

The Torretta Flyer



The TorrettaFlyer Redondo Beach, California Winter-Spring 1994 No.25

484th Operational History Starts Page 4



Inspecting flak damage 484th BG (1-1)



Robert A Harrison 825 sq

Robert Altman 484BG

'42-94738 "Knockout" 827 Sq.(1-3)



JU-88 D1 Trop S/N 43-0650 at Wright Field shortly after arrival from Cairo, first Atlantic crossing of a JU 88. See story starting on page 26 (1-2)

About This Issue

This issue of the Flyer contains only two stories as both are quite lengthy. To fit them in at full length most of our regular features have been omitted. The scholarship report, letters to the editor, obituaries, and other news will be included in the next issue slated for mid summer publication. Your patience in this matter is greatly appreciated.

484th Bomb Group History Page 4

The 484th Bomb histories were gleaned from a micro film reel, as you will note the first three months of combat operations were omitted, and are not available at this time, but will be included in a future issue of the Flyer. It took some time to assemble as the monthly reports were not written in the same style. This may be due to the fact that perhaps the original work had many authors. There were at least two micro film reels made of the 484th BG Historic Summaries that I know of and there may be more. For that reason some readers may find errors and / or omissions in the version printed in this issue. Please advise us of corrections so that they may be added to the record.

Micro films originate from Maxwell Field, Alabama, that is the prime repository of Army Air Force records of WWII. These film reel histories may not agree with the combat records in the National Archives.

The complete combat records of the 484th Bomb Group are stored in the National Archives at the Suitland, Maryland facility. The records are boxed generally by mission bundle. The bundles generally include, 1) the combat orders, and annexes or changes as they came from Group HQ, 2) Flimsies, 3) Mission Maps, 4) Aircraft numbers, by serial Number and nose number, 5) crew members assigned to each aircraft, and 6) bombing analysis. Members wishing to review the records may do so by first getting a pass at the main archive building in downtown Washington, DC.

The JU 88 Story Page 26

You may wonder why photos of a Junkers JU 88, an enemy aircraft, grace the front and back pages of this issue of the Flyer instead of the usual B-24? Read on.

When I first read the story "First Junker JU-88 Flight Across the Atlantic" by Maj./Gen. Warner E. Newby in the Friends Journal, the publication of the Air Force Museum, I was intrigued by the quality of the JU-88. You might remember that it was the JU-88 that bombed Bari Harbor in December of 1943, doing great damage to the ships anchored there. Much of the supplies intended for the 15th Air Force were sent to the bottom of the harbor and would not be recovered for many months afterwards. In that the 484th Bomb Group will be holding its 1995 reunion in Dayton, Ohio, where this same aircraft is on display, this makes a nice tie in with the 484th's "95" reunion. The story and photographs are reprinted by the gracious permission of the author, Maj./Gen. Warner E Newby.

You might remember also that the JU 88 was also used in coordinated attacks on bomber missions put up primarily by the 8th Air Force, and may have been utilized similarly against 15th Air Force missions as well. See Brian D. O'Neil's book "Half a Wing, Three Engines, and a Prayer." As a side note to General Newby's story, the Luftwaffe did not have high octane fuel available during the Battle of Britain as did the Spitfires and Hurricanes of the RAF. 100 octane fuel allowed higher power settings for the RAF aircraft. The JU-88 was designed to use low octane fuel as the story states. Further information on the JU 88 can be obtained from the book "Junkers JU 88, Star of the Luftwaffe" by Manfred Griebel.

The Torretta Flyer



Issue No 25 Winter-Spring 1994

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The Torretta Flyer is the official publication of the 484th Bomb Group Association. Normal distribution is limited to members only. Requests from non-members for copies should be directed to the editor.

Contributions of stories, articles, memorabilia, and graphic materials to the Torretta Flyer are always welcome. Clean typewritten manuscripts and Microsoft Word disks are preferable. Other forms also are acceptable. Please contact the editor for further information.

The Torretta Flyer reports primarily on the history of air warfare during WWII and the accomplishments of members of the 484th Bomb Group during WWII. From time to time the magazine will cover other subject matter related to aeronautical events as material becomes available. Readers are encouraged to submit their own stories or material from other sources.

Editor, Bud Markel
Associate Editor, Bea Markel

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News Of The Association

300 Members Attend the Harrisburg Reunion

Beautiful Spring- like weather greeted 300 members and guests gathering for the 1993 reunion in Harrisburg, PA at the Harrisburg Marriott Hotel. Nearby Hershey of chocolate fame and the Amish villages of Pennsylvania Dutch Country in Lancaster County were both big draws for member and guests. Both tours, the one to Hershey - Lancaster, and the one to Gettysburg proved very popular. The registration gift this year was a 484th Bomb Group Association embroidered insignia patch. Members not in attendance, or wishing additional patches, can order from the Association office. See PX Items listed.

The 5-member color guard company from Carlisle Barracks, presented the colors, including the Association Group flags at the banquet on Saturday evening. Our speaker at the banquet was Stephen Bowman from the War College at Carlisle Barracks, where he holds the position of Director. US Army Military History Institute. His presentation was a very timely and moving salute to our members, as well as all of the WWII veterans. The invocation at the banquet, as well as the Memorial Service on Sunday morning was given by Chaplain Candidate Michael Burgess (US Army Ranger, Infantry Airborne), accompanied by his wife and 6-month old son, the youngest attendee at the reunion. The music for listening and dancing was provided by the Executives. Judging by the guests on the dance floor when the band played "Good night" The band was a hit.

Because of the hotel's inability to provide our Group with the allocated exhibit room space and registration area for the first day of the reunion, your President successfully negotiated with the management and as a result, the Harrisburg Marriott has made a \$1,000 contribution to the Association's Memorial Scholarship Fund.

We are most thankful for the services of Bud Pressel (825th Sq), our local host for the Pennsylvania area, who provided so many of the contacts, as well as those delectable snack packages for our guests from a local Harrisburg admirer of our WWII air force veterans. We also want to thank Harold and Audrey Toomey (824th Sq) Charles and Agnes Lowell (827th Sq) Ralph Carr (825th Sq) and Bunny Tissing, for all of their help.

Annual Meeting Report

Scholarship Awards

The annual business meeting took place on Saturday morning, October 2, 1993, at 10 AM. The minutes of the last meeting and financial report were approved. Chris Donaldson, representing the Memorial Scholarship Committee, gave his report, that the four scholarship award recipients for 1993 had been selected by Prof. Umberto Albanese and his advisors. The award ceremony to be held on October 23, 1993 at the Technical Institute in Cerignola. The awardees are: David Borelli, Rosmunda Bufo, Stefania Costa and Antonietta Gisario.

As many of you already know the eligibility for grants requires that the students must be offspring of persons living on or near the airfield at Torretta and the Cerignola area. The Italian student scholarship awards program continues to attract favorable and considerable media attention in the Foggia/Cerignola area. The Committee and Association recognizes with gratitude the efforts made on our behalf by Professor Albanese. Your continuing

contributions to the scholarship fund are a measure of the support of the program.

Recommendations were made by the Committee with membership approval, that Scholarship Fund Awards be extended to students in the US, in addition to the Italian Awards program. The Committee will work on this.

In accordance with the notice of the annual meeting for the purpose of electing directors for the year 1993-1994, the election of directors took place. The directors are: Bud Markel, Beatrice Markel, Frank Valdez, John Billings, and Charles McKew.

1994 Cruise reunion

Under new business, the recommendation for the 1994 reunion was presented and approved. It will be a 4 night, five day Caribbean Cruise aboard Carnival Cruise Lines, "Ecstasy" ship, sailing from Miami on November 7, 1994, returning to Miami on November 11, 1994. Arrangements will be made with regard to requirements for our annual meeting and memorial service aboard ship. See insert for details.

1995 Reunion

Also recommendation was made and approved for the 1995 reunion to be held in Dayton, Ohio, in the fall, for the dedication of the 484th Bomb Group Plaque and Tree at the Air Force Museum Memorial Park at Wright-Patterson AFB. Donations toward the installation are solicited. The cost of the plaque and tree is approximately \$3,000. At this time we have received approximately two-thirds towards the cost. The reunion hotel and exact dates will be announced later.

1994 Dues \$25.00

Also approved by the members in attendance was the increase in annual dues to \$25.00, necessitated by the need for funds for professional help in searching for, and finding members of the 484th Bomb Group (1944-1945).

The 484th PX List

1) 484th Bomb Group Association Pins: The pins display the new logo, an adaptation of the 484th Bomb Group design which first appeared on the face of the monthly reports and was later adapted and worn on the A-2 jackets of 484th Bomb Group personnel. Please Specify: ladies stick pin or men's tie tack Price \$5.00 each

2) 484th Bomb Group Association Patch. An embroidered shoulder patch of the 484th BG Insignia (Same Design as the pin) is available at \$5.00 each

3) Antiqued B-24 Tie Tack pins are now back in stock at \$5.00 each

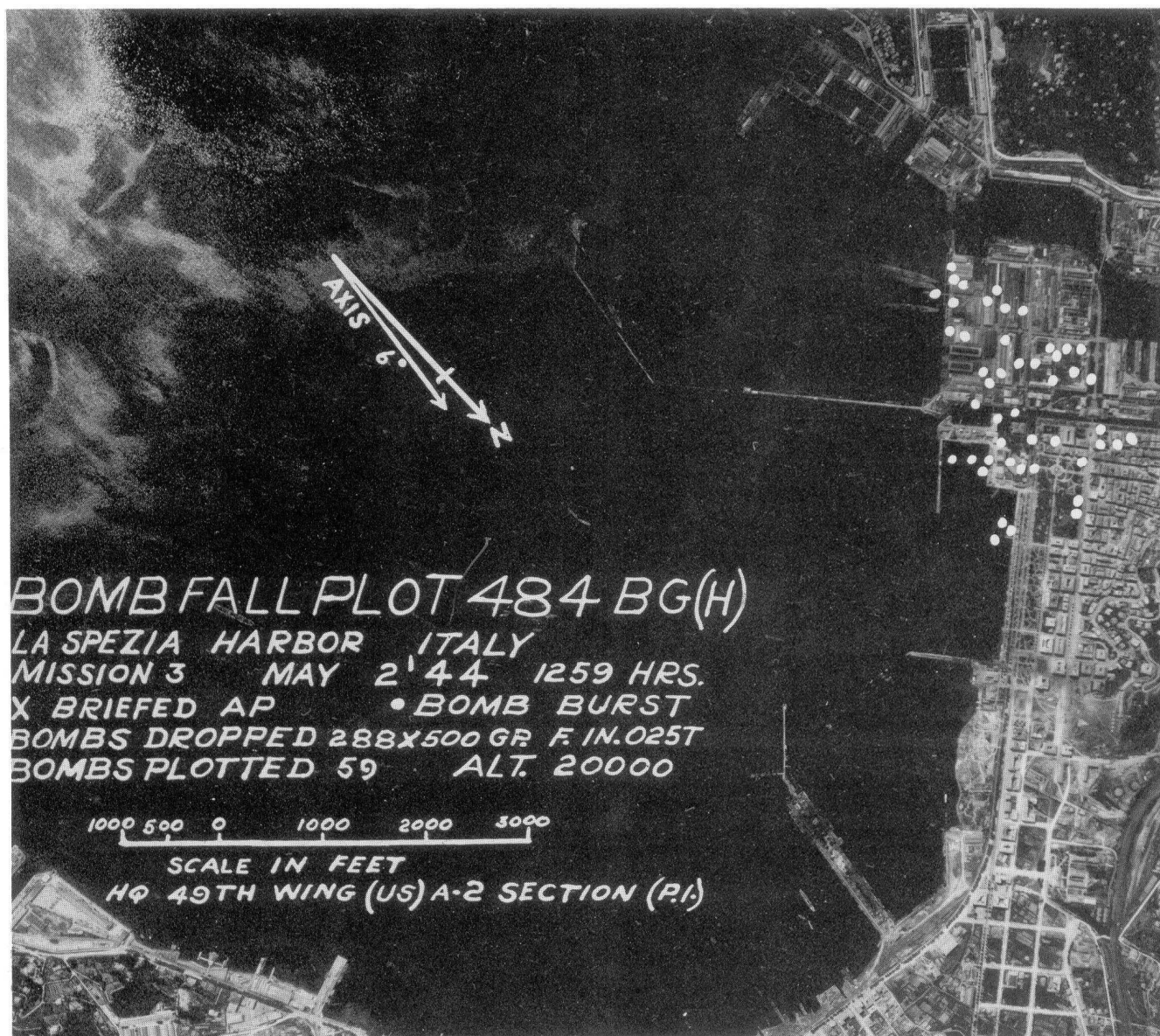
4) A new 484th Bomb Group Association baseball type cap in red and white displaying a side view of a silver B-24 on the peak is available for sale. Price- \$10.00 each

484th Bomb Group Operational History

The following text comprises the operational history of the 484th Bomb Group, 49th Bomb Wing, 15th Air Force and was transcribed from micro film. The report is neither complete nor necessarily correct. Mission numbers did not match those shown in Torretta Flyer No#23 Fall Winter 1992 and have been changed to conform with the earlier report. Missions numbers marked with an asterick(*) were added from the earlier report as the operational history did not always list missions that were recalled. Early months of combat operations up to July 1944 were missing as well. Association members are urged to review their Pilot, Navigator Flimsies, and diaries for additional information that can be added to this report. From time to time as more information becomes available we will publish corrections and additions in future issues of the Torretta Flyer.

Definitions and Abbreviations used in this report

a/c= on account of, A/C = Aircraft, A/D= Airdrome, enemy airfield, Am= ammunition, rounds of cal. 50 cartridges, Dest= Destination, DFC = Distinguished Flying Cross, Hrs. =hours, I-A-H = Intense, accurate, and heavy flak, M-A-H= medium, accurate, and heavy flak, M/Y's = Marshaling Yards, OLC= Oak Leaf Cluster, PFF pathfinder, bombing by H2X radar sighting, RDX = a type of explosive more powerful than standard TNT, bombs, and were marked by a yellow circle. Sortie = One flight by an individual aircraft, Tng= training, TX= transfer, 10/10= heavy cloud cover preventing conventional bomb aiming. (*) after a name indicates an Oak Leaf Cluster



Operational History For July 1944

During the month of July, 21 missions were flown by the 484th Bombardment Group striking virtually into every country within our range. Oil storage, marshaling yards, airdromes, factories, and communications in Germany, Czechoslovakia, France, Hungary, Rumania, Austria, and Italy underwent attacks by this group.

For exemplary achievements under battle conditions, Distinguished Flying Crosses were awarded to the following:

Capt. William M Riddle of Walterboro, SC
1st Lt. Thaddeus M Philips of Jep Hill, KY
T/Sgt. Stanley J Hood of Chicago, IL
S/Sgt. Kenneth R Randall of Portland, ME

Seventeen Purple Hearts and one Oak Leaf Cluster were awarded together with 40 Air Medals, and 282 Oak Leaf Clusters to the Air Medal.

The month of July is particularly noteworthy for the fact that all operations were successfully carried on without the loss of a single plane through enemy action or from mechanical failures. This is credited to the long hours of training which our crews have accumulated, and the ability of our men "on the line" to "keep 'em flying".

In the month of July 1944, which marked the third operational month of this group in this theater, the Engineering Sections furnished for combat duty aircraft for 792 combat sorties of which 762 were used operationally, with 690 sorties over the targets in 21 missions. The group furnished on average 36.2 aircraft for mission assignments averaging 32.2 aircraft over the target areas. The number of aborts per mission equaled four aircraft which was the lowest in the wing for the month. The maintenance work of the Group when compared with other groups of the 15th Air Force is among the best.

During the month, 97 engine changes were accomplished, with three days as the average length of time consumed by this work. Twenty fuel cells and several wings and empennages were removed and replaced. In every instance the airplanes were returned to operation in the minimum length of time. Routine maintenance occupied the greatest portion of the work for the month. This included the periodic inspections and daily correction of defects recorded in the aircraft log books by flight crews.

It is well to note here that during the month of July no aircraft were lost or suffered major damage through combat flying or mechanical failure. All battle damage was repaired promptly and efficiently with the aircraft being of service the minimum length of time.

Missions For July (Missions 39 through 59)

- 2 Budapest, Hungary, Racos Roundhouse
- 3 Bucharest, Romania, Romania-Morgasia Oil Storage
- 5 Beziers, France, Marshaling Yards
- 6 Aviano, Italy, Oil and Gasoline Storage
- 7 Blechammer, Germany, Synthetic Oil Refinery
- 8 Korneuberg, Germany, Oil Refinery
- 11 Toulans, France, Submarine Base
- 12 Nimes, France, Marshaling Yards
- 14 Petfurdo, Hungary, Oil Refinery
- 15 Ploesti, Romania, Creditul, Minier Oil Refinery
- 16 Weiner Neudorf, Austria, Aircraft Engine Factory
- 17 Tarascon, France, Railroad Bridge
- 18 Fredrichshafen, Germany, Dornier A/C Factory
- 19 Munich, Germany, Shleishein A/D
- 21 Brux, Czechoslovakia, Oil Refinery
- 22 Ploesti, Romania, Romana American Oil Refinery
- 25 Linz, Austria, Marshaling Yards
- 27 Budapest, Hungary, Manfred Weiss Armament Works
- 28 Ploesti, Romania, Romana American Oil Refinery
- 30 Budapest, Hungary, Duna Aircraft Factory
- 31 Bucharest, Romania, Prahova Oil Refinery

Operational History For August 1944

In summing up the activities of 484th Bomb Group for August 1944, twenty missions were accomplished, dealing destruction and devastating doom to the enemy territory and countries within our

range. Factories, airdromes, marshaling yards, oil storage tanks, beachheads, railroad viaducts,, each in turn felt the effectiveness of our attacks. From the southern coast of France, and to southern Germany, from Northern Italy through Austria, and Hungary, our aircraft dealt severe blows to the various targets within that area.

Although we have suffered a minimum amount of losses, our crews deserve recognition for their unusual initiative, ingenious acumen in staving off enemy aircraft and fire, and above all the valor and courage displayed in critical moments. We must not underestimate the cooperation of the ground personnel and their combined efforts, these men have made the month of August one to be remembered in the annals of aerial combat



Red Cross girl Jo Ryan (center) serves donuts after a mission. 5-1)

Robert Alman 484th BG

history.

Of noteworthy attention is the mission to the Gun Positions near the St. Tropez area, France on the 14th of August. Although the invasion of southern France had its impetus early that morning, our unit at 1600 in the afternoon made direct hits on the beachhead.

Previous waves of our invasion forces had occupied a strip of the beach on both sides of the area designated as our target. Due to the extreme navigational accuracy by the navigators and pinpoint bombing by the bombardiers we avoided endangering the lives of those who had already landed. In addition a fresh invasion was timed to hit the beach a few moments after our attack. Any error in the judgment of our crews would have wreaked havoc with our ground forces. We can readily claim that we were instrumental in forging a path in the invasion of southern France.

Of equally meritorious attention is the mission of South Blechammer Oil Refineries, Germany on the 7th of August. In spite of the fact that 16 aircraft were hit by flak in an area highly concentrated with guns, considerable damage was done and the flow of production of synthetic oil refineries was greatly impeded. Morale in the group shows steady improvement. As our facilities for all types of recreation continues to increase, more and more interest is shown towards competitive sports. Inter-squadron soft ball games, played on a regular schedule, draw many spectators. Volley ball rates top priority with army officers and enlisted men of group headquarters.

USO shows and visiting celebrities have done much towards helping us forget for a short while, discomforts and the loneliness of soldiers in a foreign land. The performances are witnessed in Cerignola and Foggia and transportation is provided to those who care to attend. At intervals the shows are scheduled here at the base and everyone has an opportunity to see them.

Rest camps are proving to be a much needed outlet for those who have been flying rigorous combat schedules and for the ground personnel as well. Many have been to Rome for a three day visit, and the Isle of Capri Villa Reggie Macuso, and the 49th Bomb Wing camps have all been utilized in an effort to give all personnel a brief respite from the grind of war. Group furnishes transportation to and from these places and almost everyone has had the chance to go.

Morale as the war in Europe nears its close, will loom larger in the mind of every commanding officer. Ideas are constantly being advanced and much thought is being given to this problem by the group in order that a broader and more complete program will be available when the need arises.

Missions For August (Missions No 60 through 79)

- 2 Avignon, France, Railroad Bridge
- 3 Fredrichshafen ,Zahnradfabrik Factory
- 6 Miramas, France, Marshaling yards
- 7 Blechammer, Germany Refinery
- 9 Almafuzito, Hungary, Oil refinery
- 10 Ploesti, Romania, Xenia Oil Refinery
- 12 Genoa, Area, Italy, Gun Positions
- 13 Genoa Area, Italy, Gun positions
- 14 St.. Tropez area, France, Beaches
- 15 Beach 264 A, France, Beaches
- 17 Ploesti, Romania, Refineries
- 18 Albunar, Yugoslavia, Airdrome
- 20 Szolnok/Rakeczfalva, Hungary, Airdrome
- 22 Vienna, Austria, Lobau Oil Storage
- 23 St. Polen, Austria, Railroad bridge
- 26 Otepeni, Romania, Airdrome

- 27 Borovnica, Yugoslavia, Railroad viaduct
- 28 Szolnok/Szajol, Hungary, Railroad bridge
- 29 Szeged, Hungary, Railroad bridge

Monthly Statistical Summary for August 1944

1. The figures assembled in this report were compiled in order to show the squadrons the excellent job the group is doing and the same time show a comparison between squadrons.

2. During the month of August we attacked enemy targets in Yugoslavia, Rumania, Germany, Hungary, Italy, and France. On D-Day our group attacked important enemy installations where the 7th Army landed and helping remove obstacles that might have proved serious, if air attack had not been carried out effectively. The group had 696 sorties airborne during the month. We had 642 effective sorties with 54 early returns.

3. The breakdown of early returns and aircraft failures during the month is broken down as follows:

Early returns

	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
824 Sq.	11	9	12	12
825 Sq.	4	10	15	16
826 Sq.	6	13	15	16
<u>827 Sq.</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>16</u>
Gr. Totals	24	46	61	54

Aircraft Failures

	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
824 Sq.	11	4	3	4
825 Sq.	5	3	0	0
826 Sq.	3	2	5	0
827 Sq.	4	5	1	4

4. The group had an average of 69.1% of its operational aircraft during August. The squadrons are broken down as follows:

824 Sq. 68.6%, 825 Sq. 74.8%, 826 Sq. 70.6%, 827 Sq. 62.4%

5. The group dropped a total of 1208.5 tons of bombs on enemy targets during the month.

6. In several encounters with enemy aircraft, we shot down 7, had 2 damaged and 4 probables to our credit. We lost 1 aircraft to flak and 9 others; 2 to flak, one for unknown reason, and 6 were salvaged for other reasons.

7. Training Summary for August

Sq	Form Hrs Flown	Practice Bombs Dropped	PFF Sorties Flown	Total Tng Sorties	Tot Tng. Sorties
824 Sq.	88:20	160	14	76	167:20
825 Sq.	102:10	144	9	63	180:50
826 Sq.	128:25	176	13	55	159:05
<u>827 Sq.</u>	<u>91:05</u>	<u>180</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>180:35</u>
	428	660	41	254	687:40

8. August Personnel losses and gains:

	KIA	USA	Group
Pilots	14	31	64
Co/Pilots		9	0
Navigators	9	11	32
Bombardiers	8	19	32
Engineers	11	70	33
Radio Operators	13	26	32
Armorer Gunners	6	43	51
<u>Gunners</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>75</u>
Totals	84	211	319

Compiled by:
 Capt. Air Corps Phillip W Frankelstein
 484th Bomb Group Statistical Officer

Missions For September 1944

During the month of September the 484th Bombardment Group flew but five missions. The greater part of the month was spent in ferrying urgently needed supplies into southern France. This unique operation by a bomb group will be fully explained in the following pages. On its five bombing missions the group flew 142 sorties with but three early returns. These missions were flown during the first six days of September, and four times the targets were railroad bridges which were very valuable to the enemy. The other mission was flown against a ferry slip, also of great importance. A total of 192.75 tons of bombs were dropped on these briefed targets. Good fortune smiled upon us during the month as no losses were suffered.

Mission No. 80, 1 September 1944, Ferrara RR Bridge, Italy

Thirty-four planes took off to bomb this strategic bridge in Italy, but the mission was uneventful. On reaching the target it was found to be covered by a 10/10 undercast, and it was necessary for all planes to return their bombs to the base.

Mission No. 81, 2 September 1944, Mitrovica RR Bridge, Yugoslavia

Although this target in Yugoslavia was obscured by smoke and haze, the group turned in a very creditable performance. The target was well hit by the 133 thousand pounders which fell in a closely knit pattern.

Mission No 82, 3 September 1944, Smederevo Ferry Slips

This mission was the first of its type to be experienced by the group, but was carried out very successfully. Direct hits were scored on the ferry slips and the causeway, and several boats in the vicinity suffered the devastating

effects of our bombs. Although not spectacular, this mission was a demonstration of the ability of our crews who were busily engaged in making successful missions seem commonplace.

Mission No. 83, 5 September 44, Smederevo Ferry Slips, Yugoslavia

Because of a very bad break in the weather, this mission must be termed unsuccessful. Arriving over the target a 10/10 undercast was encountered, and it was impossible to bomb the target by visual means. Through necessity all bombs had to be returned to the base.

Mission No 84, 6 September 1944, Sava East River Bridge, Italy

The weather cleared, and the group went after the same target as on the previous day. This time the bridge was heavily pounded, as was the marshaling yard which was slightly to the right of the briefed course. During the course of this highly successful raid 12 of our aircraft suffered minor damage from flak which was intense, accurate, and heavy.

Missions 85 through 91 cargo shipments to Bron or Istres, France

Dates 9/11/44 to 9/22/44

Supply Operations for September 1944

The following is a report of supply operations performed by a detachment of the 484th Bomb Group (Pathfinder) in France from 22 September to 2 October 1944

These were the only bombing missions carried on by this group for the month of September, for during the remainder of the month our aircraft were needed for the essential operation of ferrying badly needed supplies to the southern France invasion front.

On 21 September 1944, the advance contingent of personnel including the group commander, operations officer, administrative personnel, cooks, carpenters and supplies were flown to Istres, France, in two B-24 Airplanes. Housing facilities were procured in an apartment settlement in the town and a mess hall was set up.

On 22 September 1944, twelve B-24 airplanes and crews flew



Robert Altman 484th BG

Unloading at Lyon, France 7-1)

direct from Torretta, Italy to Istres, France. Twenty other B-24 airplanes were flown from Torretta to Bron airdrome at Lyon , France, where they unloaded gasoline, bombs, and ammunition, and 375 five gallon cans of 1120 aviation oil, and then proceeded to Istres.

For the first eight days, an average of 25 airplanes transported gasoline, ammunition, bombs, and empty drums to Bron. For the next two days supplies were ferried to Dole-Tavaux, and on the final day, 2 October 1944, supplies were again taken to Bron.

A total of 422,630 gallons of 100 octane gasoline, 370 five hundred pound bombs, fins and fuses, 494,830 rounds of 50 caliber ammunition, 1876 gallons of engine oil, and 4,5569 empty drums were transported in ten days. Gasoline consumed by our aircraft totaled 142,690 gallons.

Date	Dest	Total Gallons of Gas				
		A/C	Gas	Bombs	Am	Gas used
9/23	Bron	26	51,720	26	1,100	15,535
9/24	Bron	26	50,095	26	16,430	14,090
9/25	Bron	20	50,905	30	20,140	13,525
9/26	Bron	25	46,010	30	20,010	13,275
9/27	Bron	26	41,645	48	151,275	12,525
9/28	Bron	22	31,715	30	109,975	11,075
9/28	DiJon	2	2,115	10	6,890	1,450
5/29	Bron	24	45,680	30	32,005	11,385
9/30	Tavaux	24	37,570	60	20,405	18,200
10/1	Tavaux	26	41,160	60		18,000
10/2	Bron	24	24,025	48	116,600	13,650

The foregoing table of figures does not include the following supplies ferried from Torretta, Italy to Bron, France by 20 aircraft on 22 September 1944. 23,285 gallons aviation fuel, 28,150 rounds of 50 caliber ammunition, 40 five hundred pound bombs, fins and fuses, 375 five gallon cans of grade 1120 aviation motor oil, 196 gas drums. These ships consumed, along with the 12 that flew direct to Istres, a total of 39,695 gallons of 100 octane aviation fuel.

A total of 37 B-24s were used in the operations, one of the original 38 airplanes being wrecked when its landing gear collapsed while preparing a take off from Bron. Another ship was ferried from Torretta to Istres as a replacement. Parts of the wrecked airplane were used to repair other ships.

Adequate medical facilities were established both on the airfield and in the billeting area. French civilians were employed to assist in the mess hall and in cleaning barracks.

A brief description of how the operation was carried out follows; 55 gallon drums of 100 octane gasoline, 500 pound bombs and 50 caliber were delivered to the airplanes at Istres by the 41st Service Group. Aircrews and ground personnel of our group loaded the bombs and ammunition and pumped gas from the drums into the airplane wing and bomb bay tanks with auxiliary pumping units. As many empty drums as was possible were stacked in each airplane. Then the ships were flown to their destination, the supplies unloaded and the ships flown back to Istres where they were refueled and reloaded by our crews. Several attempts were made to make two trips per day with the bomb carrying airplanes but because of inclement weather in the afternoons, this was possible only one day. Twenty one ships usually carried gasoline and ammunition exclusively, while five airplanes took gas, bombs and ammunition. However the load was varied as the demand for different items

changed from day to day.

Four jeeps were transported on a C-47 airplanes from Torretta to Istres. These and three trucks loaned from the Service Group, plus motorcycles purchased by members of our group, furnished transportation. While the 466 men participated in this assignment were in Istres, they received their pay, PX rations and mail. A C-47, loaned to the group by the 49th wing, was used as a courier plane. Two tents were set up on the line, one housing operations, the other tech supply and engineering. Each aircraft was guard each night under supervision of an officer of the day, and interior guards were posted at the billeting area under supervision of another O. D.

Lack of sufficient auxiliary pumping units to facilitate loading and refueling our aircraft slowed down this operation to some extent.

Distinguished Flying Cross Awards in General Orders for September 1944

824 Squadron Awards

2nd Lt. Allen K McDill
 2nd Lt. Corliss J Roll
 2nd Lt. Fred C Alfred Jr
 Sgt. Frederick L. Grear
 Maj. Benjamin W Milam
 1st Lt. Reinold Rlckert
 1st Lt. Wilbur R Priess
 2nd Lt. Harold N Wells
 Capt. Lowell K Davls
 1st Lt. Arthur T S Shak
 1st Lt. Davld M: Bartow
 T/Sgt. George W Rands
 Capt. Ernest F Nance
 1st Lt. Edward K Williamson
 1st Lt. Jack Gittleman
 2nd Lt. Ray B Williams
 Maj. Eugene C Darby
 1st Lt. Robert C Bedwell
 2nd Lt. John C Brown
 2nd Lt. Billy Burke
 1st Lt. Leo J Prone
 1st Lt. Myron A Manhart
 1st Lt. William L Adams
 1st Lt. Duane D Powers
 1st Lt. Robert W T Issing
 1st Lt. Edward H Johnson
 1st Lt. Thomas J Merch
 1st Lt. Dennis W Posten
 1st Lt. John T Miller
 T/Sgt. Raymond E Adler
 1st Lt. John E Trechter
 1st Lt. George E Hays

825 Squadron.

2nd Lt. Leonard D Bloomfield
 T/Sgt. Robert J Flippen
 S/Sgt. William L Newsom
 S/Sgt. Arthur R Hotalen
 2nd Lt. Paul J Schiappacasse
 Capt. Max E Duncan

2nd Lt. Marshall C Dowe
 1st Lt. Joseph S Kornfeld
 2nd Lt. John H Bevis
 T/Sgt. Joseph C Fino
 S/Sgt. Howard J Speth
 S/Sgt. John C Morgan
 S/Sgt. Charles E Dodson
 S/Sgt. Kenneth E Lewelling
 T/Sgt. Franklin B Gomes
 1st Lt. John R Eppings
 T/Sgt. James D Coppinger
 2nd Lt. Thomas J Harrls
 S/Sgt. Walter H Scheurs
 1st Lt. Stevenson B Porter
 S/Sgt. James D Boggess
 2nd Lt. Lynn Pennington
 Maj. John T Brennan
 1st Lt. Charles C Crane
 1st Lt. Patrick I Schanzmeyer
 1st Lt. Kenneth F Kovar
 1st Lt. Thomas J McGuire
 T/Sgt. Jesse Compton
 T/Sgt. James E Conochan
 S/Sgt. John W Canfield.
 S/Sgt. Edward Hughes
 S/Sgt. Gerald D Patten
 S/Sgt. Richard S Wood
 2nd Lt. Jack A Crumbless
 2nd Lt. William C Martin
 2nd Lt. Robert W Cress
 2nd Lt. Richard E Parsons
 T/Sgt. Harry B Harrls
 S/Sgt. Lynn S Chlenn
 S/Sgt. Warren J Townsend
 S/Sgt. Charles Bayer
 S/Sgt. Louis A Tatum
 Sgt. James K Bell

826 Squadron

Maj. Clarence L Lollar
 Maj. John D Paine
 2nd Lt. David L Dowthwright
 2nd Lt. Fred E Fayard Jr
 2nd Lt. Arlo R Matney
 T/Sgt. Willie R Owen Jr
 S/Sgt. Charles D Angelo
 S/Sgt. Newman McMurtre
 S/Sgt. Howard Burnett

827 Squadron

Maj. James P Lyle
 Capt. Elvin W Bush
 1st Lt. James D Pool
 2nd Lt. Raymond Clamage
 2nd Lt. George M Duncomb Jr
 2nd Lt. James H Oakley
 T/Sgt. John H Graves
 T/Sgt. Marvin W Fischer
 T/Sgt. William A Johhson

Operational History For October 1944

During the month of October the 484th Bombardment Group ran into its first difficulties with the weather which has been harassing the operations of the American forces both on the ground and in the air. The Group was able to accomplish only ten missions in this month, but some of the targets were of the highest priority in the Fifteenth Air Force. Munich, Vienna, Linz, and Bologna are counted among the ten. The group accounted for 257 sorties with 41 early returns. Over the target 186 aircraft dropped 207.5 tons of destruction upon the enemy installations. Twenty-nine of our airmen are missing, while one was killed, and nine wounded.

Missions For October 1944

Mission No. 92, 4 October 1944, Caesara RR Bridge, Italy

Forty tons of 1000 pound bombs were rained upon the Caesara River Bridge target on 4 October scoring several direct hits on the western approach of the bridge while the surrounding area was leveled. The target was covered with 6/10 cloud cover, so it was a creditable performance for the group in putting the bridge out of operation.

Mission No 93*, 7 October 1944, Komarno, Hungary

18 aircraft were dispatched and recalled because of a failure to rendezvous

Mission No. 94 10 October 1944, Castel Franco M/Y, Italy

The mission to Castel Franco M/Y, Italy must be carried as a failure because of a most unusual occurrence. It was necessary for the lead plane to abort, and because the radio was out, there was no way to explain to the rest of the formation so they followed it back. All bombs were returned to base.

Mission No. 95, 11 October 1944, Dravograd, Yugoslavia

A partial victory was scored over weather on this mission to Dravograd. In a 10/10 overcast enroute the formation was broken up, but five of the twenty ships were able to get through and hit the target. Nine of the others dropped their bombs on targets of opportunity, but the results on these operations is unknown. The rest brought their bombs back to the base.

Mission No. 96, 12 October 1944, Bologna M/T (Motor Transport) Park, Italy

Our mission to bomb the Bologna M/T park on the 12 October was in direct support of the ground troops on the Italian Front. The mission was highly successful, seventy tons of bombs being dropped on target with excellent results. For the first time the weather was clear and our bombardiers were able to do their job unhampered by the undercast. Thirty eight aircraft were dispatched to drop 72 tons of bombs. Two aircraft returned early.



Robert Altman 484th BG

Building a "Tufi Block" house at Torretta.(10-1)

Mission No. 97, 13 October 1944, Vienna Main M/Y's, Austria

The mission to Vienna on the 13th of October was a costly one for the group. The target was missed, and two of our planes were lost. A great deal of damage was done by our bombs in the northern end of the yards, but was not our briefed target. Flak was extremely heavy, and 20 of our planes were damaged.

Mission No. 98, 14 October 1944, Edrsekujvac M/Y's, Hungary

A successful mission was carried out against the Edrsekujvac M/Y's, Hungary on 14 October. A good pattern was made on the choke point highway, and railroad. Many fires were seen in the immediate area. Another successful mission was chalked up by the group.

Mission No. 99, 16 October 1944, Linz Ordnance Depot, Austria

On 16 October thirty planes took off to bomb the Ordnance Works at Linz, Austria. It was not a successful mission although a great deal of damage was done to the area about the depot. 60 tons of bombs were dropped long and to the left of the target. Fighters were seen on this mission but they did not attack our formation. Heavy flak was encountered and twelve of our planes were moderately damaged.

Mission No. 100, 17 October 1944, Vosendorf Oil Refinery, Austria

Another victory was denied by weather when a 10/10 under-cast made it necessary for our ships to turn back. Vosendorf Oil Refinery was to have been the target. Attempts were made to bomb the alternates, but they were all weathered in and all bombs were returned to base.

Mission No. 101, 20 October 1944, Alfa Romero Works, Italy

On this date 34 B-24s were dispatched to bomb the Alfa Romero Works in Milan, Italy. 5 Ships returned early 65. 25 tons of bombs were dropped.

Mission No. 102, 23 October 1944, Munich, Germany

The group was split up on this date. One bomber force of 24 aircraft attacked Munich, Germany dropping 30 tons of bombs on the target. 3 ships returned early. Another force of 36 aircraft were unable to bomb Milan, Italy and returned to base.

Mission 102*, 23 October, 1944, Milan, Italy

16 aircraft dispatched and recalled a/c bad weather

Mission No. 103* 29 October, 1944, Regensburg, Germany

33 Aircraft dispatched and recalled a/c bad weather

Mission No. 104*, 31 October, 1944, Podgorica, Yugoslavia

33 aircraft were recalled a/c bad weather

Awards for October 1944

DFC

824 Squadron

Capt. Gerald B Bell
 Capt. Ernest F Nance
 Capt. Charles H Monnig
 1st Lt. Walt G Price
 1st Lt. Leonard M Jorganson
 1st Lt. Harold L Chern
 1st Lt. Gary B Johnson
 1st Lt. Bernard J Bossick
 1st Lt. Frederick A Fink
 1st Lt. Leonard G Forner
 1st Lt. Harvey J Teitzell
 1st Lt. Walter S Rogel
 1st Lt. Edward B Stewart
 1st Lt. Frank J Flood
 1st Lt. Harold Rosenberg
 1st Lt. Orville L Fisher Jr
 1st Lt. Ralph H Queener
 1st Lt. Alex J Bordo

Silver Star

1st Lt. William L Adams

825th Squadron DFC

1st Lt. Charles F Gladwell
 1st Lt. Charles H Marshall
 1st Lt. Ralph A Crafton
 1st Lt. Rua L Petty
 1st Lt. Wayne L Tompkins.
 1st Lt. John Hughey
 T/Sgt. Harold J Parks
 T/Sgt. Clifford E Adams
 S/Sgt. Charles W Killen
 S/Sgt. James E Rook
 S/Sgt. Walter J Kressin
 S/Sgt. Theodore T Janes

826 Squadron DFC

Maj. Alton P. McClung
 Capt. Eual E Stone
 Capt. James H Albertassi
 1st Lt. William M Landrum
 1st Lt. Robert W Goble
 1st Lt. Orville E Wolford
 1st Lt. Leo M Somers
 1st Lt. Joseph N Shobe
 1st Lt. Wilson D Rowland
 1st Lt. Arthur W Jepson
 1st Lt. John J Petrie
 1st Lt. Walter L Bruesch
 1st Lt. Robert L Remington
 1st Lt. Clifford M Ripple
 2nd Lt. John Hassan
 2nd Lt. Robert R. Nichols
 2nd Lt. Richard Olson
 F/O George C Reidell
 T/Sgt. Robert K Taylor
 T/Sgt. Charles M Sweitzer
 T/Sgt. Charlie O. Smiley
 T/Sgt. Frederlck A Howland
 T/Sgt. Robert D. Scott
 T/Sgt.. John F. Barbor
 S/Sgt. Alwyn E Cornett
 S/Sgt. Chester V. Czaplicka
 S/Sgt. Alvin T. Houpt
 S/Sgt.. Ernest R Stedman
 S/Sgt. William B Snyder
 S/Sgt. Ralph E Stokes
 S/Sgt. Everett R Stedman
 Sgt. Irwin Hansen
 Sgt. Edwin G Rogers

827 Squadron DFC

Capt. Thomas F McGruder
 1st Lt. Richard E Kinman
 1st Lt. Clifford V Taylor
 1st Lt. James T Kuiper
 1st Lt. Cecil R Ellis
 1st Lt. John Plesha
 1st Lt. John H Dunn
 1st Lt. Evan H Houseworth Jr
 1st Lt. Ernie D Brant
 1st Lt. James P Spalding
 1st Lt. Edgar T Keffer
 1st Lt. George C Mychenberg III

Operational History November 1944

During the month of November the operations of the 484th Bombardment Group (H) were severely handicapped by the weather. Under very poor conditions fourteen (14) missions were accomplished, but most of the bombing was done by instrument. 366 sorties were flown during the month with 41 aircraft returning early. A total of 497.65 tons of explosives were dropped on the enemy

The Torretta Flyer Number # 25 Winter-Spring 1994

installations in Germany, Austria, and Yugoslavia. 53 of our combat crew members are listed as missing since these missions.

Missions For November 1944

Mission No. 105, 1 November 1944, Vienna Ordnance Plant, Austria

29 of our aircraft took off to bomb this vital industrial target at Vienna but because of a 10/10 undercast it was impossible to find the target. Part of the formation was able to get through to Kapfenburg, Austria and drop 15 tons of bombs on the installations in that area. The rest of the formations returned their bombs to the base. One ship failed to return.

Mission No. 106*, 3 November 1944, Klagenfurt, Austria Three aircraft dropped 4.5 tons of bombs.

Mission No. 107, 4 November, Augsburg, Germany

The Marshaling yard at Augsburg, the distribution point of vital military traffic on the most important route to the whole southeastern front, was the target for the group on this date. Bombing was done on instruments, and the operators are of the impression that very good results were accomplished. In all, this group rained 67 tons of explosives down on the target.

Mission No. 108*, 5 November, 1944, Florisdorf, Austria, and Sarajevo, Yugoslavia

This mission was split between the two targets. Thirty aircraft attacked Florisdorf, dropping 48.5 tons of bombs. Four B-24s sent to Sarajevo, were recalled a/c bad weather.

Mission No 109, 6 November 1944, Vienna South Ordnance Depot, Austria

This was a planned pathfinder mission because the target was covered by a 10/10 undercast. Bombs were dropped by instruments so results are unknown.

Mission No 110, 7 November 1944, Sarajevo M/Y's, Yugoslavia

We were able to get in our first visual bombing during this month on this mission, but because the target could be seen only through holes in the clouds the bomb hits were slightly over the target, but a great deal of damage was done. 28 planes went over the target, and 16 were damaged by flak which was M-A-H.

Mission No 111, 11 November 1944, Rosenheim M/Y, Austria

26 aircraft took off to bomb the M/Y's at Linz, Austria, but because of bad weather it was necessary to bomb a target of opportunity, the M/Y's at Rosenheim. 33 tons of bombs were dropped on the target, but results were unobserved.

Mission No. 112*, 15 November, 1944, Innsbruck, Austria

Three aircraft were sent to bomb this target , two reached this target to drop 4 tons of bombs,

Mission 113, 16 November 1944, Munich west M/Y's, Germany

33 aircraft took off to bomb the Munich west M/Y's on this date, but again operations were hampered by poor weather conditions. It was necessary to drop by instrument and once again results were unobserved.

Mission 114, 17 November, 1944, Vienna Florisdorf, and Blechammer South Oil refinery, Germany

For this mission our forces were split up, and both targets were attacked . It was the same story on both areas with clouds making it impossible to see the targets. Bombs were dropped on both targets by instruments, and the operators are of the opinion that they were able to do a good job on the installations.

Mission 115, 18 November 1944, Villa Franca Airdrome, Italy

Because of the increased activity by the hostile Italian Air Force in this area a counter air measure was necessitated. This group dropped 38 tons on the airdrome in a very good pattern. The weather was clear over the target, and visual bombing was used for a change.

Mission 116, 19 November 1944, Vosendorf Oil Refinery, Germany.

It was imperative that we bomb the oil refinery at Vosendorf for it is one of the active sources of oil and gasoline supply for the enemy forces in Hungary and Italy. 30 planes were dispatched to the target, but again the weather was poor, Instrument bombing was again used.. After bombing the target white smoke and explosions were seen through the undercast. All planes returned to base, although 15 planes were slightly damaged by flak.

Mission 117, 20 November 1944, Blechammer Oil Refinery, Germany.

The Blechammer Oil Refinery was the number one target in Europe the time that this mission was run. . This refinery was turning out 20,000 gallons of gasoline monthly. 27 Planes were sent over this target and fair results were observed. Two airplanes were lost on this mission.

Mission 118, 21 November 1944, Motor transport and troop concentrations in the Sarajevo Area, Yugoslavia.

A unique mission was planned for the group on the 21st of November. The German army was spread out along a road in Yugoslavia making their way north from Greece. It was unfortunate that the weather was very bad, and only one of our planes had a chance to drop on these troops. The rest of the formation found it necessary to return their bombs to the base.

Mission 119, 22 November 1944 , Munich East M/Y's, Germany

On this high priority target in Germany it was necessary to bomb by pathfinder methods. No results were observed, but the instrument operator thinks that the results were good. 31 tons of bombs were dropped on the target. Weather conditions made this our last mission for the month.

Mission No. 120*, 25 November, 1944, Munich, Germany
One aircraft dropped 1.5 tons of bombs this date.

Awards for November 1944

824 Squadron DFC's

Capt. Ernest F M Nance (Oak Leaf Cluster)
1st Lt. Ingmar O P Anderson
1st Lt. Thomas W Woolcott
1st Lt. Rex Bennett Jr
1st Lt. Harold k Ridgway
1st Lt. William P Oldroyd
1st Lt. Ernest J Podlucky
1st Lt. Robert J Dieker
1st Lt. Ross W Applegate
1st Lt. Delmar L Connet
1st Lt. Richard F Lacina

825th Squadron Awards

DFC

1st Lt. James T Chafin Jr.

Soldiers Medal

M/Sgt. Ralph W Graham

826 Squadron Awards

DFC

1st Lt. John M MacCrum Jr.
1st Lt. George L Polasky
1st Lt. Wesley F Pearson
1st Lt. Robert M Simkins
1st Lt. Stanley H Mauldin
T/Sgt. Joseph G Walters Jr.

827 Squadron Awards

DFC

1st Lt. Omer F Gignac
1st Lt. Bernard Nigus

Soldiers Medal

Sgt. Bob O Billings
Sgt. Ernest M Green

Additional Narrative For November 1944

The outstanding record which the group was making received fitting recognition when it was awarded the coveted War Department Distinguished Unit Citation on November 6, 1944. The presentation was made by Major General Twining, Commanding

General of the 15th Air Force in a colorful ceremony at our field.

Early that morning all flying and ground personnel of the group not engaged in the combat mission for that day were drawn up in formation for the review that was to take place after the official presentation. In an impressive ceremony, General Twining read over the public address system the War Department General Order citing the 484th Bombardment Group as a Distinguished Unit. The outstanding attack by the group was made August 22, 1944 on the Vienna Lobau Oil Storage plant which at that time was one of the most vital targets in the 15th Air Force attack area. Everyone had a proud feeling as the General tied the blue battle streamers to the Group's colors, and gave the right to every man in the organization to wear the distinctive gold framed blue ribbon bar on the left side of the blouse.

The 15th Air Force Band gave us our first opportunity overseas to march to military music. In a surprisingly fine display of marching ability we passed in review before a reviewing party consisting of General Twining, Col. Lee, Wing Commander, Lt. Col. Busch Group Deputy Commander, and our Red Cross girls, Ellie Mae Haddock and Jo Ryan.

Operational History December 1944

During the month of December 1944, the 484th Bombardment Group was able to accomplish 16 missions, an amazing number when the weather for the month is taken into consideration. A total of 290 sorties were flown bringing the groups total to date at 4,427. Early returns for the month totaled 27. Two hundred and fifty nine aircraft (total sorties) dropped 449.65 tons of bombs on enemy installations. During the month we destroyed 7 enemy fighters while losing four of our planes.

Missions For December 1944

Mission 121, 2 December 1944, Blechammer South Oil Refinery, Germany

Blechammer South Oil Refinery was the first target for the group for the month of December. It was one of the high priority targets for the 15th Air Force. When we attack it, the refinery was only putting out 40% of capacity, but was under repair. The weather was clear over the target, but our bombardiers were hampered by smoke. 40 tons of bombs were dropped, and the target area was believed to be well hit. Flak was I-A -H (intense, accurate, and heavy) in the target area, but no planes were lost, although two were damaged.

Mission No 122, 3 December 1944, Innsbruck M/Y, Austria

Latest intelligence information accounted for 685 cars in the yards, and two planes were sent to this target to bomb by instruments under cover of the weather. Three tons of bombs were dropped, and the Mickey operators believed results were good.

Mission 123, 6 December 1944, Maribor South M/Y's, Yugoslavia

35 aircraft were sent to this target, but because of poor weather conditions, the formation became separated before reaching the objective. 10 planes bombed at Maribor, but results were unobserved, while the rest bombed at Graz M/Y's, the first alternate. results at this target were also unobserved. Weather was 10/10 at both targets. One aircraft failed to return to base.

Mission 124, 7 December 1944, Innsbruck M/Y's, Austria

Under cover of night two planes were dispatched to this target. One airplane returned early, but the other went on to drop 1.5 tons of bombs on the target. Results were unobserved.

Mission 125*, 8 November, 1944, Moosbierbaum, Austria
Mission recalled a/c bad weather two aircraft only.

Mission 126*, 9 November 1944, Linz, Austria
33 aircraft were recalled from this mission a/c bad weather

Mission 127*, 10 December, 1944, Brux, Czechoslovakia
27 aircraft were recalled a/c bad weather

Mission 128 11 December 1944, Graz M/Y's, Austria

28 airplanes took off to bomb the Blechammer Refinery on this date, but weather conditions forced them to turn to the forth alternate, the Graz M/Y's it was hazy over the target, and results were thought to be poor.

Mission 129, 12 December 1944, Blechammer South Oil Refinery, Germany

Under cover of 10/10 undercast two planes were sent to this target to bomb by instruments. Three tons of bombs were dropped on the target with results unobserved.

Mission 130, 15 December 1944, Linz Main M/Y's, Austria

26 aircraft were sent to destroy this target. The target is the main bottle neck of German traffic moving from the west to the east. The weather again was poor, necessitating the use of instruments. 41 tons of bombs were dropped, but results were unobserved.

Mission 131, 16 December 1944, Brux Synthetic Oil Plant, Czechoslovakia

Our target for 16 December was the Brux Synthetic Oil Plant which was rated as the number two priority target in all of Europe. 27 aircraft were sent to this target, but again it was the same old story on the weather. It was 10/10 over the area to be bombed, but the formation continued on instruments. Results were unobserved, but generally thought to be good. 36 tons of bombs were dropped.

Mission No 132, 17 December 1944, Odertal Oil Refinery, Germany

Odertal Oil Refinery had been under attack before this date, but was still able to produce 4000 tons of gasoline a month. On this day 30 B-24's attacked it, dropping 52.5 tons of bombs. Results were

unobserved. On this mission our group was attacked by fighters. Between 30 and 40 of them attacked the formation just as our escort left. We didn't lose any planes to them, while knocking down 7 of their planes.

Mission 133, 18 December 1944, Blechhammer South Oil Refinery, Germany

It was another Pathfinder mission. A 10/10 undercast over the target made it necessary for the bomb run to be made on instruments. Results were again unobserved, but it was thought that they were good. 19 aircraft dropped 33 tons of bombs on the target.

Mission 134, 19 December 1944, Blechhammer South Oil Refinery, Germany

After bombing the North Refinery on December 19, the South refinery was the target on the 20th. This mission was a duplication of the one going before. The target was bombed by pathfinder, and again results were believed to be good, although they were unobserved. 18 tons of bombs were dropped.

Mission 135, 20 December 1944 Linz M/Y's, Austria

On this mission Linz was the third alternate target. It was bombed by pathfinder when a 10/10 undercast obscured the target area. Again results were thought to be good, although they were unobserved. 34 tons of bombs were dropped.

Mission 136, 25 December 1944, Villach, Austria

36 aircraft took off to bomb Brux, but because of heavy overcast, the aircraft became divided. One aircraft bombed at Villach, one at Wels Austria and the rest returned their bombs to base. The mission was unsuccessful, but all planes returned to base safely.

Mission 137, 27 December 1944, Venzone Viaduct, Italy

This mission was one of the first in which the weather was clear over the target. Results were good although the bombardier in the first box had a malfunction. The bombs seemed to straddle the viaduct. 75 tons of bombs were dropped on this target which was a very important part of the communications system from Vienna though Villach into Italy.

Mission 138, 28 December 1944, Venzone R/R Bridge, Italy

This target was very close to the one which the group attacked the preceding day. The weather was clear again and, again the objective was badly damaged.

Mission 139, 29 December 1944, Passau M/Y's, Austria

The last target of the month was the Passau M/Y's a rail center on the most direct line from central Germany to Vienna. It was particularly important at this time because the enemy was trying to avoid using the facilities at Munich. Although the target was cloud covered, 54 tons of bombs were dropped in a good concentration.

This was the last mission flown by the group for the year 1944.

Winter Problems

The coming of winter with its rain and snow brought about a sharp reduction in operational flying. With non military motor and foot travel on the bumpy muddy Italian road practically at a standstill, it became necessary to keep the men occupied during leisure time.

The study classes which began slowly in the early fall came into their own and all squadrons had increased attendance. The studies covered a wide range of subjects from practical work to a class on psychology. Evening news talks became a popular indoor sport and the S-2 briefing room had standing room only during these sessions.

The group theater made in Nissen hut style with bomb stands as seats was the scene of an unusual show by the men of the group. The show performed on two nights and received much praise.

December saw the completion of most of the tufa stone houses and winterizing of tents. Men situated in more advantageous spots for supplies of various kinds built (with Italian labor and their own help) houses that were almost a bit of home in Italy. Each tent or house had its own improvised fuel stove or fireplace and when the smoke was pouring out of the stove pipes in the different squadrons, the area looked like Pittsburgh.

Christmas in Italy

A few months earlier no one would have bet on its happening. But here we were, and with Christmas trees brought down by Special Service from the Manfredonia mountain area, the Yule tide spirit was in evidence everywhere. Packages from home (mostly with food) arrived in huge numbers and with a delicious Christmas dinner served by squadron messes, the inner man was satisfied. Master sergeants, full of the right spirit, took over KP duties, and also had to take a lot of kidding.

The year 1944 ended in a high spirited celebration perhaps in the belief that 1945 would see the end of European hostilities. Every man in the group felt that it had been a year of achievement both in training and in combat.

Awards and Decorations for December 1944

484th Bomb Group HQ

DFC

Maj. Nathan Sutin (Oak leaf cluster)

Bronze Star

M/Sgt. Harold J McCarthy

824 Squadron

DFC

Maj. Claude A Trotter

Capt. George Ponty (Oak leaf cluster)

Capt. Wilson Be Wilkes (Oak leaf cluster)

Capt. George F Murphy (Oak leaf cluster)

1st Lt. George R Gilpin

1st Lt. Don L Kavanaugh

1st Lt. Lawrence Weakley

1st Lt. Stanley W Gawerecki
1st Lt. Layton W McDonald
1st Lt. Bruce Dein
1st Lt. Thomas B Hett
1st Lt. Leland C Geiss
1st Lt. Robert W Hunter
2nd Lt. John J Ruthenburg
2nd Lt. Frederick W Carter
2nd Lt. Charles B Harrison
F/O Scott H Maltby

Bronze Star

M/Sgt. Walter M Rix

825th Squadron Awards

DFC

1st Lt. Alexander L Bracken Jr
1st Lt. Edwin S Emswood
1st Lt. George W Adams
2nd Lt. Bob C Emmons

826 Squadron Awards

DFC

1st Lt. Abnew O McDaniel
1st Lt. Everett J Eiden *
1st Lt. Russell Inkous *
1st Lt. Edward P Bird
1st Lt. Kenneth R Larsen
1st Lt. John L Dooley Jr
1st Lt. Frank V Rabinovitz
1st Lt. John H Robson
1st Lt. Leonard J Weaver
2nd Lt. William C Dipple
2nd Lt. William M Cox
T/Sgt. Roy H Argo

827 Squadron Awards

DFC

Capt. George H Ingham
1st Lt. Robert E Hatch
1st Lt. Woodrow W Smith
1st Lt. Ensley B Weiner *
1st Lt. Robert V Day
1st Lt. Robert R Neville
1st Lt. Edward H B Cornell
1st Lt. William Locke
1st Lt. Robert M Cather.
2nd Lt. Milton A Stansberry
T/Sgt. George C Walko
Sgt. Jack Lawless Jr

Operational History January 1945

The operations of the 484th Bombardment Group were greatly reduced by poor weather conditions during the month of January. One hundred and sixty sorties were flown on the six mission accomplished. There were 168.85 tons of bombs dropped on enemy installations. Two planes were lost during the month.

Mission No 140, 4 January 1945, Trento North M/Y, Italy

The importance of Trento as a target lay in the fact that it is situated on the double track Bologna-Brenner Pass line. On this date the yards were found to be well stocked with cars. 28 aircraft were dispatched to the target, and 52 tons of bombs were dropped. There were many hits in the target area, and a large explosion was seen in the middle of the yards.

Mission No 141, 5 January 1945, Zagreb West Sidings, Yugoslavia

21 aircraft took off to bomb this target visually, but because the sidings were cloud covered, all bombs were returned to base.

Mission No 142*, 8, January, 1945, Linz, Austria

24 Aircraft were recalled a/c bad weather

Mission No 143, 15 January 1945, Vienna South Station, Austria

This target was the number one priority communication target in the 15th Air force operational area because of nearness to the Russian lines. Two primary lines to the front make it possible for the enemy to feed vast supplies to the force on the Russian Front. 25 aircraft dropped 37 tons in the target area by PFF, but results were unobserved.

Mission 144, 19 January 1945, Brod Highway Bridge, Yugoslavia

At this time Brod was considered to be the key communications target in Yugoslavia. It was the junction of lines from Zagreb, Belgrade, and Sarajevo. The whole 15th Air Force was going into this area. 55 tons of bombs were dropped in the bridge area. The target was believed to be well hit.

Mission 145*, 20 January 1945, Linz, Austria

Twenty eight aircraft were dispatched, , three returned early, two aircraft were lost and twenty aircrew members were declared MIA.

Mission 146, 31 January 1945, Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery, Austria

On this high priority target 40 tons of bombs were dropped by Pathfinder methods. Results were unobserved, but the operators are of the opinion that a good job was done.. This was the last mission flown by the group in the month of January.

Special Narrative January 1945

The year 1945 started at a slow pace and January was a quiet month for operations and group activities. The mud was a constant problem and the steady rains, with occasional snow, made the winterized tents and houses comfortable indoor places to stay. The movies shown in the squadrons and at headquarters theaters were slightly better than the usual run, and the attendance, as always was at capacity.

Fuel oil was made available on a rationed plan to each tent or house so that everyone had enough heat to take the sting out of the penetrating cold winds of sunny Italy. Everybody was safety conscious and as a result there were not tents burned down this month. This was a good record when taking into consideration the increase of personnel in each squadron.

Squadron S-2 sections have been devoting special attention to news talks, and interest among the men is keen. Mess halls have maps showing the fronts, and there is daily comment on the Russian advances and the wiping out of the German bulge in our lines. The Pacific Campaign doesn't suffer from neglect either in the news discussions.

Each squadron received new crews during the month so that the group was built up to its maximum strength. In spite of this, the new men were absorbed smoothly in the group. Orientation talks given by the different sections to these new crews impressed upon them our record and traditions, as well as operational policies. The strength of the group is now at its highest level, more than had been expected, but this group is functioning well against these expected demands.

824 Squadron Awards

Silver Star

T/Sgt. Joseph O'Connell

DFC

Capt. Frank E Oliver
1st Lt. Charles F Ness
1st Lt. Stanley V Olson
1st Lt. Theodore M Ewing
1st Lt. Joseph D Nelson
1st Lt. Wayne E Dack
1st Lt. Joseph Bachowicz *
1st Lt. Harry S Allen
2nd Lt. Jack B Raetz
2nd Lt. Robert W Kime

Bronze Star

M/Sgt. Chester L Coleman
S/Sgt. Louis A Guy
S/Sgt. James C Adcock

825th Squadron Awards

DFC

Maj. James C Langdon
Capt. Billie B Neel
Capt. Paul J Williams
Capt. John H Whitacre Jr
1st Lt. James T Chafin Jr
1st Lt. Sigurd V Moody (Oak leaf cluster)
1st Lt. Charles M Cossey
1st Lt. D L Billger
1st Lt. Howard Steinburg
1st Lt. Walter Samarevitz *
1st Lt. Daniel A Birnkrantz
1st Lt. Barney J Milner
1st Lt. Berton A Tenborg
1st Lt. Wallace E Lamay
1st Lt. Cloyd W Kerr

2nd Lt. Harold J Harve
2nd Lt. Richard F Hugo
2nd Lt. Ryan M O'Brien
2nd Lt. Robert F Anderson
2nd Lt. James C Ellis
2nd Lt. John H Gross Jr
2nd Lt. Paul R Willhide
2nd Lt. Lowell P Hayes *
2nd Lt. Robert J Swanson

826 Squadron Awards

DFC

1st Lt. Robert A Warne
1st Lt. Edward A Burnsed
1st Lt. George K Dickee Jr *
1st Lt. Edwin T Danowski
1st Lt. Frederick A Dierksmeier
1st Lt. Edward M Duke

827 Squadron Awards

DFC

Capt. Marion H Hammett
1st Lt. Carl K Williams
1st Lt. William J Jones
1st Lt. Kenneth C Rounds
1st Lt. John P Roedel
1st Lt. William H McWhirk
1st Lt. Michael B Goodman
2nd Lt. Russell K Bolton Jr
2nd Lt. Leo Frobom *
T/Sgt. Perry W Lounsbury
S/Sgt. Donald R Reiter
S/Sgt. Oliver E Seward
S/Sgt. James H Baysinger
S/Sgt. Loran L Conner

Operational History February 1945

During the month of February the 484th Bombardment Group flew a total of 17 missions, of these, eight were PFF, or instrument bombing missions, six were visual missions, and three were non-available missions. A total 443 sorties were flown with 808 tons of bombs dropped on enemy targets. 53 planes returned early during the month. Thirteen aircraft were lost, and 102 men were listed as missing, 12 killed, and 4 wounded.

Missions For February 1945

Mission No. 147, 1 February 1945, Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery.

A maximum effort mission was planned to attack this number one priority target in the 15th Air Force operational area. The Air Force was attempting to cripple the gasoline production of Germany in order to keep the German fighters out of action, and the motorized equipment from moving. The target was cloud covered, but 36.5

tons of bombs were dropped by instruments. Results were unobserved, but later photo reconnaissance showed that the target was successfully attacked and bracketed with bombs despite its small size and adverse weather conditions.

Mission No. 148, 5 February 1945, Regensburg Winter Harbor Oil Storage, Germany.

Large amounts of oil were shipped to this target from Romanian oil fields before their capture by the Russians, making this target important. 36 B-24's reached the target, but found it cloud covered. Forty-two tons of bombs were dropped by instruments and results were unobserved. Photos later showed results to have been very good. Two planes failed to return.

Mission No. 149, 7 February 1945, Florisdorf Oil Refinery.

Following the Air Force policy of attacking oil targets, the Florisdorf Refinery was the target on this date. The target area was smoke covered, but the bombs fell into this area and great deal of damage was believed to be done. 43 tons of bombs were dropped.

Mission No. 150, 8 February 1945, Vienna Central Repair Shops, Austria

The very important servicing and repair points for railroad facilities were the planned targets for the 49th Bomb Wing on this mission. This was planned PFF mission, so the 9/10 cloud cover was expected. Thirty tons of bombs were dropped on the cloud covered target with results being unobserved.

Mission No. 151, 9 February 1945, Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery., Austria

Two planes were dispatched to this target under cover of heavy clouds and dropped on the target by PFF. Results were unobserved.

Mission No. 152, 13 February 1945, Vienna Central Repair Shops, Austria.

The 484th Bomb Group returned to this target, and this time was able to attack visually. Thirty one tons of bombs were dropped just short and to the right of the target. This was the first target which was visual to the bombardiers for this month.

Mission No. 152, 13 February 1945, Maribor West Marshaling Yard, Yugoslavia.

A successful mission was carried out against the M/Y's at Maribor in Yugoslavia. The weather over the target was CAVU and the crews were able to do their best work. Thirty tons of bombs were dropped in an excellent pattern covering the M/Y's.

Mission No. 153, 14 February 1945, Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery, Austria

The 484th Bomb Group again tried to put the Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery out of action on this date. The target was dimly visible when the group arrived, and the bomb run was to be visual. At the last minute another Bomb Group crowded over and the lead Bom-

bardier was prevented from swinging completely on the target. The pattern was largely to the right, but the bombs from one box landed completely in the target area.

Mission No. 154, 15 February 1945, Vienna Penzinger M/Y, Austria

This M/Y was loaded to 65 percent of capacity with some 600 cars. Still larger loading was expected at the time our formation would reach the target. Weather conditions necessitated a PFF run and the other operators believe the target to be well hit. 56 tons of bombs were dropped.

Mission No. 155, 16 February 1945, Rosenheim M/Y.

The 484th Bomb Group bombed the first alternate target, Rosenheim M/Y visually. 65 tons were dropped and good results were reported. Direct hits, smoke and fires were seen.

Mission No. 156, 17 February 1945, Trieste Harbor, Italy

On this mission the 484th Bomb Group bombed the third alternate, Trieste harbor, after an unfortunate accident. The two lead planes, Able 11 and Able 12 collided on the way to the target and it was necessary for the leader of the second attack unit to come up to lead the formation. 20 tons of bombs were dropped on the target on the second bomb run. The first run found the target obscured.

Mission No. 157*, 18 February 1945, St. Valentin, Austria .

28 aircraft were recalled a/c bad weather.

Mission No. 158, 19 February 1945, Graz South East M/Y., Austria

For the third mission in succession it was necessary for the group to bomb an alternate target. This time it was the first alternate, Graz. The formation took off to bomb the Vienna South Station, but a strong head wind caused excessive fuel consumption, making it impossible to reach the primary target and return. Thirty-nine tons of bombs were dropped to the west of the target.

Mission No. 159, 20 February 1945, Pola Harbor Installations

Again it was necessary for the formation to bomb an alternate. This time the priority target was the Bolzano M/Y, but it was obvious on the route out that the solid undercast would extend over Bolzano. The Group leader elected to go to the first alternate, Pola. The target was bombed in boxes, and hits were seen in the target area.

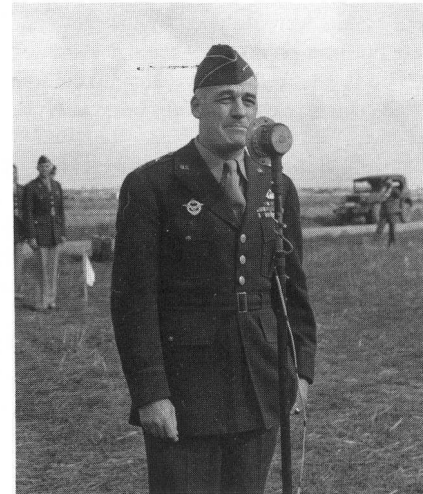
Mission No. 160, 21 February 1945, Vienna South Station, Austria

Communications targets in Vienna were under attack on this date, and the 484th Bomb Group went to the Vienna South Station. Forty tons of bombs were dropped on the target with results believed to be excellent. The main weight of bombs fell in the target area with a few scattered hits slightly North and East. Over the target the Lead



Chow time at the 825 Squadron (18-1)

Robert A Harrison 825 Sq.



Robert Altman 484th BG

Gen. Twining addressing the 484th BG upon awarding unit citation (18-2)



Robert A Harrison 825 Sq.

Gen. Carl Spatz 8th AF (R) visits Torretta, accompanied by Gen. Lee (L) 49th Wing CO and 15th AF CO Nathan Twining partially hidden behind Gen. Spatz (18-3)



Robert Altman 484th BG

Inside a communication Trailer used during the transport of ordnance and fuel From Torretta to Lyon, France September 1944 (18-4)



Robert A Harrison 825 Sq.

Ship # 42-51967 826 Sq. (18-5)



Robert Altman 484th BG

Ordnance crew loading bombs Spring 1944(18-6)

and Deputy Lead ships were hit by flak but they were able to get their bombs out and lead the formation before going down.

Mission No. 161, 22 February 1945, Donauworth M/Y.

Twenty-three aircraft took off to bomb this target, but because of adverse weather conditions all returned their bombs to the base. Runs were attempted on the alternates, but they were also closed in.

Mission No. 162, 23 February 1945, Knittelfeld M/Y.

The 484th bomb Group was scheduled to hit the Amstettin M/Y on this date, but weather again forced the formation to go to the third alternate, Knittelfeld M/Y. A great deal of difficulty was experienced in picking up the target in the 7/10 undercast, but good results were made. One box scored direct hits on the M/Y, and on the round house, while other bombs fell short. Forty-five tons of bombs were dropped.

Mission No. 163, 24 February 1945, Bolzano M/Y, Italy

The 484th Bomb Group was briefed to bomb the M/Y at Bolzano but because of adverse weather conditions all bombs were returned to the base. Attempts were made to bomb alternates, but they were all closed in.

Mission No. 164, 25 February 1945, Linz North Main M/Y, Austria

The Linz M/Y was bombed on this date using offset bombing methods because of a very effective smoke screen. However, just before bombs away another bomb group rallied under the 484th Bomb Group forcing the bombardier to hold his bombs. The results were scattered patterns starting short of the target with some bombs in the area. Thirty-four tons were dropped on this target.

Mission No. 165*, 26 February 1945, Capraz, Yugoslavia.

28 aircraft recalled a/c bad weather

Mission No. 166, 27 February 1945, Augsburg M/Y's, Germany.

Because of its key position in the enemy rail network from west to east or from Italy to the north, Augsburg was made the target of the day. The target was covered in smoke from previous bombings so that PFF methods had to be used. Results could not be observed, but hits were believed to have been made in the target area. 56 tons of 1000 pound bombs were dropped.

Mission No. 167, 28 February 1945, Bressanone M/Y, Italy

The object of this mission was to close the Brenner pass, but the target was missed. The M/Y was to be bombed in a column of boxes, but poor terrain features and faulty navigation from the IP to the target caused the bombs to hit over the target. This was the last mission for the month of February.

Awards for February 1945

484th Bomb Group Headquarters

Silver Star

Lt. Col. Chester C. Busch

DFC

Col. William B Keese Oak Leaf Cluster (OLC)

824th Bomb Squadron

DFC

Capt. Wayne K. Hinkle

Capt. John F. McCaulay

1st Lt. Harry S. Allen

1st Lt. Dominick J. Blanda

1st Lt. Richard E. Brown

1st Lt. Neil E. Kahler

1st Lt. Walter Kaus

1st Lt. Israel B. Markowitz

1st Lt. Jack A. Willis

1st Lt. Donald G. Zimmerman

2nd Lt. George Bouras

2nd Lt. David A. Nickerson

T/Sgt. Gaston A. Intoccla

T/Sgt. Marshall Kahn

T/Sgt. Elmer H. Vermie

Bronze Star

M/Sgt. Julius H. Myers

825th Bomb Squadron

DFC

Capt. Percy H. Kramer

Capt. William E. McCoy

1st Lt. York T. Lew

T/Sgt. Alfred W. Cooper

826th Bomb Squadron

DFC

Maj. William H Dowd

Capt. Kenneth D. Dowdey

1st Lt. William L. Archer

1st Lt. John A. Atkinson

1st Lt. John E. Barth

1st Lt. William H Cox

1st Lt. Joseph N. Crystall

1st Lt. Ray E. Zeimantz

2nd Lt. Harry J. Persoff

T/Sgt. John R. Neall

S/Sgt. David E Titus

Bronze Star

M/Sgt. William A Pekkala

827th Bomb Squadron

DFC

Maj. Henry B Hewett

Capt. John H. Stebbins

1st Lt. Wilburn M. Kitchen

1st Lt. James P. Spalding
2nd Lt. James J. Black
2nd Lt. Edmund J McLaughlin
2nd Lt. Louis J. Tackes
T/Sgt. James C Clemons
T/Sgt. Francis L Jenkins
T/Sgt. August J Kovacic
S/Sgt. John J Jennings
S/Sgt. Rudolf S Marino

Special Narrative For February 1945

Contrary to expectations, good weather plus pathfinder planes made it possible for the group to have a record operational month. Good maintenance enabled us to keep our formations flying over Germany in strength so that we did our full share in the all out offensive against the enemy. Combat missions were flown 15 consecutive days which is a record not matched even during the clear summer days.

One of the principal events of the month is the completion of the chapel. The chapel is to be used for all religious services and the group is proud of it. Construction was begun in January and completed by the Italian workers who took pride in building a church in the middle of February. Brig. Gen. Lee, Commanding Officer of the 49th Bombardment Wing, officially dedicated the chapel which was crowded with men of this command. Capt. Carter, Group Chaplain, 484th Bomb Group HQ has the appreciation of everyone for this job.

Work has been started on a Group Dispensary and it should be ready for use in March or early April. This dispensary with facilities for the care and short term hospitalization of our sick personnel is a definite improvement over present accommodations. It will make it unnecessary to send men who are not seriously ill to the field hospital in the area and save a lot of inconvenience.

We had the surprise and honor of being visited by General Spaatz and General Eaker on a tour of inspection. We were ready for them, but they did not get an opportunity to visit the squadrons.

One change worth recording here is the appointment of Major Hogan, former 826 Squadron Executive Officer as Group Executive Officer. Lt. Col. Johnson Group Executive Officer since the Groups activation, left for the United States.

During the last half of February we had some relief from the rain. The mud began to dry up quickly, making walking and driving more attractive. From now on it will be a matter of dodging the dust.

Operational History For March 1945

During the month of March weather conditions were an improvement over the previous month. 20 missions were flown, 610 sorties and only 26 early returns. Tonnage dropped during the month totaled 1168.10 tons. 63 combat crew members were listed as missing in action.

Missions For March 1945

Mission No 168, 1 March 1945, Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery, Austria

35 of our aircraft took off to bomb an important industrial target at Moosbierbaum, but because of 10/10 undercast it was necessary to bomb by instruments. No results observed, but a good run was made and good results were expected. 51 tons of bombs were dropped on the target and one ship failed to return.

Mission No 169, 2 March 1945, Linz Benzol Plant, Austria

28 of our aircraft took off to bomb the Linz Benzol Plant in Austria. Again it became necessary to bomb by PFF methods due to 10/10 undercast. 53 tons of bombs were dropped a little left of the course, but in the target area. Despite the short bomb run good results were obtained

Mission No 170, 4 March 1945, Graz Main M/Y's, Austria

33 of our aircraft took off to bomb the Graz main M/Y's in Austria. This attack was of vital importance to further disrupt the already disorganized rail system from Vienna to the Hungarian front and south to Yugoslavia. The run on the target was started by PFF methods but was picked up visually in time for the bombardier to make necessary corrections. 59.5 tons of bombs were dropped and bomb strike photos showed a tight concentration of bombs on the target. One of our aircraft was lost.

Mission No 171, 8 March 1945, Hegyeshalom M/Y's, Hungary

39 of our aircraft took off to bomb the RR cars at Hegyeshalom marshaling yards in Hungary. Again the importance of this attack was the disruption and disorganization of military supplies and traffic enroute to the front and its destruction would be an effective support for the Russian ground troops. Two forces were flown this day and good results were obtained by both. 57.25 tons of bombs were dropped.

Mission No 172, 9 March 1945, Graz M/Y's, Austria

38 aircraft took off to bomb Bruck M/Y's but due to adverse weather conditions it became necessary to bomb the alternate, Graz Station and M/Y. This was bombed in two units with nine ship fronts. Handicapped by 10/10 undercast PFF methods were employed. Difficult was encountered by both units on the bomb run and no results were observed, but in spite of this results were believed to have been good. 80.25 tons of bombs were dropped.

Mission No 173, 12 March 1945, Florisdorf Oil Refinery, Austria

39 of our aircraft were dispatched to bomb the remnants of the Florisdorf Oil Refinery. Complete cloud cover 10/10 was encountered over the target and it was necessary to bomb by instruments. 62 tons of bombs were dropped and no results were observed.

Mission No 174, 13 March 1945, Regensburg Main M/Y's, Germany

28 of our aircraft took off to bomb the Regensburg M/Y's in Germany. Again due to complete cloud cover over the target it was

necessary to bomb by PFF methods. 48.25 tons of bombs were dropped with results unobserved.

Mission No 175, 14 March 1945, Weiner-Neustadt, Austria

34 of our aircraft were dispatched to bomb rolling stock in the Bruck M/Y's, but due to adverse weather conditions it became necessary to bomb an alternate target, Weiner-Neustadt M/Y's in Austria. On reaching the latter 10/10 cloud cover was encountered which made it necessary to employ PFF synchronous bombing methods. 82.5 tons of bomb were dropped. No results were observed and one of our aircraft is missing.

Mission No 176, 15 March 1945, Weiner-Neustadt M/Y's, Austria.

37 of our aircraft took off to bomb Schwechat Oil Refinery, but weather again forced the group to turn to an alternate, Weiner-Neustadt M/Y's in Austria. PFF methods were used extensively for navigation and not until a sudden break though the clouds identifying the IP, were instrument methods abandoned and the bombing done by visual methods. 72.5 tons of bombs were dropped. Excellent results were obtained and fires were burning fiercely when our aircraft left.

Mission No 177, 16 March 1945, Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery, Austria

35 of our aircraft took off to bomb the Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery in Austria. On this date Moosbierbaum was one of five remaining refineries producing in the Vienna area and our objective was to destroy the remaining producing facilities and hamper repairs of the others previously damaged. Flak encountered was intensely heavy and accurate, resulting in 11 minor 2 major damage to our ships, but all returned in spite of this 62.75 tons of bombs were dropped with good results.

Mission No 178, 19 March 1945, Muhldorf M/Y's, Germany

For the first time during the month weather enroute to the target and return was clear. 39 of our aircraft took off to bomb rolling stock in the Muhldorf M/Y's. Some difficulty was experienced on the bomb run due to smoke from fires and bombs of previous group but aiming points were picked up before bombs away. Good results were obtained and total of 74.9 tons of bombs were dropped. All aircraft returned safely.

Mission No 179, 20 March 1945, Wels East M/Y, Austria

40 of our aircraft took off to bomb rolling stock in the Wels east M/Y in Austria. Again enjoying clear weather enroute to the target and return no difficulty was experienced on the bomb run. 78.5 tons of bombs were dropped, with excellent results. The target was completely saturated, destroying the round house, trains of cars were left burning and many explosions were seen. All of our aircraft returned safely.

Mission No. 180, 21 March 1945, Villach, Bruck, Austria, and Pragersko, Yugoslavia

On this date the Bruck M/Y's in Austria had been originally briefed as the primary target, but due to adverse weather conditions encountered near and over the target it became necessary to break up the formation with the result; two boxes bombed the primary with excellent results, one box bombed Villach North M/Y's with good results, and the entire second attack unit bombed the Pragersko M/Y's leaving fires burning fiercely. A total of 38 aircraft were dispatched dropping 89.5 tons of bombs on the primary and two alternates,

Mission No. 181, 22 March 1945, Kagan Oil Refinery, Austria

29 of our aircraft were dispatched to bomb Kagan Oil Refinery, located just north of the city of Vienna. After our previous attack on Moosbierbaum, Kagan was one of the four remaining refineries to destroy. 62.25 tons of bombs were dropped with good results. Flak encountered over the target was, intense, accurate, and heavy with over three quarters of the formation receiving major or minor damage. One aircraft failed to return as a result of this.

Mission No. 182, 23 March 1945, Kagan Oil refinery, Austria

Despite the previous day's attack on Kagan, further accurate bombing was deemed necessary to accomplish the objective; the complete destruction of this refinery. A total of 34 aircraft were dispatched dropping 60.75 tons of bombs on the target area. One explosion was seen. Again as in the previous day's mission, flak encountered was intense, accurate, and heavy. As a result of this, every ship in the group received major or minor damage. Our losses were two aircraft.

Mission No. 183, 24 March 1945, Budjovice M/Y, Czechoslovakia

29 aircraft were dispatched to bomb the Budjovice M/Y's where supplies moving from Germany to Vienna had been accumulating as a result of the recent attacks on the main lines. 55 tons of bombs were dropped short, but walked into the yards completely destroyed the round house.

Mission No. 184, 25 March 1945, Prague Czechoslovakia

Our objective was the destruction of ME 262 jet propelled aircraft at Prague/Kbely Airdrome. 27 aircraft were dispatched and identification of the target was difficult due to the surrounding terrain, smoke and haze. But definite check points were identified before bombs away and 45 tons of frag clusters bombs were dropped in ten target areas with good results. No ships were lost.

Mission No. 185, 26 March 1945, Strazhof M/Y, Austria

28 aircraft were dispatched to bomb the Strazhof M/Y's. The attack was made by boxes, in trail, dropping 53 tons of bombs with good results. Flak damage was minor and all of our aircraft returned safely.

Mission No. 186, 30 March 1945, Graz M/Y's, Austria

On this date 4 aircraft were dispatched to make lone wolf attacks on the Vienna North Station Good depot, but due to adverse weather conditions it became necessary to abandon the primary and turn to an alternate, Graz M/Y's. 1.5 tons of bombs fell on the yard with fairly good results.

Mission No. 187, 31 March 1945, Linz Benzol Plant, Austria

28 of our aircraft took off to bomb the Linz Benzol Plant in Austria. Due to 8/10 cloud cover in the target area, combination of PFF and offset bombing was employed. By check points, identified in the target area on the bomb run a good concentration of bombs on the target was obtained. Intense, Accurate, and heavy flak was encountered in the target area and half of the formation received minor flak damage. 39 tons of bombs were dropped and all of our aircraft returned safely.

Awards given in March 1995

484th BG Headquarters, Bronze Star

Ch. Capt. Wade L Carter
M/Sgt. William R Woodall

824 Squadron

DFC

Maj. Eugene C Derby (Oak Leaf Cluster)
1st Lt. R A Dean (Oak Leaf Cluster)
1st Lt. William C Gaskill
1st Lt. Charles R Walter
1st Lt. Franklin C Mathews
1st Lt. Herbert G Larson
1st Lt. R A Dean
1st Lt. Mere P Yanney
1st Lt. Eugene M Perlowin
1st Lt. William S Weaver
1st Lt. Robert A Paliafito
1st Lt. Howard M Segal
1st Lt. Abraham A Abramoff
1st Lt. Stanley A Hutchins
T/Sgt. Seth A Wood
T/Sgt. Robert L Hughes
T/Sgt. Robert E Davis
T/Sgt. Walter G Stow
T/Sgt. Emanuel S Monte
S/Sgt. Kevin J Moynihan
S/Sgt. Charles E Ranck
S/Sgt. Merrill L Iverson
S/Sgt. Harold T Toomey
S/Sgt. Richard E Wood
S/Sgt. Henry A Haage
S/Sgt. James F Morrissey
S/Sgt. Adolf Marcus
S/Sgt. Lionel A Lovoie

824 Squadron Bronze Star

M/Sgt. William R Hargrove
S/Sgt. Floyd E Arthur
Sgt. Abraham N Scheinbaum
Cpl. Alan A Edwards
Cpl. Charles E McNeese

826 Squadron Awards, DFC

Capt. James H Albertasse (Oak leaf cluster)
Capt. Kenneth D Dowdey (Oak leaf cluster)
Capt. Rodney T Stewart
Capt. Abbott L Taylor
1st Lt. William L Kelper
1st Lt. James E Gregg
1st Lt. Roderick W Cambell
1st Lt. William T Schwartz
1st Lt. Charles W Lindsey
2nd Lt. James Gough
2nd Lt. James H Sullivan
2nd Lt. Edward W Drislane
2nd Lt. Walter Fair
2nd Lt. Crawford S Perry
2nd Lt. Raymond O Haynes
T/Sgt. Willie R Ashurst
T/Sgt. Joseph J Dondero
T/Sgt. Kenneth R Sowers

827 Squadron DFC

Capt. Albertson H Seaman
1st Lt. Aaron Scharf
1st Lt. Martin Nisker
1st Lt. Robert D Babcock
1st Lt. James H Mann
2nd Lt. Ernest B Shope
T/Sgt. Thomas W Fairhurst

827 Bronze Star

M/Sgt. Stanley M Rozycki

Special Narrative March 1945

On March 27, stand down day, we celebrated a year overseas by having field day in the area back of Headquarters.

All sorts of field events including horseshoe pitching, tug of war, running events, and riding one of the bucking type of Italian burro were on the program. Each squadron had winners as did Headquarters detachment, and war bonds prizes didn't cause any protests from the winners. During the month Special Services conducted a series of squadron and group elimination contests in the indoor sports such as ping pong, card games, checkers, and chess. The winners went to the French Riviera for a week's pleasure. They were not disappointed. The dispensary was completed and received its first patients. It is proving itself immediately as a definite step forward for our medical section.

Several times during the month inspecting teams and high officials visited the group and consequently our areas were all in fine condition and with all buildings getting a coat of whitewash.

Generally speaking the month was uneventful in so far as outstanding achievements were concerned. It was characterized by that steady, every day duty that marks an outfit that has become a veteran.

It was decided to train promising crews from each squadron as lead crews so that pilot, navigator, and bombardier would be qualified to take over group and attack unit leads. For this purpose outstanding leaders who had completed 35 mission did not go home at once but remained with the group to fly practice missions with the

selected crews. The benefits of this program became evident soon afterward by the manner in which the attack units in formation were led and in the improvement in navigation and bombing.

Most of the men were realizing that the air war in Europe was assured and that targets were becoming very limited. But there was no relaxation and the morale of the group was maintained at a high level. The group officers began to give increased attention to entertainment of the men and the Information and Education Program assumed increasing importance.

Operational History April 1945

During the month of April the 484th Bombardment Group flew 21 combat missions against the enemy in Germany, Austria, and Italy. 688 sorties were flown with 34 early returns. 364 tons of bombs on enemy installations. 19 of our crew members are missing.

Missions For April 1945

Mission No. 188, 1 April 1945, Villach M/Y's, Austria

The first target of the month was a target of opportunity. A run was made on the primary target, the Bruck M/Y's, but cloud covering made it necessary to abandon it. A PFF run was made on the target at Villach. During the bomb run the bombardier saw the M/Y's through a break in the clouds. A small correction was made, and the bombs were seen to the south choke point. 63 tons of bombs were dropped.

Mission No. 189, 2 April 1945, Polten M/Y's, Austria

This target was attacked in order to temporarily block traffic headed for the Russian Front. The bombing was done visually by boxes, and the results were excellent. The bomb pattern was very good with all bombs landing on the target. 27 planes dropped 65 tons of bombs on this important communications target.

Mission No. 190, 5 April 1945, Brescia M/Y's, Italy

Reports indicated that the cars at Brescia were filled with German war equipment and Italian machinery being moved to Germany. 28 aircraft were dispatched to the target. It was attacked visually and by boxes. A good bomb pattern covered the target area. It was necessary for the lead bombardier to make two runs on the target because of cloud cover.

Mission No. 191, 6 April 1945, Brescia Small Arms Plant, Italy

A phase of the production of ammunition was done at this plant so it was picked as the target for the 484th Bombardment Group. All bombing was done visually by boxes in trail. 27 planes dropped 65 tons of bombs on the plant with very good results.

Mission No. 192, 7 April 1945, Klagenfurt, M/Y's, Austria Communications targets in Northern Italy and in Austria were

under attack by the 15th Air Force on this date. The 484th BG attacked the Klagenfurt M/Y's. The bomb run started on instrument, but in a short time the bombardier was able to pick up the target visually. Results were believed to be very good.

Mission No 193, 8 April 1945, Pardenone M/Y's, Italy

The 484th BG was briefed to attack the M/Y's at Bronzolo, but weather made it necessary to attempt a run on Pardenone. 28 aircraft scored some hits, but the pattern was widely scattered. 66.5 tons of bombs were dropped.

Mission No. 194, 9 April 1945, Area Apple, Italy.

On this date the 15th Air Force attacked one of its most important objectives. The 484th BG dispatched a force of 21 aircraft in two assault waves each. One aircraft returned early and two casualties were reported. It was a mission in direct support of the British Eighth Army. An area in front of troops was saturated with bombs enabling the Eighth Army to move up into the Po Valley. For safety the friendly troops were well marked with signs placed on the ground. 100 pound bombs were used in this attack. This mission was highly successful, and received commendation of the British Army. 78.75 tons of bombs were dropped.

Mission No. 195, 10 April 1945, Area Baker, Italy

This mission was the same as the one on the preceding day except for the change in the area to be bombed. 21 B-24s in two attack waves were dispatched by the 484th BG. One returned early. The Eighth Army had advanced, and so did the 15th Air Force. On this mission frag bombs were used. 67.75 tons of bombs were dropped.

Mission No 196, 11 April 1945, Bronzolo, M/Y's, Italy

The 484th BG dispatched 28 aircraft to attack the Bronzolo M/Y on this date. The attack was designed to follow up the two previous missions in cooperation with the ground forces. It was planned to further block and cut critical enemy escape routes. Visual sighting was used since the weather over the target was clear. On the first bomb run the lead bombardier had a malfunction, so a second run was necessitated. 52 tons of bombs were dropped, and many hits were scored in the yards. 6 aircraft returned early.

Mission No 197, 12 April 1945, St. Veit RR Bridge, Italy

27 aircraft were dispatched by the 484th BG to bomb one of the lesser important communication targets, but still was one more obstacle in the supply route of the enemy. The bridges were well hit.

Mission No 198, 14 April 1945, Malcontenta Ammunition Factory, Italy

Ammunition was a critical item for the enemy in North Italy so the Air Forces attacked the powder trains in this area. Our group attacked the target by boxes in trail. Three boxes bombed while one failed to recognize the target so its bombs were returned to the base. Fires and explosions were seen in the target area, and a good job of

bombing was accomplished. 28 aircraft were dispatched, with 9 returning early. 45.5 tons of bombs were dropped.

Mission No 199, 15 April 1945, Nervesa RR Bridge, Italy

The blue force of the group bombed this target visually with three boxes. This attack was made while another force went out to bomb troop concentrations at the front. Results were varied. Poor target coverage and bad weather contributed greatly to the trouble encountered on this mission. Most of the bombs fell short and to the right of the briefed aiming point. 19 B-24's were sent out in the blue force, with 4 returning early. 33.5 tons of bombs were dropped.

Mission No 199, 15 April 1945, Troop concentrations on the Fifth Army Front, Italy

This was another important mission for the 15th Air Force. The area before the Fifth Army was to be bombed by the greatest number of bombers that the Air Force could muster. Again the target area was well marked by the artificial aides. The area was well hit and the Fifth Army was able to move out the next day. The raid represented the largest number of bomber aircraft the 15th Air Force had ever put up for one mission. The 484th Bomb Group dispatched 40 aircraft, with one early return. 79.5 tons of bombs were dropped.

Mission No. 200, 16 April 1945, Troop Concentrations on the Fifth Army Front, Italy

The 15th Air Force continued its offensive against the Germans occupying the area opposing the Fifth Army. This time the weather proved a hazard, but it was possible to identify the target and to drop 40 tons on the area.

Mission No. 201, 17 April 1945, Troop Concentrations on the Fifth Army Front, Italy.

For the third time the 15th Air Force went to the Italian front. Again results were good, enabling our ground force to move forward. 40 aircraft were dispatched with 2 early returns. 74.5 tons of bombs were dropped.

Mission No 202, 19 April 1945, Vipiteno RR Bridge, Italy.

The group went over the primary target, the Aviso RR Viaduct, but smoke from the preceding groups made it impossible for the bombardier to pick up the aiming point. The alternate was picked up, but due to a freak accident the bombs fell short and to the left. A burst of flak between the lead ship and the deputy lead the vertical gyros to tumble on both ships. The 484th Bomb Group sent out 25 B-24's dropping 55.5 tons of bombs. There were no early returns.

Mission No. 203, 20 April 1945, Lusina RR Bridge, Italy

The 484th Bomb Group hit the primary employing a formation of six bombing boxes in trail. All boxes used the auto-pilot and sighted visually. The target was easily picked up and all hit with compact patterns. The center span of the bridge was knocked out. This was a highly successful mission. 40 aircraft were sent out, 2 returned early. 92 tons of bombs were dropped.

Mission No. 204, 21 April 1945, Attnang Puchiem M/Y's, Austria

The group bombed the second alternate on this date with good results. The weight of the highly concentrated attack fell on the center of the yards. All stock within a belt of 600 feet wide, stretching across the yard was totally destroyed. A little difficulty was experienced with cloud cover. 79 tons of bombs were dropped. 36 bombers were sent out, with 2 early returns.

Mission No 205, 23 April 1945, Badia Road Bridge, Italy

Because of the rapid advance of the Allies in Italy, the Germans were in a state of disorganization. The 15th Air force was endeavoring to disrupt supply lines in order to further that disorganization. The approaches to the bridge destroyed, and one box destroyed a span. 81 tons of bombs were dropped. 36 aircraft were dispatched with 4 early returns.

Mission No. 206, 24 April 1945, Roverto M/Y's, Italy

The Roverto M/Y's is located on the main Brenner Pass route. 28 planes were sent to the target. The target was smoke covered but hits were believed to have fallen into the target after first falling short.

Mission No. 207, 25 April 1945, Linz M/Y's, Austria

With the Russians in Vienna, Linz became the hinge of the German defense in this area. 28 planes were dispatched to the target. On the bomb run heavy and accurate flak was experienced. The lead ship was hit as was the deputy, and as a result bombs were dropped short. Two aircraft were lost over the target.

Mission No 208, 26 April 1945, Spital M/Y's, Austria

The 484th Bomb Group was briefed to hit ammunition stores in northern Italy, but due to bad weather the primary target was abandoned. Two boxes bombed Spital M/Y's and two boxes returned to base. 13 aircraft bombed and most of their bombs burst in the target area. This was the last mission for April, and the last mission flown by the group

Special Narrative April 1945

The last month of operation in combat for the group in the Mediterranean Theater was outstanding in several respects and they are mentioned with pride.

The 484th Bombardment Group was cited again for exceptional achievement in air combat and General Twining made the presentation to the group of its second Distinguished Unit Citation on 11 April on the parade ground near the Headquarters. With the 15th Air Force providing the music, officers and enlisted men passed in review before a reviewing party composed of General Twining, Colonel Keese, Lt. Col. Busch, and Lt. Col. DuFour, just as the blue streamer was being attached to our colors by General Twining, a fortunate coincidence occurred. The planes returning

from a combat mission passed over the parade field in formation.

The start of the offensive to destroy the German armies in North Italy marked a new use of the Group in a tactical role. Very close coordination was to be carried out by the 15th Air Force and the Fifth and Eighth Armies to insure the success of the drive. Every effort had been made to identify the targets from the air by use of ground directional markings and to prevent the possibility of premature dropping of bombs which would have fallen on our troops.

For two days the group dropped 100 pound bombs and frag clusters on German positions in front of the Eighth Army. The results were excellent and the British Forces swept across rivers which had held them up for months. The attack then switched to the approaches to the Bologna in front of the Fifth Army. For three days the entire 15th Air Force in its greatest effort bombed this area. Every available plane in the group was put into the air and the field had a stripped appearance on those days. Coverage of the assigned targets was exceptional. Subsequent events in North Italy gave the group great pride in the knowledge that it had played an important part in the destruction of the enemy in Italy.

During this month the 49th bombardment Wing and the 484th Bombardment Group established a bombing record that was worthy of commendations from General Twining and Brig. Gen. Lee. The average of the wing and our group was far above the Air Force average. Pictures of bombing results by the group appeared in several intelligence publications as outstanding examples of pattern and destructive bombing. We were satisfied with the knowledge that the military destruction was proving a factor in the war and not too much concerned with scores.

Last year we did not observe Easter as we were busy setting up our squadron areas but this year Easter was celebrated as we wanted to do it. Service was held in the new Chapel and sunrise services were on the ground in front of the chapel.

Almost a year to the day since its first combat mission, the group found the strategic air war was won. It had attacked targets all over Europe and had taken its part in the attacks on all three fronts, the Italian, the Russian, and the Western. We could look back on it and feel that we could justifiably take the words often repeated in commendations, "a job well done" as a description of our efforts.

Now we could turn our energies and experience to the Japanese War secure in the knowledge that our record there would be just as outstanding as it was in the European war.

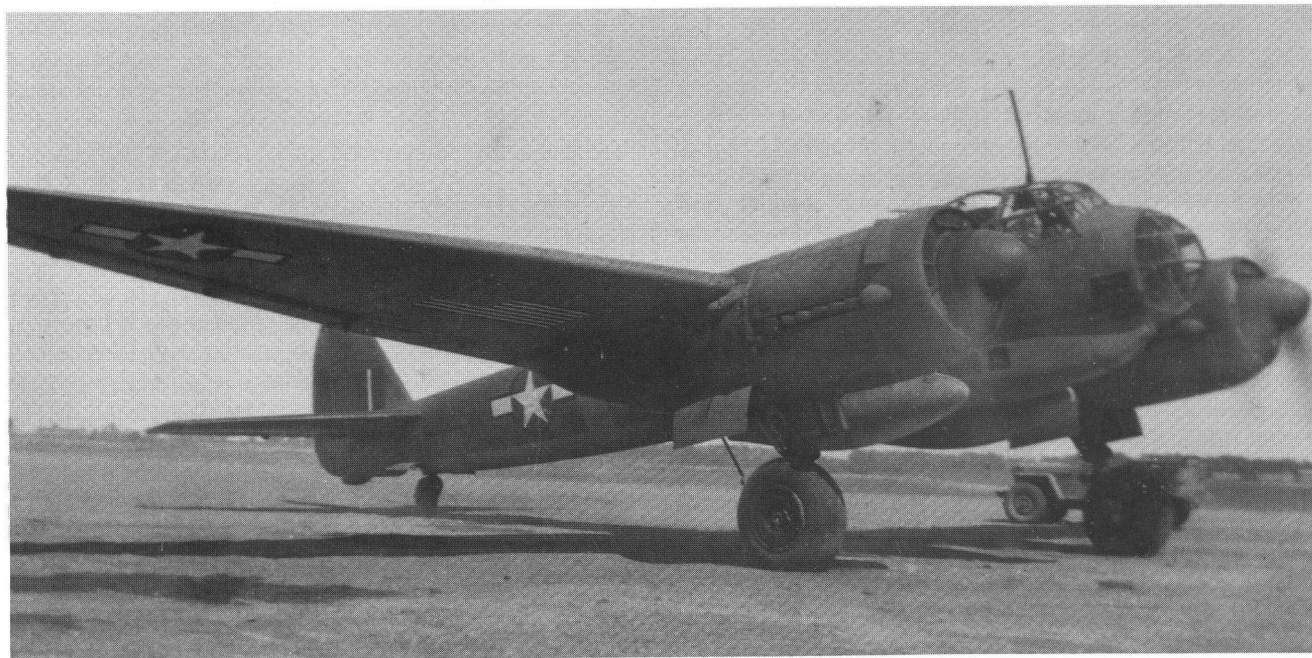
484th BG History May-July 1945

The unit was ordered to move to Casablanca on 13, May, 1945. On 19 May, 1945, the first plane took off from Torretta Field, Italy for a new station, followed by shipment daily. Movement to the new station was completed on 27 May, 1945. Upon arrival at Casablanca the unit was assigned to the Air Transport Command, North African Ferrying Division. The unit was ordered to dispose of all equipment and prepare for disbandment. The personnel were relieved from assignment from this unit and were assigned to various units in the division. The 484th Bombardment Group was disbanded on 25 July 1945. Per authority Par.1, General Order 21 HQ NAFFD ATC.



The First German Junkers JU-88 Flight Across the Atlantic

by
Maj. Gen. (Ret) Warner E. Newby



This photo shows the actual markings that were applied to the JU-99 before the Atlantic Flight (26-1)

The first JU-88 flight across the Atlantic Ocean was made in October 1943 by two US Army Air Forces officers. Lt. George W. Cook and I planned the flight, prepared the aircraft, and flew the JU 88 from Cairo Egypt to Wright Field at Dayton Ohio for technical evaluation. This article details how we acquired the aircraft selection of the crew for the mission planning and preparing the aircraft and support for the flight, the flight itself, and evaluation comments about the JU 88 as well as the German JU 88 program. The aircraft survived several disposition campaigns after WWII and eventually was transferred to the Air Force Museum at Dayton, Ohio. The aircraft has been refurbished and is on display in the WW II Rumanian Air Force color marking scheme.

THE GIFT OF A NEW JU 88

By July, 1943, Theodore Nikolai had become increasingly disenchanted with the Nazi cause, the control of his squadron by German officers, and the high risk missions being assigned to the Rumanian pilots and had developed a personal dislike for a certain superior officer. He apparently was well aware that the Allied Forces were gaining the initiative and the Nazis were increasingly being forced on the defensive particularly in the air war. He decided to defect. He planned to pick out the best JU 88 in the squadron and fly across the Black Sea and Turkey to Beirut.

On 22 July 1943 at 1500 hours, he made his move. Informing the guard he was going to test fly JU 88 #430650, he took no maps or personal items to reduce the risk of detection. After takeoff he

headed out over the Black Sea toward Turkey, flying low over the water. Over Turkey, he climbed to over 10,000 feet, entered dense cloud cover, and encountered an easterly cross wind which went undetected. Approaching his ETA, he dropped down to lower altitude and broke out of the clouds, finding that he was over water, lost, and running low on fuel. Spotting a land mass and airfield, he extended the landing gear and flaps as he headed in for a landing. About this time, British Hurricanes spotted him and closed in, but held fire because he was not flying in a threatening manner and the aircraft had Rumanian Air Force markings. The Hurricanes escorted him in for a landing at 1915 on the British airfield at Limassol, Cyprus. Theodore Nikolai shut off the engines and surrendered.

With this action he presented the British RAF with the gift of a fully operational late model JU-88D-1-Trop reconnaissance airplane, barely one month old and with under 50 total hours flight time. The British immediately started their evaluation of the aircraft. Nikolai was very cooperative in the effort and readily assisted the British pilots' preparations to fly the JU 88. The best information available indicates the JU 88 was flown from Cyprus to Heliopolis Airport, Cairo, Egypt, on 27 July 1943 by an RAF test pilot assigned to No 1 British Airways Repair Unit (No 1 BARU) located at Heliopolis, essentially removing any practical possibility of the Nazis attacking and destroying the aircraft. The JU 88 remained with this unit until 1 Oct. 1943, underwent technical evaluation, and was painted in the RAF desert camouflage scheme. Before the aircraft left Cyprus, British RAF markings had been applied.

In late September 1943, the JU 88 was transferred to the USAAF for movement to Wright Field for evaluation. Dismantling the aircraft for surface shipment could have altered valuable data on the quality of design and construction as well as performance data from the flight evaluation program. Ninth Air Force felt that a ferry flight from Cairo to Wright Field was feasible and started looking for a volunteer two man crew.

FINDING A CREW FOR THE PROJECT

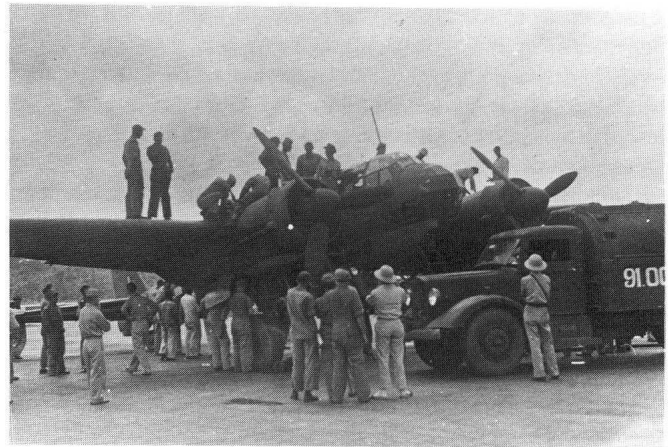
Lt. George W. Cook and I had been assigned to the 26th Air Depot Group (ADG) for the last six months of our tour in the Middle East Theater and were scheduled to rotate back to the U. S. on 1 October 1943. We left our base at Deversoir, Egypt, early that morning and arrived at Payne Field, the newly activated U. S. support base on the east side of Cairo, about 0730 for out-processing. During the briefing, our attention was called to a 9th AF request posted for a volunteer crew of two to fly an aircraft to the U. S. I had flown my B-25 over to Egypt as part of the 12th Bomb Group deployment and preferred to fly myself back rather than return as a bored passenger. Lt. Cook felt the same way and we decided to check out the posting. It gave no details of the ferry flight, only a phone number to call if interested. We joked about the old Army adage of don't ever volunteer but decided to respond, feeling we could probably back out if the situation turned out to be too hairy. I made the phone call.

We were instructed to go to the entrance of the building where we would be picked up by a staff car within 15 minutes and driven to 9th AF headquarters. We picked up our B4 bags and in a few minutes we were on our way. We were met at 9th AF and escorted to the intelligence staff offices. We were taken to a room in the technical intelligence sections and introduced to several staff members. We had a cup of coffee and were told that they had a special project that needed a highly qualified flight crew with a strong technical background, but still were given no clue as to what equipment was involved. They advised that they needed to document our qualifications and experience.

Very detailed interviews were conducted and they were particularly interested in the facts that I had flown a B-25 from the U. S. to Egypt, had participated in service testing of the B-25D at Wright Field, was involved in a number of 12th Bomb Group and 9th Air Force directed special tasks and projects, and had flown a number of different aircraft. On the negative side, there was noticeable disappointment and cooling of staff interest when they learned that I had graduated from flying school in March, 1942, and had only 18 months of commissioned flying service.

The interview was concluded about 1100 and we were told to return at 1300 as the staff needed to summarize their data on the project and crews and brief the senior staff during lunch. Lt. Cook and I left the headquarters and went to an early lunch at the famous Shepherd's Hotel. We still didn't know what aircraft we had volunteered to fly to the U. S. and this lack of disclosure was beginning to worry us. Having lunch or dinner at Shepherd's was usually a special and pleasant experience, but our preoccupation with the mystery of the assignment took the bloom off the occasion.

We returned at 1300 and were escorted to the intelligence briefing section. We were surprised to find the staff extremely cordial and were promptly advised that we had been selected for a project to fly a German Junkers 88 aircraft to Wright Field. We were then briefed on the project to bring us up to date. Because of wartime



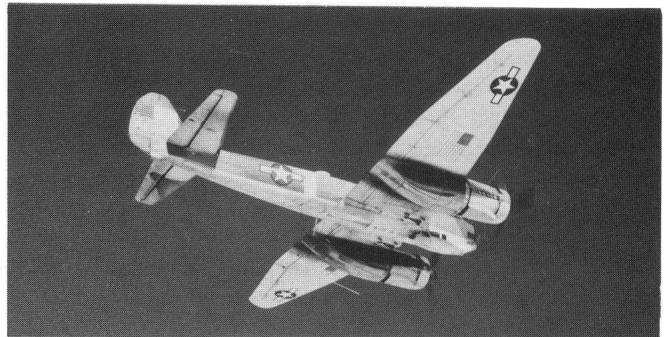
There was always plenty of help wherever the JU 88 stopped enroute to the USA. (27-1)

security, information on the defection was limited at the time to the fact that a Rumanian Air Force pilot had become disenchanted with the Nazi cause and Luftwaffe officer corps, had picked up a new JU 88D-1 reconnaissance aircraft, took off and headed for Syria, got lost, was low on fuel, and landed at an RAF field in Cyprus and surrendered. We were further briefed that the RAF had completed their evaluation and had given the aircraft to the USAAF.

The US had no flyable Ju 88 at this time and wanted to get one to Wright Field for flight and technical evaluation. The briefing concluded with the disclosure that the JU 88 was at Heliopolis Airport and was ready for transfer.

At this point, Lt. Cook and I were struggling with the surprise of the project and were clearly developing doubts and reservations, but we were still drawn by its challenge. We asked for a copy of the project plan and learned that a comprehensive plan was yet to be developed. I asked the key question, i.e., "What is the range of the aircraft?" Answer "Estimated to be about 1300 miles." Then I asked if a technical order file or flight manual for this model was available. There was only very limited data. We concluded that a great deal of work needed to be done before we would attempt a transatlantic flight. We asked the staff to arrange for us to fly the JU 88 to the 26th ADC; and get us the best priority they could to develop the plan and prepare the aircraft. We talked about security and advised that the project had to be unclassified as many people would need to be involved. Support bases on our route had to be notified of our flight and, most importantly, defense units along our route must be informed. The staff pondered this briefly and then agreed. They felt they could get approval and would take up the matter with their seniors.

Maj. Morgan Nelson and Lt. Col. Charles E. Thompson of the 9th Air Force Crash Intelligence Office had handled the transfer



arrangements with the British and were designated as 9th Air Force project officers and our contacts for the project.

There being little more substantive information to pass on, it was suggested we drive out to Heliopolis Airfield to meet the RAF test pilot and officer in charge, get a look at the aircraft, and, if it was in commission, take a check flight.

Shortly before we arrived at No 1 BARU, we were briefed that the test pilot and officer in charge was a 58 year old RAF wing commander, Wynne Eaton, who was all business. Upon arrival we went to his office and, following an exchange of a few words, he asked "Shall we get on with it?" and laid out papers to be signed. Maj. Nelson did the signing for the US Army Air Forces. Following this, Wing Commander Eaton promptly walked out of the office with the comment "Let's go get a look at the JU-88."

We walked out to the JU 88 which was parked on a dirt parking spot. The entire Heliopolis Airfield was unpaved, and on our previous flights in and out we learned to use low power during power checks, taxi runs, and initial takeoff rolls until we were moving at least 25 mph. We had damaged some propellers until we adopted these techniques.

We approached the JU 88 at the right wing tip and started our walk around inspection with the wing commander pointing out checks and features. As we approached the right nacelle, he pointed out the rotating operation of the landing gear during retraction so it laid horizontal in the up position, and that the door closed with the gear in both the up and extended positions. We then took a careful look in the wheel well and at the landing gear for any signs of fluid leaks and proper strut extension. He pointed out that the engines were 1340 hp Junkers 211J series units. At the bomb bay area we checked the forward and aft bomb bay tanks and camera compartment. We inspected the tail sections, the left wheel well, engine, and wing sections, and finally the wings, fuselage, and engines from the front of the airplane. As he entered the crew compartment, Wg. Cmdr. Eaton checked electrical switches and circuit breakers, emergency hydraulic panel, valves, and pump. Once in the pilot's seat, he checked fuel valves, switches, and controls, set brakes, and turned on power, booster pumps, and master ignition switch, calling out all of these actions in rapid fire order as he proceeded. He energized the left starter and, after several rotations of the propellers, turned the left ignition switch on, whereupon the left engine came to life and stabilized at about 1000 RPM. He checked engine, hydraulic, electrical, and pneumatic gauges for proper responses; all were OK. Then he did the same for the right engine, fired up the radios, put on the headset, got tower clearance and taxied to the south end of the airport, which was just a wide field with no runways. He did a power check with a manifold pressure of about 2 atmospheres (30 Inches of mercury), a magneto check at about 2200 RPM, and a recheck of the gauges. I was trying to follow all these actions, but was having some difficulty because everything was metric and labeled in German.

He set the flaps to *starte* (take off position), advised the tower he was on the go and applied power. During the takeoff, the heading changed about 10° and the aircraft seemed to be difficult to hold on heading during the early part of the roll. After lift off, the aircraft handled well and the wing commander was obviously a very skilled and smooth pilot. He pointed out some of the flight characteristics and other features of the aircraft, then returned to the airfield, and landed. After shutting down, he answered some of my questions. After a few more questions outside the aircraft, he departed with a cheerful "good luck, Yank."

Although Wg. Cmdr. Eaton had gone through the preflight and flight checkout in a proper and professional manner, I was really not prepared nor sufficiently familiar with the aircraft to fly it in a safe and competent manner. We had become aware of the JU 88 about two hours earlier and had no manuals or technical data on the aircraft. All the aircraft placards and instructions were in German and most of the instruments were in metric units. But we had committed ourselves to the task of ferrying it to the US and the Army Air Forces now owned the bird. So it was now up to us to pick up the ball and get on with the project. We did just that.

As we walked away from the JU 88, I thanked Eaton for his help. Lt. Cook and I then met with Lt. Col. Thompson and Maj. Nelson to check status. We asked for a couple of US parachutes, that the crew chief meet us at the JU to go over servicing procedures and provide us with any additional information about the aircraft, and for any available manuals of similar JU 88 models, since none for our model were on hand. We split up and I returned to the JU 88 to get more familiar with the aircraft and get better prepared to make the flight back to the 26th ADG at Deversoir.

After another walkaround inspection of the aircraft, I was about to enter the cockpit when Lt. Cook and the man who had crewed the JU 88 from the time the RAF took charge at Cyprus, walked up. He was an extremely personable chap and turned out to be very familiar with the JU 88's systems, service, and maintenance procedures. He had a ladder and tools with him and proceeded to work Cook right through the service and preflight check. He provided valuable information and added to our confidence.

While they were doing their checks, I entered the cockpit and studied the controls and instruments until I was completely familiar with those I would need to make the flight to Deversoir. I memorized the power settings on German instruments I would need, as well as a night profile data for takeoff, climb, cruise, and landing, and the critical procedures I would need in case of engine, electrical, or hydraulic failure and, of course, fire.

Lt. Cook and the RAF crew chief entered the cockpit and he worked us through the electrical, hydraulic, fuel, communications, and escape systems. He was really good and gave us a big leg up on our task. We both were much more confident and now ready to fly the JU to Deversoir. I am sorry that I do not have the name of the RAF crew chief, because he was a key player for us.

It was late in the afternoon when we again met with Lt. Col. Thompson and Maj. Nelson. They had our parachutes, some JU 88 A-4 flight, maintenance, and repair manuals, and several English/German dictionaries. Col. Thompson advised all was set at the 26th ADG to give whatever assistance we needed. They expected to have the project declassified, probably in the morning. Maj. Nelson advised that he would be out at Deversoir by noon the next day to coordinate any 9th Air Force actions.

After filing a clearance to Deversoir, we climbed in the cockpit, adjusted our parachutes and seat harnesses, then set and checked controls, switches, instruments, and brakes. With Lt. Cook checking in sequence, I powered up and started the engines. Cook turned on the radios and I called the tower and was cleared to takeoff to the south end of the field. There I did a power and magneto check, and set wing flaps and trim. We both double checked everything and called the tower for takeoff clearance, and were cleared to go.

I applied power gradually and was able to hold my heading, but with a little difficulty. I used 2.9 atmospheres manifold pressure for takeoff power. The aircraft lifted off easily at about 170 kilometers per hour (kmph) (100 mph) and with gear up and flaps

retracted, accelerated to 250 kmph (150 mph) for climb. We leveled off for cruise indicating around 380 kmph (230 mph). Because of our limited knowledge of the JU 88, we flew as conservatively as possible, with no experimentation, straight to Deversoir AB, circled the field calling for clearance to land, made a wide base and long final, coming over the runway at about 180 kmph (110 mph) and made a 3-point touchdown at about 155 kmph (90 mph). The flight was uneventful and we were impressed with the handling and performance of the JU at this point. The tower directed us to the hangar (only one on the base) where we parked and shut the bird down.

There was a crowd already assembling. The ground crew immediately towed the aircraft into the hangar and roped it off. We said hellos to our associates we had said good-by to only a few hours before. The depot had picked a good crew to work with us. The crew leader was Sgt. Robert V. Connor. (Sgt. Connor made the Air Force a career and retired at Edwards Air Force Base a few years ago and now lives in Salt Lake City, Utah).

PREPARING THE PLAN AND THE JU 88 FOR THE FERRY TO THE U.S.

We decided to pull samples of gasoline, engine oil, hydraulic fluid, and engine coolant. The German gasoline sample came from a small amount of residual fuel left in the bomb bay tanks as Lt. Cook had learned that only the wing tanks had been serviced by the RAF crew. These samples were taken to the lab to determine compatibility with US grade fluids and to check for contaminants. We requested earliest possible processing as the results could either make ferrying route support easy or a major problem. We did not plan any other work on the JU 88 until the next day, but planned to meet after dinner. Meanwhile, I met with Colonel Phillip Roll, the 26th commander, and brought him up to date on the project.

During the after dinner meeting, we agreed that I would take responsibility for the overall project as well as for flight planning, navigation, administrative matters, and communications. Lt. Cook would take prime responsibility for inspection, maintenance, modification, and service of the JU 88. He would work up the inspections, service, maintenance, and documentation program, and extract as much historical flight and maintenance data as possible in order to set up a standard USAAF Flight Maintenance Record file (Form 1). He would use 26th Air Depot forms to document, servicing, inspections, repairs, removals, reinstallations, openings, closures, and modifications, etc., using a double checkoff on all actions. Our personal stakes were high as most of the flight was over unforgiving territory. We both agreed we did not want to leave anything to chance or overlook any item that could compromise our success.

An additional requirement for Lt. Cook was to open covers and panels to expose all of the important systems, such as electrical, fuel, hydraulic, pneumatic, flight control, instruments, communications, etc., and diagram or describe them to the level needed to operate and maintain them on the flight (this was to fill in the void left by the lack of Ju 88D-I technical data and manuals).

By the next morning, I was to have available the preliminary flight route, our primary and alternate landing locations, and a list of our longest flight legs and the distances involved. We agreed my highest priority was to resolve question of range.

We split up and I went to base operations to review maps, airport data, navigational facilities, notams (Notice to Airmen file), i.e., airfield and route problem data) and to plot our route. I chose to take the same route back that I had flown in the B-25 with the 12th Bomb Group deployment back in July 1942. I had some familiarity with the bases and route, and all the planning documents indicated facility and navigational aids improvements all along the route since then. I switched to Georgetown, British Guiana, and dropped Trinidad as stopover base. All of our flight legs could be held under 1100 miles except the two Atlantic legs from Accra to Ascension Island and from there to Natal, Brazil. I made up a list of items I would need for a flight navigational kit and left it at operations.

It was now near midnight so I went to quarters, turned in, and reflected on the day's activity. That morning, I had actually been manifested to return to the US, and here at the end of the day I was back at Deversoir in the same quarters, faced with the biggest challenge of my life and one not free of risk.

I went to the hangar about 0700 the next morning and Lt. Cook and crew were already at work with engines uncowed and inspection covers and panels removed. He had made up a long list of items to be inspected and serviced, and a list of removals. Worksheets to log actions were in place and in use. Cook was an exceptional maintenance officer with unusual supervisory and communications skills. He was also very good at maintaining rapport with those under his supervision. I went to my old office to study the JU 88A-4 data we had picked up to see if I could develop reliable range data. All the charts were for bomber configurations and the best range figure was under 1200 miles, so the best possible estimate for our reconnaissance variant was 1300 miles. I called Col. Thompson at 9th AF and advised him that we were going to have to add fuel to make it across the Atlantic and that the JU 88 A-4 data included load configurations with 900 liter drop tanks installed. I asked him to check and see if he could locate any JU 88 external rack tanks and brought him up to date on our activities at Deversoir. He said that Maj. Nelson was on his way out to Deversoir and that the classified status had been dropped, but there was to be no publicity until the aircraft reached Wright Field.

I returned to the hangar, telling Cook we would have to add fuel and that the JU manuals showed drop tanks for the bomber version's external racks. We checked our JU and found that it had a bomb rack inboard of the engine on each side. The crew was well along in diagramming the fuel system. We expanded the effort to determine whether fuel lines extended to the bomb racks. We found two lines; one fed to the fuel manifold-valve system and the other appeared to connect to a pneumatic system. The fuel shop started a search to see if JU tanks may have been picked up on depot salvage recovery runs into the battlefield area while I went over the fuel system data with Cook. It was similar to the B-25 system with engines feeding from inboard and outboard wing and bomb bay tanks, and drop tanks apparently transferring to wing tanks. We would have to finalize the fuel system configuration after we resolved the drop tank installation issue.

The laboratory personnel arrived with a preliminary analysis of the fluids we had drawn the previous evening. There was no significant contamination. The engine coolant was essentially identical to our 50-50 glycol and water; the hydraulic fluid was similar to US fluid and compatible even at elevated temperatures; the engine oil was similar and considered compatible, but with slight degradation when mixed under elevated temperatures; fuel was com-

patible, with the German fuel having an octane rating of 87 and the RAF fuel a rating of 91, but both were compatible with US 91 octane fuel. We decided that 91 octane would be our fuel of choice and that we would use standard US hydraulic and engine coolant fluids. We checked further with the sergeant who ran the oil tests and learned that both US and German engine oils performed slightly better separately than when mixed. We decided to drain the oil, flush, and service with standard US engine oil.

Maj. Nelson arrived and we brought him up to date. Along with Lt. Cook, we went over the planned route and primary and alternate service points. We decided that 9th Air Force should send a priority message to all units along the route, including Wright Field, informing them of the project, the probable flight dates and services required, and asking that defense units be notified to prevent attack. The message advised that periodic follow-on messages would be dispatched as the project progressed.

After lunch, we met with the fuel shop people and learned that they had not been able to locate, or surface any information that might lead to locating, any JU 88 drop tanks. Maj. Nelson phoned Col. Thompson to see if he had any luck; he hadn't. Apparently they had not been used extensively by the Germans in the Middle East Theater. I remembered that a crashed P-38 we recovered in Palestine had drop tanks on it that didn't look too bad. The fuel people said they had seen some at the salvage yard while looking for JU-88 tanks and that they also saw a lot of other German parts in the yard. We asked them to pick up the P-38 tanks and see if they might be fitted to the JU bomb racks. They returned in about 20 minutes with the tanks. One was completely serviceable and the other appeared to be repairable, but the big surprise was that the diameter was just right and it looked like mounting hardware could be adapted. The fuel and armament shops went to work.

Maj. Nelson drafted the 9th AF wire and phoned it to Col. Thompson, who finalized and dispatched it. Maj. Nelson was pleased with the way things were going and decided to return to Cairo. He asked if we would like to have the Rumanian pilot, Theodore Nikolai come out for a few hours on his next trip. I said we would.

A check late in the afternoon indicated that the P-38 tanks could be mounted and stabilized, but that transferring fuel using the Ju 88 system was in doubt. Lt. Cook had some ideas on using a transfer pump. We decided to leave the JU system intact until the next morning in case Col. Thompson lucked out in locating JU drop tanks. Cook, the fuel shop people, a Consolidated Aircraft, and a General Electric tech rep diagrammed a system to transfer fuel using a B-24 transfer pump. With the range problem moving

toward a solution, I went after our next concern, navigation aids. The radio shop people had been analyzing the JU 88 equipment and concluded that we had good tunable transceivers for communications and a radio compass covering the needed frequencies, but were of the opinion that the automatic homing module was not installed. A separate receiver which also covered radio range frequencies was installed. They could not check the equipment until the aircraft was buttoned up and the batteries reconnected.

Lt. Cook informed me that the main landing gear tires were at about half life and had some minor cuts; he was not sure we could go all the way. The fuels man overheard our discussion and said he had seen some German tires in the salvage yard. Cook asked the tire people to go take a look. They returned in a few minutes with German tires that turned out to be new and the exact size. The next day they pulled the wheels, changed the tires, repacked wheel bearings, and reinstalled the wheels.

I drove over to operations to check on my flight navigation kit. It was ready with everything I asked for and some additional items they had added. I signed for the kit, thanked the operations personnel, and returned to the hangar. Lt. Cook had the personal equipment shop removing the life raft for a check and they were to make up a list of emergency equipment we should carry. It was well after normal duty time and I suggested we secure for the night or many of the crew would miss dinner.

After dinner I returned to base operations where there were good work tables to plot my course and make up my navigational

log for each flight leg. Each log contained all the data I would need from takeoff to landing. The maps and flight charts all had planned ground tracks plotted, along with true and magnetic headings; distances, check points, and navigational aids marked; and radio facilities with identification codes circled. I quit for the day about 2230 and turned in for the night.

The next morning I checked in at the hangar. Lt. Cook was well into the effort. The right P-38 tank was now mounted and stabilized. Cook and the fuel system crew had diagrammed the drop tank fuel transfer modification and were assembling parts, some of which they would have to fabricate. The paint shop came in with a sketch of the USAAF marking scheme for the JU 88 and a regulation that prescribed painting a gold band around the fuselage aft of the wing on foreign aircraft. They also wanted to add US flags to wings, fuselage, and rudder. We agreed and they went to work..

I called Col. Thompson to see if he had any leads on drop tanks and he reported no luck. I told him we were going to proceed



Notice the ARN-7 loop antenna installed just aft of the US Flag painting. (30-1).

with P-38 300 gallon drop tank modification and he agreed. I gave him status of the project and he said that half of the enroute stations had responded to their message and all had confirmed 91 octane fuel availability. He advised that Maj. Nelson was coming out the next day and would have Theodore Nikolai with him.

Lt. Cook and I then went over the radio and navigational equipment analysis with the shop specialists. We had adequate communication capability, but no automatic radio compass system. I had made up some of my logs for the flight and our primary navigation aids were radio beacons and a few radio range systems. The radio compass requirement was so important that I felt we must have redundant capability and I asked the shop personnel if they could install an AAF ARN-7 radio compass system. They said they needed to develop an installation plan, but felt confident they could do it. I asked them to use equipment that had been "burned in" and from the most reliable manufacturers. They reminded us that they had not been able to operate the equipment because batteries were still disconnected. I asked them to let us know as soon as possible the feasibility of the proposed ARN-7 installation.

Lt. Cook reported that most of the work was going well, except the spark plug check. They still had not been able to remove all the plugs located on the inside banks of the V-12 engine. They could feel the plugs, but could not see them or get existing tools on them. Lt. Cook had the engine shop and the two tech reps working to design tools to do the job. We knew the Germans had to replace plugs and there had to be a way to do it. We then went over the electrical, hydraulic, and flight control systems. We had what we needed and they had been serviced, so Cook started to button up for the closeout phase.

I began to hear the JU 88 being referred to as "Baksheesh." We had a number of inquiries about how we had gained possession of it. We jokingly indicated that a Rumanian pilot had delivered it to the RAF as a gift from Der Fuehrer and the British in turn gave it to the U.S. "Baksheesh" is a term used by Egyptian hawkers and beggars trying to get something for nothing. The GI's used the term jokingly, but it soon became a term that stuck.

Sgt. Connor reported they had made an adapter to remove the difficult plugs that was working. Cook told them to install the new plugs they found in the salvage yard, as the engine shop had checked them and found them to be excellent. We then went over the instrument systems. Sgt. Eldered H. Johnson had run a calibration check on the altimeter and airspeed system and made up a calibration card for the airspeed indicator. We decided not to replace any instruments as we now understood them and their units of measurement. We were not sure the JU 88 static-pressure system would work accurately on USAAF instruments. Sgt. Johnson's card would permit me to convert kilometers to miles per hour. The heading reference instrument combined the direct gyro, primary compass, and radio bearing functions in a single integrated instrument. There was a switch labeled "Kurtz Sten" they had not been able to identify. They had called for anyone that spoke German and a man from the mess hall bake shop responded, but turned out to be extremely nontechnical. The best he could come up with was "short steerer". We pondered this for a while, but could not determine its function. I asked the instrument people to see if they could remove the instrument to gain enough clearance to pick up some of the wire codes so we could trace wire bundles. We found the bundle routed into the aft fuselage. The bundle went to a servo-like assembly with control cables connecting to the rudder cables. All of a sudden we realized it was part of the autopilot system. Further checks revealed

that the directional integrated instrument also included a heading-hold system. We could not find any autopilot functions for pitch or lateral control; it controlled only heading.

The electric shop personnel returned to affirm that they could install the ARN-7. They went over the planned layout, with the directional readout instrument on the main instrument panel, the control unit located on the right side of the cockpit easily accessible to the pilot, the receiver in the aft fuselage, and loop and sensing antenna units on top of the fuselage just aft of the wing. They were going to use the shop mock-up system, as it had some time on it, was in excellent condition, and was made by the original design contractor. They had also been able to get control cables and wire bundles with plugs from aircraft in the salvage yard. We told them it looked good and to go ahead with the installation.

I discussed with Lt. Cook the need for reserve or emergency electrical power in the event we lost our normal electrical system. We decided to install another battery that could be manually switched onto the main electrical bus to charge the battery or supply power directly. We planned to make up a sub panel that could be switched from the main power bus to the emergency battery to supply power to the ARN-7, fuel transfer pump, and command transceiver.

Lt. Cook reported the plugs had now all been replaced and he was going to take that special plug tool with us. The emergency equipment people checked in with the bad news that the German life raft would not hold pressure for more than a few hours. They were trying to find a U.S. raft that could be satisfactorily adapted to the JU 88 compartment.

Lt. Cook asked the crew to button up and configure the aircraft so we could connect the batteries. We needed to power up to complete a number of other checks. It was again after hours when we secured and shut down for the night. After dinner, I returned to base operations and finished plotting the maps and flight charts. I completed my navigational logs for all legs of the flight.

The next morning, October 4, 1943 (Day four with the JU 88), I checked in at the hangar and Lt. Cook said he would have power on the JU 88 in about an hour. The right side P-38 tank was mounted and stabilized with adjustable braces made by the depot machine shop. We would need the capability to salvo the drop tanks in the event of a power loss with a full fuel load, so we located the bomb salvo switches on the instrument panel and scheduled a test of the system for 0830.

I went to the office to check on the enroute messages. All stations had reported back and all confirmed that 91 octane fuel and the other service products were available. Each station also confirmed that their defense organizations had been notified. I returned to the hangar where the paint shop had finished with the markings. Cook advised that the JU was now powered up and we could do some of the checks. We set up with Cook and the crew under the right P-38 tank to catch it when it released. I went to the cockpit and on signal, snapped the right red covered switch labeled *Bombenbefreiung* (Bomb Release). There was a loud bang and smoke. I shut off power and cleared the cockpit to discover the P-38 tank still hung on the right bomb rack and Lt. Cook, Sgt. Atilio I. Gromebeth, and a couple of other personnel with minor shrapnel wounds. We discovered the left bomb rack lying on the floor beneath the wing. It had been blown off as explosive bolts and linkage detonated when I toggled the emergency bomb salvo switch. By a stroke of luck, the switches were wired backwards or we would

have had some serious injuries. We had the electrical shop disconnect the switches and isolate the wires to deactivate this system.

The bomb rack was not damaged beyond repair and Sgt. Gromebeth went to work to make replacement hi-strength bolts with metric threads. We started looking for a mechanical bomb release system to provide the emergency salvo function. Maj. Nelson arrived with the Rumanian pilot, and we chatted through an interpreter for a while before going on to our questions. We explained our mishap with the bomb salvo system and asked if there was a manual release system. There was, with the handle located behind the pilot's seat. We confirmed the auto pilot system as a direct system only. We covered the whole range of flight conditions, power settings, emergency procedures, etc. He was surprised and seemed pleased that we were going to fly his JU 88 to the U.S. While he was still there, we successfully made a manual release of the right tank. His description of the radio compass indicated it was more a direction finding system than an automatic compass.

With most of the inspections and service now complete, the main effort remaining was to complete the modifications, make a live check of all systems, swing the compass and ARN-7, and complete a test flight verification of aircraft readiness. If we didn't hit any snags, I thought we would make the test flight the afternoon of the 7th or the morning of the 8th. The bomb rack incident had set us back a bit, as had the spark plug removal delay. Maj. Nelson was still pleased with the way the project was shaping up and all the things that had been done to prepare the bird for the trip. We proposed to remove and ship the machine guns and cameras to Wright Field as air cargo. He agreed to take care of that and he and Nikolai departed for Cairo.

I drafted a message, giving our requirements again and reporting that stations had confirmed support capability. I projected departure in the next four to six days and described the aircraft markings in detail. The message was dispatched that evening.

The next day, the modifications were all being worked and the button up and closeout work was continuing as inspections and service were completed. By afternoon the machine shop had finished bolts and links and remounted the left bomb rack. The second P-38 tank had been repaired and was hung and braced. Several manual salvo releases were made, and both tanks released without difficulty. The tanks were reinstalled and checked. Work now turned to making the plumbing connections and completing fuel transfer modifications. The emergency equipment shop had solved the raft problem with installation of a B-25 raft with emergency equipment and provisions. They also had a Gibson Girl emergency radio, emergency rations, and water ready to load.

The next morning, work was winding up on the modifications and Lt. Cook expected them to be complete by noon. At 1100, we moved the aircraft out of the hangar to a remote area where we could run the engines with US grade oil to flush the system of residual German oil. We also feathered and unfeathered the propellers to check and purge the oil in that system. We let the airplane cool down during lunch break.

After lunch, the engine crew drained the slushing oil and made final service of the engine systems. The big task of checking the fuel system took most of the afternoon as a lot of fuel had to be drained to check flow rates. The German system worked well and the P-38 drop tanks and B-24 transfer system worked better than expected. We also got a check of our emergency battery and elec-

trical sub panel, through which the B-24 transfer pump was powered.

The remaining items were to swing the compass and check the accuracy of the German and ARN-7 radio compass systems. We returned the JU to the hangar for the night and had the instrument and electrical shop set up to perform the compass swings and radio checks in the morning. Lt. Cook undertook a review of all the work sheets to make sure all actions were complete and to tag actions, such as spark plug change data and time, oil change, tire change, wheel bearing inspections and repack, and modifications, that needed to be entered in the aircraft permanent record file by the records clerk. He worked into the night on this review.

When we arrived the morning of October 7th, the aircraft was already out on the compass rose being prepared for the calibration swing. They had set up a dolly and jack arrangement to raise the tail and place the aircraft in a near-flight attitude. It was a time consuming task with the radio checks added in, but they were done by mid-afternoon. The primary compass was exceptionally accurate with only a couple of minor corrections. The standby compass had the typical number of deviation corrections. Power on and power off did not change the primary compass indications. The radio compass readings tended to swing within a degree on either side of the bearing. The ARN-7 installation worked out very well. We returned the JU-88 to the hangar as all work had now been completed. Cook needed to finish his records review and asked his team to go over the aircraft one more time and conduct a post flight inspection. The plan now was to service it and perform a preflight in the morning, and we would do the engine run. If all checked out, we would fly the test flight with full ferry load.

I called Col. Thompson to advise him of our plan. He wanted to know if I planned to depart for the U.S. that day. I said that if the test flight went well and there were no major glitches we would fly the first leg if I could get off no later than 1330. He said he and/or Maj. Nelson would fly out in the morning.

I returned to the hangar, finding that Lt. Cook had completed his review. Everything was complete and the records clerk was updating the permanent records. We released the crew for the day, but most hung around. We also noticed a lot of people showing up for a last look and to chat. The word had gotten out that the bird was about to go. We even heard of bets being made on whether we would make it.

Lt. Cook and I climbed up in the cockpit to update ourselves on the instruments and our crew procedures, went over all emergency procedures, and then worked out where we would put our emergency gear, B-4 bags, hand bags, brief cases, navigational kit, etc. Things were getting tight, so we decided we would put some gear in the camera compartment. The emergency equipment and supplies we placed in the gunner's gondola. The shop had attached tether lines with snaps to all items and we decided that we would have to move these items up into the crew compartment if we planned to ditch as they would probably be lost or destroyed if we left them in the gondola. We loaded the emergency gear and supplies in the gondola. Lt. Cook asked for straps to tie things down in the camera compartment. There was nothing more to do so we left the aircraft, but stopped to answer questions from the assembled crowd for a while. As we left the hangar, I told Cook that I planned to settle for my room that night and would pack my B-4 bag so I could pick it up in a hurry if we decided to leave after the test flight.

The next morning was 8 October, and our eighth day of involvement with the JU 88D-1. I arrived at the hangar area about 0700. Lt. Cook and crew had the plane on the flight ramp where

they were toppling the fuel tanks and performing the preflight inspection. About 0830, we were all set to start engines to complete the preflight. The left engine started, but would only come up to about 1000 RPM and quit. We had engine fuel pressure and could not pinpoint any problem from the cockpit indications. We secured the systems and climbed out. The crew uncowed the left engine, but could not see anything obvious. In reviewing the work performed on the engines, they determined that the only operation that had been performed on the engine fuel system was to disconnect a cable attached to the fuel injection pump. They removed the cover and found that the cotter pin installed in a clevis pin was too large and not properly trimmed, and as a result was binding in a close fit area. They installed a new cotter pin and very carefully trimmed it. Lt. Cook had the crew check the right engine also and they decided to replace that pin as well. They reinspected the engine compartment and recowed the engines.

Lt. Cook, Sgt. Connor, and I reentered the cockpit, set controls and again tried the left engine. It started promptly—the fault had been corrected. We started the right engine, brought the temperature up to normal, did a magneto and power check, and then ran electrical, hydraulic, control, navigational equipment, and finally communications checks. I got clearance and taxied to runway 36. I went through a takeoff check, setting flaps and trim, turned boost pumps on, checked all gauges, set and checked flight instruments, and then rechecked all items with Cook and Sgt. Connor verifying. We got takeoff clearance from the tower and took the runway, rechecked flight Instruments, applied power, and started takeoff roll with manifold pressure set to 2.9 atmospheres. At about the 4000 ft. marker the airspeed was over 200 kmph (120 mph), but the aircraft did not want to fly off. With about 800 ft. to go, I pushed the throttles a little past red line to three atmospheres, and finally had to pull the aircraft off and immediately retract the landing gear. There were date palms about 1000 ft. beyond the runway which I had to clear. The aircraft started to climb as the gear came up and we continued to accelerate to about 225 kmph. We were right at the top of the palm trees as we went over (we probably shredded palm leaves and picked some dates). It was too damned close I throttled back to 2.9 atmospheres after we passed the trees and at 500 ft. and 250 kmph (150 mph), I reached over to retract flaps only to discover that the wing flaps were already in the up position. I checked with Lt. Cook and Sgt. Connor, and we all agreed that the flaps were in the *starte* position before we took the runway for takeoff, and further that we had all rechecked it.

We climbed on up to 9500 ft. and started checking systems. The radio compasses were very sensitive and could tune stations over 100 miles distance and gave reasonably steady bearing readings. The command radio was loud and clear and switched frequencies easily. I feathered and unfeathered each propeller. Electrical output peaked to high output as feathering was initiated. All systems looked very good. The engines smoked a little during climb, but were clear at cruise power at altitude. I did a series of stalls. The aircraft gave good stall warning and exhibited no nasty characteristics. I decided that 270 kmph (158 mph) would be a good pattern and climb speed, 210 kmph (125 mph) on final, over the runway at 175 kmph (105 mph) and to touchdown at about 160 kmph (93 mph). I planned to add about 10 kmph in turbulence. I rechecked all these speeds down to 200 kmph and the JU 88 had good handling and response.

I then did a simulated engine out condition and could control the aircraft down to about 200 kmph (120 mph), but had difficulty

accelerating without giving up altitude. I could accelerate from 220 kmph (130 mph) with left or right engine. It would be difficult to continue takeoff at less than 220 kmph airspeed with a heavy weight. We were flying at over 25,000 pounds.

We had now burned enough fuel to check the fuel transfer system. It worked very well. With the exception of the flap problem the airplane checked out with no write-ups. We returned to Deversoir and landed about 1100. We proceeded to check out the naps. When I moved the handle from up to *starte* position and waited, the light would go out (flaps retracting) in a little over a minute. They stayed put for several minutes in the full down landing position. When I moved them from landing position to takeoff position, they held position for over five minutes. We rechecked several times and verified that the flaps would retract when setting from up to the takeoff position, but would stay put in the up or full down position and most importantly, they would stay put in the takeoff position if we moved to the takeoff position from the full down position. In other words, to set takeoff flaps, I had to move them from up to full down, then back up to the takeoff position.

We went in and parked the aircraft and shut down. Lt. Cook immediately checked over the flap and hydraulic system and could not find any leaks or other faults. We held a huddle with our crew and decided we could go with the flaps by using the up-down up-to-takeoff position procedure. Post flight inspection disclosed no fluid leaks or other problems.

It was 1130. We met with Col. Johnson and Maj. Nelson and reviewed our status. Lt. Cook and I both felt we had done all we could to get the JU 88 and ourselves ready to go and they agreed. Col. Johnson handed me a sealed and an unsealed envelope. The sealed envelope was addressed to me, but marked with "Do not open until 10 October 1943." The other envelope contained our flight orders to fly JU 88D-1 serial number 43-0650 to Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio, and deliver it to Colonel "Olie" Hayward, Chief of the Air Technical Intelligence Center. The flight order also had a restriction that precluded our departing Africa prior to 10 October.

Lt. Cook instructed the crew to top the fuel tanks, check oil, coolant, and hydraulic fluid levels, and double check that all filler caps were in place and secure. We went to get a quick lunch and pick up our B-4 bags. Lt. Cook returned to the aircraft and loaded our bags and my flight kit. I went to base operations and filed a clearance for a direct flight to Khartoum in the Sudan.

I then called Col. Phillip Roll, the 26th ADG commander, to say goodbye once again and to thank him for the enthusiastic and superb support his people had given us. I also expressed the hope that we could do our part well and get the JU to Wright Field and make all the effort pay off. I returned to the aircraft, thanked all the support personnel directly, wished them well, and hoped I would see many of them in the future. The time had come to takeoff into the wild blue yonder and head for the good old USA.



Capt. Warner E Newby in front of the JU 88 (33-1)



Warner E Newby (R) pilot and Lt. George W Cook (L) Engineering Officer stand by the JU 88 after the completion of their ferry flight across the Atlantic. (34-1)

THE FLIGHT

Col. Thompson and Maj. Nelson thanked Lt. Cook and me for the way we had handled the project so far. I asked Maj. Nelson if he would send a wire along the route advising of our start with a first stop at Khartoum. We climbed aboard, strapped in, started engines, and were cleared to the active runway. We made our checks, called for takeoff clearance, and took the runway. I rechecked everything with Cook double checking, applied power, and started takeoff roll; Cook was to keep an eye on the flaps and advise if they moved from the *starte* position. As we approached the 4000 ft marker, the JU 88 lifted off easily and climbed at a moderate, but adequate rate, clearing the palm trees by over 200 ft. The flaps stayed put on takeoff, so our procedure worked okay. I retracted flaps at about 500 ft, climbed to 1000 ft, and turned back toward the field. With tower approval, I descended to about 300 ft over the flight line where there was quite a gathering, rocked the wings as we passed, then climbed to cruise altitude (9500 ft) on a direct route to Khartoum.

This was our shakedown flight and first real opportunity to expand our familiarity with the JU 88. The distance was 1035 miles. During the flight, the cowl flaps tended to hunt until we figured out the proper settings. We had oil oozing out of the right filler cover. The fuel transfer system and P-38 drop tanks all worked fine. The heading-hold auto pilot worked amazingly well and the gyro heading reference was extremely stable. The ARN-7 worked better than expected and would consistently pick up usable signals over 100 miles. We learned how to use the German radio compass system better and it had more capability than we thought.

The country we were traversing was harsh, barren desert. The Nile river was to our right and looped under us to the left and back in front of us as we approached Khartoum. We arrived at Khartoum in four hours and 20 minutes and essentially on course over the 1035 miles distance, landing just before sundown. The only write-up was the oozing oil on the engines (the left engine had also leaked,

which we had not seen in flight because the filler cover was on the outboard side).

Lt. Cook went to work servicing the plane, while I went to base operations to close our flight plan and start the clearance for the next leg. The weather forecast was good and no serious notams reported. I arranged for quarters for both of us and dispatched a wire to all stations on our route advising of our progress and planned flight for the 9th. Cook arrived and reported the JU refueled and ready to go. The oil leak was caused by overfilling the reservoir, not leaving enough room for expansion. He had removed some oil, tightened the filler caps, and wiped the oil off so we could get a good check on the next flight. We had dinner and turned in.

On 9 October, we got up at 0400 for an early takeoff. I then went to the plane and loaded our gear. Lt. Cook again monitored the flap indicator on takeoff, and we lifted off easily at about 180 kmph. We turned and headed west, climbing to a cruise altitude of 8500 ft. Our first key check point was 500 miles distant at Al Fashir, still in the Sudan. The area was still empty desert, but we did fly over some mountains and dry lake beds. From Al Fashir we turned toward Maiduguri, Nigeria, our next planned stop some 849 miles ahead, making a total of 1341 miles for this leg. The terrain was changing from desert to vegetation with lakes and streams as we crossed Chad, and then to dense jungle and swamp as we approached Cameroon and Nigeria. We landed at Maiduguri after a five hour flight. We computed ground speeds of 285 mph on this leg. The JU 88 performed superbly and we had no write-ups. Maiduguri personnel were ready with service when we parked and Lt. Cook went right to work. A good sized crowd had gathered, including natives. Cook had all the help he could use and then some. I went to base operations to close the night plan and check weather and notams. All looked good and I decided if we could get off within an hour, we would make Accra before sundown. I made out the clearance and when Lt. Cook arrived and reported the JU all serviced and ready to go, we went to have a quick lunch with transit alert

watching the aircraft. The stability of the aircraft was amazing it flew as if it were controlled by a precision autopilot.

Following lunch I filed our clearance at base operations and returned to the aircraft. We talked to the crowd for a few minutes and then climbed in the JU, fired up, and took off. Even in the tropical heat, we were now lifting off at about 180 kmph (110 mph) and before we reached the 4000 ft marker. We turned on heading and climbed to a cool and comfortable 8500 ft, out of the humid jungle heat. This leg was 1012 miles long, terminating at Accra, Ghana (previously referred to as the Gold Coast), on the west coast of Africa and the North Atlantic.

The terrain continued mostly jungle wilderness and some mountains, but more developed areas as we approached the coast. Most of this flight was over Nigeria, but we also passed over Benin, Togo, and, of course, Ghana. Throughout the day the JU 88 performed and handled beautifully. The stability of the aircraft was amazing—it flew as if it were controlled by a precision autopilot. With only heading-hold on autopilot, the trim system and lateral and longitudinal stability had to be exceptionally good to hold altitude and wings level as well as it did. Cook had just gone over our fuel situation on the previous flights and we were doing better than planned. On the Khartoum to Maiduquri flight of 1341 miles, we landed with near full wing tanks and about 100 gallons in the bomb bay tanks. Our longest leg was 1420 miles going into South America. We had solved our fuel problem with the 600 gallons in the P-38 drop tanks and now had a very large reserve even on our longest legs.

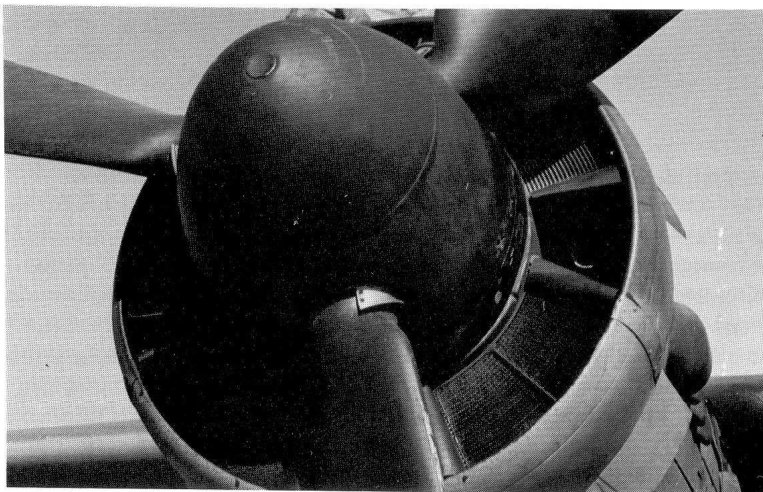
Our flight into Accra was uneventful with the aircraft continuing to perform better than we expected. About 75 miles out, we overtook a C-87 (a cargo B-24). He called us and we chatted a bit as there wasn't much traffic in this part of the world then. We landed as planned a few minutes before sundown with no write-ups. As we parked and shut down, another crowd assembled. The service crew had arrived at the airplane, so Cook started his refueling and performed a complete post flight inspection, as the next two flight legs were over the North and South Atlantic Oceans. He had all the help he could use. I answered questions from the crowd for a few minutes, then picked up my flight kit and went to close the flight plan. I very carefully checked weather for the ocean route and well into the interior of South America; it looked good, with mild, stable wind. No problems were noted in the notam file.

I then went over my charts and logs and double checked all data. These two legs were our high risk legs with the toughest navigation, as there were no check points or navigational aids enroute. Also, I had to time-plot five heading changes to correct for 12 degrees of variation change between Accra and Ascension Island. Ascension is small, approximately seven by nine miles, and the

nearest other land mass is over 500 miles away. Finding it was our only option for success and survival. The very light winds would be a minor factor, if the forecast was correct.

There was another officer working up flight data on the next table. I was finished and packing my flight kit when a pilot walked up to him. I started to walk away when the pilot inquired as to whether I was the pilot of the JU 88. I said I was and he said that he was the pilot of the C-87 we had passed and talked to on the way in to Accra and the officer was his navigator. When he learned we were planning to depart in the morning for Ascension Island without a navigator, they were surprised. As we talked, he said he was leaving at dawn and offered to let us fly along with him. We discussed air speeds; she normally indicated around 190 to 195 mph and we were indicating 230 to 245 mph. He said he was light and could manage 200 without any trouble.

I liked the idea of tailing another ship with a navigator and liaison radio, but I did not know how the JU would handle at 200 mph. We agreed to give it a try at least part way and set a time to meet at operations. I asked the navigator if I could compare notes. Our headings were nearly identical except he changed headings every 1° of variation change, where I had corrected every 2°. I sent the usual



Close up shot of engine inlet. Note the annular radiators and cowling, an unusual arrangement for a liquid cooled inline engine (35-1).

progress message to all stations and gave planned flight legs for 10 October.

Lt. Cook arrived at base operations with word that the JU was serviced, the post flight was complete, the aircraft was clean, and the aircraft had been taken to an isolated area where it would not be available to casual visitors. We had dinner and turned in.

I awoke about 0330, dressed, and opened the rather thick sealed letter. To my surprise, it contained orders promoting me to major and included a couple of leather flight clothing oak leaf insignia as well as a pair of pin-on. The promotion order was signed by the commanding general of 9th Air Force. I was naturally pleased with the promotion, but even more gratified that some key 9th AF personnel thought enough of my work to go to the trouble they did to make the promotion a reality. The restriction against leaving Africa before 10 October was apparently based on the promotion date. Being a theater promotion, I needed to be in the 9th Air Force area—the western boundary was the west coast of Africa.

Lt. Cook and I had a quick breakfast and I went to base operations and he went to the aircraft. At base operations, the C-87 pilot was preparing his clearance. We set an estimated time of departure and advised operations that we planned to fly together and wanted a close interval takeoff. Weather, winds, and notams all reflected good conditions, so I annotated my clearance for takeoff and flight with the C-87 and filed. At the JU-88 Lt. Cook had our gear loaded and the bird ready to go. We could see the C-87, so we

waited in the cockpit until he started his engines and we started and taxied with him. We had a cloud layer about 4000 ft. thick, so we agreed to climb up through the clouds on different headings with tower approval. He took off and climbed on runway heading. I started my takeoff as soon as he was climbing with gear up. Right after lift off and gear and flaps up, I turned right 20° and climbed up through the cloud layer, breaking out at about 6000. At 7000, I turned on course, and shortly thereafter, spotted the Liberator climbing in the clear. We established radio contact while climbing to a cruise altitude of 10,500. I closed in to about 1/4 mile off his right wing and adjusted power to hold position. We flew together for about an hour, but we had to tell him that we were going to have to increase airspeed. The JU 88 was not handling up to par. We asked for a position update and the latest weather, winds, and en route conditions. In a few minutes, the C-87 pilot responded that we were right on course, 255 miles out of Accra and no change in weather, wind, or conditions. We thanked them for their help. We throttled up and resumed normal cruise power and airspeed of 390 kmph and I made my first variation correction of +2°. We crossed the equator about one hour and forty five minutes out at 05° 05' west longitude and shifted from the North Atlantic Ocean to the South Atlantic. Some time later, there was a sudden increase in noise and as I looked around, Cook was hanging onto the cockpit structure and was ghostly white. He had some how hit the entrance hatch release and the hatch had opened under him. The hatch was part of the lower gunner's station and made of heavy steel to mount a .303 caliber gun and provide armor protection. I could not help him from my position, but he finally gained solid footing and got the hatch closed and latched.

I returned my attention to flying and noticed a vapor trail coming off the left wing tip. I was puzzled at first, then realized we were spilling fuel through the vent line at the wing tip. Cook was transferring fuel when the hatch opened, and in the confusion, overlooked it. He shut off the fuel transfer and the vapor trail disappeared in a minute or so.

The aircraft was stable at this speed and in the smooth air. Things were starting to get boring when I noticed some specks on the horizon in front of us. They began to get larger and in a few minutes, I realized it was a flight of aircraft heading to Africa. I soon recognized them as A-20s. One dropped down and turned to try to fly alongside, but soon had to break off as he had to pull a lot of power to catch up with us.

The third and fourth hours passed uneventfully with heading changes and fuel transfers the main activity. At the 4+15 hour point, I began to get the Ascension Island radio beacon and by 4+30, I had a good homing lock on. It indicated we were right on course. The German radio compass also confirmed the heading to the beacon. I was scanning out in front to see if I could spot the island when I saw more specks. Not long after that, I recognized the aircraft as P-39s and felt they must be from Ascension Island, as no fighters could fly this route to Africa. The P-39s established radio contact and advised they wanted to join up on our wings and escort us into Ascension.

We soon spotted the island and started our descent with P-39s on our wings. We circled the field and they broke off as we entered the down wind leg and landed, with an Accra to Ascension time of five hours, fifteen minutes. I went into base operations to close the flight plan and make the usual checks for the next leg. I also checked sundown time for Natal, Brazil, and calculated we could get there 30 minutes before that if we got off in the next hour and a half.

I had started to fill out the clearance when Lt. Cook came in, very upset. He said we had a problem as these "clowns" didn't have any 91 octane gasoline! The base commander and maintenance officer joined us and explained that they had checked and had 50 gallon drums marked 91 octane aviation fuel in the fuel dump. When they went to filter it and transfer it to the service vehicle, however, they found that the barrels were, for some unexplained reason, empty. The maintenance officer had the fuel technical order with him which recommended using the next higher grade if the recommended grade was not available. He had radioed the fuel depot in the U.S. and discussed the problem. They also recommended using the next higher grade, 100 octane. The wing tanks were nearly full (with 91 octane fuel) but the other tanks were empty. We reluctantly agreed to service with 100 octane as we had no choice; they did not expect their next shipment of fuel for five or six weeks. Since we were falling behind our time line, I asked if we could get a couple of carryout lunches. The base commander said he would see to it.

Lt. Cook serviced the JU 88 with 100 octane and everything else checked okay: we did not have any write-ups on this 1373 mile leg. I filed a clearance for Natal, our longest leg at 1420 miles with an estimated time enroute of five hours and thirty minutes. We had an extended daylight period as we were going west and crossing several time zones. The lunches arrived and we climbed aboard, strapped in, started engines, taxied, and took off well within our time line for the longest leg. Within a minute, we crossed the shoreline of the tiny island and within ten minutes, we were once again out of sight of land and the security it offered.

We climbed to 10,500 ft cruising altitude and heading of 290°, with virtually no variation change in our heading as the 20° W variation line parallels the flight path all the way on this leg. We would be flying 7° south latitude. The flight was uneventful until three hours and 45 minutes out of Ascension. We began to feel a little vibration in the airplane and it continued to increase. At four hours out, we realized that the right engine had started to run rough with a vibration. The left engine was also starting to vibrate. Both Lt. Cook and I realized that we had serious trouble and, as both engines were affected, we concluded that the 100 octane fuel was damaging them. Suddenly the front cylinder on the left bank of the right engine began to spit fire and make a hell of a racket. In a few minutes that cylinder went completely dead and the racket stopped. Both engines were now running rough and vibrating.

The airspeed dropped off about 10 kmph. I checked our position and put it at about 400 miles from Natal with an hour and a half to go at our normal cruise speed. We knew we might have to ditch, being so far out. I asked Cook to check our fuel remaining and he said we had plenty, with wing tanks full and some remaining in the bomb bay tanks, I decided that with plenty of fuel I would increase power to recover the lost airspeed and pick up another 10 to 15 kmph. I decided if we had to ditch, I wanted to get as close to shore as possible. We did not have a radio that could reach shore from this far out. I wanted to get into the active ship lane, which was closer to shore, and I wanted to ditch before dark if we had to. I was undecided on whether to release the P-38 tanks or keep them for flotation. Also whether they might hit the tail section if I released them empty. I now had the airspeed up to 400+ kmph. I reviewed these actions with Lt. Cook and he agreed. As the minutes passed, we were holding our own in airspeed. I began to sense that the vibration on the left engine was attenuating. The vibration in the right engine now seemed to be steady rather than erratic as

before. We picked up three or four more kmph. We both felt the engines were no longer getting worse.

We were now less than an hour out and the left engine was running smoothly. The right engine was stable with a steady vibration with the dead cylinder. I told Cook I thought we were going to make it now. With the air speed increasing, I was tempted to throttle back a little, but decided that the improved condition had come after power was increased, so I left things alone.

I now had a good bearing to Natal on the radio compasses once again, dead ahead. Shortly after passing the five hour point, I spotted land and, in a few more minutes, the airfield at Natal. I called the tower and gave our position advising that I was starting my descent. We reached the field and the tower told us to circle while they launched a group of airplanes deploying overseas. We had to circle for nearly thirty minutes.

We were cleared to land and entered the traffic pattern, but when I lowered the gear, it did not go all the way down. Checking the problem, we noted very low hydraulic pressure. Lt. Cook used the gear valve position on the emergency system panel and the hand pump to lower and lock the gear, then peaked the brake accumulator. We had to circle the field one more time while lowering the gear. We were again cleared to land and Cook lowered partial flaps on final approach, again using the hand pump. I went in fast as if making a no-flaps landing. The JU touched down nicely and I watched the brake pressure as we taxied in, parked, and shut down. Cook got out of the airplane and chocked the wheels, in case we lost brake pressure.

This landing gear emergency, proved the value of our taking the time to analyze, diagram, and describe each system at Deversoir to compensate for lack of tech data on the main hydraulic system, probably because of a loose fitting or cracked line, induced by the prolonged operation with the vibrating and rough engines. Lt. Cook had gone to the emergency panel, set the selector, and hand pumped the gear down and locked. The brake system had a separate accumulator charged by the main system through a check valve to prevent loss of pressure if the main system went out, retaining several liters of fluid for the hand pump. He had selected brake system and peaked it with the hand pump, giving us at least ten braking applications. It could also have been recharged further with the hand pump if necessary. On final, Lt. Cook set the selector to flaps position and gave me what flaps he could with the hand pump. All of these actions took place while I went once around the pattern. The effort at Deversoir put us in position of knowing the systems and how to use them quickly.

The ten days of long hours, short nights, this long flight day, and the last two hours of stress were taking their toll on us. I decided we would stand down for a day and regroup. We secured the JU 88 for the night, closed the flight plan, sent a status wire, and checked into quarters. After a good shower we went to the officer's club to relax and have a leisurely dinner. The Natal club was the best club we had seen since we left the States. We decided to get a good night's rest and planned to delay working on the plane until 0900.



JU 88 under tow by the Crew chief Swiheart at Wright Field 14 Oct 1943 (37-1)

As I turned in, I reflected on what a day it had been. It started with a promotion to Major, success at hitting Ascension Island dead on, the frustration and concern over having to use 100 octane fuel, the malfunctioning engines, the circling delay at Natal that used up our daylight, and the final blow: the loss of hydraulic pressure and the landing gear. It was indeed a day of adversity, but we had a lot of good luck as well, and the Lord was surely with us. All turned out well at the end of the day, including a good and relaxing dinner at the best club we had seen in a year and a half. But by far the most important event was the first known successful crossing of the Atlantic Ocean by a JU 88.

The next morning, Lt. Cook found the hydraulic leak at one of the selector valves and corrected it. We decided to remove and clean the spark plugs, as they were coated with a film that the engine shop said was lead accumulation from the high octane gas. They were able to clean and test all plugs satisfactorily except the two from the front left bank cylinder of the right engine. With the special plug tool the crew was able to remove and replace all the plugs in about two hours. The two dead plugs had to be replaced with U. S .plugs which required some modification of the ignition wires.

We decided to remove the P-38 tanks as they would not be needed for the remaining flight legs. We drained all the gas out of the aircraft to get rid of the highly leaded 100 octane fuel which had caused our rough engine problem. I learned months later that increasing power to burn off the lead was the correct action to take. Our decision, based on other considerations, to increase power saved our mission (and perhaps our lives).

We refueled with 91 octane fuel, completed other servicing, and did the post flight inspection. We ran the engines, did power and magneto checks, and exercised the hydraulic system. Everything checked out. We topped the tanks and secured the aircraft, then went into Natal to look the town over and buy some leather goods. I also had major's leaves sewn on all of my flight clothes.

The next morning, 12 October I filed for Belem, Brazil, and we took off, picked up a heading of 292°, and climbed to 10,500 ft cruise altitude for the 950 mile flight up the South American coast. With the drop tanks removed, the JU really flew off the runway



Responsibility for maintenance of the JU 88 is transferred to C/C Swiheart at Wright Field.(38-1)

with ease and was more responsive. The bird was quite spry now, and we began to respect it as a damn good airplane. We made the flight in three hours and 35 minutes, but when we called the tower for a clearance to land, we could not establish contact. I lowered the gear, circled the field, and got a green light from the tower, came around for landing, but on final with flaps down, I was waved off with a red light. I came around again on final and got another wave-off. Lt. Cook switched frequencies on our command radio and I finally got the tower on an auxiliary frequency and requested clearance to land. The tower advised that base operations did not want to clear us, as part of the runway was closed for repair. I told the tower that the notam advised of the closure, but listed 4000 feet available for use, and I saw other planes landing. I told them I could not divert to any other field since there were none within several hundred miles. The tower said to stand by. In a couple of minutes, the tower advised that the operations officer considered the JU 88 to be too hot to land there, but that we could land at our own discretion. I acknowledged and turned on final approach. I landed short and took the first turnoff. I closed our flight plan and checked notams and weather for the flight to Georgetown, British Guiana (now Guyana). Natal had advised us to try to get past the mouth of the Amazon River before noon as clouds normally built up in the area most every afternoon. Except for scattered clouds building at the Amazon, the predicted weather was good. I had planned to get a quick turn around at Belem, but Cook came in and told me that he still had not been able to get a fuel truck to finish the servicing. I called transient maintenance asking for expedited service. They said they would call for 91 octane fuel again. We waited a while longer and I was about to call the base commander when the truck arrived. I filed the clearance, picked up some sandwiches and beverage, and went to the aircraft. I talked to some of the people watching until Cook advised he was set to go. We had now lost over two hours. I expedited taxi and takeoff, took up a heading of 330° and climbed to 10,500 ft. About 15 minutes later we were starting to clip the top of clouds, so I climbed to 12,500.

Shortly after resetting power for cruise, the right engine quit. A scan of the instruments showed low fuel pressure on the right engine and the left engine was lower than normal and fluctuating. I snapped on the fuel booster pumps and the right engine restarted. Both fuel pressures stabilized in the normal range. We had to dodge clouds and were about to go to 14,500 when I spotted a slot in the clouds. As we passed the mouth of the Amazon, the heights decreased and thinned out. I did not want to go to 14,500 or stay at 12,500 as we did not have oxygen masks, although we did have some oxygen which we could draw from the hose. We had not set up the oxygen system before we left Deversoir as our support stations would not have proper service fittings. We planned to fly be-

low oxygen requiring altitudes. After 30 minutes, we were able to drop down to 10,500 ft for the rest of the 910 mile flight.

We spent the night at Georgetown. The next day we took off and flew 1,025 miles to a U.S. base, Borinquen Field, Puerto Rico, and then on to West Palm Beach, Florida, another 1025 mile leg. These two legs were uneventful except for a tropical storm we had to circumnavigate and some very rough air, which the JU 88 rode through very well.

As we approached Florida, I contacted Miami radio our position and the time we would enter the defense zone. We were given instructions to enter and fly up the coast to West Palm Beach Airport. When we had landed and parked, we were met by military police and asked to remain at the aircraft. Customs, immigration, and agriculture inspectors arrived, questioned us, and inspected the aircraft and our baggage. The inspections did not last long but there sure were a lot of inspectors that looked the JU 88 over.

When we were cleared, the base commander welcomed us. Shortly thereafter, the defense staff people arrived and queried us about the airplane and its performance. They also advised us that their defense forces had been notified of our flight and expected arrival, but not aircraft spotter organizations. Three units had spotted us and correctly identified the JU. Two units reported also that it had U.S. markings. Most of the spotters were "ladies doing their bit for the defense of the country" (actually in those days, they were fondly referred to as "the little old ladies"). The defense staff was damn proud of their performance that day.

There was quite a crowd at the airplane. I had to send word into base operations to close the flight plan. As things quieted down, we were able to start servicing and went to base ops to check conditions for our flight to Wright Field. The weather was a mess, with severe weather warnings all over the southeastern US. The weatherman predicted improving weather for the next day, so we secured the aircraft and spent the night at Palm Beach.

The next morning, 14 October, I checked weather again. The foul weather still covered much of the area and was particularly bad on our planned route, so we delayed again. By 1000, Dayton was clearing, as were Indiana, Western Tennessee, and Mississippi. The weather was good enough to file under instrument flight rules (IFR) to Memphis, then up into Indiana and back into Ohio from the West. I told Lt. Cook to get the JU ready while I worked up a new flight log and filed. When I called the tower for clearance, I had to double check, not having used IFR procedures for many months. After takeoff, we skirted most of the weather and completed the final leg late that afternoon. We landed at Wright Field, taxied up to base operations, shut down, and secured the aircraft as a crowd began to gather.

Colonel Hayward soon arrived and I was preparing to turn the aircraft over to him per my flight orders, when Col. Signa Gilkey, Deputy Chief of the Flight Test Engineering Division, arrived to take charge of the JU 88. I backed away and let the two colonels resolve the matter. In the end, we turned the aircraft over to Col. Hayward and he in turn turned it over to Col. Gilkey, whose organization maintained, flew, and tested it in the months ahead. We unpacked our gear and signed in with the Material Command personnel office.

The next day, we were told to check in with the Flight Test Engineering Division as we were now being carried in TDY status with the Material Command, assigned for duty with that division. We did and were immediately escorted to Col. Gilkey's office, where we had a pleasant session going over the JU 88 and the

project to ferry it to Wright. The JU had been assigned to the fighter branch and Captain Everett W. Leach had been assigned as test pilot and project officer.

We met Capt. Leach in Col. Gilkey's office and then went with him to the fighter branch. Lt. Cook was introduced to the maintenance personnel and he started to pass on his knowledge of the JU so they could pick up support responsibility. I worked with Capt. Leach to get him checked out on the aircraft. We also worked with Col. Hayward's technical intelligence staff to answer as many questions as we could about the plane and the ferry flight to expand their data base on the JU 88 D- 1. Col. Hayward also asked me to write a chronology of the project. A few days later, he asked me to fly the airplane for night movie shots as they wanted to make a film for technical and identification purposes.

At the end of a week, Capt. Leach had made several flights and Lt. Cook felt he had done all he could. We asked to be released to go on leave, as we had been overseas for a year and a half. Col. Gilkey released Cook, but I was held for a few more days. At the end of my leave, I received orders assigning me to the Material Command with duty as the Chief of Bomber Flight Test Branch, Flight Test Engineering Division, fulfilling an aspiration I had held since service testing the B-25 in March of 1942.

COMMENTS ABOUT THE PROJECT, THE JU 88, AND THE JU 88 PROGRAM.

The project to ferry the JU 88 D- 1 to Wright Field was a success partly due to luck, but mainly because a lot of people worked long, hard, and enthusiastically to prepare the aircraft and provide support for the project. Not only was there a lot of work, it was the quality and professionalism of that work that counted. The efforts of 26th Air Depot Group personnel were outstanding. Lt. Cook's contributions were unique and critically important. The JU 88 was delivered to Wright Field undamaged and with very little alteration, having flown 11,342 miles with only one discrepancy that could be attributed to its design, manufacture, or reliability. That problem was the loss of hydraulic pressure going into Natal. All the other problems were caused by our own lack of knowledge, like overfilling the oil tanks and not turning on the fuel boost pumps when climbing above 10,000 ft. The worst mistake we made was using highly leaded fuel on a long flight at low power. The AAF was not aware of this serious problem until some months later and the technique of using higher power periodically to clear it. I still wonder if the Lord wasn't flying with us on this episode.

There was only one major discrepancy found on the JU 88 while inspecting and preparing the aircraft: the left-right mix-up on the bomb salvo switch. Finding that error saved us from some serious injuries. All other discrepancies were minor, such as sheet metal cracks, wire bundle or tube chafing, and some improperly safety wired items. It was a very well manufactured airplane.

I rate the JU 88 as a quality aircraft with excellent flying and handling qualities in the air. The stability in flight was outstanding. Our comparable aircraft started to surpass the JU 88 in 1943 and 1944, particularly in payloads and top speed under test conditions, but the JU 88 had very high cruising speeds. Our indicated speed ranged from 220 to 245 mph on the long distance legs we flew. I indicated 165 to 170 mph in the B-25D flying to Deversoir over the same route. We flew the JU 88 only in daylight, but flew in one day the same legs which took us two days in the B-25. It is not my intention to knock the B-25, because it still ranks as one of my favorite birds of the WW II era.

Our people who worked on the JU 88 considered German design for maintainability to be excellent, with the exception of spark plug access. Panels had quick action locks with a simple push to lock or unlock feature. When the left engine showed metal particles on the oil screen during the 200 hour periodic inspection and needed to be replaced, the fighter branch crew started its removal at 1300 hours and had the aircraft on ramp for engine runup, with a replacement German engine from the power plant laboratory, at 1600 that afternoon. All disconnect points were painted white with red crosshatch lines. There was a perfect match up between the aircraft and the two engines. The oil and coolant systems were totally self contained in the engine pod, eliminating any need to clean tanks and lines on the airframe which was typical of our designs. I never saw a quick "Change Engine Package" design on our equipment that could come close to the simplicity of the JU 88 packages.

On the shortcomings side, I would say handling the JU 88 on takeoff roll and landing required close attention. The throttle handles are short and awkward to handle, contributing to the takeoff control problem. Several pilots complained of both faults, though for some reason, I never had any trouble with it, even on my first takeoff. Also, the JU 88 had a built-in trim change when the flaps were placed in the down (landing) position. This was to give an automatic small nose up trim condition to counteract a small nose down condition that resulted with the flaps in the full down position. The problem was that the nose up trim change came abruptly as the flaps were activated, but before the nose down component took effect. This momentary nose up trim had to be counteracted and some pilots found this objectionable.

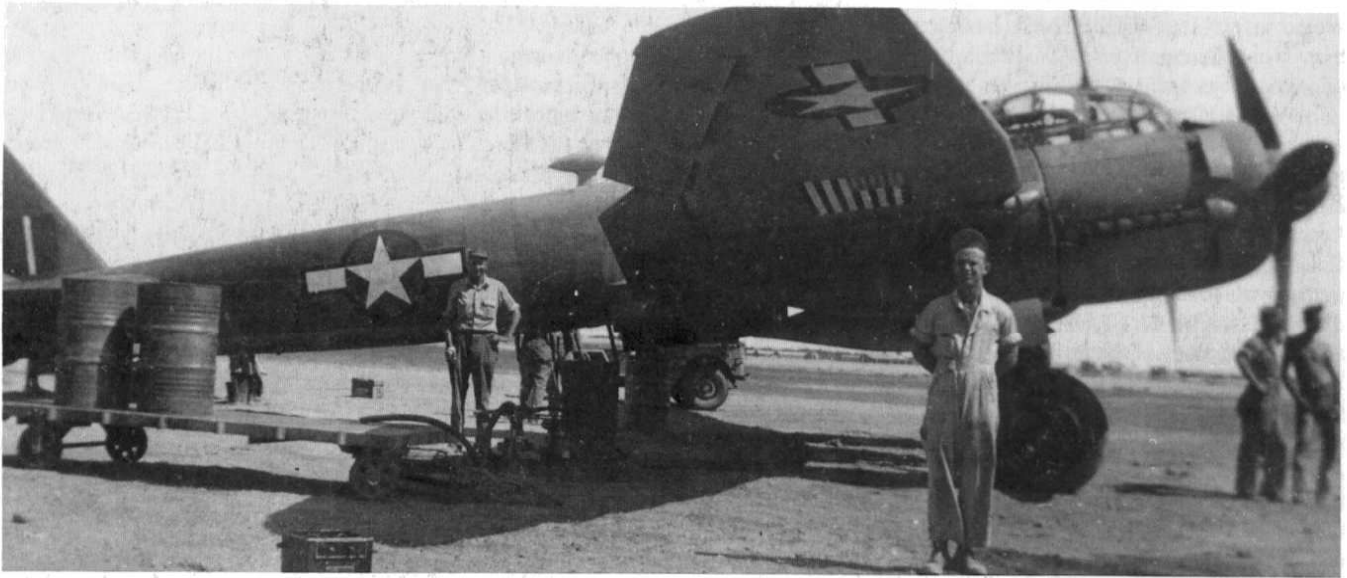
The JU 88 evolved into one of the most versatile and valuable aircraft for Germany. The original design started in 1935 and a number of prototypes were built. The first production JU 88s were built and went into service in late 1939. Although numerous improvements and modifications were made throughout its production life, many features and its basic profile remained the same. It was used in almost every role imaginable: it was a bomber, a dive bomber, a fighter, an attack aircraft, a night fighter, a reconnaissance aircraft, a long range patrol aircraft, a radar patrol aircraft, a high altitude reconnaissance plane, barrage balloon cable cutter, and even a pilotless flying bomb. It remained in production throughout the war and was still in production at its conclusion. Well over 10,000 in all variants were built. This airplane and project provided solid evidence of German ingenuity, exceptional engineering prowess, highly disciplined production, quality control achievement, successful attainment of excellent maintainability and reliability, and the fielding of equipment of respectable performance.

I rank the JU 88, as a very good airplane for its time, and its reliability was exceptional. It was indeed a good airplane in anyman's language.

The JU 88 (popularly referred to as "Baksheesh") survived numerous disposal programs after the war and is now displayed in the Air Force Museum, an appropriate outcome to a memorable and perhaps historic event.

A special note of thanks. Two of Bob Cavanagh's British contacts—Frank Cheesman and Richard Bateson were instrumental in identifying Wing Commander Eaton, the test pilot and OIC at No 1 BARU who introduced Newby and Cook to the JU. Also, the photograph of the JU with the P-38 tanks was from an original snapshot by R.F. Trimble.

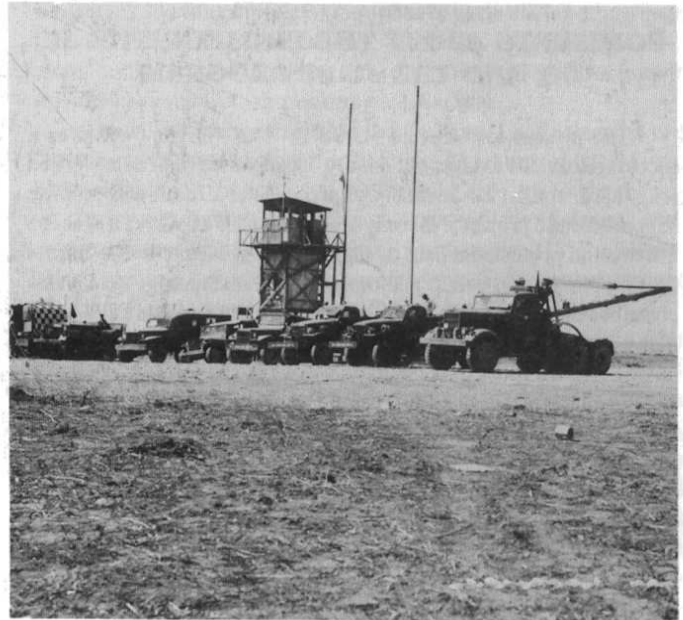
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The JU 88 undergoing fuel transfer tests with P-38 drop tanks prior to the Atlantic Flight at Deversoir Field, Egypt 6, October, 1944. See story starting on page 26 (40-1)



Delivery of Stars & Stripes, 825 Squadron (40-2)



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