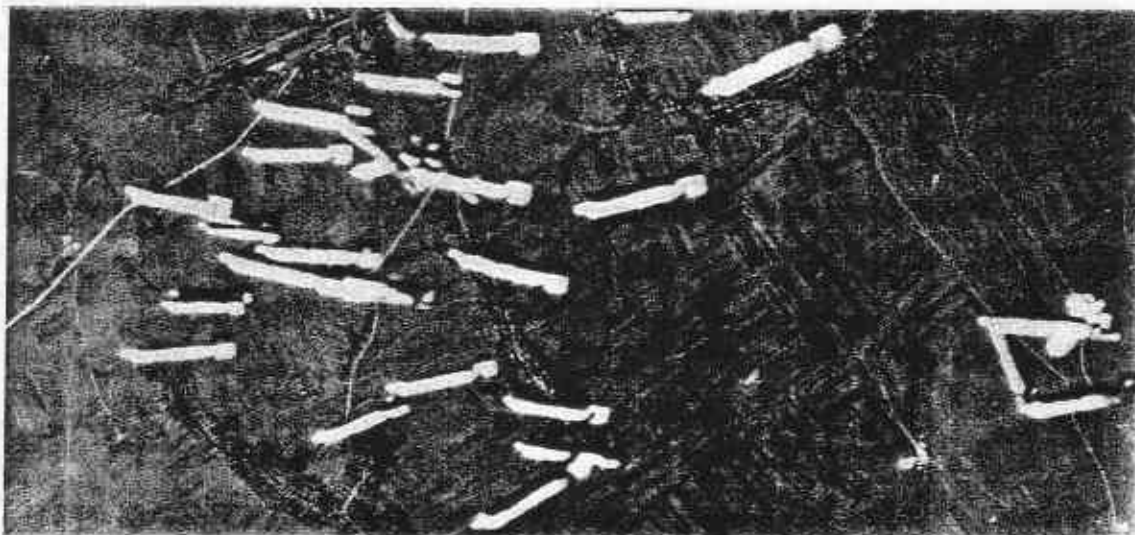


ARMED AND DANGEROUS GROUP (AD) (H)



Flight of the Vulgar Vultures
1943-1945

Our Final Missions



MARCH 1945

March arrived with some good flying weather, at least for the first three or four days, and the 15th Air Force took advantage of it. Our final missions supported the "mopping up" activities of the Allies in the defeat of the Nazis. The German defense in northern Italy still held along the Gothic Line and the battle on the eastern front was in full swing as we went back to our attacks on the communication systems of the enemy.

Mission 207, March 1 At 0900 hours, 18 B-24's took off to bomb the marshalling yards at Maribor, Yugoslavia. Eleven aircraft dropped their bombs on the secondary target, the marshalling yards at Jesenice, as the primary could not be reached due to weather conditions. Seven aircraft did not bomb. All aircraft returned to base.

Mission 208, March 1 At 0930 hours, 16 B-24's took off to bomb the same Maribor marshalling yards. Scant but fairly accurate flak was encountered at the target. The weather had

improved and a good concentration of bombs were observed in the target area. All planes returned safely.

Mission 209, March 2 Twenty-eight B-24's loaded with 500# RDX bombs took off to bomb the marshalling yards at Linz, Austria. Nineteen planes dropped their bombs on the primary target by pathfinder. Five aircraft dropped their bombs on the Knittelfeld marshalling yards as they could not line up on the primary. Flak at the target was moderate to intense and accurate. All planes returned to base safely.

Mission 210, March 4 Seventeen B-24's took off to bomb the station yard at Wiener Neustadt, Austria. All 17 aircraft dropped their bombs by pathfinder method and returned to base. No flak or fighters were encountered.

Mission 211, March 4 Twenty-one B-24's took off to bomb the primary target at Brod, Yugoslavia, but all returned without dropping their bombs due to bad weather conditions.

Mission 212, March 8 The Group was scheduled to bomb the railway cars

at Novezamke marshalling yards. Twenty-one B-24's took off at 0738 hours loaded with 500# RDX bombs. The weather prevented them from bombing any target as the Group tried to find targets of opportunity but none were found. Three aircraft were missing due to shortage of fuel. Two were heading to Zara, Yugoslavia for refueling and one plane was reported missing. There was no flak nor fighters but bad weather was our foe for the day.

Mission 213, March 8 The second section, or blue force, took off at 0810 hours with 21 B-24's loaded the same as red force to bomb the same target. They had the same results, as they were unable to spot even a target of opportunity. All planes of the blue force returned to base safely.

Mission 214, March 9 The red force of 19 B-24's took off to bomb the Pragersho marshalling yards. They were loaded with 500# GP bombs. One aircraft returned early because of an oil leak and 18 aircraft bombed the secondary target, the marshalling yard at Graz, Austria. They dropped 42 tons of bombs by pathfinder method. Flak at the target was slight and inaccurate. All planes returned to base safely.

Mission 215, March 9 The blue force took off with the same bomb load. Their target was the same but they were unable to bomb because of weather conditions. All planes returned to base with their bombs.

Mission 216, March 10 Twenty-one B-24's took off to bomb the railroad bridge at Verona Parona, Italy. They were loaded with 1,000# RDX bombs. Two aircraft returned early due to mechanical trouble. Nineteen aircraft dropped their bombs with outstanding results. Over 75% of the bombs fell within 1,000 feet of the aiming point. Flak at the target was moderate and

very accurate. One aircraft received heavy flak damage and three were slightly damaged. All planes returned safely.

Mission 217, March 12 We are back in the oil business. We put up a maximum effort of 42 B-24's to bomb the Florisdorf, Vienna oil refinery. The load was 500# RDX bombs. Only 38 aircraft dropped their bombs by pathfinder method. Flak at the target was intense but inaccurate. No results were observed because of clouds. One aircraft was missing. It was seen leaving formation with the pilot saying he could not feather his number four engine. Twelve crewmen were reported missing in action.

Mission 218, March 13 Twenty-eight B-24's took off to bomb the marshalling yards at Regensburg, Germany. Three aircraft returned before bombing but 25 dropped over 52 tons of 500# GP bombs by pathfinder method. Flak at the target was slight and inaccurate. All planes returned to base without incident.

Mission 219, March 14 Twenty-one B-24's of the red force and another 21 of the blue force consolidated their efforts and took off between 0805 and 0840 hours to bomb the primary target. They settled on the alternate target of the marshalling yards at Wiener Neustadt, Austria. They dropped 93 tons of bombs on the target by pathfinder method. Flak was not experienced at the target or en route. All planes returned to base.

Mission 220, March 15 The red force of 20 B-24's took off to bomb their primary target but had to settle for their fourth alternate, the marshalling yards at Bruck-Leitha, Austria. Thirteen aircraft dropped their bombs on the primary target. Seven others dropped theirs on the Wiener Neustadt marshalling yards, a target of opportunity.

No flak nor fighters were encountered. All planes returned to base.

Mission 221, March 15 The blue force was unable to bomb its primary target so 13 of their aircraft bombed a target of opportunity, the marshalling yards at Murzzuschlag. Seven aircraft of "C" box bombed various targets of opportunity. All planes returned to base.

Mission 222, March 16 Red and blue forces combined and took off between 0800 and 0830 hours. Weather prevented the Group from getting to their primary target so they bombed the marshalling yards at Amsteten, Austria. Thirty-seven B-24's dropped over 87 tons of 500# GP bombs on the target with fair results. No enemy resistance was met and all planes returned safely.

Mission 223, March 19 Forty-two B-24's took off to bomb the marshalling yards at Muhldorf, Germany. One aircraft returned early and 41 aircraft dropped over 116 tons of 1,000# GP bombs with good results. Over 55% fell within 1,000 feet of the aiming point. No enemy resistance was met and all planes returned safely.

Mission 224, March 20 Forty-two B-24's loaded with 500# RDX bombs took off to bomb the marshalling yards at Wels, Austria. All 42 B-24's dropped their bombs with outstanding results. Over 80% of the bombs fell within 1,000 feet of the aiming point. Again, there was no enemy resistance. All planes returned safely.

Mission 225, March 21 Mission was the Airdrome at Neuburg, Germany. The group was able to get 42 aircraft into the air for the third day in a row, an outstanding effort by the ground crews. One aircraft returned early and 41 dropped over 94 tons of 500# RDX bombs with outstanding accuracy. Over 87% fell within 1,000 feet of the aiming point. Flak at the target area was non-existent but some flak

along the route inflicted slight damage to one plane. All planes returned safely.

Mission 226, March 22 This was the fourth day of good weather and the red and blue forces again combined to fly a mission. Forty-two B-24's took off to bomb the oil refinery at Kralupy, Czechoslovakia. This time we were escorted by P-51's and P-38's. The bomb load was 500# RDX bombs. Two aircraft returned before bombing and 40 B-24's dropped 93 tons of bombs. No enemy resistance was met and all planes returned to base.

Mission 227, March 23 Good flying weather. Forty-two B-24's took off loaded with 1,000# RDX bombs to bomb the St. Valentine Tank Works. Flak at the target was intense and accurate. One aircraft was badly damaged and crash-landed at a nearby field with three crewmen seriously injured and six injured slightly. Another aircraft landed at Zaro, Yugoslavia with engines damaged from flak and the crew was returned to Bari, Italy by C-47. All other aircraft returned to base.

Mission 228, March 24 This was the sixth day of flyable weather. The group sent both red and blue forces on a combined mission. Forty-two B-24's were scheduled but only 38 took off. One aircraft returned early and 37 dropped their bombs on the primary target, which was the Riem Airdrome at Munich, Germany. Over 85 tons of 500# RDX bombs were dropped with fair results. Flak at the target was intense and accurate. Four aircraft received heavy damage and four slight. All planes returned to base.

Mission 229, March 25 This was the seventh straight day of flyable

weather and again the Group scheduled 42 B-24's. Thirty-eight got off the ground to attack the C.K.D. Liben Tank Works in Prague, Czechoslovakia. Two aircraft returned prior to bombing. Thirty-six aircraft dropped 96 tons of 1,000# GP bombs with good results. Flak at the target was moderate and accurate. Three aircraft received slight damage from flak. No enemy fighters were seen. All planes returned to base.

Mission 230, March 26 The Group sent 28 B-24's loaded with 500# GP bombs to the marshalling yards at Szombathely, Hungary. Only six aircraft dropped their bombs on the primary target as the weather moved in. Thirteen aircraft returned their bombs to base, while seven jettisoned their bombs in the Adriatic. Those that dropped their bombs on the primary did a good job because over 75% fell within 1,000 feet of the aiming point. Flak was moderate and accurate; one aircraft received heavy damage and ten had slight damage. All planes returned safely.

Mission 231, March 30 Four B-24's took off to bomb the North Station and Good Depot at Vienna, Austria under the cover of weather to avoid fighters. Two aircraft dropped their bombs on the primary and one dropped its bombs on an alternate target, the Kapfenberg Tank Works. One aircraft did not bomb because the primary target was clear. Results were good as bomb strikes were seen in the target area. Flak at target was intense and accurate. All planes returned safely.

Mission 232, March 31 The last day of the month and the group sent 28 B-24's to bomb the freight and locomotive depot at Linz, Austria. The group was escorted by P-38's to the target. Three aircraft returned without bombing. Eighteen aircraft dropped 33.5 tons of 100# GP bombs on the primary tar-

get. Four aircraft returned their bombs to base and three aircraft jettisoned their bombs in the Adriatic. Results were not observed. Flak at the target area was intense and accurate. All planes returned to base.

March was over and the Group had flown 26 missions, putting 719 aircraft over the target areas. The Group dropped 1,376.15 tons of bombs during the month. While no enemy fighters were shot down during March, it was because we were not attacked by them. We lost three aircraft to flak but only two of those resulted in a loss of 12 crewmen as the third aircraft crash-landed and most of the crew escaped with minor injuries. We had six men severely wounded and three received minor wounds. The concentration of flak around the major targets seemed to be increasing as the Germans appeared to be "circling their wagons" for the final attack.

APRIL 1945

April started off with a continuation of March's good weather. Our targets this month would be troop concentrations and communications. By communications we were including marshalling yards, railroad bridges and depots. We would hit one oil depot as our last effort against oil resources. The war was fast coming to an end and we hastened it a little with our effort.

Mission 233, April 1 The Group sent 28 B-24's loaded with 1,000# RDX bombs to bomb the railroad bridge at Kreglach. One aircraft returned prior to bombing with engine trouble. Twenty-seven aircraft dropped 78 tons of bombs on the target. Results were not observed because of smoke in the target area. No flak was experienced and no enemy fighters were seen. All planes returned to base.

Mission 234, April 2 The Group sent 28 B-24's to bomb the marshalling yards at Krems, Austria. One aircraft returned prior to bombing because of low engine oil pressure. Twenty-seven aircraft dropped over 65 tons of 500# RDX bombs in the target area with outstanding results as 87% of the bombs fell within 1,000 feet of the aiming point. There was no flak at the target and none en route. All planes returned safely.

Mission 235, April 5 Twenty-eight B-24's took off to bomb the railroad bridge at Verona, Italy. Weather prevented them from reaching the target so all planes returned to base, aborting the mission.

Mission 236, April 6 Six B-24's loaded with fragmentation bombs attacked the flak emplacements at Verona, Italy. They dropped 14 tons of bombs with poor results. Flak at the target was moderate and accurate. All planes returned safely without casualties.

Mission 237, April 7 Six B-24's of the red force took off to bomb the flak emplacements at Bressanone, Italy. Weather prevented them from bombing the target, so the mission was aborted. All planes returned to base.

Mission 238, April 7 The blue force consisting of 28 B-24's loaded with three 2,000# RDX bombs took off to bomb the marshalling yards at Innsbruck, Austria. Twenty-six aircraft dropped 81 tons of bombs on the primary target by pathfinder method. Flak at the target was moderate and inaccurate. No enemy fighters were seen. All planes returned to base.

Mission 239, April 8 Twenty-eight B-24's took off to bomb the railroad bridge at Campo Di Trens, Italy. Flak at the target was moderate and accurate. Twenty-eight aircraft dropped 81 tons of 2,000# RDX bombs with fair results. One crewman was wounded and two

aircraft were damaged severely. All planes returned.

Mission 240, April 9 Forty-two B-24's took off to bomb troop concentrations in northern Italy. Two aircraft returned prior to bombing. The planes were loaded with 8,272 fragmentation bombs. Bombing was done visually and good results were obtained. Flak was moderate to slight at the target and all planes returned safely.

Mission 241, April 10 The Group again went to northern Italy to bomb troop concentrations. The bomb load was the same, fragmentation bombs. This time they dropped 9,084 of them with good results. Moderate and accurate flak was encountered at the target. No fighters were seen and all planes returned to base.

Mission 242, April 11 The Group was briefed to bomb the railroad bridge at Ponte Gardena, Italy. Twenty-eight B-24's loaded with 1,000# RDX bombs took off at 0800 hours. Two aircraft returned prior to bombing and only seven aircraft could bomb the primary target. The rest of the aircraft selected an alternate target, the fuel depot at Goito, Italy. Moderate flak was encountered at the primary and one aircraft was seen leaving the formation, radioing that his controls were shot away and he would try to make it to Switzerland. Eleven crewmen were listed as missing in action. The rest of the planes returned to base safely.

Mission 243, April 12 The Group was briefed for another railroad bridge. This time it was at Nervessa, Italy. Twenty-eight B-24's loaded with 500# RDX bombs took off at 1000 hours. Six aircraft returned early, two because of engine trouble and four because of weather. The remaining aircraft dropped 210 bombs with very good results. From observations, the bridge

appeared to be knocked out. Moderate and accurate flak was encountered at the target. One aircraft was lost when its nose wheel collapsed on takeoff; six crewmen were killed. One crewman was severely injured by flak and three slightly injured.

Mission 244, April 15 Seven B-24's took off to bomb the Ghedi, Italy ammunition depot and 42 B-24's took off to bomb troop concentrations in northern Italy. Six aircraft of the blue force bombed the ammunition depot with 500# RDX bombs and 39 aircraft of the red force bombed the troop concentrations. No flak was encountered at Ghedi and only moderate flak at the other target. All planes returned to base.

Mission 245, April 16 The Group was briefed to strike at troop concentrations in northern Italy. Forty-three B-24's took off at 0900 hours loaded with 250# GP bombs but were unable to bomb because of weather conditions. All planes returned to base.

Mission 246, April 17 Forty-one B-24's took off to bomb troop concentrations in northern Italy. Again they were loaded with 250# GP bombs. The Group bombed visually and dropped over 85 tons of bombs on the primary target with very good results. Flak was slight and inaccurate at the target. All planes returned safely.

Mission 247, April 18 The Group went back to the same area to bomb troop and equipment concentrations. This time 41 B-24's dropped 96 tons of 500# RDX bombs with good results. All planes returned to base.

Mission 248, April 19 The Group attacked an alternate target with mixed results as only 30 aircraft dropped their bombs on the Bischofshofen, Austria marshalling yards. Weather prevented the remainder from dropping their bombs. Three Me-109's were observed but they did not attack and were driven off by P-51's. All planes returned to base.

Mission 249, April 20 Forty-three



B-24's took off to bomb the Campodazzo, Italy railroad bridge. Five aircraft returned prior to bombing for various reasons. Thirty-three aircraft bombed the primary target with excellent results, dropping 1,000# RDX bombs on the target. Five aircraft dropped their bombs on the Campo Di Trans railroad bridge, an alternate, because the primary was obscured by smoke. Flak at the target was slight and inaccurate. All planes returned to base safely.

Mission 250, April 23 Forty-two B-24's took off to bomb the road bridges at Padua, Italy. They dropped 93 tons of 500# RDX bombs with good results. No flak or enemy fighters were encountered in the area or en route. All planes returned to base.

Mission 251, April 24 Forty-two B-24's took off to bomb the road bridges at Friola, Italy. Twenty-eight of the aircraft dropped 1,000# RDX bombs on the primary target with good results. Fourteen aircraft dropped their bombs on the alternate, Oseppe marshalling yards and ammunition dump, with good results. Flak at the target was slight and inaccurate. All planes returned to base safely.

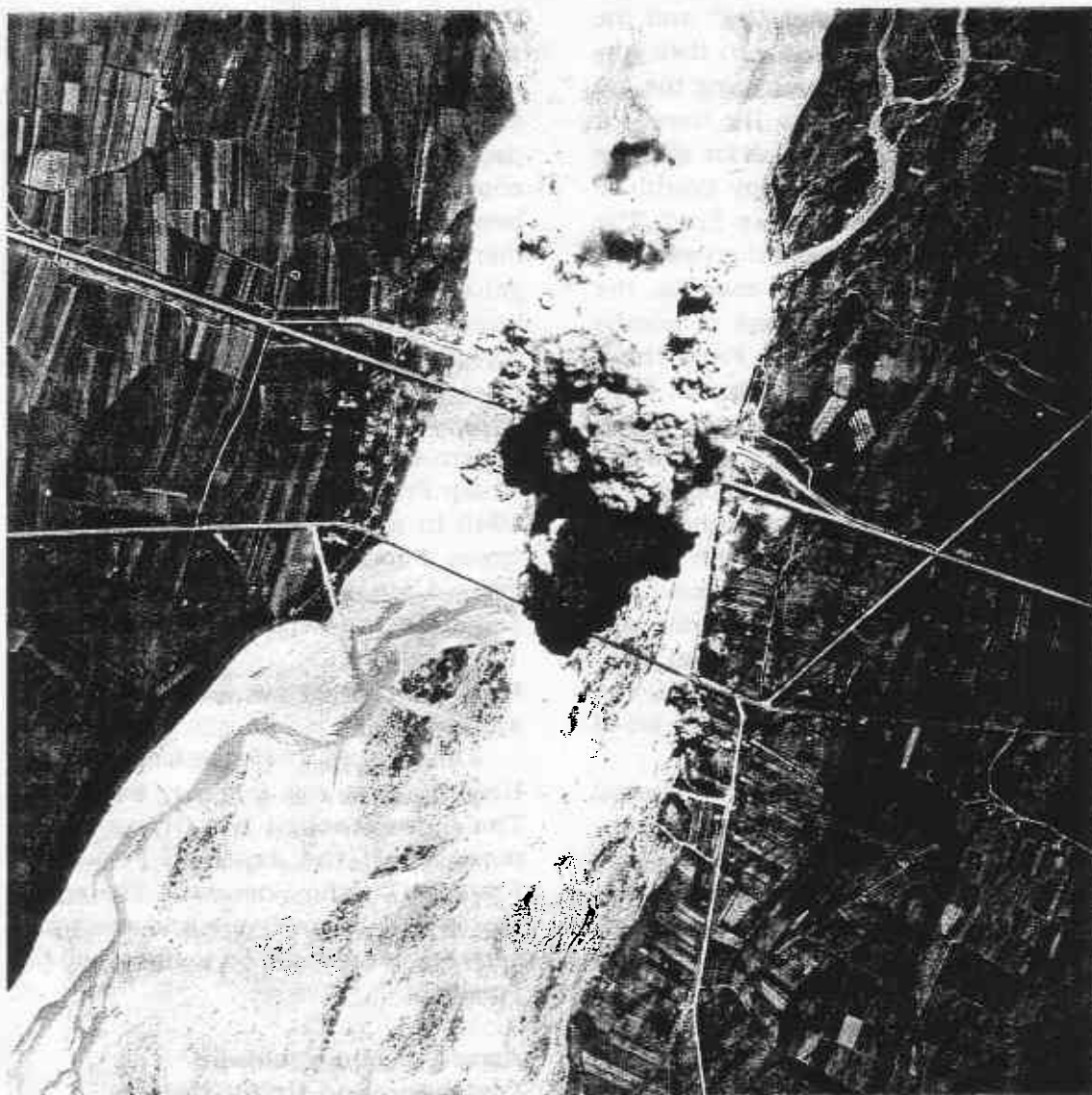
Mission 252, April 25 Twenty-eight

B-24's took off to bomb the main station and marshalling yards at Linz, Austria. The group was escorted by P-51's. Two aircraft returned prior to bombing because of engine trouble and 26 aircraft dropped 62 tons of 500# RDX bombs on the primary target. Flak at the target was intense and accurate. It seemed that the enemy was bringing all their flak guns back to protect their priority targets as the flak was extremely intense over this area. One aircraft was hit in the bomb bay and ten crewmen were missing in action. Three other crewmen received flak wounds, one serious and two slight. Twenty-five planes returned to base at 1440 hours.

Mission 253, April 26 Although a mission was scheduled for this day, it never got off the ground as the air war was over while the Group waited for takeoff. April was over and so was the war in Europe. The results for April were 20 missions flown with a total of 653 aircraft over the target and 1,305 tons of bombs dropped. The group lost three aircraft, two to enemy action and one accident. The loss in personnel was six killed, 21 missing and eight wounded in action.



The War Has Ended



April 25th marked the last day the 15th Air Force flew high over enemy territory and the last day the bombs fell in full force. Everyone knew the war would soon be over and the air crews started "sweating out" the last few missions as they had made it this far and some suspicions and anxiety prevailed about getting shot down at this stage of combat. The remaining strategic targets were

heavily defended with flak with Linz, our last target, being no exception. We lost one airplane and crew from flak on that mission and two men were severely wounded and one received slight wounds. Seven of our B-24's received severe flak damage and 11 were slightly damaged. The Group had flown 13 missions with no enemy opposition from flak or fighters before striking Linz.

These missions were flown in support of the ground forces in the Po Valley, Italy. Another mission again was scheduled against Linz for 26 April 1945 and the crews were already waiting in their aircraft with great concern, hoping the red flare would be fired from the tower for its cancellation. It was time for starting engines and shouts of joy could be heard as the red flare was fired. The war was over for the combat crews!

During these last few months, the Group dropped 2,851 tons of bombs from flying 1,434 sorties. From these operations, we lost eight aircraft from flak and 134 received flak damage. There were 74 crewmen missing in action, 20 wounded and 16 killed. In addition, we lost three B-24's to causes other than combat. The Group started with 60 aircraft at the beginning of this period and with the loss of 11 planes, the rate was 18%. Losses to causes other than combat plagued the Group throughout the war. Many of the crews listed as killed were from these accidents.

Much of the Group's efforts during April was giving direct and indirect support to our ground troops trying to push the Germans out of Italy, or to capture them. In doing this, we bombed just ahead of our troop lines and hit bridges and marshalling yards to stop all ground transportation. Air transport was no longer a factor.

Crude but effective ways were developed to mark the areas along the front lines for the bombers to hit the dug in enemy troops and make certain that we would not accidentally hit our own. This was accomplished by the use of low frequency radio beacons and white markers well placed along the lines. The bombing altitude was generally 15,000 feet. The radio beacon was placed at one end of our dug in troops. Supplementing this, the Army placed a

series of white letters "T" 100 yards in length and 1,000 yards apart to mark where our troops were located. The bomber stream flew perpendicular to the line of troops from an IP and would not drop their bombs until the pilot got an indication on his cockpit radio compass that he had passed the radio beacon, i.e., his compass bearing to the beacon was 90° or more. The white markers were for the benefit of the navigators and bombardiers to insure the bombers were beyond them before dropping the bombs. Also, this was of great assistance in locating the dug in troops of the enemy for bombing. This system worked extremely well with the Group flying several missions in March 1945 in direct support of the ground forces. Shortly after this campaign, our ground forces were able to move out and defeat the Germans.

We Lost Our Commander and Chief

On 13 April 1945 the flag at Group Headquarters was flown at half mast. The news reached the Group in the morning of the death of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. There was sorrow felt by everyone and memorial services were held in memory of the President.

Award of the Second Distinguished Unit Citation

On 16 April 1945 the Group was awarded its second Distinguished Unit Citation for destroying the Moosbierbaum oil refineries at Vienna on 26 June 1944. The troops made a nice picture marching to the flight line and standing at attention in their Class A uniforms. General Twining failed to attend but sent a Brigadier General instead to make the official presentation. This, however, did not make the

award any less significant. It was indeed a happy and proud moment for everyone.

Our POW's Were Freed

Our POW's held by the Germans were freed! It was indeed a joyous occasion but many of them had been mistreated and all suffered from malnutrition. A good number had to remain in Allied hospitals to return to health before making the long trip back to the States and home. Many had to remain in veteran's hospitals for long periods of time after returning to the States.

Tom Ramey, himself a POW, gave this account: "We had 179 airman lost from burning planes, ditching in icy cold water, crash-landing on rugged mountain terrain, often times wounded, only to realize their fate on the ground – captured American prisoners of war. Each airman had a different story to tell but sooner or later it reverted to starvation diets, deprivation, abuse, humiliation, vermin-infested quarters, forced marches in sub-zero weather, considerable weight loss, inadequate or no medical attention, infamous German box car rides, and in many cases, torture.

"Prison camp life was one of cold drafty buildings, warning wires, guard towers, lengthy roll calls in bitter cold weather, search lights and guard dogs at night, boredom and loneliness. Escape was the binding thread that held out hope. Tunnels were dug, found by the Germans, filled in and then under the threat of death, new tunnels were dug again. From a handful of nothing but American ingenuity, POWs were able to fashion many articles to meet basic necessities of life. Humor was the thread that made life bearable and the waiting tolerable.

"The German prison camps were located throughout most of Germany,

Poland and occupied Europe. Stalag indicated the enlisted POW camps: Stalag Luft, air force camps; and Oflag, officer camps. As the war drew to a close and the Russian and American troops pushed forward, camps were closed and prisoners were marched out and consolidated deeper into Germany.

"The sounds of war came closer and closer until one day when armored tank columns overran the camps and the American flag flew once again."

At the same time, our crews who were interned in Switzerland were turned over to our Embassy personnel who arranged for transportation for their return to the States.

There was little recognition given to our POWs for the acts of heroism and hardships endured. Stories later told about crew members risking their lives to save others during the heat of combat clearly indicate that awards should have been made following the end of the war. There were not only acts of heroism in the air but also acts of individuals making sacrifices so that others could evade capture. There were also acts during POW life by some that deserved recognition. Perhaps this in some small way will call attention to the forgotten crewmen who became POWs.

There Was Humor with Tragedy

There were several incidents which occurred that were tragic to those involved but to others and in retrospect, they were rather humorous. For example, we lost two waist gunners over the target when the bombardier said: "Let's get the hell out of here," as he released the bombs over a target with very heavy flak. The waist gunners hearing this over their airplane radio intercommunications mistook the comment as an order to bail out, so they did. The pilot and remainder of the crew returned to base safely. The

two gunners became POWs for the duration. Replacement gunners were given to the crew and they completed their tour.

Another incident occurred when the bombardier and navigator mistakenly bailed out over the target after bombs away. Their airplane received a hit in the nose section from flak, destroying the radio intercommunications. The navigator, being concerned as to the status of the B-24, looked back at the pilot from the navigator's plastic dome. The pilot gave him an OK sign by making a circle with his thumb and finger. The navigator saw only his thumb and thought the sign meant to bail out, so he and the bombardier did. The rest of the crew returned to Italy, badly shot up and bailed out over friendly territory. The navigator and bombardier became POWs.

Many will always remember about one of the pilots who suffered from the "GI's" and never made it back to the base before using up the space inside his electrically heated blue flying suit as a substitute for the latrine. Many saw him on a very cold day in March standing ankle deep in a water puddle next to his hard stand trying to clean himself and his flying suit. He completed the combat mission but was in dire straits the whole time. Many thought he should have been given some kind of medal or award but no one could think of an appropriate one for him.

VE-Day

The official announcement of the end of the war in Europe on 8 May 1945 did not cause much surprise in the Group since it had been expected for days. Also, it was an anti-climax to another war still going on, that against the Japanese in the Far East. It was a hot, sunny day and the men were routed out of their "sacks" in the morning and marched down to the parade ground near the runway for a thankful prayer by the chaplain. The

Group C.O., Col. Snowden, gave everybody the day off to celebrate except the guards. Very little celebrating was done. Most of the men just took it easy, getting a suntan and listening to their radios with all the notables from President Truman and Prime Minister Churchill down to the commanding officers of all the bomb wings and service groups in the Mediterranean Theatre of Operations giving glowing accounts of what the men over in Italy had accomplished toward achieving victory! Somehow, the accolades sounded hollow, like praise often does. It was a poor replacement for the thoughts of those who had made the supreme sacrifice with their lives.

Packing and Going Home

Rumors were rampant. Some implied that the Group would be sent to the Far East to help defeat the Japanese. This would have been a major undertaking to move ground equipment, personnel and airplanes. Other rumors were that just individuals would go to fill the critical needs of our forces in the Far East. None of this happened.

The Group was assigned the task to fly a few support missions, carrying mostly foods to areas in dire need. For example, Erling Kindem of the 742nd Squadron entered in his war diary that his crew carried a cargo of wheat to Udine, Italy. Supplies and food products were also carried to Aviano and other places in Italy. The pilots and airplanes were also used to carry personnel to ports and airfields for processing and shipment home. Many of the airplanes were being made ready for the long flight back to the States. In the meantime, several of the crews went on sightseeing trips in their B-24's over many of the areas they had bombed. There were raves about the sights from the air, especially Rome, Pisa and the Alps. There were accounts of trips