ships bombed; except for Lt. Fred Stone in aircraft #952, Shack Rat, who turned back with their bombs due to personnel trouble.

Frank Orehowsey indicated that he believes the Titter crew was on this mission. Merritt Derr's notes indicate that he took off to make this mission, but their aircraft aborted. The balance of our ships returned to base. A second mission for that day was scrubbed.

On July 6th Ray Marner wrote:

The 68th lost three ships today. North Pickenham lost 12. (Will Lundy reports these losses by the 68th to have been on July 7.)

Records maintained by Gerald Folsom indicate that he was on a raid to Bernberg on July 7th. He probably was copilot for George Beiber. William Uvanni was with them and wrote the following about this raid:

They woke us up for our first mission at 1:00 A.M. We knew we were going last night and I doubt any of our crew got any sleep. Trucks took us to the mess hall and then to the briefing.

On the wall map of Europe a red line (tape) was stretched

all the way from England to Bernberg, deep in Germany. We were briefed to expect fighters as this is in a fighter region and also to expect heavy flak.

We were pretty tense on the way to the target. About five minutes before target time we were hit by fighters. We flew in the lead element and were right up front. Approximately 60 fighters, lined 15 abreast, came in at us from 1 o'clock and slightly high. They fired as they came in and you could see orange 20 millimeter shells as they came through the air. None of the planes from our Squadron were hit, but an entire squadron (12 aircraft) were knocked out on the first pass. Some blew up and others went into dives and never came out.

Some of the crew saw several chutes come out of these planes and a few minutes later the report came over VHF radio the Germans were strafing the airmen hanging in their chutes. We had been warned to delay our chute openings until a lower altitude to avoid this, but under tension we don't always do the proper thing.

We were in heavy flak all of this time and I watched through the open bomb bays. We had P-38 fighter escorts and they gathered where the German fighters were and in a few minutes they really paid them off. The ones that hit us were Me-410's (Germany's latest) and the interphone rang out with, "There's a 38 on a 410--he blew up!!" "There's another 410 on fire!" "Hey, do you see that B-24 burning on our right?" "Another B-24 blew up behind us." "Look at that P-38 after that German--there he goes--look at him, he's coming apart!!"

I saw Bernberg below and it looked rather small. Our target was a bomber assembly plant right on the edge of town. It was easily identified because of the large runways in front of the plant. Our bombing was excellent. All the bomb explosions I saw were on the plant area and a few minutes after bombs away the whole place was nothing but smoke and flames.

We were about 7-to-10 minutes in the flak and when we broke away from it, all the enemy fighters had disappeared. We had no further trouble on the way home.

At interrogation the intelligence officer told us that missions didn't come any rougher than today's and we were relieved to know that they would not all be like this one.

Our Group lost five aircraft. (Note: Will Lundy only reported the loss of three ships by the 44th.) The mission lasted seven hours and we were on oxygen for four hours. Our bombing altitude was 19,000 feet and the temperature was minus 7 degrees.

Once again Henry Siteman was engaged in combat two days in a row. On July 7th he recorded:

I was up at 0100 hours and briefed at 0200 hours for an 0500 hours takeoff to an engine plant in central Germany (Bernberg). Flak was heavy over the target and over Hannover. We were attacked by about 60 enemy fighters (Me-410's, Me-109's and Fw-190's), but they didn't get any of us. However, the 44th's 68th Squadron lost three, including Lt. Morrison's crew. (Will Lundy's research reveals the loss of three ships by the 68th on this day, but there was not a Lt. Morrison reported as lost.) "Happy" set one of them on fire. Lt. Bennett now has 32 missions and needs three more. Hope the next ones are easy because the last two were kind of rough. The pilot was Henderson Bennett and we were carrying twelve 500-pound general purpose bombs.

The Robert Foust and Merritt Derr records show that they made this mission. Morris Yoanitz was with them. They were flying with Fred Stone. Derr's notes were:

We flew in A/C #952, A, *Shack Rat*. The mission was to Bernberg, Germany. As we turned from the IP toward the target, I saw heavy smoke rising from the target and a formation of twin-engine aircraft flying toward us at our altitude. This formation, which turned out to be German Me-210's, flew right through our formation. They were so close I could see the faces of the German fliers. We exchanged fire as they passed through and I believe Ryan was credited with one aircraft downed. There were many chutes seen in the area as planes went down and one of our gunners reported seeing some set on fire as they were pursued by German fighters.

The Robert Foust note was:

Our target was the airfield and fighter assembly factory at Bernberg, Germany. We were attacked by twin-engine fighters (Me-110's). I saw a twin-engine German aircraft with no props (Jet Engine). A lot of B-24's went down on this mission. If all the men in parachutes had 45-cal.

pistols they could have captured the target.

On July 7th eleven aircraft of the 506th departed England on the Bernberg mission. Lt. Leonard led the Squadron as well as the Group with Lt. Henderson Bennett as the deputy lead. Bombing was visual and rated as good. Eight ships bombed and returned to base. Lt. Leonard and Lt. Doctor bombed a target of opportunity. Lt. Richard Hruby failed to bomb due to mechanical failure and brought his bombs back. Aircraft #088 and aircraft #209 returned early due to engine failures.

On the next day, July 8th, George Beiber was on a mission to attack a bridge at Esternay, France. It is likely that Gerald Folsom and William Uvanni were aboard. Uvanni's notes were:

Today's target was a bridge near Rotterdam. After yesterday's mission we expected anything, but were happily disappointed. How two missions could differ so much I can't understand.

It was pretty cloudy but a break through near the bridge gave us a good view of the target. I watched bombs fall for about two minutes and not one hit the bridge. They landed on both sides and I was rather disgusted with the bombardiers. A strange thing to me was that we bombed across the width of the bridge and not its length!! (Later I found out that we knocked the bridge out with near misses. It seems that concussion from 1,000-pounders going off tears structures apart anyhow!)

There were only a couple bursts of flak and I didn't see them.

For the 8th day of July there were only three 506th ships airborne for the attack on the bridge. They were part of a twelve ship squadron. They used visual sighting. As a result, they bombed a bridge other than the assigned one. Bombing results were rated as excellent. Lt. Titter jettisoned his bombs and returned early due to mechanical trouble. Our other two aircraft bombed with the formation and returned to base.

Jack Wind's notes show that he went to a rest home on July 8th. However, he did not stay there very long:

When we were sent to rest camp, Ben Mazza and I went AWOL to Edinburgh, Scotland, on the 9th.

A July 9th British newspaper article reviewed the cost of the invasion:

25,000
AIRMEN
PAID FOR
INVASION

To Make The Invasion
Of France Possible,
Nearly 25,000 Young And
Highly-Trained Men--equivalent
to two divisions--
Died Or Were Taken Prisoner
In The Five Months Before
The Actual Landings.

They were the British and American flyers who fought to smash the Luftwaffe in its breeding grounds among the great aircraft plants of Europe, and in the air whenever it came up to answer the challenge.

They fought to dislocate the communications of German-occupied France so seriously that when the time came for landing on French soil the German supply system was too clogged to allow the swift rallying of German reinforcements.

The daily communique which announces that "Twenty-five of our bombers are missing" has become so regular that the effort and sacrifice by RAF Bomber Command and the U.S. Eighth Air Force, which made the invasion possible, is liable to pass almost unnoticed.

In the first five months of this year--say to within a day of D-Day--the RAF lost 1,483 bombers, mostly four-engine heavies, and the U.S. Eighth Air Force, in the same period, lost 1,407.

Fighter losses were respectively 276 and 673, while the U.S. Ninth Air Force, operating medium and light bombers, lost over 100.

Flying these planes were some 24,260 young men, now listed as dead or prisoners.

Many more, of course, were killed or wounded, but their planes returned to their home bases.

This is the balance sheet in terms of men and blood.

I estimate that in this five months pre-invasion period the two great air forces, the RAF and U.S. Eighth Air Force, dropped 250,000 tons of bombs on selected tactical and strategic targets.

That is to say, for every man lost, ten tons of bombs were dropped on some point of vital importance.

In terms of money alone, and money can never be offset against human life, the value of aircraft lost is at least 70,000,000 pounds.

On July 9th Ray Warner reported:

Tonight a buzz bomb hit outside of Watton. It would have liked to have shook us out of bed. That was some explosion. The time one hit the Regent Palace in London, Harbison was in the hotel on the third floor. The bomb blew off the 7th and 8th floors.

The following day, July 10th, the Ray Warner entry was:

We can now wear four bronze stars to our E. T. O. ribbon. They are for Ploesti, Sicilian Campaign, Italian Campaign, and Air Offensive Over Europe. We also can wear a service stripe for each 6 months service overseas.

On July 11th William Uvanni was a raider at the Rein Air Field near Munich, Germany. He was probably flying with George Beiber, and Gerald Folsom. Uvanni wrote for that day:

We had a two-day rest and then we were briefed for Munich, Germany, the Reich's second largest city. When we saw our target during the briefing, a murmur of conversation filled the room. It was going to be tough and no use kidding ourselves.

The day was clear and we could see for 25 miles in advance of arriving at Munich. There was an immense flak barrage over the city before the first bombers reached it. I watched through the open bomb bays again today and counted 14 oval shaped stadiums. I thought they were race tracks, but most were probably sports stadiums for German physical culture movements.

Munich was very large and pretty from the air. The flak

however, was anything but pretty. We were in it for at least 12 minutes and our Group lost five more bombers. (Will Lundy only reported the loss of one aircraft each from the 66th and 68th Squadrons.) We expected fighters, but none were reported. The mission lasted 9 hours with 7 of them on oxygen. We are tired tonight and our faces are tender from wearing oxygen masks.

One of the P-51's in our escort was hit by flak right over Munich. I watched him go down as I was monitoring the distress channel and he appeared to land in a river running through the city. Nobody reported a chute coming out--either he was killed when hit by the flak or he delayed his jump until we could no longer see his chute. I had a funny feeling in my stomach when this happened.

Eight ships from the 508th were in this raiding party on Munich. Lt. Mendenhall led the second squadron and Lt. Bentcliff was his deputy lead. Bombing was done using PFF assistance due to a heavy cloud cover. Bombing results were unobserved. All of our craft dropped on the target, except for Lt. Eberhardt who experienced a mechanical failure. All of our ships returned to base.

Notes maintained by Kenneth Adrian indicate that he flew this mission, probably with Louis Wimsatt. They were carrying six 1,000-pound bombs. Frank Orehowsky believes that the Titter crew also made this mission.

The Henry Siteman Diary reported for July 11:

Our Group and the whole Eighth Air Force went to Munich, Germany. They dropped over 4,000 tons of bombs on the city itself. German radio reports said bombs were falling for 45 minutes. I didn't go on this one.

Gerald Folsom went to Munich for the second day in a row on July 12th. He probably was with George Beiber and William Uvanni. Uvanni reported:

There was plenty of excitement when Munich appeared again today! Our hearts beat a little faster to say the least. The weather is very clear and the flak will be accurate again.

We reached the target with no trouble; other than a light barrage of flak on the French coast. It looked as though Munich had a priority on flak guns by the size of the

barrage they threw up at us. There were fighters in the area, but none hit our part of the formation.

Munich looked pretty again today, but I've seen all of it I ever want to see! The same goes for all of our crew. Our faces are sore now from another 7 hours on oxygen.

Ten aircraft from the 506th made the repeat performance over Munich. Once again PFF assistance was used. This time, we had two PFF aircraft with us and we flew as the lead squadron. Once again, bombing results were unobserved because of the heavy cloud cover. Lt. Stone returned early and brought back his bombs because of an oil leak in engine #1 on ship #952.

The Kenneth Adrian notes show that he flew this mission in an A/C with the tail marking of Bar R. He was probably with Louis Wimsatt. For the second day in a row the Titter crew was on a raid according to Frank Orehowsey. The Merritt Derr notes indicate that their crew had to abort on this mission.

Henry Siteman didn't go on this raid on Munich, but he did write:

Still just hanging around the site, but the Group went to Munich again in force--1,400 this time. Just about cut off the supply line railroad to Italy so things should break soon down that way. (Note: The primary target was not hit on the 11th so they returned on the 12th to get Rein Airfield.)

The Ray Marner entry for July 12 was:

Our planes went to Munich yesterday and today. The 68th lost a ship that ditched in the Channel killing five men. (Will Lundy's works confirm this loss.)

For the third day in a row, July 13th, the Kenneth Adrian notes show that they were in combat. Once again he was in A/C Bar R. He probably was with Louis Wimsatt.

The 506th placed eight ships in the formation headed for the rail and communications center at Saarbrucken, Germany. They used the PFF ships that that were with them. All of our ships, except for Lts. Docktor and Allen, who experienced mechanical failures, dropped on the target and all aircraft returned to base.

Notes maintained by both Merritt Derr and Robert Foust show that the Fred Stone crew went to the rest home in Southport, England, for a week.

Norm Kiefer received a big promotion on July 14th. On July 17th he wrote to his wife:

As you probably noticed it has been quite a few days since I last wrote to you. Boy! A lot has happened since then.

Last Friday I got up at the usual time and went down to work. There wasn't anyone there, so I went back to the billets. The phone rang and Lt. John McCaslin told me to come down to his office as quickly as possible.

I had no more than walked in when they started to pick on me and wouldn't let me sit down. McCaslin wanted to know if I didn't know how to report to an officer and salute. He then said that I had a lot of learning to do in a hurry.

There was a group of enlisted men there and he told me to take them over to the drying room and put them to work. As I left the room there was a bunch of officers waiting for me. Major Frank Slough grabbed my hand and said, "Let me be the first to congratulate you." I asked him what he was talking about and he said that they had orders to swear me in as a Second Lt. in the afternoon. From then on it has been a mad race.

I had to borrow clothes. Major James McAtee was off base, but I swiped one of his blouses. Lt. Carlton Horne contributed the pants, Capt. Coppens a shirt and tie and Capt. Larry Linck a hat.

I had to go down to Group Headquarters and fill out scads of forms. Then the swearing in ceremony was held at a little after noon on the stage of the Group theater. Major Cannelli administered the oath.

After we left the theater I was walking along the street when Jimmy Caillier passed, going in the opposite direction. He threw a salute without thinking and then stopped. He then said, "Well I'll be damned! A bastard in the morning and a son of a bitch in the afternoon." He then continued on his way. That was my first salute.

I was assigned the BOQ just to the east of the Orderly

Room. The Flight Surgeon, Capt. Allison, has the room across the hall. Lt. Richard Wynes is my roommate. He was a friend of McAtee. They are both from the same general area back in the States.

That evening Major McAtee took me to the Combat Officer's Club for dinner. He had a grand time introducing me as his radio operator.

Then an unplanned drinking party started. After an appropriate period of attendance at the party, I bought a bottle and went down to the enlisted men's barracks. (Note: In December, 1985, Walter Bunker wrote "I remember you well and when you were commissioned. There was an impromptu party at the Club where Chaplain Patterson enjoyed his toddy(s) while saying he never could handle more than one.")

The next morning I got up early. I talked to Major Slough and arranged for Jimmy Caillier to be given a pass to London. Jimmy and I took the train to London so that I could get some officer's clothing at the quartermaster store.

We were fortunate to be able to get a room at the Regeant Palace. Then we went to the quartermaster store. I want you to know that a Sgt. and a guy in a mixed uniform of officer's pants and a shirt with Sgt. stripes can gather a lot of stares.

Now here is where you are going to be surprised. I had saved three hundred dollars to come home with. Now that money has to be spent on my clothing. So far, I haven't spent much over one hundred dollars, but I am not through yet. The Govt. will be giving me two hundred dollars for a clothing allowance.

That evening Jimmy and I were crossing a street just in front of the hotel. Who should be approaching us but Captains Joe Young and David McCash. When they saw me in an officer's uniform they were horrified. They thought that I was impersonating an officer. They wanted to get me off the street and back into my enlisted man's uniform. After I showed them my new identity card there was another drinking party.

The next night the air raid sirens sounded. We were in the hotel bar at the time and should have stayed inside.

However, we went out in front. The searchlights and guns over in St. James Park were all in action and had locked in on a low flying plane. I thought at the time that it was strange that the pilot was not taking evasive action. Then I realized that the ship did not have a pilot. It was a buzz bomb. Suddenly the engine stopped and then there was a big explosion.

The next morning we went to Mass in a church that was on the far side of St. James Park. During Mass the drone of a buzz bomb was heard and then it stopped. That is when I hit the floor. There was an explosion. When I looked over the top of the pew, the priest was still saying mass prayers. I don't think that he missed one word. A number of parishioners left to go see if they still had a home. A few weeks later I heard that the church was demolished by one of the bombs.

Henry Siteman wrote on July 14th:

Yesterday, July 13 I went to tea at Pop's and had a swell time. Today Lt. Bennett got his Distinguished Flying Cross at 32 missions and finished his tour. He is now going on detached service somewhere in Scotland. I have no crew now, but am going to fly with Lt. Tucker. I refused to fly with another pilot as we didn't think him capable of bringing us back home. Raymond Khoury came home from the hospital today, but won't be flying for a while.

Since there were no operational flights scheduled for July 15th Henry Siteman wrote:

I went looking for strawberries with Lt. Henderson Bennett. I learned that Bennett would spend 90 days flying between Scotland and Sweden. He was to then return to the base before going back to the States.

On the 16th of July Henry Siteman was on this his 29th mission and he wrote:

A fine way to spend a birthday -- 23,000 feet over Germany. We went to Saarbrucken again and hit the marshalling yards. This target was requested by the ground troops. We were up at 0130 hours, briefed at 0245 hours and took off at 0530 hours. We were carrying 2,700 gallons of gas and twelve 500-pound general purpose bombs. We returned at 1230 and I hit the sack. It was a seven

hour mission.

The pilot was Kearney and his copilot and navigator were on their first mission. They were quite thrilled. Flak was moderate and there were no fighters. "Jerry" now has bombs hanging from cables attached to a balloon. We were shooting at these to clear a path to the target. Eustice Hawkins led the Group in a PFF ship and had to abort. I don't know why.

The Kenneth Adrian record shows that he made this second trip to Saarbrucken. He probably was with Louis Wimsatt.

William Uvanni, who probably was with George Beiber and Gerald Folsom, wrote:

Saarbrucken, Germany! Back to good old Germany again! Looks as if we are doomed to do all our missions in Adolph's back yard! This one wasn't so far though; being just over the French border. This means a lot to us in the event we have to bail out or are forced to crash land in enemy territory. French people offer aid to our escape while the Germans offer virtually no hope.

Bombing results were good. Flak was quite accurate and heavy. Quite a bit of flak was of the tracking variety. (Ack-ack batteries track and shoot at individual planes and squadrons rather than shooting at the entire formation.)

We've flown all of our missions in a plane named *Consolidated Mess* and she is a honey! So far we've had no serious battle damage--the "Mess" seems charmed.

For this mission the 506th placed 12 aircraft in the air. PFF assistance was used. Lt. Max Mendenhall led the second squadron with Lt. Titter as the deputy lead. Bombing results were unobserved. All ships bombed the target and returned home.

On July 16th Ray Marner recorded:

Danny Mattis was killed when a reconnaissance vehicle hit a truck. (This accidental death was not recorded in Will Lundy's works.)

Garnet Stoltenburg recorded on July 17th that he was on a mission:

We went to Aussex, northeast of Caen, France. We were carrying 52 one-hundred pound general purpose bombs. The specific target was enemy tanks and troops that were dug in about 3,000 yards from our forces. The flak was medium accurate and it lasted for a long time. Bombing results were very good. Our ship was hit eight times by flak. (Note: The Microfilm history did not show that the 506th was in combat on this day. Will Lundy does not show that the 44th went out this day. Neither does Rodger Freeman report that the 44th was in combat on the 17th of July. However, Freeman does show that the 392nd Group was on a mission. Garnet may have flown with another group in the Division on this day.)

Henry Siteman reported for July 17 that Lt. Henderson Bennett left for Scotland to ferry officers back from Sweden.

A report prepared by the Operations Office, dated July 17, 1944 named the following personnel:

PILOTS--Mendenhall, Leonard, McKenna, Kearney, Dines, Tucker, Wind, Scott, Docktor, Menzel, Titter, Stone, Milliken, Butler, Bentcliff, Beiber, Wimsatt, Eberhardt, Allen, Atkins, Clements, Insley, and Van Ess.

COPILOTS--Quirk, Adams, Grene, T. L. Smith, Waldo, Clasgens, Heintz, Swenson, Whitehouse, Derr, Manerre, Kincaid, Gempel, Folsom, Wood, Airoidi, Jacobs, Ryan, and Kodaj.

NAVIGATORS--Bearden, Williams, Goe. Dwelle, Wilson, Mazza, Perdisatt, Dunbar, Bennett, Hersh, Patrichuk, Bertoli, McKay, Fiskum, Edgecomb, Adrian, Gleichenhaus, Healy, Boykin, Feinstein, Giroux, and Hess.

BOMBARDIERS--McCloud, Dowsett, Stanton, Reynolds, Miller, Werkstein, Graham, Stovroff, Perry, Celentano, Boensch, Bockstedt, Beirne, Flora, Faigenblat, Bumbicka, Gutknecht, and Walfish. In addition, there were two enlisted men who were bombardiers: Foster and Millican.

ENGINEERS--M. H. Mann, Cowden, Sheldon, Gardner, Zesdorn, Reeves, Lightcap, Yost, Goebel, Smart, Brumm, Brown, Richard, Rasmussen, Griffin, Woodruff, Robertson, Favers, Pettelli, Browning, Bolger, Stoefen, Hartzell, De Boer, Moffett, and Jandreau.

ASST. ENGINEERS--McGee, Missig, Hobbs, Siteman, Emch,

Gardner, Wurzbarger, Bushby, Becker, Larsen, Connelly, Cena, Rebhan, Perman, Parker, Petz, Cummins, Tiemeier, Young, Yaniga, Thompson, Underwood, Lynch, Cash, Fox, Clarke, and T. L. Peters.

RADIO OPERATORS--Apice, Bednar, Kovach, Wright, Racer, Khoury, Stoltenburg, Horne, Foust, Grady, Uchanski, Cervellera, Beckwith, Mann R. E., Maschmeyer, Uvanni, Hannon, Raniello, Kempowicz, Norwood, Shook, Kittle, Fletcher, and Stallworth.

ASST RADIO OPERATORS--Toothacker, C. C. Peters, Miller, Robison, Hiserote, Whiteside, Tulini, Muff, Guebard, Branson, Richter, Foust, Larkin, Deifer, Fuller, Maggard, Hairr, Garrett, Priddy, Bechtold, Hagner, and Edmonds.

TAIL GUNNERS--Murray, Brosh, Gaudin, Hopkins, Struble, Breakey, Eccleston, Anuskiewicz, Farrell, Libby, Gorski, Meunitz, Yarbrough, Eramo, Downey, Morse, Mason, Gross, Pacylowsky, Gardner, Huggins, and Federlin.

GUNNERS--Bernstein, Tuzinski, Livingston, Meyers, Gurt, Harper, Puglisi, Ryan, Allen, Humphries, Capps, Miller, Collins, Behnke, Shay, Higdon, Horner, Deutsch, Westerman, Mulholland, Wycoff, Williams, Porter, Hardwick, Di Cicco, Parks, Reed, Truono, Nealy, Banks, Grannon, Powell, Richardson, O'Gara, Howser, Murray, and Moerbe.

It must have been after Henry Siteman completed his diary entry the night before, but he got some good and bad news on the evening of the July 17th. The good news was that he would only have to fly 30 missions. The bad news was that he was flying that last mission on the next day. Henry wrote:

I was briefed at 0200 hours for a 0400 hours take off to the German lines which were about eight miles southeast of Caen. The British troops were to start a drive through this area later on in the day. The British requested we help out. We bombed just 3,000 feet from the British and Canadian troops. We bombed from 14,000 feet and the pilot was hit by flak in both feet and legs. We gave him first aid and the copilot brought our plane home. Lt. Smith did a beautiful job. Our pilot almost lost his left foot at the ankle. We gave him morphine to deaden the pain. We had a hard time with him while in the air and also getting him out of the plane after landing. I am glad that it is all over now, at least I will be able to sleep nights. The pilot was Kearney and we carried fifty-two 100-pound

bombs. The mission lasted four and one half hours.

My crew mates Wright, and Gardner finished today. Robbie has one more to go. Hawkins has five to do in the 66th Squadron. Joe (Bearden) has five and Mac (McCloud) has nine still to go. I will surely pray for them all and then we can have a great reunion after it is all over. Hawkins is now a Capt.

It is likely that George Beiber went to Troarn on July 18th with Gerald Folsom, and William Uvanni aboard. Uvanni wrote:

We had yesterday off, but today we at last drew a haul to France. It lasted 4 hours. We were briefed to support our ground troops by bombing German troop concentrations at Troarn. Our altitude was 15,000 feet and we carried fifty-two 100-pound bombs. They never seemed to stop dropping when we released them.

The results were excellent as bombs away was at 7:30 A.M. and we caught the Germans either at breakfast or in their barracks. The flak was heavy and awfully gosh darned accurate at this lower altitude.

We could see the English Channel at all times and this was comforting. If we were shot up, chances to ditch in the Channel and get back to England would have been good. Lately Air/Sea Rescue has been dashing in right next to the French coast and picking up Allied airmen who went down in the Channel.

We pulled our mission and were back in the "sack" at 9:30 A.M. (Banker's Hours???) This mission qualified our crew for the Air Medal. We haven't received them yet. It usually takes a month or so for it to come through.

There were twelve aircraft from the 506th in the formation that left on this ground support mission of July 18th. They flew as the first squadron in an effort to allow a breakthrough for our ground troops. Lt. Leonard led the Group with General Johnson aboard. Lt. Clifford Bentcliff flew deputy lead. Bombing was visual with results being from good to excellent. Lt. Louis Wimsatt in ship #177 failed to take off due to mechanical trouble. Ten ships suffered battle damage with seven of them being quickly repaired.

After our return, four ships were scheduled for a second mission. The target was to have been Rotterdam, Holland.

That mission was scrubbed due to weather.

The diary of William Uvanni and the combat list of Gerald Folsom show that they were both in combat on July 19th. They were probably with George Beiber. Uvanni wrote:

We went into Germany by way of Belgium this morning. Our target was the city of Koblenz which is about 125 miles from the German/Belgium border.

There was plenty of flak in the target area. We expected this because of the city's location. It's right where the Rhine and Moselle rivers meet and it is easy to see why the Germans would defend it well.

We are all very tired tonight. We have flown seven missions in the last 13 days and the effect of oxygen and long hours at high altitude have really made us weary.

The 506th placed thirteen ships in the air for this trip. The assigned primary target was Russelsheim, Germany. Instead, the secondary at Koblenz, Germany was struck. Lt. Max Mendenhall led the second squadron with Lt. Titter as the deputy lead. Bombing was performed visually after preliminary sighting by PFF. Bombing results were good.

This was the fifth mission for Kenneth Adrian. His notes show that he flew the raid in A/C Bar W and they were carrying twelve 500-pound bombs. The target was Koblenz. He was probably with Louis Wimsatt.

Henry Siteman reported on July 19th:

I am just hanging around waiting to see what they are going to do with me. Lt. Bennett came back from Scotland as they didn't need him up there.

The George Beiber crew was out on July 20th. The records of both Gerald Folsom and William Uvanni show that they were along. Uvanni recorded:

Erfurt, Germany. We were briefed to bomb an airdrome in Central Germany.

We used the city of Frankfurt as a check point. I saw the "Autobahn" which runs through Frankfurt and it is the largest highway I have ever seen. It seemed a third as wide as the entire city!

There was an awful lot of flak over Frankfurt (box barrage) and we were thankful that we were able to go around it rather than through it.

At Erfurt the flak was light and I was really surprised. (Maybe the barrage at Frankfurt made it seem that way!) The airfield that we went after was an easy target as the weather was real clear. Our bombing results were excellent and we came home over Holland. We caught as much flak off the Dutch Coast as we did over Erfurt.

I can't understand why the Germans didn't defend the airfield better? We could see several multi-engine bombers on the field and although our own bombs hit hangars, I imagine some of our heavies disposed of the planes also.

On this mission there were only nine aircraft from the 506th dispatched. Lt. Oscar Leonard led the Group and Lt. John Milliken was his deputy lead. Clear weather allowed visual sighting and the bomb strikes were good. Lt. John Allen experienced mechanical failure and brought his bombs back to base early. All other ships bombed and returned to base.

Once again the Louis Wimsatt crew appears to have been in combat on this day. At least Kenneth Adrian was. His records show that he flew this raid in an aircraft with the call letter Bar W.

Gerald Folsom was probably flying copilot for George Beiber on July 21st. This was the fifth time in the last six days that this crew had been in combat. William Uvanni was with them. Uvanni wrote:

When they briefed us for Munich again, we began to wonder. A good way to get rid of a fellow is to keep sending him to Munich.

We never saw the ground after takeoff until we reached the target. There was an opening over Munich and it was the only one we saw over three countries; England, France and Germany! We were up to 25,000 feet trying to find an opening between cloud layers so that the dangers of flying formation would not be so great.

As we started our bomb run we saw, coming head-on, a formation of B-17's making their run exactly opposite ours!! We withdrew to one side and passed over the city

again catching all the flak they threw up. Having our bombs all of this time, we never really knew what worry was until then.

We skirted the city and came back to try our run again. We flew over the break in the clouds once more and caught the flak all over again. Several bombers had been hit and were going down. We finished this second run and still did not drop our bombs. We were all scared to death after making that second run and when the report came over VHF (radio) that we were going to try once more, I think everyone's heart stood still. Mine did and after the mission all of our crew admitted the same thing.

About this time we flew into a cloud bank and when we broke through we were the only bomber around!!!! We had become separated from the 8th Air Force! At that point, we had been cruising around Munich for more than half an hour. "Woodie" told Lt. Beiber that our gas was getting low and if we didn't head for home we'd never make it. (He didn't know whether or not we could as it was.)

I had opened and closed the bomb bay doors twice already and Lt. George Beiber told me to open them again. As soon as they were opened, we dropped our bombs and Lt. Beiber told our navigator, Lt. Willis Edgcomb to plot the straightest route home. We were deep in Germany; all alone and fighters had been reported around Munich. If they spotted us now, we'd be lucky to make "Stalag Luft. (The airmen's prison camp in Germany.)

The Good Lord smiled on us and we crossed Germany without seeing anything other than clouds, which were all over.

About 15 minutes after we crossed the French/German border we saw a formation of about 18 American bombers. A B-17 was leading it and there were both B-17's and B-24's in it. We headed for them and as we did we saw flak start to break around them. As much as we wanted to join them for protection against the fighters, our pilot decided we'd stick it out alone rather than fly through the flak with them.

About 20 minutes later I made a terrible mistake. I looked out my window and saw flak climbing to meet us. I was listening to my radio (I was assigned the channel at briefing) and didn't know what was being said on interphone throughout the plane. I took it for granted

that one of our crew had reported the flak.

It climbed steadily to our altitude looking for all the world like a great big staircase. One burst exploded right under our right wing and threw it high into the air. I couldn't wait any longer and switched to interphone and reported that antiaircraft batteries were tracking us.

By this time Lt. Beiber had taken evasive action and soon the flak stopped. He replied back over the interphone that he knew they were shooting at us now, but no one except myself had noticed it. (I made a solemn oath to myself that from now on when I see flak I'll switch to interphone and unless I hear it called out, I'll call it myself.)

Our navigator, Lt. Edgecomb, did a beautiful job plotting our course home and we landed at our base with 15 gallons of gas left for each engine. "Woodie" called it right. We were one of the few crews who landed at their own field. A large number of planes that came back crash landed on the English coast and almost every other plane landed in southern England, not having enough gas to reach home.

The next day I found out that the lead plane in our formation had its bomb sight destroyed by flak preventing the bombardier from dropping his bombs. His interphone was also shot out making it impossible for him to tell the deputy lead bombardier to take over and drop the bombs.

Lt. Butler's crew had its left rear vertical stabilizer shot off over the target and was leaking gasoline badly. We heard them say over the VHF radio they were trying to make Switzerland.

Rumor has it that this mission to Munich has been one of the most costly ever undertaken by the 8th Air Force. The 44th lost several planes on it and quite a few of those who came back had to crash land on the coast. (Note: Will Lundy reports the loss of four 44th aircraft on this date.)

On July 21st the 506th put up eight ships. We were accompanied by two PFF aircraft from the 68th Squadron. They led the first section on takeoff. The target was the armament works at Munich, Germany. PFF sighting was used with poor results. Two of our 506th ships were shot down.

Lt. John Allen was flying aircraft #034, Bar R, *Southern Comfort II*. They were believed to have been attacked by enemy fighters and started to go down. The tail gunner was seen to be firing at enemy aircraft as the ship fell. When last seen the ship was in a steep dive and then was lost from view.

In Will Lundy's *44th Bomb Group Roll of Honor and Casualties*, Dan Healy reported what happened aboard *Southern Comfort II*:

We were shot down by an antiaircraft battery despite strong evasive action taken by pilots Allen and Jacobs. One engine failed, I believe #4, and we stalled. Then we righted ourselves when #1 & #2 were adjusted, etc. We had not bombed Munich because of cloud cover, but bombed a target of opportunity not far from Munich. *Southern Comfort II* had two new engines on one side and two old ones on the other. We could not keep up with the formation and set off for England alone. When the antiaircraft shell hit the other engine, the bells went off. I got Lt. Flora out of the nose turret and followed him out the nose wheel hatch. John Kempowicz, our radio operator, did not pop his chute after the crewmen had put him out through the bomb bay. I never saw fighters on us, but then, I couldn't from my position. We were collected in a small village (Leonbronn), and then transported to the Stuttgart area. We were interrogated at Oberusal (near the Leica Works outside Frankfurt), then sent by train to Stalag #1.

Lt. Orville Flora added:

Stalag #1 was located on a peninsula jutting out into the Baltic Sea, 90 miles north of Berlin and just 60 miles from Sweden. Some 10,000 officers including 8,000 Americans were confined in barracks there, behind barbed wire.

For me the war was a short one. I was on my fourth mission when enemy flak struck a wing and touched off an oil fed fire. Because of our heavy concentration of 110+ octane gasoline in the wing tanks, we were under orders to jump any time we had a fire. An open field near a small Austrian village, just across the border from Munich, provided a convenient landing place and an opportunity for the village home guard to capture its first American. One member of the bombing crew, a radio operator, had to be pushed out of the plane and did not survive. The others

were scattered over 60 miles of German and Austrian countryside before being taken prisoner.

In a recent letter William Shay wrote:

I was shot down on my second mission, July 21, 1944. I didn't really have much time with the 506th. I spent 10 months in a POW camp or on a death march from February 2, 1945 until May 8, 1945.

With Lt. John W. Allen (POW) were Lts. John R. Jacobs Jr. (POW), Daniel J. Healy (POW), and Orville E. Flora Jr. (POW). The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Alex Patelli (POW), John J. Kempowicz Jr. (KIA), William E. Shay (POW), Steve J. Petz (POW), George C. Prida (POW), and Frank P. Pacylowsky (POW).

The other 506th crew that was lost on July 21st belonged to Lt. Myron Butler, flying in aircraft #142, Bar K. They were hit by flak and about three feet of wing tip was missing. The pilot called on the VHF radio and said that he was going to Switzerland. When last seen all engines were running and the ship appeared to be under control.

In Will Lundy's *44th Bomb Group Roll of Honor And Casualties* Oliver C. Perry reported:

We did not make it to Switzerland. However, all ten men survived to become POW's. We were hit over Munich and had a very large hole in the wing. It was most unlikely that we could get back to base. So we proceeded to go toward Switzerland. We were hit again before we got there. That was southwest of Munich, over a town named Lorach (Eurach or Durach) where we lost an engine and a rear stabilizer was shot off. Not then being able to make Switzerland, we all bailed out.

I think that we encountered some fighter action south of Munich, but it was in very cloudy conditions and they lost contact with us in the 10/10 overcast. We had been told that we would have had to fly at least eight miles into Switzerland before we could be considered safe internees, as those people living near the German border might be tempted to sell or give us back to the Germans.

Our radio man, Robert E. Mann, received a broken arm while either bailing out or upon landing. A few of the crew members got banged up on landing. We were captured and made prisoners.

We were taken to Mulhouse, France, and then to Frankfurt and placed in a jail for a couple of days. Then we went to Dulag Luft for interrogation. We then took the trip to Stalag I, Barth, on the Baltic Sea. We remained there until the war ended and we were liberated by the Russians.

With Lt. Myron H. Butler (POW) were Lts. Jack A. Kincaid (POW), John E. McKay ((POW), and Oliver C. Perry (POW). The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Jack D. Rasmussen (POW), Robert E. Mann (POW), Paul C. Humphries Jr. (POW), John J. Connelly (POW), Louis W. Deifer (POW), and Leonard A. Eramo (POW).

That same day, July 21st, the Louis Wimsatt crew was on their third raid in as many days. This was by far their worst raid to date. In a recent letter Kenneth Adrian wrote:

The mission was a failure for the 44th as we missed the target a good mile.

Due to high clouds and a lead pilot that made a diving turn into them after dropping our bombs, we had planes scattered all over the sky. We didn't see the 44th from Munich till we got home.

Anyway, we dropped under the clouds and could see the ground again at about 16,000 feet. We flew back to the coast without incident. On the coast one German 88-mm gun got on us and we would have had a direct hit if the pilot had not taken a steep right turn. One shot was in front, one was in the back and the next one was where we would have been if we hadn't turned. Anyway, we picked up 35 holes in the ship.

The nose gunner got a piece of shrapnel in his forearm and was bleeding profusely. He called me (I was right behind him in the navigators compartment) and said that he had been hit. He had a "hell of a time" getting the turret turned so that he could get out. I helped him out and found that he was lucky with only a flesh wound.

Many of our aircraft received battle damage on July 21st. Aircraft #42-95 207 landed at Warningford, England and was later salvaged (At Shipdham). Ship #016, Z, *Down De Hatch*, also received battle damage.

The entry by Ray Marner on July 21st was:

Today we lost Lt. Butler's and Lt. Allen's crews over

Munich. The Group lost several. (Note: The Group lost four ships on this day.)

This was a very poor day for the Komasinski crew to arrive. With Lt. Bernard J. Komasinski were Lts. Winfield Scott Gippert, Edgar W. Michaels, and Charles H. Lain. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Stanley J. Hulewicz Jr., Frank La Fazia, John H. McKee, Nelson E. Brott, Walter E. Bohenko, and Frank N. Schaeffer.

Henry Siteman wrote:

July 22--"We have been released from the Squadron. and now the Group has charge of us. I went to the hospital today to see about a pain in my back at the bottom of my spine. Doc. Allison says I'm to go to the General Hospital tomorrow."

July 23rd--"I was admitted to the hospital and was operated on at 1830 hours. I was in hellish pain for 48 hours, but feel better now. I will have to have another operation after this one heals. Later on the cyst will have to be removed. I may be in the hospital four or five weeks."

It is likely that George Beiber was on a ground troop support mission on July 24th. Records of both Gerald Folsom and William Uvanni show that they were out on this day. Uvanni's notes show:

Caen, France. Today we supported British ground troops in a drive southeast of Cherbourg.

We assembled and headed for France at 15,000 feet. We could see the channel at all times, even on our bomb run. We again carried fifty-two 100-pound bombs. As we approached "no man's land" the British lit red smoke pots so we wouldn't drop on them.

Our bombs were dropped in train and they seemed to drop for several minutes when we released them. The German lines were covered with a rain of bombs and as they hit the British artillery opened up with a barrage of shells. Flak was thick and very accurate. When the British first opened their barrage, I thought they were German ack-ack batteries and froze all over because I had never seen so many shooting at once.

We were in the flak about seven minutes and then we were over the channel and on our way home. The mission lasted 4 hours and that part of it we all liked.

There were twelve ships from the 506th that flew in support of the ground forces that were trying to affect a break through at St. Lo, France, on July 24th. The microfilm record shows that our aircraft could not release their bombs because of cloud cover. Sortie credit was given since there were no abortions and all ships returned to base. Lt. Max Mendenhall led the third squadron with Lt. John Titter flying as deputy lead.

Both Robert Foust and Merritt Derr were on this mission. They were probably with Fred Stone.

The Robert Foust note reads:

The target was the German buildup at St. Lo, France. Low level mission in support of ground troops. 10/10 cloud cover and we returned to base with our bomb load.

The records of Kenneth Adrian show that he was on this mission to St. Lo. He was probably with Wimsatt.

The George Beiber crew returned to St. Lo on July 25th. Both William Uvanni and Gerald Folsom were along. Uvanni's notes were:

St. Lo, France. Today's mission was quite similar to yesterday's only today we supported our own troops.

As there were only 1,000 yards between our lines and the Germans, red smoke pots were again used. Lt. Edgcomb, upon seeing some of the heavies unload their bombs ahead of us told us they were dropping short and would hit our own troops. He said the wind had shifted and was blowing the smoke towards them. I felt badly when I heard this as my brother, Frank, and brother-in-law, Fred, were somewhere down there. (Frank was in Armored and Fred was in Infantry.)

Lt. Beiber kept flying beyond the point of release of the others and we released our bombs well beyond the smoke making sure they fell on German troops. As we were at 12,000 feet the flak was very heavy and accurate.

We were glad to see the Channel below and landed an hour

after bombs away. Our Group was badly damaged by flak.

Lt. Edgcomb was right, American bombers dropped on our own ground troops and many were killed.

The 506th sent twelve ships on this return visit to St. Lo on July 25th. Once again the intent was to assist our infantry boys that were tied up by the German forces. Our target was section A. This was one of three sections. We overran the MPI and had to make a second pass on section C with excellent results. Lt. Max Mendenhall led the third squadron with Lt. Titter as his deputy lead. All ships bombed and returned to base. Intelligence later notified us that our bombing enabled the break out of our ground troops. They poured through the gap and were able to make significant ground gains.

The Robert Foust note for this mission was:

The target was the German troops at St. Lo, France again. This was a maximum effort with B-24's, B-17's, B-25's and B-26's. The bomb group ahead of us dropped their bombs on our own troops.

The Merritt Derr note was:

We were in aircraft #952, A, on the mission to St. Lo, France. We were gone for five hours. The target was the German troop concentrations. At the briefing we were given a road that would serve as the line between our ground troops and the German forces. There was to be no bombing behind that line. As we approached the target, artillery marked the corners of our designated target area with colored smoke. I'll never understand how the 8th Air Force could possibly bomb our own forces, but I saw it happen. The group preceding us to the target dropped their entire load on the Allied side of that road. I felt sick. Upon release of our bombs, we made a diving turn to the right at speeds up to red line to avoid flak from all the 88's (antiaircraft and artillery guns) the Germans had there.

The following newspaper article described this error:

558 AMERICANS KILLED

German troops were defying Allied troops on the Normandy peninsula seven weeks after D-Day in 1944. A massive

effort code-named Operation Cobra was mounted to break out into the rest of France.

After fighter/bombers worked over the German lines, 1,500 heavy bombers of the U.S. 8th Air Force were assigned to blast the way for tanks and infantry. They dropped 3,400 tons of bombs close ahead of the Allied ground troops.

Fritz Bayerlein, Commanding General of the Panzer Lehr, lived through it. He said, "They kept coming over as if on a conveyor belt. My front lines looked like the face of the moon. At least 70 percent of my troops were out of action, dead, wounded, crazed or numbed. All my forward tanks were knocked out. The roads were practically impassable."

General Bayerlein was the enemy. Lt. General Leslie McNair, commander of the U.S. Army ground forces, was on our side. Unlike Gen. Bayerlein, he did not live through it. He was one of the 558 American casualties from that overwhelming bomb drop.

"GROUND BELCHED, SHOOK"

The worst hit U.S. division was the 30th Infantry, whose commander said, "It was horrible. The ground belched, shook and spewed dirt to the sky. Scores of our troops were hit, their bodies flung from their slit trenches." Maj. Gen. Clarence Huebner, of the 1st Infantry Division, who had seen much combat said, "It was the most terrifying thing ever seen. I had a remote feeling of helplessness."

Gen. Omar Bradley, commanding the U.S. First Army said, "Oh, Christ! Not another short drop."

Another 506th crew that made this break through mission was that of Louis Wimsatt. Kenneth Adrian's records shows they were carrying fifty-two 100-pound bombs.

Ray Marner wrote regarding this ground support bombing:

The 44th led the 8th Air Force today and bombed 1500 yards in front of our troops in Normandy. (Note: I can find no other evidence that the 44th was leading that day. Roger Freeman, in his *Mighty Eighth War Diary* indicated that there were two incidents of short drops on July 25 and also short drops on July 24th.)

It was probably about this time that the Lt. McGuire crew arrived. With Thomas J. McGuire were Lts. Dudley G. Titus, Peter G. Crawford, and Merle G. Turley. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Edward W. Kramer, John C. Cullinane, Carl E. Daniel, James C. Nokes, Joseph L. Hansen, and Robert J. Reiner.

It was on July 27th that Captain Wayne Middleton was reassigned to the 506th. He had served with the 67th for a number of months prior to being sent back to the States on leave. He now became acting Commanding Officer while Major James C. McAtee was sent on secret detached service. That was some secret assignment. He went back home on leave.

Jack Wind's notes show that:

T. L. Smith assigned as pilot for crew.

George Beiber went on a mission on July 29th. With him were Gerald Folsom and William Uvanni. Uvanni's notes indicate:

We weren't scheduled to fly this mission last night, but one of the pilots got into a fight in town (from another squadron) and is riding the sick boat so we were elected.

We would draw one like Bremen on a deal like this. The older men in the barracks had told us that Bremen was second to none and they were not wrong. We flew in D with another squadron (67th). There wasn't any seat at my desk so I spent most of the time on the floor.

Bremen was covered completely with clouds when we arrived and thank heaven for that!! We dropped our bombs on PFF (instruments used to bomb through the clouds) and they shot flak by radar. There was a solid flak barrage the length of the city and you couldn't see through it!! They were off slightly to the right. However, as we flew in the middle element, we made it OK.

Bombing results were perfect. Bremen was "pinpointed" through 10/10 overcast and that is remarkable. Our Group lost five heavies however. (Note: Will Lundy only mentioned the loss of two ships for the Group on this date.)

At interrogation they told us about Lt. Green (67th) and a plane from our Squadron colliding over the Channel during assembly. They were at 2,000 feet and both planes dropped

like rocks. The enlisted crew members slept in our barracks. "Red" Alva Favors was the only member of either plane to get out. He was in the bomb bay and had his chute on when it happened. It was his sixth mission. His chute opened as he hit the Channel and a Dutch rescue boat picked him up.

The radio operator slept next to me. His name was Johnny Raniello and he had a picture of his baby tacked to the ceiling over his bed. He had never seen the baby, but he would lie in his bunk and look at the picture. He was killed instantly in the Martin upper turret. The pilot and copilot were also killed as the propellers from Lt. Greene's plane chewed right through the flight deck.

Someone had taken Johnny's picture of his baby down before we got back -- I don't know who.

Our crew was awfully tired after this mission, but we couldn't sleep. We just talked occasionally and rested as well as possible.

Ten ships from the 506th paid the visit to Bremen, Germany, on July 29th. Lt. Max Mendenhall led the second squadron and Lt. Conrad Menzel was his deputy lead. We lost Lt. Bernard Eberhardt flying in aircraft #309, V. At eight-thirty A.M., while making a left turn, the low element slid under the second element. The number three man in the second element was caught in prop wash and nosed down colliding with the number three man in the low element. The Eberhardt aircraft went into a flat spin.

Sgt. Alva Favors, the sole survivor of this accident, has no recollections of what happened that day. One body was recovered, Sgt. Gale Gross, and it is buried at Cambridge.

With Lt. Bernard J. Eberhardt Jr (KIA) were Lts. John A. Airoidi (KIA), Seymour Gleichenhaus (KIA), and Milton R. Beirne (KIA). The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Alva F. Favors (Rescued), John V. Raniello (KIA), Victor Parker (KIA), Wayne D. Garrett (KIA), George C. Behnke (KIA), and Gale H. Gross (KIA).

Notes maintained by Merritt Derr and Robert Foust show that they were on this mission. Probably, Fred Stone was the pilot.

Frank Schaefer reports that this was the first mission for

the Bernard Komasinski crew. They flew in aircraft #42-110 024, Bar P, *Old Cock*. (Note: This ship carried an eleventh man, the radar jammer.). Frank remembers:

There was a solid undercast when we arrived in the target area. However, the area was evident when we saw the giant barrage of flak that greeted us. One plane in a higher element must have dropped its bombs through the bomb bay doors because they were hanging straight down.

Notes kept by Robert Foust indicate that he was on a mission to Ludwigshafen, Germany, on July 31st. The pilot was probably Fred Stone.

There were seven 506th ships in the formation. Bombing was performed using PFF assistance and results were unobserved. All of our ships bombed and returned to base.

The Kenneth Adrian record show that his crew was out this day. They were carrying twelve 500-pound bombs and the specific target was a rubber plant. Merritt Derr was also on this mission. Frank Schaeffer's records indicate the Komasinski crew took *Old Cock* to this target.

Lts. Ogden K. Hill and Hal C. Tyree Jr. arrived in the 506th on July 31, 1944.

With Lt. Hill were Lts. Ellsworth J. Zitzman Jr., William W. Albert, and Raymond H. Parshall. The enlisted men were Sgts. James B. Barnett, Charles W. Buechler, Owen A. Warren, Abe Friedman, William G. Hahn, and Walter P. Yost.

With Lt. Tyree were Lts. Rudolph D. Santini, Walter H. Eichensehr, and Jacob R. Young. The enlisted personnel consisted of Sgts. John P. Cronin, Charles J. Turner, Joe W. Cutright, Theodore Niemczura, Jack Rollins, and George Weidig.

Also, some time during July, the Ellis crew arrived. With Lt. Raymond E. Ellis was Lt. Edwin E. Cowles III. The enlisted personnel Sgts. Ben M. Samuels Jr., Leonard G. Slack, Leon B. Runions, James E. Vaisey, Roy H. King Jr., and Raymond A. Kaufmann Jr.. Before this crew could get into combat, Ellis was replaced by Thorne, Cowles was replaced by Wilson, Slack was replaced by Ekonomski, King was replaced by Frank Sullivan and Kaufmann was replaced by George Lewis.

Another crew that arrived about this time belonged to Paul

Durett. With Lt. Durett were Lts. Donald Clapper and Frank Hope. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Jim Burton, Floyd Nesbitt, Horace Ellis, Charles Greene, and Herman Smith.

Promotions, not previously mentioned, were given to the following 506th personnel during the month: 1st Lts. John Horey and Allen N. Williams appointed temporary Captains; 2nd Lt. to 1st Lt. included Martin Swenson, Miller, Richard Hruby, Robert Bertoli, Gee, Henderson Bennett, Forseth, Robert Graham, Grene, William Manerre, James Whitehouse and Morton Bauman.

New crews, not previously mentioned, joining the Squadron during the month were: Wood, and William Atkins. In addition, Jack Wind (and crew) and John Docktor (and crew) returned from detached service to duty. Captain George Insley (and crew) from detached service to duty. Lts. James Tucker, Fred Stone, and crew, and Alfred Wilson from detached service to duty. Lt. Richard Hruby (and crew) from rest home to duty.

Individuals, not previously mentioned, leaving the Squadron during the month included: Captain Robert A. Johnson assigned to the 14th Combat Wing; Captain Paul Blow and Lts. Robert Westcott and Ellwood Van Ess transferred to the 12th RCD; Captain Saul Fineman and Lt. Alfred Lincoln transferred to the 489th Bomb Group; Captain Carlton Horne on detached service to the 10th School of Technical Training, RAF; Lt. Richard Hruby detached service, RAF Station Louchers, Scotland; Lts. John Doctor, and crew, and John Titter, and crew, to detached service, ARC Club, Southport; Lt. Thomas McKenna and crew transferred to the 66th Squadron; Lt. Conrad Scheer assigned to the 10th replacement depot; Lt. Grover Trumbo assigned to the 491st Bomb Group; Major James C. McAtee was given a three-day leave of absence; Jack Wind, and crew, and Walter Scott, and crew, to a rest home.

Local test, practice formation and/or bombing missions were carried out by the following individuals during the month: Henderson Bennett, Conrad Menzel, Joseph McCormack, Donald Dines, Albert McCloud, Oscar Leonard, Sherman Dowsett, Max Mendenhall, Clifford Bentcliff, Myron Butler, George Beiber, Thomas McKenna, John Milliken, William Atkins, Louis Wimsatt, John Allen, Bernard Eberhardt, John Titter, Ralph Van Ess, Kearney, John Docktor, Joseph Bearden, Richardson, Eustice Hawkins, Paul Blow, Jack Wind, George Insley, Raymond McCormick, Thomas McQuire, Thomas Waters, Myron Jacobs, Williams, and Forseth. Lt. T. L. Smith ferried Lt. Walter

Scott and crew to Stoney Cross. Lt. John McCaslin flew to Lasham to pick up Lt. Richard Hruby and crew. Lt. Jack Wind made a cross country flight to Liverpool.

Confusion still reigned regarding the number of operational missions required for the completion of an operational tour. To a large extent the problem was created by the many short unopposed missions that were carried out during the landings on the continent. No definite requirements have yet been established. Crews are being finished on any number of missions between 30 and 35. A lot depends on the length of time the individual has been in the theater, the individuals physical condition, the type of missions already flown, and etc.

During the month of July Norm Kiefer wrote the following to his wife:

"This morning I was deserted by three very good friends. They all are on their way back to the States for a thirty-day period. They are Major's McAtee, Strong and Slough. The part that really makes me feel badly is that I didn't get a chance to see them before they left. It was one of those hurry up jobs"...."I spent the biggest part of my day off in a hospital. Joe Barnett is having an operation on his nose. I had to leave him at noon since they wanted to get him ready"...."You are wrong, they do allow women in Pubs. However, in most of them, there is a separate part for the ladies"...."I am going to go shave and clean up for supper. You know I have to get dressed for dinner every night now. Just one of the disadvantages of being an officer"...."Did I tell you that we are losing Tommy Davis? He is returning to be a permanent instructor in Florida. He will drop a few lines to you the first chance that he gets"...."I resent your insinuation that I couldn't take a bike apart and put it back together without having parts left over"....

It appears that George Belber started the new month by going to France on August 1st. Gerald Folsom's records indicates the target to be Corbie. William Uvanni shows they went to Amiens. Therefore, they may not have been on the same ship. Uvanni's diary entry was:

We were briefed to hit Amiens today. The briefing was held at noon due to a low ceiling and poor visibility.

We arrived over France around 3 P.M. and sky conditions

were still bad. The clouds were almost solid beneath us. As we approached the target area the overcast broke and Amiens was very visible below.

It looked very small with its red-roofed buildings. Before bombs away I could see flashes throughout the town which I figured were flak guns firing at us. The flak wasn't too heavy.

After we dropped our bombs I watched for several minutes. When the bombs struck Amiens, the whole town was engulfed in flames and smoke. I had a very good look at the results and the flames and smoke seemed to be forced upward several thousand feet. I don't see how a single person could have escaped destruction in Amiens.

This mission lasted five hours and we were home in time for supper.

Twelve 506th ships joined with 24 other 44th aircraft on this raid. The primary target was a railway bridge at Corbie, France. Captain Insley led the third squadron with Conrad Menzel as his deputy. Bombing was visual. Lt. Thomas McQuire became separated and bombed a target of opportunity. The remainder of the 506th ships did not bomb due to the heavy undercast.

Records maintained by Merritt Derr show that he made this raid on a railroad bridge at Corbie, France. He was flying in A/C 952, A, Shack Rat. Michel Yuspeh also indicates that the Thomas Waters crew made this August 1st trip to Corbie.

The Louis Wimsatt crew went on the mission to Amiens according to records kept by Kenneth Adrian. Adrian's note indicated they carried eight 1000-pound bombs to a bridge at Amiens, France. (This may have been a target of opportunity.)

Records maintained by Robert Foust show that he was on a mission to destroy a railroad bridge at Amiens, France, on August 2nd. (Note: Neither Will Lundy nor Roger Freeman show that there was a mission to Amiens on this date. Therefore it is assumed that there is a date problem and Foust was actually on the mission to Amiens on August 1st.)

In a letter to his wife on August 2 the author wrote:

Will you look around downtown to see if you can find a

store that sells officer's clothing? I would like a pink shirt and a green shirt. Now, the pink isn't really the pink that you are thinking of. It is gray with a pinkish hue. The green is a deep green. I can buy the pants over here, but not the shirts. I bought some underwear, green pants, pillow cases and stockings from the quartermaster store today.

Records maintained by both Robert Foust and Merritt Derr indicate that they went looking for rockets on August 3rd. They probably flew with Fred Stone. The notes for Merritt Derr were:

Mission to Mery-Sur-Oise, France. The target was a rocket depot. This was the last mission for the Fred Stone crew (Patrichuk, Foust, Ryan, Cervellera, and Meunitz). Brown and I were hospitalized earlier in the tour and consequently had some missions to fly to make the required 35. (Later this total was reduced to 30)

The Robert Foust note was:

Target: Rocket base outside of Paris, France. Found out on return to base that this would be our last mission and we are to be rotated home.

Once again, the 44th put up 36 aircraft on this raid. Twelve of those ships belonged to the 506th. Visual bombing was to have been used. However, adverse weather conditions resulted in most of our ships returning home with their bombs. The sole exception was Lt. William Atkins in aircraft #030, U+, who bombed a target of opportunity with fair results. Lt. Bernard Komasinski aborted after experiencing a mechanical failure. There was battle damage to six of our ships. Aircraft #626, Bar H, *My Gal Sal*, and #177 are out for repair of battle damage.

It appears that Gerald Folsom did not fly with his regular crew when he went to Mery-Sur-Oise. There is no indication of who he was with. Another crew that apparently went out on August 3rd belonged to Thomas Waters. At least, Michel Yuspeh made the trip to Mery-Sur-Oise. The Louis Wimsatt crew also went according to records belonging to Kenneth Adrian.

After a few days rest the George Beiber crew returned to combat on August 4th. The records of both Gerald Folsom and William Uvanni show they were out on this day. Uvanni wrote:

We knew that we would get around to Kiel sooner or later. Kiel is a great naval center and port on the northern tip of Germany. It's on Kiel Bay which is a part of the Baltic sea. We were told to try for Sweden if battle damage was prohibiting our return home. Our target was a submarine base.

We went in by way of Denmark, after crossing the North Sea. The water at Kiel was one of the prettiest sights I have ever seen. From our altitude of 21,000 feet I could see right through the blue water to the bottom of the bay. Sand bars stood out just as if we were but a few feet away.

As we approached our target, naval vessels anchored in the bay started to lay a smoke screen to cover Kiel, but they were too late! The flak they threw up at us was on time though and it certainly took its toll of bombers. We saw several going down on our bombing run. The flak was very intense and accurate.

We were all much relieved when we broke clear of the flak. We came home over Holland and saw what appeared to us as launching pads or platforms for "Buzz Bombs". The houses on both sides of the canals seemed to run for miles.

A bomber that had been hit by flak over the target had been sticking it out with us most of the way. However, now trouble seemed to set in further and it started down and to lag behind. I watched him for about 15 minutes and the flak batteries picked him up. When I last saw him they had his altitude and were giving him everything. It looked like they had him and I doubt he made it home. You have a strange feeling inside when you see this happen and know there's no way to help. I am usually assigned to monitor the distress frequency and have to report these planes going down.

When we landed we reported the buzz bomb sites. Rockets were also fired at us over Kiel, but we didn't see any hit our part of the formation.

(Note: After this date, Rebhan, tail gunner on this crew, started to fly with other crews.)

On this raid, the 44th put up 39 ships, including four PFF aircraft from the 66th. There were eleven aircraft from the 506th that departed Shipdham that morning. Lt. John Titter

was deputy lead in the first squadron. Except for the PFF ship, that squadron was made up entirely of 506th ships. Bombing was carried out visually with poor results for the lead and high right aircraft. The low left strikes were good. Lt. William Atkins jettisoned his bombs and returned early as a result of mechanical difficulties.

The Merritt Derr note for this raid was:

This mission was to the submarine pens at Kiel, Germany. It took seven hours. I flew as copilot; replacing Thomas Smith who was copilot for Richard Hruby.

One of the raiders that day was Garnet Stoltenburg. There is no mention of who he was flying with. His notes show:

We were carrying twelve 500-pound bombs. The flak was low, medium and missed most of us. We didn't take a hit. Bombing results were good. The temperature was 22 degrees below.

Another of the 506th crews that made the August 4th Kiel raid belonged to Thomas Waters. Michel Yuspeh and Gene McMahon were with him. The Louis Wimsatt crew was on this mission. Kenneth Adrian was with him. His notes indicate they carried twelve 500-pound bombs to a submarine factory.

There was a second mission on August 4th. In total the 44th furnished four aircraft with half of them belonging to the 506th. Lt. Oscar Leonard was leading and Bernard Komasinski was his deputy. Ships from the 392 Bomb Group flew as the right element and the 492 Bomb Group flew the left behind us. The primary target, a military installation at Villers L' Hospital, France, was hit visually. The results were unobserved due to cloud cover. There was reason to celebrate after our aircraft returned that night. We had now completed 200 missions.

Frank Schaeffer recalls:

On this trip we did not take the *Old Cock*. I believe the target was a V-2 rocket site.

Gerald Folsom and William Uvanni made the long trip to Brunswick, Germany on August 5th. Uvanni wrote:

It looks as if the government is mad at us!!! Paris, Bremen, Kiel and now Brunswick. These are some of the

roughest targets Germany has.

Visibility was unlimited with not a cloud in the sky over Germany. They briefed us that we'd be in heavy flak for 15 minutes. When we started our bomb run you couldn't see the bombers ahead for flak. It was all over the sky. There was more of it than any target we'd hit so far.

Flak shells were bursting between all our planes and I have never before felt the concussions the way I did today. The air rushes like a locomotive when they go off so close.

When we opened the bomb bay doors, since I had not fastened my helmet chin strap, the flaps on my helmet were rising and falling with the concussions of the explosions. One shell tore several holes in our bomb bays and knocked out our hydraulic system. The doors closed on what fluid remained and spared us the trouble of cranking them closed.

When we reached the Channel and dropped down to lower altitude, "Woodie" and I went back into the bomb bay to see what we could do, but the hydraulic lines had too many holes in them.

"Woodie" cranked the landing gear down for our landing. We lost more men today, but I was too excited to find out the number. (Note: Will Lundy reported no losses for the 44th.)

A very strange incident happened over Brunswick on this mission. It happened after our bombs had fallen and while the bomb bay doors were still open. A flak shell burst under our plane at about the very front of the bomb bay and right wing. The plane lurched upwards and smoke from the flak rushed into the airplane and up on to the flight deck. It was all around "Woodie" and myself. Lt. Beiber couldn't believe we were both okay. We were though and as far as we could see no flak had hit the flight deck at all.

When we landed we looked the plane over on the outside. Flak had hit our #2 engine and had crushed its exhaust pipe for about 15 inches, but had failed to enter the engine. It must have been a huge piece as there were no other holes visible.

The Group effort for this raid consisted of 40 aircraft, including six PFF's from the 66th. The 44th was leading the 14th Combat Wing. Eustice Hawkins flew Wing Lead. There were twelve ships from the 506th up that day. We were the third squadron with Captain Insley leading and Lt. Walter Scott as deputy lead. We were carrying thirteen 100-pound M47s and nine 500-pound general purpose bombs. PFF assistance was used in the bombing. Lt. Thomas Smith had an early release of bombs in a field due to an oxygen tank being hit by flak. Lt. John Milliken aborted due to a mechanical failure. The balance of our ships bombed and then returned to base. Nine of our aircraft suffered battle damage. Aircraft #016, Z, *Down De Hatch*, is not available until repairs can be made.

Merritt Derr was once again flying with Thomas Smith on this mission to Brunswick, Germany. The mission took seven hours. This was the first time that he had flown an unpainted aircraft in combat.

For the second day in a row Garnet Stoltenburg was in combat. It is not known who he flew with. His notes show:

It was a cold 22 degrees below again. This time we were carrying incendiaries to an aircraft factory at Brunswick, Germany. The flak was medium and accurate. Our ship was hit six times and the oxygen system was shot out. Bombing results were good.

Frank Schaeffer, flying with the Komasinski crew, recalls:

We were in a new silver aircraft #42-50 626, Bar H. We were carrying bundles of incendiaries. Unfortunately, in going up through the overcast we lost the lead plane. In the great maze of airplanes assembling in the sky we attached to some other squadron. Our course to Brunswick was over the North Sea and then southward at Helgoland, where their flak gunners took pot shots at us. The flak in the target area was pretty tough and accurate. When we landed back at base there were a couple of holes in the side of the nose. This attracted a lot of attention from the off duty spectators as we taxied back onto the hardstand.

Michel Yuspeh went to Brunswick on this day. He probably was with Thomas Waters and Gene McMahon. The notes kept by Kenneth Adrian show that he flew in Bar Z on this trip to Brunswick. He probably was with the Louis Wimsatt crew.

On August 6th Merritt Derr wrote:

I went on a mission to Hamburg, Germany, that took seven hours. At the briefing I couldn't believe that the target was defended by 700 anti-aircraft guns. I knew we and the British had been hitting Hamburg a lot and I thought there couldn't be much left to bomb. As we turned from the IP toward Hamburg, I could see an immense cloud of black smoke ahead and realized the intelligence reports at briefing were correct. Flak was very intense and accurate. We flew number 4 slot in the lead element. Right after "bombs away" the other three ships in our element were hit and just seemed to disappear. I really racked that B-24 all over the sky in evasive maneuvers to get out of there. I knew this was my last mission prior to rotation back to the U.S. and I sure wanted to get safely back to England.

On this raid on Hamburg, the 44th put up 22 aircraft including one PFF from the 66th. There were seven 506th aircraft in the formation. Our ships were part of the first squadron. Lt. Clifford Bentcliff was the deputy lead. We were carrying twelve 500-pound general purpose bombs. PFF assistance was used in bombing and the results were excellent. Lt. Myron Jacobs aborted due to engine failure and brought his bombs back.

The weather warmed up on August 6th for Garnet Stoltenburg so that he could fly his last mission. His notes show:

It was 18 degrees below today. We carried twelve 500-pound bombs to Hamburg, Germany. The target was the oil refinery. The flak was heavy and accurate. Once again our ship was hit--this time eight holes. Bombing results were good.

William Uvanni must have been trying to get his missions over in a hurry since he was out for the fourth day in a row. There is no indication of who he was with. He wrote:

When we arrived at briefing this morning the red tape on the map ran to Hamburg, Germany. Our target was an oil refinery in the city itself. Flak batteries would have us for 17-to-21 minutes and it would be intense. We carried two kinds of chaff to drop as the Germans had two types of radar working to determine our altitude.

The weather was crystal clear again and we could see for

50 miles all over Germany. Hamburg was a very pretty city. It is located on a bend of the river Elbe. The flak barrage started while we were miles from the target. We were in the third element and we could see planes going down ahead of us as they entered the barrage.

Several B-24's went down before we even entered the zone and it looked impossible for an airplane to get through. There was even more flak than at Brunswick. As we started our bombing run the flak was bursting regularly between planes in our Squadron and it looked as if everyone was getting hit by it.

I was sitting on the floor of the flight deck having already opened the bomb bay doors and our plane was being forced upward rhythmically by concussions. This was just like Brunswick. When the bombs dropped I jumped to close the bomb bay doors. (not that it would protect us, but it sure helps morale!)

I had no sooner closed the doors and turned around than "WHOOMPH" a burst of flak hit us and right where I was sitting a hole the size of a 50-cent piece appeared!! My flak vest was covered with cotton batting and the air was filled with it. I thought at first that I had been hit and flak had torn right through my flak vest. I didn't feel anything, but I must be injured. When I found out I wasn't hurt I called "Woodie" in the upper turret thinking it might have hit him. I was relieved when he said he was okay.

The same burst ripped through the fuselage right in front of Perry Morse, tail gunner, missed his head by inches and then tore through some K-rations he had stored. The rations were torn to pieces.

A B-24 behind us took a direct hit which blew its right wing off. It started down in a crazy spin and no chutes came out. We watched it all the way down and it landed in a small town and blew up.

We were in flak 17 minutes and then broke free. It seemed like ages. We came over the Dutch Coast coming home and the meager barrage they threw up seemed like a joke after Hamburg.

When we landed we watched planes behind us come in and most fired red/red flares meaning planes were damaged and

there were injured aboard.

At interrogation we found out that we had sent out 48 bombers (a maximum effort) and of those we lost 5 over Hamburg to flak and the remaining 43 who came home had all been badly shot up!!! (Note: Will Lundy only reported the loss of one aircraft from the 44th.)

Our plane, Consolidated Mess, had holes in the left wing a foot long; holes in the flight deck; in the bomb bays; in the tail section; holes beneath the pilot and copilot seats and holes in the nose compartment. However, not one of our crew had received a scratch!!! The Good Lord surely smiled on us today.

A waist gunner from another crew had gone to Brunswick with us yesterday and Hamburg today. He had 23 prior missions and said he had seen more flak on these 2 missions than all of his previous missions.

A fifth 506th crew that went to Hamburg on August 6th belonged to Louis Wimsatt, according to records maintained by Kenneth Adrian. Adrian's note shows they flew Bar B and carried twelve 500-pound bombs to an oil refinery. He also noted that James McKenna, from the 66th went down.

After a one-day rest, the Thomas Waters crew returned to combat on August 7th. They made the trip to Saleux, which is near Amiens, according to records maintained by Michel Yuspeh and Gene McMahon.

The Group effort on this day consisted of 24 aircraft. Eight of those ships belonged to the 506th. There was no PFF lead ship. Lt. Oscar Leonard led the first squadron as well as the Group. Our aircraft were carrying twenty-four 300-pound general purpose bombs. Bombing was visual. All ships bombed with good results.

The Komasinski crew was on this mission according to the records maintained by Frank Schaeffer.

On August 8th the 506th put up eight aircraft to bomb the primary target at La Perth, France. We were carrying fifty-two 100-pound M47s. Bombing was visual. Two of our aircraft failed to return.

Lt. Myron Jacobs and crew in aircraft #328, Q, Flying Log, crashed near our field due to engine failure and burst into

flames. All crew members were lost.

The Group Operations Report indicated that this aircraft aborted because of mechanical reasons and returned to the field. While in the traffic pattern the aircraft suddenly spun in and crashed with a full load of bombs.

With Myron G. Jacobs (KIA) were Lts. Howard K. Harmon (KIA), Frederick F. McDaris (KIA), and Kenneth P. Ward (KIA). The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Emil L. Grogg (KIA), Jack V. Whalen (KIA), Robert J. Bell (KIA), Karl D. Breakey (KIA), Shirley A. Jones (KIA), and Rolon D. Borgstrom (KIA).

The second missing aircraft belonged to Lt. Bernard Komasinski. He was flying aircraft #42-100 415, Bar Y, My Peach. Frank Schaeffer was with him and remembers:

The mission was postponed for several hours because of ground fog. This was our sixth mission.

Because the prop governor was faulty for the #2 engine, I was told to stay on the flight deck to monitor the engine RPM's with the synchronizing switch. Sgt. Nelson Brott took my place in the top turret. One of our gun positions was left unmanned.

As I recall, there was little or no flak up to the point of the target area. While on the bomb run and with the bomb bay doors open, the #2 engine began to speed up and the synchronizing switch would not slow it down. We had a runaway prop that was turning over at 4500 RPM's. Our copilot, Gilbert operated the feathering button and closed the throttles, but the propeller would not feather.

I went to the forward end of the bomb bay to turn off the fuel selector valve and booster pump switch to that engine. The engine continued to run wild and the oil pressure went to zero.

The engine continued to howl and shake violently. I was afraid the prop would come off and fly right through the fuselage. By that time we had reached the target and the bombardier, Lain, had released the bombs. I had dropped my flak suit and removed my helmet, head set, oxygen mask and gloves in order to more easily cope with the runaway engine.

I heard no bailout order or bell. Suddenly the copilot

raised out of his seat and headed back. With my parachute snapped on, I tapped Brott, who was in the top turret, on the knee and motioned for him to come down. Then I got into the bomb bay and suddenly thought that because I hadn't heard any bailout signal, I'd be the first one out. In order to get out of the way of the others, I swung out and around the bomb rack in order to move back on the catwalk. With the chest pack on I could not go back on the catwalk between the bomb racks.

When I made my move around the bomb rack, the handle on my rip cord caught on a bomb shackle and it pulled out about 3/4 inch. I pushed it back in, but the damage had been done. The chute started to spill out. I started to bundle the folds of my chute in my arms. However, the wind going through the ship spilled even more of the chute onto the catwalk. Frantically I gathered the remaining folds in to my arms.

It was now or never, so I moved to the forward end of the aft bomb bay section. There I rolled head first off the cat walk and out the right side of the bomb bay. The chute was immediately pulled out of my arms.

A moment later I was swinging violently. Overhead I could see the chute was fully open, but there were three rips, each about a foot long, in the panels.

While drifting down in the silence I searched for our ship. Then I saw it about a mile away flying level. There was a long trail of black smoke behind it. While looking, I saw that one of my fellow crewmen was below me. I yelled as loud as I could, but got no answer. There were two others about a mile away and lower than I was. I then noticed that my big black escape shoes had not pulled off, and I still had my G.I.'s attached to the chute pack.

When I was a few thousand feet from the ground I noticed two bicycles or motorcycles traveling along a road. A little lower and I could see people running out of houses and along the road. I prepared to land with my knees slightly bent. On impact my legs folded and I fell backward, being dragged by my un-spilled chute. I pulled on the lines and the canopy collapsed.

I was in a cut grain field. I quickly released my harness, gathered up the chute in my arms.

Then a shot was fired. The bullet went over my head. I ran for some bushes and threw the chute under one. Then I ran about a hundred feet before I realized that I was still wearing my Mae West. Without stopping I took it off and threw it under another bush. I moved to the ditch and ran low in order not to be seen.

Suddenly I was surrounded by French people. One had a bicycle and was coaxing me to get on it and ride down the road. I wanted to head for my nearest crewmate, but that would have taken me in the direction from which I had been shot at.

I went down the road about half a mile with a crowd of people following me. The crowd stopped in front of a farm house and wanted to take me inside. One woman objected and it appeared to be her house. After a heated debate among them, two young men took me to another house further down the road.

They quickly got civilian clothing for me and a woman brought me a loaf of bread and some butter. Outside was a cart that I was loaded into for a rough ride of about a mile into some woods.

Next I was placed in a hole which not easily seen from the road. There was straw to sleep on, a bag of potatoes, and a keg of wine. When I was comfortable they covered me over and then left. About two hours later the two men returned. They whistled a tune so that I would know that it was them. I got out to stretch and they shared a bottle of cider which they had. Somehow they got across to me the idea that they would leave again and at dusk return to start me off on a trip. I was cold. One of the men left, but soon returned with my flying clothing.

Just as the sun was going down I heard the whistle again and I started to crawl out of the hole. They took my flying clothing and we started across fields on an eight or ten mile hike. When we were coming out of a forest I noticed a light flashing about 200 yards away. My companions answered with their flashlight. At that point they went back and I went with my new escort.

My new friends had a French-English translation book. Using it I indicated that I was not hungry. We then continued to walk. I thought we were approaching a village when I heard a church bell ringing. We were soon

on a path that led along a stone wall. They stopped at a house and one of my companions went alone to knock on the door. When he came back they led me around the front and to the back door. An old woman admitted us and took us to the kitchen. The two escorts then left. It now was about midnight.

I could not speak French and the woman could not speak English. We just sat there and waited. After about half an hour a man and a woman came into the house. They had a number of questions which I answered using the translation book. I was then taken to a room where I was to sleep. I was told that I would be joined by a fellow that could speak English. However, when he arrived I quickly found that he could only speak French. He left during the night and I never saw him again.

At nine o'clock I was served breakfast of a bowl of something and slice of bread with honey on it. I then went back to sleep until noon when the woman reappeared to feed me again. First, I washed and shaved using the items from my escape kit.

There was a young dark-haired man that ate with us. Little did I know that he would become my closest companion for the next month. He could speak some English! He also stayed at that house most of the time.

I never knew his name, but I called him "Shorty". I later learned that he was a spy that had been trained in England. He had English made and American made radios. There were batteries and a generator that worked off of a bicycle. He was well armed with a gun, knives and a hand grenade.

"Shorty" told me I was in the town of Orbais L'Abbaye (SW of Reims). We were living with some people named Benier. There were three of them (The old woman and her two unmarried children). The children were between forty and fifty years old. They treated me well while I was with them. The presence of "Shorty" and I was kept a secret. I was not allowed to leave the house except to go into the highly walled backyard.

I learned that there had been a B-17 copilot that had stayed with the Benier family before I joined them. He had to be moved when some of the neighbors saw him. He had been there about five weeks before he was found. He

went into the woods and stayed with the Free French Forces. His name was William Weatyherwas. While living in the house he had drawn pictures of the house and of B-17's.

Eventually I learned that my host family knew where some of my fellow crewmates were. Four of them were in the woods with the Free French. Three others were in another forest. Our radio operator had been taken by truck to Paris as a prisoner of war.

There was one radio in the house. They played it only a few minutes each day. That was to get the news broadcast in French from the BBC in England. Since I didn't understand the broadcast, they would daily point out on a map how far the front lines had advanced.

Finally, the Yanks took Paris and the Third Army made a fast drive to the south. Before long we could hear gunfire. The Germans seemed to be scurrying around more than before. There were power outages. Sometimes for days at a time.

On the 28th of August we were having dinner when I saw a German go by on a motorcycle. Then there was the sound of machine-gun fire. Soon thereafter, the door bell rang and an excited friend of the family told them something that prompted them all to run to the center of the town, leaving the front door open. Soon one of them returned with the news that the Americans were there!

Early in Sept 1944, those of us who were with the French Underground were liberated by General Patton's 3rd Army and returned to duty and eventually back to the U.S.

In the 44th Bomb Group Roll Of Honor And Casualties Will Lundy recorded the following memories of Nelson Brott:

Coley W. Richardson was assigned to our crew for that mission when our regular member, Frank La Fazia was placed on guard duty. He was our ball turret gunner. This was our seventh mission.

We had been flying at 25,000 feet. I bailed out at 22,000 feet and landed about 100-to-200 feet away from our copilot, Lt. Gippert. We both had pulled a delayed jump. Luckily, we landed in a corn field and there to greet us, unexpectedly, were members of the French Forces of the

Interior.

They hid us in the woods away from all civilization where we had to fend for ourselves for food. We caught rabbits in snares, drained a pond, stripped and then went into the mud and ooze to catch carp. They provided us with our civilian clothes. We threw away our dog tags and hoped we'd never be caught as we would have been shot as spies.

It was only about a month until the American Forces came through near us and liberated us. What a celebration that was! Coley W. Richardson was seriously injured. Eventually he was evacuated back to the States on the 23rd of December, 1944.

With Bernard Komasinski (Evadee/Returned) were Lts. Winfred S. Gippert (Evadee/Returned), Edgar W. Michaels (Evadee/Returned), and Charles H. Lain (Evadee/Returned). The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Frank N. Schaeffer (Evadee/Returned), John H. McKee (POW), Nelson E. Brott (Evadee/Returned), Walter E. Bohenko (Evadee/Returned), Coley W. Richardson (Wounded/Evacuated), and Stanley J. Hulewicz Jr. (Evadee/Returned).

On August 8th Henry Siteman recorded:

I got out of the hospital and went right to a rest home. That was very nice. However, as usual, I had to come home to rest up.

On that same day Ray Marner wrote:

We lost Lt. Komasinski's crew today and Lt. Jacob's crew crashed near Shipdham killing everyone. Coley Richardson was on the first ship.

On August 8th Norm Kiefer wrote to his wife:

I'll bet that you are not as sleepy as I am this morning. You see, I got a couple hours sleep last night and then had to get up to go to work. This morning I went to bed at 0730 hours and at 0900 hours Capt. McKee came in and woke me up. We are going to leave here around ten for a funeral. Bob Struble is going with us.

One of the boys that helped to take care of our guns was very foolish and signed up for combat. He was just unlucky. At the least he didn't suffer very long.

It's funny, I have seen lots of things happen, but it took me eighteen months to get up nerve enough to go to a burial. Even then, I looked at the flag covered pine box and thought, "It very easily could have been me".

In a recent letter Henry Fetherolf mentioned:

One of our armament men named Bradford Barber, from Alabama, got tired of the war. He thought that it was dragging on too long. He agreed to sign up for combat. He thought that he would fly 25 missions and go home.

His first mission was a milk run. On the second one he was flying with a crew from the 492nd. The ship he was on was shot up pretty badly and there were wounded aboard. As they were trying to land at the 492nd field, Bradford got excited and bailed out. They were too low and his chute never opened. We buried him at Cambridge.

Rudy Thrower, was an Alabama boy and after the war he went to see Bradford's folks. He met the sister and married her.

The Kenneth Adrian record shows that he received credit for a raid on the marshalling yards at Saarbrucken, Germany, on August 9th. They were carrying twelve 500-pound bombs.

Records show that the Group sent 24 aircraft (The total included two PFF ships from the 66th.) on a raid with Sindelfingen, Germany, as the primary target. The 506th placed seven aircraft in the air on this day. Lt. John Titter was the deputy lead in the first squadron. In reality, the secondary target was hit visually with results from fair-to-excellent. Lt. Clifford Bentcliff in ship #733, and Lt. Thomas Waters in ship #150, Bar B, *Passion Pit*, aborted due to mechanical failures and brought their bombs back. The remaining raiders returned to base.

Will Lundy's works indicate that the weather would not allow any operational flying on August 10th. He also stated "Everyone is awaiting the big Group 200 Mission Party scheduled tomorrow".

On August 11th Ray Marnier reported:

We had our 200 mission party today. Brad Barber was killed in a crack up at Pickenham. It was his second mission. He was the only one on the ship that was killed.

On the 11th Norm Kiefer wrote to his wife:

Oh what a day this has been! Only the surrender of Germany will be able to pass it.

To begin with, there was no rank on the field today. Anyone caught wearing insignia of rank was put on K.P. Instead of enlisted men being on guard duty or K.P. it was the officers. The Deputy Commander was on M.P. duty at the main gate most of the day.

The day started with some prayers by the Chaplains. Then they went into a ball game between the "Brass" (Higher than Capt.) and the "One Bars" (Lower than Capt.). The "One Bars" won!

Just about the same time they started a football game between the officers and the enlisted men. In a little while there was a volley ball game going on between the Pvts. and 1st Sgts.

After the games were over they held a three-legged race. It was then that Gen. Johnson put in his appearance. He and a Lt. Colonel ran in the race. Now the Gen. isn't a young man by a long way. Thus, you can appreciate that it was quite an accomplishment for him. He did all right until they had to turn around and then they fell, but he got up and finished the race.

By that time it was high time to take on some chow. Everyone made a dash for the Mess Halls.

I will write more about this day in Mother's letter. (This letter is not available.)

However, there was no partying on the 12th of August when the William Uvanni record shows that he made a mission to Junincourt, France. Gerald Folsom does not appear to have been with him. Uvanni wrote:

We were briefed for the area around Paris this morning. Our target was an airfield about 50 miles east of the city. This was a famous battleground of World War I--it is the location of Chateau Thierry.

We expected considerable fighter opposition as it was a fighter base we were after. Our entry was uneventful except for light flak on the coast. There was light flak

over the airfield, but we saw nothing of fighters. I had a feeling it was a trap of some kind, but the return trip was as quiet as the entry.

I can't understand the situation when we hit an airfield and encounter such little opposition.

The 44th led the 14th Combat Wing on August 12th. We put up 32 aircraft and no PFF's. There were nine ships belonging to the 506th in the air that day. Lt. Oscar Leonard led the Group as well as the Squadron. Captain Insley was the deputy lead. Our ships were carrying fifty-two 100-pound general purpose bombs. Bombing was visual with results being from good to excellent. Lt. Paul Durett, in ship #293, G, Judy's Buggy, (A ship from the 67th) turned back because of engine failure and brought his bombs back.

We lost Lt. Thomas McGuire and crew flying in aircraft #024, Bar P. Their aircraft was seen to leave the formation losing altitude. The pilot called and said he was low on gas and was advised to call for fighter help. He then headed for allied lines. The pilot called again and reported that his #3 engine had cut out and the #4 was empty. The ship was last seen headed for friendly lines.

In the book, *44th Bomb Group Roll Of Honor And Casualties* written by Will Lundy, it was reported; "Both Lt. Crawford, navigator, and Robert J. Reiner, gunner, bailed out, evaded capture, and with the assistance of the French Underground, returned to duty on 31 August, 1944. That was just 19 days from the date of the mission."

With Thomas J. McGuire (KIA) were Lts. Dudley G. Titus (KIA), Peter G. Crawford (Evadee/Returned), and Merle G. Turley (POW). The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Edward Kramer (POW), John C. Cullinane (POW), Robert J. Reiner (Evadee/Returned), Carl E. Daniels (KIA), James C. Nokes (POW), and Joseph L. Hansen (POW).

Delmar Fox reports that this was the first mission for the Durett crew.

A list of missions kept by Firman Mack shows that his crew went to Reims on August 12th. It was the first mission for the crew.

Records maintained by Michel Yuspeh and Gene McMahon show that this was the sixth mission for the Thomas Waters crew.

Ray Marner reported on August 12th:

We lost Lt. McGuire's crew today.

The Ciesielski crew arrived on August 12th. With Lt. Ramond J. Ciesielski were Lts. Bert Cheney and Tom Appert. The enlisted personnel were James C. Crume, Robert Beauchampes, Sylvan Hines, Clarence Unger, Ralieg Turner, and Lewis M. Robinson.

Lewis Robinson recalls:

We were a replacement crew that survived three other crews in our hut. We were welcomed by name and serial number over German radio in the mess hall when we arrived. Carl Snavely was the Base Commander and his reputation was not good for us. At that time my service record was like a "yo-yo". I arrived as a busted private and flew as S/Sgt.

As a matter of practice, whenever we finished a successful trip, we would hold a broom up through the top hatch. I believe it made a picture and news story back home at the time, but I have no record of it.

I think it was after five missions we became a lead crew. From then on our passes were extended and we would head straight for "London Fog", "Underground", "Regent Palace Hotel", and "Piccadilly".

At one time in our stay in England, our "An American Air Crew" was given a "special tour" of Parliament. During the tour I happened to bump into a little man carrying a sheaf of papers. When I bent down to help pick them up, I became acquainted with the Chancellor of Exchequer, Sir Stafford Cripps. Sorry, a closer relationship never developed.

The three biscuits and a wool blanket that we were issued for bedding just didn't measure up for sleeping comfort. On our first London pass the hotel contributed two large bed sheets toward increased comfort. When these were cut for the upper bunk and turned over once in a while, they would last until the next pass.

Did anyone ever complain about those cold-water showers?

Do you recall those letters from home? Mail call was always a big event. However, those "Dear John" letters

were some letdown. Of the three I remember, one caught up with me overseas. The heartthrob, that had come all the way to Topeka with Mom and Dad to see us off, had met a better "hot shot" (available?) at Hunters College where she trained for WACS. I presume they were married and lived happily ever after.

The diary entry by Ray Marner on August 13th was:

We lost Lt. Milliken's crew today. It was their last mission.

The Group effort consisted of 25 attacking ships and no PFF's. The 506th furnished nine of those ships striking the primary target of a road junction between Le Harve and Rouen, France. The bomb load was fifty-two 100-pound M47's. Bombing was visual with generally good results. Six of our ships were subjected to much battle damage.

Will Lundy reported in his *44th Bomb Group Roll Of Honor And Casualties* the words of John Milliken:

We were in aircraft #150, Bar B. Our plane's name was *Passion Pit*. It was named after the basement bar of the Santa Rita hotel in Tucson, Arizona, where we took our phase training. This plane had been our regular one since June 14, 1944.

They had raised the tour requirement to 33 missions and this one was our 31st. I found out later that they had lowered it to 31 that day. If we had returned, they would have told us it was our last mission.

This raid required a long bomb run over the Falaise pocket. We had three road intersections in a direct line. We were supposed to drop 1/3rd of our bombs on each one. It was believed that would stop the Germans from escaping Patton's pincer movement. It was too long and straight a run. The first flak burst did knock out both #1 and #2 engines and set us on fire. I was flying Group Deputy Lead (#2) and had a hard time sliding out of the box without hitting others.

We all bailed out and were captured by the Germans. I escaped that night by jumping out of a canvas-back German G.I. truck that was taking us back to Germany. I walked through the German front lines and joined the advancing Canadian 1st Army four days later.

No one was hurt as far as I know except Larsen who escaped before the end of hostilities when he was being marched across central Europe by the Germans. Stovroff, a Jew, was beaten up and given a bad time by the S.S. The rest of the crew were all prisoners until the end of the war.

In a conversation with the author a long time later, John Milliken related, "When the opportunity to escape presented itself, we knew that we couldn't all go. The crew decided that since I had spent part of my life in France and could speak fluent French, I was the logical one to go."

With John L. Milliken (POW/Escaped/Returned) were Lt. William R. Manierre (POW), Robert J. Bertoli (POW), and Irwin J. Stovroff (POW). The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Richard W. Martin (POW), Kenneth E. Beckwith (POW), Morris W. Larkin (POW), Darrell E. Larsen (POW), Leon J. Allen (POW), and Virgil R. Guebard (POW).

The Paul Durett crew made this mission according to records maintained by Delmar Fox. Fox recalls that they received battle damage from flak. Also, Firman Mack indicates that his crew went to Lisieux, France on August 13th.

The records of both Gerald Folsom and William Uvanni show they went to Lyon/Bron, France, on August 14th. It is likely that they were with George Beiber. Uvanni wrote:

This morning we were given one of the longest hauls yet. We were briefed to hit a German fighter base in southeastern France. It is about 150 miles from Turin, Italy. Because of the distance from our base we were forced to eliminate any zigzagging on the entry and withdrawal routes.

We were warned to look for heavy enemy fighter attacks in southern France. They told us not to be surprised if we saw older German fighters as they might be German cadets taking advanced training in outmoded planes. Lyon is the center of all German fighters in southern France.

This bit of briefing must have gone over big with our fighter escort because their talk over VHF sounded as if they couldn't wait to get there.

Before we reached our target area reports from our

advanced escort told of enemy fighters being engaged by them. When we arrived, there wasn't an enemy plane around so they must have really had things under control. Flak was light again and after bombs away, we had a long and uneventful trip. This mission lasted over nine hours. It was in support of the invasion of southern France.

Again our strike force consisted of 25 aircraft; however, this time there was one PFF ship. Will Lundy reported in his works that this raid was "a prelude to the invasion of the South Coast of France that followed two days later". There were nine aircraft from the 506th with this formation. Lt. Ernest Gossett led the second squadron and Lt. Clifford Bentcliff was deputy lead. Our aircraft were carrying ten 500-pound general purpose bombs. We bombed visually with all ships hitting the target, scoring excellent results, and returning to base.

Firman Mack was also in combat on this date. The only other known 506th crew to make this raid belonged to Thomas Waters according to records maintained by Michel Yuspeh and Gene McMahon.

On the 14 of August Merritt Derr made a three-hour local check flight in the left seat.

The next day, August 15th, the George Beiber crew were up early. The records of William Uvanni and Gerald Folsom show that they were out. Uvanni wrote:

We are now in the airfield wrecking business. Today it was Ardorf near Wilhelmshaven on Germany's north coast. It is a port on the North Sea.

Intelligence briefed us for moderate to heavy flak and possible fighter attacks. We experienced neither on penetration and located our airfield with ease as the day was cloudless.

We flew over the field and could see several multi-engine (probably bombers) planes in the parking areas. We didn't drop our bombs on the first run, but circled and came across again. This time we let them go for a bull's-eye on a set of hangars.

We were rather tense on our second run. Experience has proven that two runs can be mighty risky business. However, we experienced no opposition at all. Not a

single burst of flak. We're getting to like airfields.

There were 24 aircraft from the Group on this raid. The attacking force was forced off its first bomb run by an approaching formation and had to turn around and do it again. There were no enemy aircraft and flak was light. The fighter support was excellent. Seven crews from the 506th went on this raid to Ardorf (Wittmundhafen), Germany. We made up part of the 1st squadron. Bombing was visual. We were carrying 500-pound general purpose bombs, except for one ship which had fifty-two M47's. All ships bombed with fair-to-good results and returned to base.

Hal Tyree recalls that this was the first mission for his crew. Accompanying this rookie was the Thomas Waters crew according to records kept by Michel Yuspeh and Gene McMahon. The Firman Mack records show that they went to Wittmundhafen on this date.

Henry Siteman got some good news on August 15th:

I got back from rest home to find out I was to leave for home today! Gardner and Wright left early this morning. So I got on the ball and chased up to Group Hqdrs. Now I leave in the morning to join the boys at the P.O.E. I also got my Distinguished Flying Cross today. I am all packed and ready to go to the 12th R.C.D.

While I was away, we lost Larsen. He was flying with the John Milliken crew when they went down on the 13th of August. They are all POW'S.

Ray Marner had a reason to celebrate on the evening of August 15th. He wrote in his diary:

I made S/Sgt. today. S.O. #227. The 856th Squadron has split up and went to Chethingham. The fellows went to different places from there.

It is likely that on August 16th George Beiber and Gerald Folsom went to Kothen, Germany. The William Uvanni diary states:

Our last three missions were unusually easy and this couldn't go on forever. Today's trip to Kothen, Germany broke the run of easy ones. When we were given today's target we had a rather thrilling memory revived. Kothen is only 15 miles east of Bernberg which was our first

mission and as bad as they come. Kothen is right in the heart of a fighter belt and has heavy flak.

As we approached Kothen, things looked more natural. The flak was heavy and it pretty well covered the sky. Fighters failed to show--enemy aircraft that is--ours were there.

The Group dispatched 34 aircraft on this raid, including two PFF's. The 506th dispatched twelve ships on the aero engine works there. Captain Insley led the third squadron and Lt. Ernest Gossett was the deputy lead. The bomb load was ten 500-pound PG's. Bombing was by PFF. Strike photos showed that the first and third squadrons achieved excellent hits. The second squadron bombing was poor. Lt. William Atkins in ship #030, U+, aborted due to engine trouble and returned with his bombs. All of our ships returned to base.

Hal Tyree remembers that his crew made this trip. Delmar Fox reports that the Paul Durett crew also went on this raid. Another 506th crew that was out on this date belonged to Thomas Waters. Michel Yuspeh and Gene McMahon were with him. The last known 506th crew that was at Kothen on this date belonged to Firman Mack.

In a letter to his wife on August 16th Norm Kiefer mentioned:

We had a big boxing show here tonight. There was a couple of good fights and then Billy Conn (World's Light Heavy Weight Champion) put on an exhibition bout.

On August 17th the Richard H. Habedank crew arrived. With Lt. Habedank were Lts. Robert Dupont, Murry G. Margolies, and William E. Laughlin. The enlisted men were Sgts. Albert J. Urania, Arthur J. Schmidt, Elwood A Matter, David Moore, Melvin C. Murrack, and J. C. Wheatley.

The Group sent 24 aircraft on a mission to an airfield at Nancy/Essey, France, on August 18th. The 506th Squadron furnished eight aircraft on this effort. Lt. Philip Quirk led the second squadron and Lt. Kuecker was the deputy lead. Once again, our Squadron had to make a second run on the target after being forced off the bomb run just prior to bombs away. There was no enemy opposition and fighter support was good. Bombing was visual with good to excellent results being achieved. All ships bombed the target and returned to base.

Hal Tyree recalls that this was the third straight mission for his crew. Another crew on this mission, according to Delmar Fox, belonged to Paul Durett. This may have been when they started to fly in *Tinker Belle*. The Thomas Waters crew returned to combat on this date after a one-day rest. This was the fifth raid they had pulled in the last seven days according to records maintained by Michel Yuspeh and Gene McMahon. Notes kept by Kenneth Adrian show that they carried fifty-two 100-pound bombs to Nancy. He probably was flying with Louis Wimsatt.

On August 18th Norm Kiefer wrote to his wife:

Do you know where I am right now? I am at Lt. Jack Edward's home base. If you remember, he flew our tail guns. He has also been Commissioned.

He came to see us yesterday and talked me into coming back with him. He has a good job with a nice office. I can't say that I would want the responsibility that he has. His job would ordinarily be held by a Major.

On August 18th our acting Commanding Officer, Captain Wayne Middleton, was promoted to Major.

It was during this lull in operations that Ray Marner went to London. In his diary he wrote:

Buzz bombs kept me awake all one night. They kept going over and dropping near the hotel. Some shook us up fairly much. London is taking a beating again.

The August 24th mission to Hannover, Germany was the first combat mission for the Ray Ciesielski crew. Lewis Robinson recalls:

On the mission to Hannover, instead of flying head-on into the Cliffs of Dover, (two engines out, supercharger on a 3rd, hydraulic system out), we managed to crash land on an 8th Air Force field. Base Commander, Jimmy Stewart, came out as the dust settled. He took our officers in his Jeep and later sent a truck for the rest of us. That was the end of our first plane, *Clean Sweep*. When we got back to base, we came to the realization that we would have to do better if we were to keep on good terms with our ground crew.

There were 24 aircraft from the 44th on the mission of August

24th, including two PFF's from the 66th. Seven of these belonged to the 506th. We comprised a part of the first squadron. The briefed target was at Langenhagen, Germany. However, the secondary, an airfield near Hannover, Germany, was hit visually. Our bomb load was a mixture of six 500-pound general purpose and M47 bombs. All of our ships bombed the target and returned to base. Extensive battle damage was inflicted on three of our ships.

Hal Tyree remembers that his crew made their fourth mission on this day. The Firman Mack records show that this was their sixth mission.

Will Lundy noted on August 24th that, "2nd Lt. Harbison was transferred to Group Headquarters". Harbison was originally with the 506th. At Group, he became the Group Gunnery Officer.

On August 25th it is likely that George Beiber was over Schwerin, Germany. The records of both Gerald Folsom and William Uvanni report that they were out. Uvanni wrote in his diary:

Schwerin is an inland port of northern Germany. It is about 70 miles east of "good old Hamburg"!

Flak conditions at Schwerin were rather vague to our intelligence, but we were told to expect moderate to heavy flak. Our trip in was near Dummer Lake in western Germany. We were repeatedly told to avoid this lake. It is a training area for German artillery outfits and they can throw up a horrible barrage of flak. To fly over it is to ask for a one-way ticket!

We made certain not to pass over the lake. It looked small and insignificant way below and to our left. Every airman who has ever flown in this area has respect for that little lake.

At Schwerin, the flak was negligible and we dropped our bombs and headed for home. The withdrawal route brought us by Dummer Lake again and they opened up at us. We were out of their range however. Their flak demonstration made us happy to be "once removed".

This mission was another comparatively easy one. Opposition over the target seems to be on the decline. I think a good deal of this is due to the confusion caused

by our ground forces rapid advances through Europe.

There were 36 aircraft from the 44th participating in the mission August 25th to Schwerin. Twelve of these belonged to the 506th. Captain Insley led the third squadron and Lt. Clifford Bentcliff was the deputy lead. We were carrying twelve 500-pound general purpose bombs. Bombing was visual with PFF assistance. Bomb strikes were excellent for all three squadrons.

Today's mission was the fifth in a row for Hal Tyree's crew. "When we returned from this mission our crew was given a three-day pass and we all went to London". Kenneth Adrian went on this mission. He probably was with Louis Wimsatt. Lewis Robinson was in combat on this date. He probably was with Ray Ciesielski.

The next day, the George Beiber crew was engaged in a combat flight for the second day in a row. This was August 26th. The records of both Gerald Folsom and William Uvanni show combat time. Uvanni wrote:

Salzbergen is in the vicinity of Schwerin. The day was clear again and we had no trouble locating the target. No flak was encountered and no fighters were seen. Germany looked very pretty as we flew over it today. Things looked peaceful and a war seemed the last thing existing below.

We flew no more in August due to bad weather.

There were 24 aircraft from the 44th that made the trip to bomb the oil refinery at Salzbergen on August 26th. The 506th furnished eight of those ships. Lt. John Ryan led the Squadron and Lt. Louis Wimsatt was deputy lead. Our craft were carrying twenty-four 250-pound general purpose bombs. Bombing was visual with the assistance of PFF ships. Bomb results were very good. All of our ships bombed the target and returned to base.

Kenneth Adrian was with Louis Wimsatt. Adrian kept this newspaper article about the raid:

REICH GETS NEW DOUBLE BLOWS

OIL OUTPUT HALVED IN 90 DAYS

Yesterday, in a furious coordinated attack by more than

1,350 heavy bombers of the 8th and 15th Air Forces, German aircraft factories, airdromes and other objectives were hit. Yesterday's attack followed Thursday's massive offensive by British based and Italian based heavies; the largest number of USSTAF bombers ever dispatched. The record task force battered seven enemy oil producing centers in another of the Allied assaults which in a 90-day campaign slashed Nazi oil and gasoline production by more than 50 percent, according to a joint statement released yesterday by USSTA and Air Ministry.

No interceptors penetrated the screen thrown around the Eighth Fortresses and Liberators. Nearly 750 P-47's, P-38's and P-51's participated. Our fighters destroyed 51 German aircraft--11 in the air and 40 on the ground. Our losses were 17 heavies and seven fighters.

Glenn Hall recalls:

I was engineer when Menzel was checked out for instrument flying and he did better with the seat lowered than most pilots under visual conditions. Conrad Menzel was a pilot's pilot. He finished his tour as a lead pilot and stayed around as instructor, test pilot and other things such as checking weather before the planes went on their missions. James Deборе usually was Menzel's engineer. On one occasion they took off and brought back to Shipdham a B-24 on three engines.

On August 27th two missions were scheduled. The first to Wezendorf, Germany, was scrubbed due to weather. The second mission called for our Squadron to put into the air ten ships to attack the primary target at Basdorf, Germany. Except for the PFF ship, our aircraft made up the first squadron. The mission was recalled due to weather conditions and all ships returned with their bombs except for Lt. Hal Tyree, who jettisoned his bombs before returning to base.

The Kenneth Adrian notes show that he was going to Berlin, but aborted in Denmark due to weather. He probably was with Louis Wimsatt. Records maintained by Lewis Robinson indicate that the Ray Ciesielski crew was on this mission. Lewis recalls: "the fog that was encountered". The last known crew that went on this Berlin mission belonged to Firman Mack.

A noncombat item was it was Merritt Derr's turn to make the big trip back to the States. It was August 27th when he climbed aboard the *Louis Pasteur* and left England.

On August 28th 1st Lt. John Milliken returned to our Squadron. John Milliken had been shot down in France 15 days earlier, was captured, escaped, and was returned to Allied control by the French Underground.

The Lt. John W. Jones crew joined the Squadron on August 28th. With Lt. Jones were Lts. Clyde Horsely, Clement R.C. Holcomb, James T. Westenhiser, and Edward Baird. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Robert Kirkland, Elwood A. Van Epps, Raul Garza, John P. Haggard, Robert E. Simon, and Mitrey K. Hage Jr. They flew most of their missions in *Down De Hatch*.

On August 29th Henry Siteman wrote:

I boarded the *Queen Mary* for the trip home.

The next day, August 30th, the Group put up eleven ships to attack military installations at Haute Maisnil, France. Captain Insley was the deputy lead. Our aircraft were carrying 250-pound general purpose bombs. Sighting was carried out using PFF. Lt. Louis Wimsatt experienced a malfunction and brought back six of his bombs. All other ships dropped on the target. Results were believed to be good.

Kenneth Adrian was with Wimsatt. Thomas Waters was on this mission according to records maintained by Gene McMahon and Michel Yuspeh.

Ray Marner wrote of some bad news in his diary entry for August 30th:

A kid named Kenny James, who worked in finance, was killed when a truck hit him while he was riding a bike. He was a nice guy too! (Note: Will Lundy does not list any casualties on this date.)

Fred Marzolph recalls:

Sid Lovett was a real nice guy who flew with us on our first six missions. This was his second tour of combat. He made a mission seem like a ride on a tourist bus. He would say, "In five minutes look out to the left and you'll see Bremen or Hannover or look to the right in such and such time and you'll see this or that. He seldom needed a map to know where he was. A Major, he left us to go back to the 100th Bomb Group.

I was the Mess Officer (or Sgt.) for the plane. When we first started flying missions in England, we usually received one or two good candy bars (Hershey Almond or plain Hershey bars) for each member to eat en route. The sugar in the candy was supposed to allow us to fly at altitude without using as much oxygen; and to satisfy our hunger on long flights. Shortly after this good ration, someone thought that plain cake doughnuts and coffee would be just as good and maybe cheaper. This idea almost caused the whole Group to die from choking to death while in flight. The doughnuts were very dry and had to be eaten while we were wearing oxygen masks. We took them off long enough to take a bite and we couldn't digest the darned things. Coffee??? As soon as the thermos was open, it froze solid. We had to choke the doughnuts down or try to spit them out.

Next we received a small package the English were using. It was a box about 4X4 and had openings at each of the four corners. If you opened one end you received a Chicolet piece of gum, another end gave you some dry, almost stale-tasting pieces of divinity, another end gave you a piece of candy called "Charms" and the fourth side gave you some kind of nutty candy. None of this was very tasty.

Finally, before war's end, the U.S. came up with a box of their own which was colored in red, white and blue. The candy was somewhat similar to the British, but much tastier. My job was to see everyone got their rations before we took off or else I had to scramble around the plane with an oxygen bottle to distribute the goodies.

Speaking of food, our Combat Mess really left a lot to be desired. On some combat missions all we had to eat for breakfast would be some pancakes that would leave your stomach still dragging on the ground even when the rest of you is at 22,000 feet.

One "creation" by our master chefs remained on a table morning, noon and night. It was a mixture of beets and onions.

Many times after a seven-hour mission the sandwiches we received at debriefing were better than the COLD HOT DOGS we got at the Combat Mess.

Now our "Deluxe Blue Plate" special for breakfast

consisted of greenish-yellow eggs from the package, wonderful half-mixed powdered milk and tasty grapefruit juice. Rare were the occasions that we received real eggs.

So good was the food at the Combat Mess that the air crews were "borrowing" those fleece-lined old style flying suits, the ground crews wore, and carrying a wrench or aircraft part as they tried to imposture their way into the Ground Mess. It got so bad they had a huge M/Sgt. who stood at the door to guard against "Alien" air crews.

What was the big attraction in the Ground Mess? They had to "suffer" with pork chops, American fried potatoes, fresh baked bread, coffee, desserts and other treats.

I do have to admit that the Christmas and Thanksgiving meals in the Combat Mess were a real delight. There were the traditional foods including mashed potatoes and gravy. However, I just couldn't understand the depraved individual at the end of the line who threw a handful of hard candies into the mashed potatoes and gravy. As these goodies sank into the mixture on your plate, he would say a holiday greeting. Our only salvation was knowing it wasn't being served to those troops on the front lines.

The following individuals received promotions during the month: 1st Lt. to Captain; Mendenhall, and Scott. 2nd Lt. to 1st Lt.; Chamberlain, Atkins, Walsh, Durett, Ryan, Adrian, Backstedt, Celentano, Edgecomb, Cempel, Wood, Fiskum, and Williams. Flight Officer to 2nd Lt.; Titus, Hersh, and Stovoff.

The following additions were made to the active duty roster during the month: New crews not previously mentioned included Lts. Hare, Egan, Salfen, Rosser, Spohn, and Smith. Crews returning to duty included Mendenhall, Menzel, Scott, Hruby, Atkins, and Clements.

The following individuals were removed, either temporarily or permanently from the active duty roster: Transfers to the 12th RCD were McCormack, Scott, Dines, Spohn, Titter, Tucker, and Wind. Transfers to the 8th AFRD were Mendenhall and 16 combat Sgts, Swenson and twelve combat Sgts. To detached service rest home were Atkins (and crew), Mendenhall (and crew), and Menzel (and crew). To detached duty other were Bennett, Hruby, and Rosenberg

Individuals participating in training, test or other local flights during the month were: Mendenhall, Quirk, Leonard, Menzel, Titter, McCormick, Durett, Wynes, McCloud, Waters, Bentcliff, Celentano, Daniels, Insley, Mack, Tyree, Hill, Horne, McCaslin, Gossett, Stone, Wimsatt, Salfen, Ciesielski, Ryan, Rosser, Kodaj, Kuecker, Hosington, Burns, and Clements.

In letters to his wife during the month of August Norm Kiefer wrote:

"I paid my Mess Bill. It was \$30 even."----"You mentioned the picture that was taken when I finished my missions. Was that the one with the airplane in the background? I don't remember sending it to you. I don't know how I got it by the censors."----"They are having a bond drive in the Squadron. Therefore, instead of sending you a check for \$100 this month it will be a bond."----"I am finding myself pretty much alone as far as enlisted men are concerned. Joe Barnett got out of the hospital last night and in the morning he leaves for the first leg on the trip home. That just leaves four of the original combat boys here now."----"You said that you see our car go by every once in a while. Who has it now?"----"Today I am very happy. The reason being that this afternoon the orders came down for the commissioning of Sgt. Harbison. Now there will be two of us. I was the first Direct Commission Officer in the Group and "Harbi" is the second."----"They did get rid of Danny (the dog). A farmer took him and now he wants to get rid of Danny. It seems he is a bit too familiar with the farmers chickens."----"Am I ever glad that I didn't come home in time to "watch" you build the garage. I'll bet that you would have tried to get me to help."----"Say!!! Where do you get off calling me a "shave tail"??? You had better watch out or I will make you "Hit a Brace". What do you say to that."----"Dobbins has now been listed as Killed In Action."

Early in September William Uvanni wrote in his diary:

We flew no more in August due to bad weather. September started the same way with very low ceiling and complete overcasts. Although we wanted to keep flying and finish our tour of 30 missions, we were put on orders to go to the rest home.

At 3 A.M. on the day we were to leave for Bournemouth Rest home, we were alerted to fly a mission. Lt. Beiber went

to Headquarters and straightened the matter out and we left for this "vacation" at 9 A.M.

We stayed over in London for a day, but when we got to Bournemouth, we were sorry to have wasted a day. Bournemouth is on the southern coast of England and it was the nearest thing to an American city we had seen since leaving the US.

In peace time it is a resort for rich Americans traveling in Europe. It is very clean and modern. We lived like "Kings" at an American Red Cross hotel. We slept as late as we wanted, swam, rode horseback, saw the sights, played games, etc. I got a horse called Satan at a riding place and couldn't control him. Carl Miller, who has been around horses on a farm and can control them, came to my rescue. We traded a little mare he had and Satan was no longer a problem. Thanks Carl!!

Food was better than we were used to and people treated us like their own sons around town. We stayed seven days and then we returned to our Bomb Group. (Unwillingly of course!) We felt like new men and told all of our friends not to miss their "rest leave" for anything.

On the first day of the month six of our ships went to Foret-De Dehaguenu, but were recalled due to weather. No sortie credit was given.

On September 2nd Norm Kiefer wrote to his wife:

Do you know something? I am going to find a job that gets an advancement or something of that sort every month. You see, with my most recent promotion, I am receiving mail from people that I haven't heard from before.

Capt. Michael Neri took a picture of me at my desk today. He also had one taken of himself and I, just outside of the building. Last week a couple of the enlisted men stopped me and wanted a picture of the three of us in front of the Squadron sign.

On September 4th Lt. John Milliken started out on the long trip back home. Sgts. Joseph O. Peloquin and Lawrence C. Richards were on the same orders.

Also, on September 4th, the author wrote to his wife:

You asked how I was getting along on my new job. I will answer that question in this manner. Today Capt. Michael Neri asked how much longer I had to wait until I was eligible for a promotion.

On September 5th the Squadron sent six aircraft to the marshalling yards at Karlsruhe, Germany. Captain Ernest E. Gossett led the 2nd section. Bombing results were poor.

Records maintained by Lewis Robinson indicate that the Raymond Ciesielski crew was on this mission.

Also, the Firman Mack record shows that he was in combat on this date.

The Henry Siteman diary entry for September 5th was:

I had to spend a week on board the ship waiting for Winston Churchill. He is going to the States to see President Roosevelt. However, I am now on the high seas heading for home.

On September 6th Ray Marner recorded in his diary:

Lots of men are coming back after going down. Most of Komasinski's crew are back. Milliken also escaped.

On that day Norm Kiefer wrote to his wife:

I was up for a ride again today. This time it was a British Mosquito. Boy, you could really have some fun in one of those ships. We were playing tag with the clouds and you really know that you are in a nice ship when you pour the soup to it. We did more "buzzing" today than I have done since we were practicing for the "Big Raid". (Note: I must have been with Dick Wynes.)

Lt. Van E. Lowe joined the Squadron on September 7th. With Lt. Lowe were Lts. Clyde Housley, Marion A. Williams, and Fred Benkert. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Odie D. Hill Jr., Wallace Penney, Kieth Ellis, Bernard Schmidt, Leroy Holmberg, and James Hazen. Clyde Housley took over another crew in October, 1944, and Marian Williams became lead navigator in December, 1944.

Ten 506th ships joined 26 other aircraft from the 44th for a mission to Karlsruhe, Germany on September 8th. The Group flew lead for the 14th Combat Wing and 2nd Air Division.

Bombing results were excellent

This was the first raid for the James Clements crew on their second combat tour. It was sortie #334. They were flying in A/C #800, Bar E. They were carrying two 1000-pound bombs. Clements was flying as Group Deputy Lead. Joseph C. Kodaj was the copilot. The remainder of the crew were the usual members. Lt. David L. Therme and Capt. David E. Sayler were also aboard. The target was the marshalling yards. Bombs away was at 1149 hours at 25,000 feet. They were dropped by H2X through 10/10 under cast with unobserved results. There was moderate inaccurate flak in the target area with no enemy aircraft encountered. Fighter escort was excellent.

The Lewis Wimsatt crew was on this raid according to records maintained by Kenneth Adrian. The Adrian notes indicated that they were carrying twelve 500-pound bombs and the raid took 9 hours. A newspaper report, kept by Adrian, read:

HEAVIES ATTACK

PLANTS IN REICH

Ludwigshafen, Karlsruhe,

Kassel Among Targets

Of 1,000 B17s, B24s

More than 1,000 Eighth Air Force Liberators and Fortresses, escorted by nearly 500 Mustang fighters, yesterday attacked chemical and synthetic oil plants in Ludwigshafen, marshalling yards in Karlsruhe, and ordnance depots at Kassel, near Mainz, and a tank armored vehicle plant at Gastaveberg, southwest of Frankfurt in Germany.

Approximately 300 Eighth Thunderbolts, Lightnings and Mustangs strafed rail and road targets in western Germany.

Twenty bombers are missing from the day's operations. All escorting fighters returned safely.

Ninth Air Force P-47 fighter bombers attacked Brest yesterday morning, destroying 16 fortified buildings and damaging 21 others. In addition, four gun positions were bombed and strafed. Two fighter bombers were lost.

Unfavorable weather was encountered at all targets,

crews reporting temperatures as low as 50 degrees below zero.

The B-17's braved intense flak at Ludwigshafen, while only moderate ack-ack was encountered at Karlsruhe, an important rail center for traffic supplying the Siegfried Line.

Records maintained by Michel Yuspeh and Gene McMahon indicate that the Thomas Waters crew was on this raid.

Another crew that was on this raid belonged to Ray Ciesielski according to records maintained by Lewis Robinson.

The next day, September 9th, eight aircraft from the 506th joined with 27 other 44th ships to go to Mainz, Germany. Lt. John Ryan led the Group. Bombing results were unobserved. Lt. Wilson completed his combat tour. The only other known 506th crew that made this raid belonged to Louis Wimsatt.

In his *History Of The 67th Squadron* Will Lundy wrote: "---the high squadron of 11 ships, after being forced off its bomb run by the 467th BG, went on to attack the Worms M/Y with that formation.---No E/A were observed and flak encountered was moderate to intense and accurate. Fighter escort was excellent throughout the mission and all of our aircraft returned safely.---(the target was) the rail yards and supply dumps to aid General Patton.---Parachute flak was sent up. It has a can of explosives under it and floats through the formation."

It was probably about this time that the Homer E. Still arrived. With Lt. Still were Lts. William Welborne, John Wilson, and Henry Strunc. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Helge Wessmann, John B. Lord, Connie Wyant, Kenneth Dahlin, Leo Hibbs, and Vernon Buhl.

On September 9th the author wrote to his wife:

Did I tell you about the robes that Father had made? They are for serving mass and benediction. He had them made out of parachute silk. He got hold of a chute that was pretty badly messed up, but still had enough material that he could use. The actual sewing of the fringe and tassels was done in town. It really is nice and is something that he can keep for the rest of his life.

On September 10th nine 506th ships joined 25 other 44th

aircraft on a mission to attack the ordnance depot at Ulm, Germany. The Group led the 14th Combat Wing. Bombing results were unobserved.

Ray Ciesielski was over Ulm on this day according to records kept by Lewis Robinson.

Will Lundy wrote in his *History Of The 67th Squadron*:
"---Enemy resistance was encountered only in the form of meager and inaccurate flak along the way. No serious battle damage was reported. The formation returned to base at 1455. The bomb load was twenty-four 260-pound fragmentation bombs dropped from an altitude of 22,600 feet."

The Henry Siteman diary entry for September 10th was:

We pulled into Halifax at 1400 hours to let Churchill off and left at 1639 hours; headed for good old New York.

On September 11th nine aircraft from the 506th went to attack the locomotive works at Hannover, Germany. Our crews joined with 26 other crews from the 44th on this mission. Lt. Clifford J. Bentcliff led the high right squadron. All of our aircraft reached the target and bombed thru cloud cover and the results were unobserved. Ten-to-20 enemy aircraft were seen, but no attacks were made on our Group's formation. Flak was intense and accurate, but we sustained no losses.

The Thomas Waters crew was on this mission according to records kept by Gene McMahon and Michel Yuspeh. Also, the Firman Mack record shows his crew was there. This was the first mission for the Richard Habedank crew according to records maintained by Elwood Matter.

On that September 11th day Norm Kiefer wrote to his wife:

I often wonder just how much things have changed there at home. We sit over here and think of things as they used to be and hope that they haven't changed a bit. They must have changed though or the boys wouldn't want to come back into foreign service after they have been home for a while. If I can believe what they tell us in the magazines and papers, everything back there is the same as always. The trouble is that we have changed! If that is so, I hope that it is for the better.

On September 12th seven aircraft from our Squadron participated in a mission to hit the oil refinery at Misburg,

Germany. The 506th ships joined 17 other ships from the 44th on this mission.

Will Lundy wrote: "The primary target for today is a repeat of yesterday--- the Hanomag Works at Misburg. However, an intense smoke screen hid the primary, so the rail junction at Lehrte, 5 and a 1/2 miles west, was bombed.---the first squadron bombed long, dropping their twenty-four 250-pound bombs too late. The second squadron's bombs were on the target. Bombing altitude was 23,000 feet, temperature was at -32 Centigrade. Flak in the target area was heavy, but inaccurate, and no enemy aircraft were observed.---as they (our returning aircraft) flew low over Holland and Belgium they could see how the Germans had flooded the low country there.---"

Records maintained by Delmar Fox show that the Paul Durett crew was on this mission. Another raiding aircraft that day was flown by the Firman Mack crew.

On September 13th eight aircraft from the 506th struck an airfield at Hall, Germany. Our ships joined 28 other 44th ships on this mission and led the 14th Combat Wing. Captain Gossett led the Group and bombing results were excellent.

Will Lundy told in his *History Of The 67th Squadron*: "Flak was encountered at Gernsheim and Mannheim where six aircraft sustained slight battle damage.---Fighter support was excellent and the Group had no losses.---Four A/C became separated from the formation and bombed targets of opportunity.---(our) ten 500-pound general purpose bombs from both squadrons covered the target very well, dropping them from altitudes of 25,000 to 20,000 feet.---the target was the Me-262 Jet Propelled airfield and we caught them flat-footed. The P-38's and P-47's had a field day, strafing Jets, Me-109's and Fw-190's on the ground. They must have destroyed at least 150!---We had an overcast up to 26,000 feet and couldn't get over it. We called the leader and dropped to 19,000 feet before breaking out. About this time we crossed the Moselle River and they shot the hell out of us.---"

Thomas Waters was on this operation according to the records of Gene McMahon and Michel Yuspeh.

Another of the raiders on this day was the Paul Durett crew according to the Delmar Fox record.

Also, Elwood Matter reported that the Richard Habedank crew was on this raid.

On September 15th the author wrote to his wife:

Here is one of the things that burns me up. One of the boys went back to the States to be discharged. He was going to a movie. Because he was in uniform he got into the movie for a few cents less than the civilians that were also going. One of the civilians turned and said, "I wish that I was in uniform. I could save a few cents". Now this boy was getting a medical discharge for wounds received in action. The civilian could only see the saving of a few cents. The military man faced a life of suffering.

On September 16th Ray Marner wrote:

Castro came back after living with the French underground for six months. Three Ploesti raiders came back after being liberated by the Russians.

On September 17 Will Lundy reported "All crews participated in practice mission--at low level."

Norm Kiefer remembers I took part in planning for briefing this practice mission. When I saw my roommate, Dick Wynes, we agreed that he would have a passenger on this practice flight.

We quickly left England by way of the English Channel where we flew at wave top level. After breaking the Dutch coast, we turned and returned at wave top.

I will always remember watching the shore line cliffs as we approach England. I was standing between the pilot and copilot and could clearly see the cliffs beginning to loom above us. There were fishermen on a dock. At the last minute, Wynes pulled up to miss the cliff. As we went over, the fishermen went into the water. That same day, it was decided that we would not have to fly so low.

Glenn Hall went on a low level flight over the lowlands on September 18th. He does not recall who he was with. He does remember:

We had no enemy opposition and had a very good view of the country, coming in at tree top level. We passed over an

air raid shelter and saw six Dutchmen nearby holding a very large Dutch flag with one hand and waving like crazy with their other hand. It was a very moving sight and made me realize what we were fighting for.

Glenn was on a supply mission for our ground troops. The Group dispatched 10 aircraft from each of the four squadrons on this mission to Best, Holland. There had been an air landing in that area.

The Richard Habedank crew was on this mission. Two of the crew members, Robert Dupont and Elwood Matter were wounded. Matter received his Purple Heart from General Johnson. As a result of his wounds, Matter missed several missions with his crew and then tried to catch up by flying with other crews.

Gene McMahon's record shows that he was on this mission, but does not show who he was with.

Will Lundy reported in his *History Of The 67th Squadron*:
"---(The mission was) to drop food supplies and ammunition to air-borne forces operating behind enemy lines at Best, Holland. The entire mission was carried out at low level. We left the English coast at 1100 feet, entered the Dutch coast at that same altitude, came down over the target at 400 feet, dropped the huge packages, climbed to 3,000 feet, and then let down again over the Channel to enter the English coast at 1,000 feet. The results were excellent as reported by the drop masters, with all parachutes landing in the drop zone. Enemy resistance encountered was from small arms fire, and 27 of the Group's airplanes were slightly damaged and two men were wounded. All planes returned safely to base except one squadron's ship that was forced to land in Belgium near Brussels. Three ships were involved in crash landings due to flat tires, etc.---All along our course the Dutch people gathered in groups to wave at us. We're so low one can almost shake hands with them. We pulled up to 300 feet to release our cargo.---all the cattle in Holland got a good workout today!"

On September 18th Norm Kiefer wrote to his wife:

Tonight I received an invitation to a party. The enlisted men that were with us back in the States are having a get together. Lt. Harbison and I are the only officers that have been invited. The only reason, I think, is that we were enlisted men with them. I was afraid, at first, that there would be some hard feelings, but so far, I haven't

found a bit of it.

The next night he indicated:

I checked to make certain that everything is set for the party tonight. They had thirty chickens killed and dressed when I left the kitchen.

The George Beiber crew were back in combat on September 22nd. Gerald Folsom and William Uvanni were on the crew. Uvanni wrote:

We resumed our tour in true style. Good old Germany! Kassel was the town and it is located at the eastern end of the Ruhr Valley.

Our target was the Henschler Locomotive Works. The plant currently is producing, of all things, 88-mm Flak Guns!!! This is the first time in 24 missions that flak guns were our target.

Intense flak was expected and also fighter attacks. There were clouds scattered pretty well throughout Germany and our gunners were especially alert. Kassel was covered by clouds so we bombed by PFF. Flak was moderate and nothing like we expected.

Our bombers left contrails all over the sky and it's lucky for us that clouds obscured the antiaircraft gunner's eyes. The fighters in our escort wove pretty patterns over and under us with their S'ing motions leaving contrails.

Woodie, flying the top turret, reported a German jet overhead followed by 2 P-51's. The jet emitted a trail of black smoke when the Mustangs approached him and left them "hanging" in the air.

At interrogation, after the mission, Woodie reported the jet plane and the intelligence officer told us he was the only one from our Group to do so. Fighter pilots from our escort turned in reports bearing out what Woodie said. Everyone else had mistaken the jet for one of our planes with wing-tanks!

The 508th sent six aircraft on September 22nd. Our ships joined 14 other ships from the 44th in this attack. Bombing was by PFF and the results were unobserved.

Lewis Robinson reports that he was with the Ray Ciesielski crew on this mission to Kassel.

The 506th continued to pound the enemy on September 25th when we sent eight of our aircraft to bomb the marshalling yards at Koblenz, Germany. Lt. Ryan led the Squadron with Major Middleton as the command pilot. Bombing was carried out using PFF equipment and the results were unobserved. Captain Sherman Dowsett completed his combat tour with a very excellent bombing record. He was lead bombardier on 30 missions and scored excellent on 26 occasions. In addition to our ships, the Group dispatched 22 other aircraft on this mission.

Records maintained by Kenneth Adrian show that the Louis Wimsatt crew was on this raid. Adrian's note indicate they carried twelve 500-pound bombs and hit a marshaling yard. A newspaper account of the raid is as follows:

NEARLY 2,000 U.S. PLANES BLAST REICH THROUGH CLOUDS

After a weekend lull because of bad weather, more than 1,200 Fortresses and Liberators of the Eighth Air Force yesterday swarmed over western Germany to blast railroad yards and other military and industrial objectives. Bombing was done with the aid of special instruments through solid clouds.

For the first time since D-Day, both Eighth and Ninth fighters, numbering nearly 750 Mustangs, Thunderbolts and Lightnings, escorted the heavies. Part of the escorting force also strafed enemy supplies and reinforcement facilities in the Ruhr north of Marburg and in the vicinity of Pederborn.

Although no enemy pursuits were encountered and antiaircraft fire was comparatively light, nine bombers and three Eighth fighters were lost.

The B-17's and B-24's pounded two railroad yards at Frankfurt, two at Coblenz, and one at Ludwigshafen, as well as the Oopau chemical and synthetic oil plant. The railroad yards are important distribution points for German troops and supplies sent to the western front.

Records maintained by Delmar Fox indicate that the Paul Durett crew was on this mission.

Both Gerald Folsom and William Uvanni were on a raid to Hamm, Germany, on September 26th. They probably were with George Beiber. Uvanni wrote:

Recently our efforts have been concentrated around Germany's Ruhr Valley. Today's target was the marshalling yard at Hamm. This is the biggest railroad yard in Germany at present. They are moving thousands of German troops through it daily.

Clouds were again in favor of the Germans. Our bombing was instrumental in creating some smoke cover. Light flak was encountered instead of the intense flak expected so I guess it was even all around.

The 44th sent 32 aircraft sent on this mission. They went after the transportation facilities. Capt Gossett was the deputy lead. PFF bombing was used with poor results. Lt. George D. Wright completed his combat tour.

The ship flown by Louis Wimsatt carried six 1000-pound bombs according to records maintained by Kenneth Adrian. The Ray Ciesielski crew was on this raid according to the Lewis Robinson record. It is possible that the Homer Still crew was on their first mission on this day.

Lewis Robinson recalls:

Combat crews didn't get to know ground personnel. In fact we didn't care to know other combat crew members, even in our own hut. If you formed a friendship, it hurt when they disappeared.

He also recalls the digestive problems caused by fright during predawn preparations after a breakfast of limp flapjacks, powdered eggs, bacon grease. These conditions did not lend themselves to carrying out the bodies natural functions.

Frostbite was another problem that occurred when heating units in the boots or socks failed.

I switched to a "Limey" suit and back parachute after my chest chute was riddled with flak as it rested on an ammunition rack at my side. Of course I didn't know my chute was riddled until we landed.

Our white silk gloves allowed us to touch our metal guns

at high altitude. Without them the skin on our hands would have remained frozen to the gun.

On September 26th Norm Kiefer wrote the following to his wife:

I had a letter from Major McAtee. He said that it was sure swell to be home once more, even if it is only for a little while. He claims that none of his clothes fit him any more. The letter was written on Aug. 31st and he ended it by saying that he would see me in about a month.

Speaking of my pass. I have something to tell you that I though was good. You know that since I have been over here I have had one pass for seven days, seven days in the rest home (which isn't supposed to count) and three times I have had a three-day pass. Well when I turned in for a seven-day pass I was turned down. Capt. Doughten told me that he had to cut my leave to six days. I haven't been an officer long enough to take a seven-day pass. Well here is one boy that is going to take my seven days the same as the rest of them. They can take a jump in the lake.

On September 27th seven aircraft from the 506th made a trip to Kassel, Germany. Captain Clements led the Group. As a result of the failure of the H2X equipment he turned the lead over to the deputy at the Group I.P. There were 23 other ships from the 44th on this raid.

James Clements was flying in A/C #800, Bar E. He had aboard his usual crew except for Sgt. C. N. Cash. Also aboard were Capt. Davis (Not 506th), Lt. R. J. Bennett and Lt. W. R. Partridge. They were carrying two 1000-pound bombs which were dropped on H2X at 0945 hours at an altitude of 24,700 feet. They encountered light accurate flak at the target area. There were no enemy aircraft.

The Delmar Fox record shows that the Paul Durett crew was on this mission. Delmar recalls:

Although there were no enemy attacks on our Group, one of the groups behind us lost quit a few planes.

Probably what Delmar Fox saw was the air battle that Roger Freeman, reported in his *Mighty Eighth War Diary*:

On this Kassel raid there were 26 Second Air Division

B-24's lost. Gunners on our B-24's shot down five enemy aircraft. Fighters escorting the 2nd Air Division shot down 30 enemy aircraft. Including crashed aircraft, the 445th Bomb Group lost 28 ships out of the 37 dispatched. This was the largest loss for any group on any mission.

Also, the Ray Ciesielski crew was in combat on this day according to the Lewis Robinson record.

It is possible that the Homer Still crew was on this mission.

On September 27th Lt. Milliken received the Distinguished Flying Cross. (Note: Milliken had left for the States early in the month. The orders would be forwarded to the States.)

Lewis Robinson recalls:

I carried my own small box camera on the first few missions. After a while, I was given an 8-mm hand held movie camera to take pictures of combat. I was also supposed to place a big K-24 camera over the escape hatch to photograph the bomb run results. Sometimes I was so busy throwing out chaff (by the boxful at times), that I didn't get the bombing results.

I never did forget the debriefing interrogations! We had a couple of the teetotalers (did not drink) on the crew. This resulted in a bonus for the rest of us. Our officers were good suppliers of the scotch, acquired at their club, which we kept in our hut.

On September 27th Norm Kiefer wrote:

Well there goes the blackout warning and since I don't have any lights on my bike I am going to get back to my quarters before it gets too dark. What happened to my lights? Somebody borrowed them and forgot to return them.

On September 28th eight aircraft from the 506th were briefed to returned to Kassel, Germany. Lt. Bentcliff led the Squadron. The Group flew lead for the 14th Combat Wing. There were 30 ships from the 44th in the attacking force. Bombing was by PFF with poor results.

In that formation was an aircraft flown by the Firman Mack crew.

On that same day Norm Kiefer wrote to his wife:

I am glad that Joe Young got back to the States all right. You will probably get a letter from him. (Note: Norm's wife went to visit with Joe and his family while Joe was in the States.)

Both Gerald Folsom and William Uvanni were on a return trip to Hamm, Germany, on September 30th. They were probably with George Beiber. Uvanni wrote:

Clouds of the 26th caused our bombing to be off and less effective than it should have been so we were briefed today for a return engagement. If we can knock out Hamm, we'll be helping our ground forces tremendously. Hamm has a large number of German troops who are being transported through there each day.

Visibility was perfect and we had a 100-mile an hour tail wind going across the target. Our ground speed was 367 MPH and the flak, which was heavy, was all behind us. The flak gunners failed to compensate for our higher than usual speed and didn't lead us properly.

As we turned to come home we were against this wind and our actual ground speed was only 97 MPH! This time the flak gunners gave us too much lead and the flak was all in front of us. It was a great feeling to see them off so much in their aim.

Our bombing results were good and I don't think we'll have to pay Hamm a visit for a while.

There were six aircrews from the 506th that made this trip to Hamm on September 30th. Bombing was by PFF and results were poor. In addition to our ships, there were 23 other 44th ships in the air on this day. The Group led the 14th Combat Wing which led the 2nd Air Division.

The Paul Durett crew was on this raid according to records kept by Delmar Fox. It is possible that the Homer Still crew was on this mission.

This was a disappointing day for M/Sgt. Iverson. His record of 96 missions without an abortion was broken when Captain Insley returned early with malfunctioning prop governors.

On September 30th Norm Kiefer wrote:

I am only going to take six days on this leave. They made

certain of that by naming me as Officer Of The Day for the Base on the day they want me back. Nice of them wasn't it.

During the month of September the excellent record of no turn-backs continued, making a total of 175 sorties with no abortions. M/Sgt. Robert M. Iverson, Crew Chief, continued his outstanding record. Aircraft maintained by Iverson completed 95 sorties without a single abortion due to mechanical failure. Crew Chiefs M/Sgts. Favero, Steele and Yerke were recommended for the award of the Bronze Star.

During the month the following personnel were given promotions: From Captain to Major Lawrence J. Linck; From 1st Lt. to Captain Bearden and McCaslin; From 2nd Lt. to 1st Lt. Waters, Bayless, Clapper, Jolvitz, Tyree, Daniel, Parshall, Fuss, Litzman, and Ward.

During the month the following additions were made to the duty roster: New crews not previously mentioned included William R. Partridge and Van E. Lowe; Returning from the rest home was Major Middleton; Captain John F. King assigned.

During the month the following temporary or permanent removals from the duty roster were made: Captain Saylor to the 14th Combat Wing; Captain Joe Bearden assigned to the 70th Replacement Depot; Lt. Frank Adams to the 12th Replacement Depot; Lts. Gippert, Komasinski, Lain, and Michaels and Sgts. Bohenko, Grett, and Hulewicz transferred to 8th Air Force Replacement Center; M/Sgt. Nathan Sweedler, Line Chief, transferred to the 302nd Air Transport Wing; 2nd Lt. William K. Brown assigned to the 96th General Hospital; Sgt. Owen transferred to the Zone of Interior; Major Middleton to rest home.

During the month of September Norm Kiefer wrote the following to his wife:

"I received a letter from Albert Kerns today. He is now a married man. He is working as a mechanic on a B-17 field. He said that he wishes that he was back over here."---"Jack Edwards was up for a little while again today. He had to leave quite early since they came up in a Cub."---"Barber was married and lived in Penn. It was his funeral that I went to."---"Maybe I will spend the later part of this evening in the manner that days off are supposed to be spent. Sgt. Delores Brumagin is trying to persuade me into going out for a few brews with

him."---"You asked what I wanted for Christmas. Since all of my good wings are broken, I could use a pair if you can find them. Also, I am out of the little wire collar holders."---"I did some sewing today. I put three gold braided bars on my left blouse sleeve. Each one stands for six months of overseas duty. That one blouse of mine sure is getting full of junk."---"The picture of Sgt. Klose was taken back in the States. He was killed with Dobbins."---"Today I had some of my old flying clothes out. A moth miller flew out of my heavy helmet. I suppose that by this time next year I won't have any fur left in it."---"Cutshall is now a prisoner of war."---"Yesterday I was in town most of the day. When I got back to the field I had a package from you. The shirt fit just fine except for the sides. I will have it tailored down."---"I had no more than finished opening your package when there was a knock at the door. It was one of the enlisted men. He wanted to know if I wanted to go out with a bunch of the boys to play darts at one of the "pubs". We had a pretty good time. However, we were soundly beaten at darts by a group of Englishmen."---"I'll bet you that I beat you at something this morning. I got to vote before you did. I sent in my ballot this morning."