

have confirmed from the records available, that thirty-nine pilots flew Toggle Annie on ninety-nine combat missions (although not all received mission credit). Herewith are the pilots and their number of missions: O'Shea, Vincent- 13 confirmed (plus 16 probabilities). Stewart, Dana 19 (plus three as copilot). Gregg, James- 7. Bird-5. Pearson, W and Eiden, Everett- 4 each. Shobe, Zeimantz, and Walrond- 3 each. Myers, Latimer, Mauldin, Cox, Foss, Vance, Branson, and Dippel- 2 each. Nichols, Noel, Ireland, McClung, Stone, Porter, Taylor, Howell, Colvin, Forster, Robson, Nowacki, Crockett, Tackes, Anderson, Loveall, Halliday, Gannon, Paul, Scott, Trotter and Stewart, Rod- 1 each. As you can see, Toggle Annie's 107 missions can be divided into three almost equal parts. (1) O'Shea's tenure from 29 Apr-15 Aug, 1944 to 16 Aug-20 Dec 1944, when anybody and everybody flew Toggle Annie and (3) 27 December 1944- 24 Apr 1945, when Dana Stewart's crew flew most of the missions. Even though other crews flew some of the missions, we always thought of Toggle Annie as "our" airplane. Other than what I have already told you, I have no details on any of the missions prior to our arrival in Dec 1944. I have tabulated the missions that I flew as a member of Dana Stewart's crew. This information I gleaned from my diary of 1944-45 with some help from The National Archives. On the first three missions, Zeimantz flew as our pilot and Stewart flew as copilot. With very few exceptions, we flew our missions as a congruent crew. On some missions, we carried a bombardier, but usually we did not. The navigator did double duty and threw the toggle switch to drop our bombs simultaneously with the lead plane. To my knowledge, our plane never had a bomb sight; and that accounts for the name of Toggle Annie. On at least one occasion, namely Toggle Annie's 100th mission, we carried an aerial photographer. So basically, our crew consisted of nine men, which is as follows: Dana A. Stewart- Pilot Robert J. Reed- Copilot Daniel J. Miller- Navigator Odis C. Johnson- Engineer, Walter D. Nilson- Radio operator, Louis V. Galgano- Ball turret gunner, Allan L. Davidson- Top turret gunner, Darrell Johnson- Nose gunner, J. W. Delk- Tail turret gunner.

Again with the help of my diary, I will try to give you the high lights of some of our missions. Several were so mundane that they were scarcely mentioned in passing in my diary. On our very first mission, the target was a railroad viaduct just south of the Brenner Pass in Italy. We missed the target but managed to obliterate a nearby village. Our third mission's target was Zagreb, Yugoslavia. The target was obscured by clouds so we returned the bombs to base; but we got credit for the mission anyway. Our fourth mission, to Vienna, was really our baptism to fire. On some crews, the engineer flew in the top turret for various unknown reasons. So it was decided that on this mission, anyway, our engineer Odis would fly in my turret and I would get his waste gun position. Fortunate for me; not so fortunate for him. As was always the case with Vienna, the flak was heavy and accurate. We garnered many flak holes in the plane, an engine mount in number four engine was severed, and a piece of flak penetrated the top turret dome and drew enough blood in Odis' forehead to earn him the Purple Heart. For some reason, that was the one and only time that I flew the waist position. One memory that I still have, is when the flak got close I ducked down behind the fuselage. Later I realized how stupid that really was. The Plexiglas in the waist window would stop a hellava lot more flak than the thin aluminum fuselage. Out of sight, out of mind I guess.

Our next two missions, six and seven, are undoubtedly the most memorable of all, at least in my mind. Toggle Annie flew both, but with other crews. My crew flew both in plane #61. Toggle Annie never treated us so shabbily. Mission six's target was the jet airfield at Newburg, Austria but the target was overcast, so

we floated around over central Europe and finally dropped our bombs on Rosenheim and got some good hits. On this mission we flew home, not over the Alps, but rather through the Alps. We were getting low on gas and as we came off the target we lost engine #2 and the turbocharger on #3. We dropped out of formation and descended to a lower altitude to get more power from #3. This was all well and good. One of the Tuskegee airmen stayed with us as long as he could. But as we approached the Alps we were unable to gain the proper altitude. As the pilot frantically scanned the horizon looking for a pass through the Alps, it behooved him to order us to prepare to bail out, just in case. It was comical in retrospect, that J. W. the tail gunner, whose heated suit had gone out and he had left his turret, was sitting near the camera hatch without his headset plugged in, blissfully unaware of what was going on. When he saw Lou exit the ball turret, and all the scurrying around, he plugged in his headset just as the navigator said, "When you bail out, head east." As he said later (in 1995), "My hair stood on end!"

But fortunately, with the Lord's help, Dana was able to find a pass through the mountains. But, I swear, I could look up at the peaks on both sides. (Walt Nilson, the radio operator, tells me that the pass we flew through was the same one where they found the "Ice Man" a few years ago. He almost had some company that day!)

The briefed target for mission #7 was Wells or Vienna, but the weather stood us down until 11:30 am when we took off for the harbor at Trieste, Italy. While we were still over the waters of the Adriatic, the two lead planes of the Group, #501 and #502 went to change positions and collided in mid-air. As you can imagine, the planes in the formation scattered all over the sky, but we managed to regroup and, after two passes over the target, successfully dropped our bombs. Also on this mission, the tail gunner, J. W. received a cut on his hand from flak. Another Purple Heart. Fortunately, no one else of the crew received any injuries (other than Odis) during all of our missions. But when Bob Reed retrieved his ball-cap from beneath his seat after this mission, he found a three inch piece of flak lying in it.

Vienna was again the target for mission #8, but we bombed Graz, Austria instead because of strong head-winds. The flak was scant, but accurate. The instruments on engine #1 were shot out and we received many flak holes in the wings, waist and stabilizer.

We took off 21 Feb 1945 for a mission to Vienna but blew a cylinder head on #2 engine on takeoff. In a great show of skill, Dana managed to circle the field once and land. This is the only mission that we ever aborted.

Mission #9 to Linz, Austria. If we should have aborted another mission, this is that one. Shortly after takeoff, we noticed a gasoline leak; and landed to tighten a gas cap and top off the tank. After the second takeoff, we noticed an oil leak, so landed again to replace an oil sump plug. By the third takeoff, the formation had left and we didn't catch up to it until we were about twenty minutes away from the IP. I never could decide whether the pilot was foolhardy or just plain stupid!

Mission #12 my diary says. Superstition I guess. This mission we flew in plane #65, one of the five missions when we used a plane other than Toggle Annie. Late takeoff (10:30 am) Went through flak over Graz and Novsky as well as over the target Bruck. Mission # 14. Vienna again. Heavy flak. Picked up a few holes. Mission #16. Plane #53. Easter Sunday. Briefed for Linz. Weath-