



## Honorable Discharge

*This is to certify that*

JOHN A DAY

31 353 187 Private First Class Company C 12th IATB 56th IATR IARTC

**Army of the United States**

*is hereby Honorably Discharged from the military service of the United States of America.*

*This certificate is awarded as a testimonial of Honest and Faithful Service to this country.*

*Given at* 1473D SCU REGIONAL HOSPITAL CAMP SHELLEY MISSISSIPPI

*Date* 25 MAY 1945

*Walter M. Stout*

WALTER M. STOUT  
COLONEL, MEDICAL CORPS  
COMMANDING

# HONORABLE DISCHARGE

1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL <b>Day John A</b>		2. ARMY SERIAL NO. <b>31 353 187</b>	3. GRADE <b>Pfc</b>	4. ARM OR SERVICE <b>INF</b>	5. COMPONENT <b>AUS</b>
6. ORGANIZATION <b>Company C 12th IATB 56th IATR IARTC</b>		7. DATE OF SEPARATION <b>25 May 45</b>	8. PLACE OF SEPARATION <b>Regional Hospital Camp Shelby Mississippi</b>		
9. PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES <b>247 A Maple Street Lynn Mass</b>		10. DATE OF BIRTH <b>8 Feb 20</b>	11. PLACE OF BIRTH <b>Boston Mass</b>		
12. ADDRESS FROM WHICH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE SOUGHT <b>See 9</b>		13. COLOR EYES <b>Blue</b>	14. COLOR HAIR <b>Brown</b>	15. HEIGHT <b>6'</b>	16. WEIGHT <b>180 LBS.</b>
17. NO. DEPEND. <b>1</b>		21. CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND NO. <b>Truck Driver Light 7-36.260</b>			
18. RACE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WHITE	19. MARITAL STATUS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SINGLE	20. U.S. CITIZEN <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES			

## MILITARY HISTORY


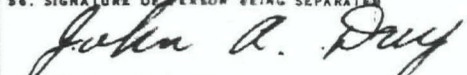
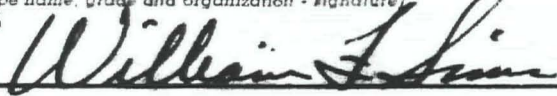
22. DATE OF INDUCTION <b>23 Apr 43</b>		23. DATE OF ENLISTMENT <b>23 Apr 43</b>		24. DATE OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE <b>Boston Mass</b>	
25. PLACE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE <b>See 9</b>		26. REGISTERED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES		27. LOCAL S.S. BOARD NO. <b>89</b>	
28. COUNTY AND STATE <b>Lynn Mass</b>		29. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE <b>See 9</b>			
30. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY AND NO. <b>Military Policeman 677</b>			31. MILITARY QUALIFICATION AND DATE (i.e., infantry, aviation and marksmanship badges, etc.) <b>None</b>		
32. BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS <b>None</b>					
33. DECORATIONS AND CITATIONS <b>None</b>					
34. WOUNDS RECEIVED IN ACTION <b>None</b>					
35. LATEST IMMUNIZATION DATES					
SMALLPOX <b>10 Jun 43</b>	TYPHOID <b>6 Jun 44</b>	TETANUS <b>6 Jun 44</b>	OTHER (specify) <b>Y.F. 13 Feb 45 Typhus 28 Oct 44</b>		
36. SERVICE OUTSIDE CONTINENTAL U.S. AND RETURN			37. HIGHEST GRADE HELD <b>Pfc</b>		
DATE OF DEPARTURE <b>None</b>		DESTINATION <b>None</b>		DATE OF ARRIVAL <b>None</b>	
38. PRIOR SERVICE <b>None</b>					
40. REASON AND AUTHORITY FOR SEPARATION <b>Certificate of Disability for Discharge Section I AR 615-361</b>					
41. SERVICE SCHOOLS ATTENDED <b>None</b>				42. EDUCATION (Years) Grammar <b>8</b> High School <b>2</b> College <b>0</b>	

## PAY DATA

43. LONGEVITY FOR PAY PURPOSES <b>2</b> YEARS <b>1</b> MONTH <b>3</b> DAYS	44. MUSTERING OUT PAY TOTAL <b>\$200</b> THIS PAYMENT <b>\$100</b>	45. SOLDIER DEPOSITS <b>None</b>	46. TRAVEL PAY <b>74.05</b>	47. TOTAL AMOUNT, NAME OF DISBURSING OFFICER <b>196.05 R.E. HAMANN, 1st Lt., FD</b>
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## INSURANCE NOTICE

48. KIND OF INSURANCE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> U.S. Govt <input type="checkbox"/> Other						49. HOW PAID <input type="checkbox"/> Allotment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Direct to V.A.		50. Effective Date of Allotment Discontinuance		51. Date of Next Premium Due (One month after 50)		52. PREMIUM DUE EACH MONTH <b>8</b>		53. INTENTION OF VETERAN TO <input type="checkbox"/> Continue <input type="checkbox"/> Continue only <input type="checkbox"/> Discontinue	
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 RIGHT THUMB PRINT	54. REMARKS (This space for completion of above items or entry of other items specified in W. D. Directives)  <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Lapel button issued</p> <p>No time lost Under AR 107</p> </div>	
	56. SIGNATURE OF PERSON BEING SEPARATED <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	
57. PERSONNEL OFFICER (Type name, grade and organization - signature) <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>WILLIAM F. SIDS</p> <p>Captain, FA.</p>  </div>		







## HONORABLE DISCHARGE

from

## The Army of the United States

NORTH CAROLINA  
WILSON COUNTY

FILED FOR REGISTRATION

AT 3:10 O'CLOCK P.M. 24 DAY OF

June 1946 AND RECORDED

IN BOOK II PAGE 79

Sadie H. Collins

REGISTER OF DEEDS



TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

40

This is to Certify, That\* PAUL C. DARDEN, JR.

† 34116909, Sergeant, Quartermaster Corps

THE ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES, as a TESTIMONIAL OF HONEST AND FAITHFUL SERVICE, is hereby HONORABLY DISCHARGED from the military service of the UNITED STATES by reason of ‡ Conv of Govt (Sec X, AR 615-360) to accept apmt and active duty as 2d Lt. A.U.S.

Said PAUL C. DARDEN, JR. was born in Fremont, in the State of North Carolina. When enlisted he was 24 years of age and by occupation a Clerk. He had Grey eyes, Brown hair, Ruddy complexion, and was 5 feet 10 inches in height.

Given under my hand at Camp Lee, Virginia this 24th day of September, one thousand nine hundred and forty-two

KARL B. BOWERS  
Lt. Col. Q.M.C.

Commanding.

See AR 345-470.

\*Insert name; as, "John J. Doe."

†Insert Army serial number, grade, company, regiment, or arm or service; as "1620302"; "Corporal, Company A, 1st Infantry"; "Sergeant, Quartermaster Corps."

‡If discharged prior to expiration of service, give number, date, and source of order or full description of authority therefor.

16-10565



## ENLISTED RECORD

OF

Darden, Jr. Paul C. 34116909 Sgt.  
 (Last name) (First name) (Middle Initial) (Army Serial No.) (Grade)  
~~Enlisted~~ Inducted,<sup>1</sup> July 21, 1941, at Fort Bragg, North Carolina  
 Completed 1 years, 2 months, 3 days service for longevity pay.  
 Prior service:<sup>2</sup> None

Office of the Finance Officer  
 Camp Lee, Va.

SEP 24 1942

FINAL STATEMENT PAID IN FULL

THIS DATE \$ 59.40

FOR CERTIFICATE, A CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY NO. 38296-NC WAS ISSUED BY THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION TO BE USED FOR THE FUTURE PAYMENT OF ANY GUARANTY OR INSURANCE AT THE UNDER TITLE III OF THE SERVICE-MEN'S ACT JUSTMENT ACT OF 1941, AS AMENDED, THAT MAY BE AVAILABLE TO THE PERSON TO WHOM THIS SEPARATION P. PER WAS ISSUED

ALFRED N. TAYLOR, Maj. PD  
 Finance Officer

Noncommissioned officer: Sergeant 5/1/42

Qualification in arms:<sup>3</sup> Not armed for qualification

Horsemanship: Not mounted Army specialty: Clerk

Attendance at: Officer Candidate School, Quartermaster Corps, Class No. 8  
 (Name of noncommissioned officers' or special service school)

Battles, engagements, skirmishes, expeditions: None

Decorations, service medals citations: None

Wounds received in service: None

Date and result of smallpox vaccination:<sup>4</sup> 7/22/41 result not noted

Date of completion of all typhoid-paratyphoid vaccinations:<sup>4</sup> 8/5/41 Completed

Date and result of diphtheria immunity test (Schick):<sup>4</sup> Not given

Date of other vaccinations (specify vaccine used) Tetanus Toxoid Completed 9/25/41

Physical condition when discharged: Good Married or single: Single

Character: Excellent R.P.

Remarks:<sup>5</sup> Soldier is not entitled to travel pay. No time los under AW 107. Blood Type "A"



Signature of soldier:

Paul C. Darden, Jr.  
 William Glickfeld  
 WILLIAM GLICKFELD,  
 1st Lt., QMC,  
 Personnel Officer.

Commanding

<sup>1</sup> Enter date of induction only in case of trainee inducted under Selective Training and Service Act, 1940 (Bull. No. 25, W. D., 1940); in all other cases enter date of enlistment.

<sup>2</sup> For each enlistment give company, regiment, or arm or service, with inclusive dates of service, grade, cause of discharge, number of days lost under AW 107 (if none, so state), and number of days retained and cause of retention in service for convenience of the Government, if any.

<sup>3</sup> Give date of qualification, and number, date, and source of order announcing same.

<sup>4</sup> See paragraph 6, AR 40-215.

<sup>5</sup> Enter periods of active duty of enlisted men of the Regular Army Reserve and the Enlisted Reserve Corps and dates of induction into Federal Service in the cases of members of the National Guard.





## SEPARATION QUALIFICATION RECORD

SAVE THIS FORM. IT WILL NOT BE REPLACED IF LOST

This record of job assignments and special training received in the Army is furnished to the soldier when he leaves the service. In its preparation, information is taken from available Army records and supplemented by personal interview. The information about civilian education and work experience is based on the individual's own statements. The veteran may present this document to former employers, prospective employers, representatives of schools or colleges, or use it in any other way that may prove beneficial to him.

1. LAST NAME—FIRST NAME—MIDDLE INITIAL				MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS		
DARDEN, PAUL C. JR.				10. MONTHS	11. GRADE	12. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY
2. ARMY SERIAL NO.				9	2nd Lt	Training Officer (2520)
3. GRADE				12	1st Lt	Pilot B-24 (1092)
4. SOCIAL SECURITY NO.				1	1st Lt	Pilot SE (1054)
5. PERMANENT MAILING ADDRESS (Street, City, County, State)				5	1st Lt	Pilot Twin Engine (1051)
110 Park Avenue, Wilson						
Wilson, North Carolina						
6. DATE OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE		7. DATE OF SEPARATION		8. DATE OF BIRTH		
25 Sep 1942		8 Dec 1945		2 July 1917		
9. PLACE OF SEPARATION						
Separation Base						
Seymour Johnson Field, N.C.						

### SUMMARY OF MILITARY OCCUPATIONS

13. TITLE—DESCRIPTION—RELATED CIVILIAN OCCUPATION

TRAINING OFFICER Platoon leader, instructing troops for overseas duty. Regimental assistant S-3, making, training schedule for truck regiment.

PILOT B-24 Flew co-pilot on B-24 for 30 missions in ETO, based in England.

PILOT SE Ferried fighter planes in USA for ATC.

RELATED CIVILIAN OCCUPATION Commercial Transport Pilot Up to 4 Engines.



# MILITARY EDUCATION

## 14. NAME OR TYPE OF SCHOOL—COURSE OR CURRICULUM—DURATION—DESCRIPTION

OCS Quartermaster 90 days.  
Pre-Flight School 30 days.  
Primary Flying School 9 weeks.  
Basic Flying School 9 weeks.  
Advance Flying School 9 weeks.

## CIVILIAN EDUCATION

15. HIGHEST GRADE COMPLETED	16. DEGREES OR DIPLOMAS	17. YEAR LEFT SCHOOL	OTHER TRAINING OR SCHOOLING	
16	BS Commerce	1938	20. COURSE—NAME AND ADDRESS OF SCHOOL—DATE	21. DURATION
18. NAME AND ADDRESS OF LAST SCHOOL ATTENDED			None	
University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, N.C.				
19. MAJOR COURSES OF STUDY				
Personnel Management				

## CIVILIAN OCCUPATIONS

### 22. TITLE—NAME AND ADDRESS OF EMPLOYER—INCLUSIVE DATES—DESCRIPTION

FOREMAN Tobacco Mfr. July 1938-Dec 1938 Imperial Tobacco Company, Wilson, N.C. Receiving room clerk and labor foreman. Checked tobacco as it came into factory and made sure it was distributed correctly.

FOREMAN Tobacco Mfr. Southern Tobacco Co. Wilson, N.C. Receiving room clerk and labor foreman. Checked tobacco as it came into factory and made sure it was distributed correctly.

ASSISTANT ACCOUNTING CLERK War Department, Camp Davis, N.C. Checked invoices against purchase orders.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### 23. REMARKS

None

### 24. SIGNATURE OF PERSON BEING SEPARATED

Paul C. Dardinger

### 25. SIGNATURE OF SEPARATION CLASSIFICATION OFFICER

William P. Lozito

### 26. NAME OF OFFICER (Typed or Stamped)

WILLIAM P. LOZITO  
2nd Lt. AC





# Army of the United States

## CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

*This is to certify that*

39 PAUL C DARDEN JR 01 578 333 First Lieutenant

Squadron B 555th Army Air Forces Base Unit

*honorably served in active Federal Service*

*in the Army of the United States from*

25 September 1942

*to*

8 December 1945

*Given at*

Seymour Johnson Field North Carolina

*on the*

8th

*day of*

December

19 45

NORTH CAROLINA  
WILSON COUNTY

FILED FOR REGISTRATION

AT 3:10 O'CLOCK A.P.M. 24 DAY OF

June 1946 AND RECORDED

IN BOOK XI PAGE 47

Sadie H. Collins  
REGISTER OF DEEDS

*Dudley B. Howard*

DUDLEY B HOWARD  
Colonel Air Corps



# MILITARY RECORD AND REPORT OF SEPARATION CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE


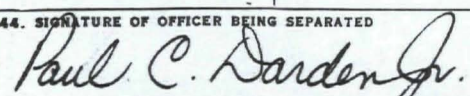
1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL <b>Darden Paul C Jr</b>			2. ARMY SERIAL NUMBER <b>01 578 333</b>		3. AUS. GRADE <b>1st Lt</b>	4. ARM OR SERVICE <b>AC (QMC)</b>	5. COMPONENT <b>AUS</b>	
6. ORGANIZATION <b>Squadron B 555 AAF Base Unit</b>			7. DATE OF RELIEF FROM ACTIVE DUTY <b>8 Dec 45</b>		8. PLACE OF SEPARATION <b>Seymour Johnson Field N C</b>			
9. PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES <b>110 Park Ave Wilson N C</b>					10. DATE OF BIRTH <b>2 Jul 17</b>		11. PLACE OF BIRTH <b>Fremont N C</b>	
12. ADDRESS FROM WHICH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE SOUGHT <b>See 9</b>					13. COLOR EYES <b>Green</b>	14. COLOR HAIR <b>Brown</b>	15. HEIGHT <b>5' 10"</b>	16. WEIGHT <b>165 LBS.</b>
17. NO. OF DEPENDENTS <b>0</b>	18. RACE <b>X</b> WHITE <input type="checkbox"/> NEGRO <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (specify)	19. MARITAL STATUS <b>X</b> SINGLE <input type="checkbox"/> MARRIED <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (specify)	20. U.S. CITIZEN <b>X</b> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	21. CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND NO. <b>Asst. Accounting Clk 1-15.82</b>				

## MILITARY HISTORY

SELECTIVE SERVICE DATA <b>X</b>	22. REGISTERED <b>X</b> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	23. LOCAL S. S. BOARD NUMBER <b>Not available</b>	24. COUNTY AND STATE <b>Wilson N C</b>	25. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY ON ACTIVE DUTY <b>See 9</b>																								
26. DATE OF ENTRY ON ACTIVE DUTY <b>25 Sep 42</b>		27. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY AND NO. <b>Pilot Two Engine Airplanes 1051</b>																										
28. BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS <b>Northern France Ltr Hq ETOUSA 44 Rhineland GO 33 WD 45 Ardennes Go 33 WD 45</b>																												
29. DECORATIONS AND CITATIONS <b>European African Middle Eastern Service Medal 1 overseas Service Bar Air Medal and 1st 2nd and 3rd Oak Leaf Clusters to Air Medal Go 236 2 BD 44 4th Oak Leaf Cluster to Air Medal Authority Unavailable 5th Oak leaf Cluster to Air *</b>																												
30. WOUNDS RECEIVED IN ACTION <b>None</b>																												
31. SERVICE SCHOOLS ATTENDED <b>Officer Candidate School Camp Lee Va Primary Pilot School Douglas Ga Basic Pilot School Cochran **</b>		32. SERVICE OUTSIDE CONTINENTAL U. S. AND RETURN																										
33. REASON AND AUTHORITY FOR SEPARATION <b>RR 1-5 and TWX AFIAF 783 45</b>		<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th>DATE OF DEPARTURE</th> <th>DESTINATION</th> <th>DATE OF ARRIVAL</th> </tr> <tr> <td>17 Jun 44</td> <td>European</td> <td>18 Jun 44</td> </tr> <tr> <td>22 Feb 45</td> <td>US</td> <td>23 Feb 45</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25 May 45</td> <td>American</td> <td>26 May 45</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10 Jun 45</td> <td>US</td> <td>10 Jun 45</td> </tr> </table>			DATE OF DEPARTURE	DESTINATION	DATE OF ARRIVAL	17 Jun 44	European	18 Jun 44	22 Feb 45	US	23 Feb 45	25 May 45	American	26 May 45	10 Jun 45	US	10 Jun 45									
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17 Jun 44	European	18 Jun 44																										
22 Feb 45	US	23 Feb 45																										
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10 Jun 45	US	10 Jun 45																										
34. CURRENT TOUR OF ACTIVE DUTY			35. EDUCATION (years)																									
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="3">CONTINENTAL SERVICE</th> <th colspan="3">FOREIGN SERVICE</th> </tr> <tr> <th>YEARS</th> <th>MONTHS</th> <th>DAYS</th> <th>YEARS</th> <th>MONTHS</th> <th>DAYS</th> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>5</td> <td>20</td> <td>0</td> <td>8</td> <td>24</td> </tr> </table>			CONTINENTAL SERVICE			FOREIGN SERVICE			YEARS	MONTHS	DAYS	YEARS	MONTHS	DAYS	2	5	20	0	8	24	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th>GRAMMAR SCHOOL</th> <th>HIGH SCHOOL</th> <th>COLLEGE</th> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> </tr> </table>		GRAMMAR SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL	COLLEGE	8	4	4
CONTINENTAL SERVICE			FOREIGN SERVICE																									
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GRAMMAR SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL	COLLEGE																										
8	4	4																										

## INSURANCE NOTICE

IMPORTANT IF PREMIUM IS NOT PAID WHEN DUE OR WITHIN THIRTY-ONE DAYS THEREAFTER, INSURANCE WILL LAPSE. MAKE CHECKS OR MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO THE TREASURER OF THE U. S. AND FORWARD TO COLLECTIONS SUBDIVISION, VETERANS ADMINISTRATION, WASHINGTON 25, D. C.												
36. KIND OF INSURANCE			37. HOW PAID		38. Effective Date of Allotment Discontinuance		39. Date of Next Premium Due (one month after 38)		40. PREMIUM DUE EACH MONTH		41. INTENTION OF VETERAN TO	
Nat. Serv.	U.S. Govt.	None	Allotment	Direct to V.A.							Continue	Continue only
<b>X</b>			<b>X</b>		<b>31 Dec 45</b>		<b>31 Jan 46</b>		<b>* 6.70</b>		<b>X</b>	

 RIGHT THUMB PRINT	43. REMARKS (This space for completion of above items or entry of other items specified in W. D. Directives) <b>* Medal Go 106 Hq 2D AD 45</b> <b>** Field Ga Advanced Twin Engine Pilot School Turner Field Ga</b> <b>Lapel Button Issued</b>	
	44. SIGNATURE OF OFFICER BEING SEPARATED 	
45. PERSONNEL OFFICER (Name, grade and organization - signature) <b>KENNETH S. HUBBARD</b> <b>First Lieut AC</b>		

FOR CONVENIENCE, A CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY NO. **38296 NC** HAS BEEN ISSUED BY THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION TO BE USED FOR THE FUTURE REQUEST OF ANY QUARANTY OR INSURANCE BENEFIT UNDER TITLE III OF THE SERVICEMEN'S READJUSTMENT ACT OF 1924, AS AMENDED, THAT MAY BE AVAILABLE TO THE PERSON TO WHOM THIS SEPARATION P PER WAS ISSUED.

*Kenneth S. Hubbard*



HEADQUARTERS  
AAF STATION 144 Apo 558

4 January 1945.  
(Date)

SUBJECT: Recommendation.

TO : Whom It May Concern.

1. 1st Lt. PAUL C. DARDEN JR. 0-1578333  
(Rank) (Name) (Army Serial No.)

734th Bombardment Squadron, 453rd Bombardment Group (H) AAF, completed an  
operational tour of 30 sorties on 2 January 1945 as Co-Pilot  
(Specific)

in B-24 Aircraft.

2. He has been awarded the following decorations:

Air Medal.

First Oak Leaf Cluster to Air Medal.

Second Oak Leaf Cluster to Air Medal.

Third Oak Leaf Cluster to Air Medal.


Fourth Oak Leaf Cluster to Air Medal.

3. He has been credited with the destruction of the following enemy  
aircraft: None.

4. His manner of performance is Excellent.

5. He is recommended for assignment to Very Heavy Bombardment Aircraft.

6. He is a lead crew member.

  
L. M. THOMAS,  
Colonel, Air Corps,  
Commanding.



R E S T R I C T E D

HEADQUARTERS 2d AIR DIVISION  
APO 553

25 March 1945

GENERAL ORDERS)

NUMBER 106)

E X T R A C T

AWARDS OF THE SILVER OAK LEAF CLUSTER TO THE AIR MEDAL

Under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, 22 September 1943, as amended, and pursuant to authority contained in Paragraph 2b, Section I, Circular 56, Hq European T of Opns, U.S. Army, 27 May 1944, and Letter, Hq Eighth Air Force, File No. 200.6 Subject: "Awards and Decorations", 23 September 1944, a SILVER OAK LEAF CLUSTER to the Air Medal is awarded to the following named individuals in addition to four Oak Leaf Clusters previously awarded.

Citation: For meritorious achievement, in accomplishing with distinction, several aerial operational missions over enemy occupied Continental Europe. The courage, coolness and skill displayed by each of these individuals in the face of determined opposition materially aided in the successful completion of these missions. Their actions reflect great credit upon themselves and the Armed Forces of the United States.

453RD BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)

\* \* \*  
PAUL C. DARDEN, JR., 0157833, 1st Lieutenant, Wilson, N. C. \*

BY COMMAND OF MAJOR GENERAL KEPNER:

FRANCIS H. GRISWOLD  
Brigadier General U.S.A.  
Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL:

/s/George L. Paul  
/t/GEORGE L. PAUL  
Lt Col AGD  
Adjutant General

CERTIFIED A TRUE EXTRACT COPY:

*W. T. Garrett Jr.*  
W. T. GARRETT JR.  
1st Lt. AC  
Awards Officer

R E S T R I C T E D



# Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Classification Officer, Post  
FROM : Personnel Services Officer, Post  
SUBJECT: Authorization for bronze service stars

DATE: 16 June 1945

1. 1st Lt. Paul C. Darden, O-1578333, is authorized bronze service stars for participation in the following campaigns, while member of the 453rd Bomb Group (H), 734th Bomb Squadron from July 1944 to 8 January 1945:

- a. Rhineland, per GO 33, WD, 1 May 1945, time limitation from 15 September 1944 to 21 March 1945.
- b. Ardennes, per GO 33, WD, 1 May 1945, time limitation from 16 December 1944 to 25 January 1945.

2. Verification for this authorization has been taken from record of operational missions, which lists locations and dates. This record is kept in officer's 201 file.

FRANK H. MALONE, JR.  
1st Lt., Air Corps  
Personnel Services Officer



# FOR MERITORIOUS SERVICE

The Commanding General  
Army Air Forces  
extends the gratitude of the  
**UNITED STATES  
ARMY AIR FORCES**  
to

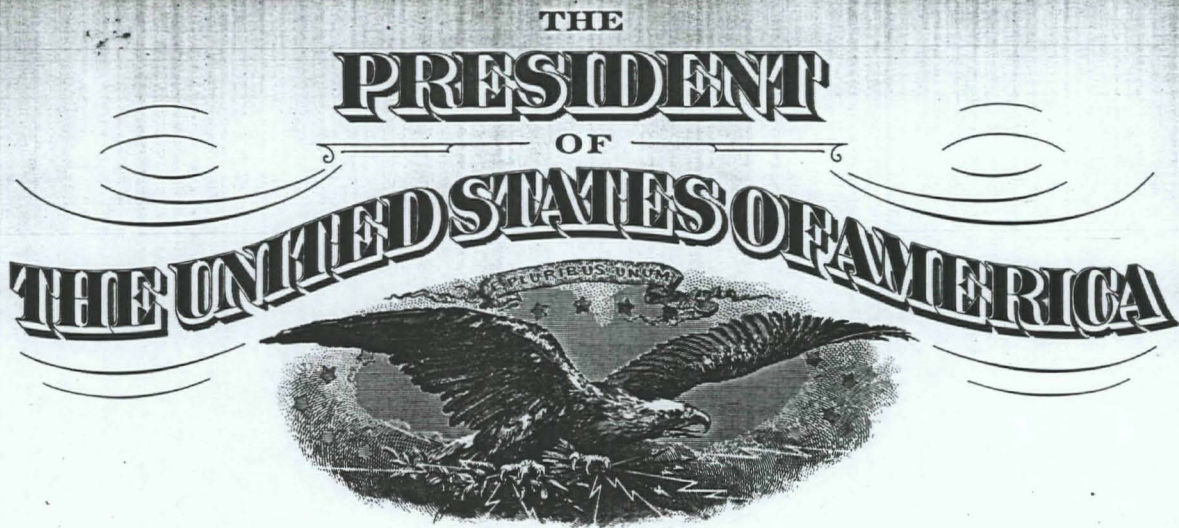
1st Lt PAUL C DARDEN JR 01 578 333

*Whose wholehearted and sincere services contributed  
to the successful prosecution of World War II against those  
who sought to subjugate the civilized world.*

*Dudley B. Howard*  
DUDLEY B. HOWARD  
Colonel, Air Corps

*H. A. Arnold*  
COMMANDING GENERAL, ARMY AIR FORCES





To all who shall see these presents, greeting:  
Know Ye, that reposing special trust and confidence in the patriotism, valor, fidelity  
and abilities of PAUL CLIFFORD DARDEN, JUNIOR  
I do appoint him FIRST LIEUTENANT, AIR CORPS in the

### Army of the United States

such appointment to date from the SECOND day of OCTOBER  
nineteen hundred and FORTY-FIVE. He is therefore carefully and diligently to  
discharge the duty of the office to which he is appointed by doing and performing all  
manner of things thereunto belonging.

He will enter upon active duty under this commission only when specifically  
ordered to such active duty by competent authority.  
And I do strictly charge and require all Officers and Soldiers under his command  
when he shall be employed on active duty to be obedient to his orders as an officer of his  
grade and position. And he is to observe and follow such orders and directions from time  
to time as he shall receive from me, or the future President of the United States of  
America, or the General or other Superior Officers set over him, according to the rules  
and discipline of War.

This Commission evidences an appointment in the Army of the United States under  
the provisions of section 37. National Defense Act, as amended, and is to continue in  
force for a period of five years from the date above specified, and during the pleasure  
of the President of the United States for the time being.

Done at the City of Washington, this SEVENTH day of DECEMBER  
in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and FORTY-FIVE, and of the  
Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and SEVENTIETH.

By the President:

*J. P. Gombinski*  
Adjutant General.



Sept. 10, 1900

Dear Iry,

Many thanks for your letter and phone call. It's thoughtful of you to endeavor to produce a book about Lee's military career for his descendants.

I have gotten together everything I think would be of interest to you and am sending in this package. Hope you can read it and that it may be some help.

Lee was a fine young man and a very good pilot. We went on leave together several times, and it was always very enjoyable.

I heard from Katherine both by letter and by phone, soon after I heard from you. She sent me snapshots of you and your family and herself and they are all very good. I appreciate it.

Good luck to you in your compilation of the book.

And all the best to you and yours.

Sincerely,  
Paul Darden



*453<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group*  
*734<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron*

201 DARDEN, Paul C.

OPERATIONAL MISSIONS

<u>NO.</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TARGET</u>	<u>NO.</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TARGET</u>
1.	17 Jul 44	Belfort, Fr	16.	26 Sept 44	Hamm, Ger
2.	18 Jul 44	Caen, Fr	17.	28 Sept 44	Kassel, Ger
3.	19 Jul 44	Laupheim, Ger	18.	7 Oct 44	Kassel, Ger
4.	20 Jul 44	Gotha, Ger	19.	9 Oct 44	Lippe, Ger
5.	24 Jul 44	St Lo Area, Fr	20.	12 Oct 44	Osnabruck, Ger
6.	25 Jul 44	St Lo Area, Fr	21.	19 Oct 44	Mainz, Ger
7.	29 Jul 44	Bremen, Ger	22.	30 Oct 44	Cuxhaven, Ger
8.	31 Jul 44	Ludwigshaven, Ger	23.	21 Nov 44	Hamburg, Ger
9.	1 Aug 44	Fismes, Fr	24.	29 Nov 44	Altenbeken, Ger
10.	4 Aug 44	Schwerin, Ger	25.	10 Dec 44	Bingen, Ger
11.	5 Aug 44	Brunswick, Ger	26.	11 Dec 44	Hanau, Ger
12.	6 Aug 44	Hamburg, Ger	27.	19 Dec 44	Bitburg, Ger
13.	11 Aug 44	Strasbourg, Fr	28.	24 Dec 44	Hillesheim, Ger
14.	18 Aug 44	Metz, Fr, A/F	29.	30 Dec 44	Euskirchen, Ger
15.	22 Sep 44	Kassel, Ger	30.	2 Jan 45	Koblenz/Lutzel, Ger



# Missions



201 Gulley, Lee R.

## OPERATIONAL MISSIONS

22 Sep 1944

<u>NO.</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TARGET</u>	<u>NO.</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TARGET</u>
1.	17 Jul 44	Belfort, Fr	16.	26 Sept 44	Hamm, Ger
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201 Gulley, Lee R.

OPERATIONAL MISSIONS

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our crew

Pilot - Lee R. Gulley  
Co pilot - Paul C. Darden Jr  
Navigator - Myron M. Abel  
Bombardier - Robert H. Ronaldez  
Engineer - Arthur Pinkerton  
Radio operator - Dino Bartolino  
Gunner - Joseph Godek  
Gunner - Harry Buckel  
Gunner - Mike Aguerre  
Gunner - Kenneth Kropf  
Radar navigator - Herman Lefko  
Bombardier - Robert A. Webb

these men flew all  
30 missions together



201 Gulley, Lee R.

OPERATIONAL MISSIONS

22 Sep 1944

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GP-143-453 (19-7-44) (GULLEY-734 M)



## Lead Crew Commendation

On this **18** day of **August** nineteen hundred and forty four the members of the following crew, of the **453** Bombardment Group, leading the **71st** Sqn, are awarded this token for their meritorious achievement in the destruction of the target at **Metz AIF, France.**

PILOT-Lt. F.E. Gulley	R.O.P.-Tsgt. G.E. Bartolino	GUN.-Tsgt. H.J. Buckel
CO-PILOT-Lt. P.C. Darden	ENG.-Tsgt. G. Pinkerton	GUN.-Tsgt. M. Aguirre
NAV.-Lt. M.M. Cibel	GUN.-Tsgt. J.W. Godek	NAV.-Lt. R.H. Ronaldo
BOMB.-Lt. R.G. Webb	GUN.-Tsgt. K.D. Kropf	



*[Signature]*  
COMMANDING



①

Diary of Paul Darden, Jr., copilot on crew  
of Lee R. Gulley, 453<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group, 734<sup>th</sup>  
Bomb Squadron.

~~June~~ <sup>June</sup> 13, 1944 - left Westover Field, Mass.

June 16, 1944 - acquired brand new B-24 and  
left Mitchell Field N.Y. flew to Bangor, Maine.

June 17, 1944 - left Bangor, Maine and flew to Goose  
Bay, Labrador.

June 18, 1944 left Goose Bay, Labrador and flew to  
Nutz Corner, Ireland in 10 1/2 hours.

June 19, 1944 - left Nutz's Corner, Ireland

June 20, 1944 - left Larne, Ireland

June 25, 1944 - left Stone, England

July 10, 1944 left Clontarf, Ireland

July 17, 1944. Flew first mission to Besfort, France -  
7 hours, 45 minutes - No fighters, little flak

July 18, 1944 Flew second mission to Caen, France -  
6 hours, 20 minutes - no fighters, moderate flak.  
but accurate.

July 19, 1944 flew third mission to Lappheim in  
southern Germany near Ulm. 7 hours, 30 minutes  
no fighters, little flak.

(over)



July 20, 1944 flew fourth mission to Gotha in central Germany to bomb aircraft factories. 8 hour mission, no fighters, little flak.

July 24, 1944 flew fifth mission to area around St. Lo, France in support of ground troops. Clouds were too low and bombs were not dropped. Five hour mission. No enemy fighters, meager flak.

July 25, 1944 flew sixth mission to area around St. Lo, France in support of ground troops. Bombed from 12,000 feet instead of the usual 20-23,000 ft. No enemy fighters but accurate flak. You could feel the plane shake when the flak exploded close enough. I saw one B-24 explode and another go out of control from which I counted nine parachutes. Our plane got 6 flak holes - Five hours, 30 minutes.

July 26-28, 1944 had a two day pass. Went to Norwich, then to London. Heard three buzz bombs in London.

July 29, 1944 flew seventh mission to Bremen, Germany. Bombed by PFF. Flak was intense but inaccurate. No fighters. Six hours.



July 31, 1944 flew eighth mission to Ludwigsfelde, Germany. Bombed Farben Chemical Works by PFF. Flak was intense. Fighters were reported but we saw none. Our group operations officer, Capt. Andy Low, was shot down and became a POW. Six hours 30 minutes. (This is the same Andrew Low who finished the book ~~that~~ "In Search of Peace".)

Aug. 1, 1944 flew ninth mission to Nevers on the Loire in western France on tactical mission to bomb bridge visually. Undercast prevented our squadron dropping. We flew about 1 1/2 hours with bomb bay doors open looking for a target of opportunity. We never found one, so brought our bombs back. Our #3 engine gave out of gas around London and #4 would put out only 20 lbs. We feathered #3 and transferred gas getting all engines running again. We then found an RAF field and landed to get some gas. We saw little flak, no enemy fighters on the mission. 6 1/2 hours.

Aug 4, 1944 flew tenth mission to Schwerin, Germany, 70 miles NW of Berlin to bomb air field. Hit the target squarely. Meager flak, no fighters, eight hours.



Aug. 5, 1944 flew eleventh mission to Brunswick, Germany to bomb airplane factories. Heavy flak, no fighters. Eight hours.

Aug. 6, 1944 flew twelfth mission to Hamburg, Germany to bomb oil refineries. Flak was very heavy, no fighters. Six hours 30 minutes. Our ship got four flak holes.

Aug. 9, 1944 had 24 hour pass. Went to Norwich for the day.

Aug. 11, 1944 flew thirteenth mission to Strasburg, France to bomb German Air Force fuel depot. We led the high right squadron and 91% of the bombs hit within 2000 feet of target. There were no fighters - flak was moderate. Six hours 35 minutes.

Aug. 18, 1944 flew fourteenth mission to Metz in southeast France to bomb nearby supply warehouses at an airfield that distributed plane parts to German Air Force. We led high right squadron and put 88% of our bombs in 500 ft. circle and 100% in 1000 ft. circle. There was no flak, no enemy fighters. Thro. 15 minutes.



Aug. 25, 1944 We went on a 9 day leave to Southport for a flak rest. Had the first time at all. The entire crew went. Came back Sept. 2

Sept. 13, 1944 went on 2 day pass to London

Sept. 22, 1944 flew fifteenth mission to Kassel, Germany to bomb armament factory. Bombing was PFF from 24,000 ft. We flew deputy lead. Flak was not very heavy and there were no enemy fighters. We lost #4 engine about ten minutes after bombs away but got home OK. 6 1/2 hours.

Sept. 23, 1944 went on a 2 day pass to Norwich.

Sept. 26, 1944 flew sixteenth mission to Ham, Germany to bomb a bridge. We led high right squadron and bombed PFF off group leader. Mission was one big mess. Both lead mickeys went out. Moderate flak, no fighters. Six hours 15 minutes.

Sept. 27, 1944 - 445<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group lost 30 of 40 planes when attacked by fighters. They were right behind our group. Our crew did not fly this mission.



Sept. 28, 1944 flew seventeenth mission to Kassel, Germany to bomb tank factory. We led high right squadron. Flak was moderate but accurate. We lost one plane. Bombing was PFF by groups. No fighters. 7 hours.

Oct. 7, 1944 flew eighteenth mission to Kassel, Germany to bomb tank factory. We led low left squadron - our first PFF mission leading - but target was ~~visual~~ visual. Flak was moderate but accurate. Six hours, 30 minutes.

Oct. 9, 1944 flew nineteenth mission to Koblenz, Germany. Bombing was PFF. We flew deputy wing lead but had to take lead on the bomb run. Missed the target. Major Walsh flew command pilot. I rode in the waist. No flak. No fighters. 6 1/2 hours.

<sup>1944</sup>  
Oct. 12 flew twentieth mission to Osnabruck in NW Germany to bomb marshalling yards. We led low left squadron. Bombed PFF by group though conditions were visual. Flak moderate. No fighters. 5 hours.

Oct. 13, 1944 had a two day pass. Went to London

Oct. 19, 1944 flew twenty first mission to Mainz, Germany to bomb marshalling yards PFF. We flew group



deputy lead. Capt. Seevens was command pilot. I rode the waist. Flak was moderate but very accurate.

We got about 30 holes in our plane. Two gas lines were cut, radio operator's seat shot through (he was manning a waist gun at the time) and a piece through waist hatch about two feet from me. No enemy fighters - Six hours 25 minutes. Temperature minus  $42^{\circ}$  at 26000 ft. Pinkerton was recommended for DFC.

Oct 21-23, 1944 spent week-end in Norwich

Oct. 30, 1944 flew twenty second mission. Primary target was Hamburg but clouds were too high to climb over. So we bombed Cuxhaven PFF. We led low left squadron but had to take over when group leader's PFF set went out. We lost the 389<sup>th</sup> group because they went off course and were mixed in with 96<sup>th</sup> Wing. When the soup got thick we went up to 25,000 feet but it was still way above us. We lost both our other squadrons in the soup and bombed by ourselves. Original lead squadron did not bomb because it had no workable PFF and there was 10% cloud coverage. High right bombed in three ship elements. We caught a little flak occasionally. No enemy fighters. Temp.  $-38^{\circ}$ . Mission lasted 6 hours 25 minutes. Most SNAFU mission yet.

(over)



Nov. 1-8 had a seven day leave. Went to London and caught a train to Southport. Lefco and I went and stayed at the flat home. Had a very good time. Played golf on Ainsdale course where Ryder Cup was held. Also went horseback riding, dancing, etc. Came back to London after five days and stayed there a day. Had a real good time but got back at 4AM Nov. 9. Had a bed full of Christmas presents when I got back.

Nov. 21, 1944 flew twenty third mission to Hamburg, Germany to bomb oil refineries. We led low left squadron and bombed PFF. Two planes from 389<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group collided over buncher and went down. One ship from 445<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group ditched in North Sea before reaching target. Flak was intense over target. Our slot leader was flying "Dolly's Sister" and lost two engines over target and didn't get back. We got a few holes but squadron was pretty well shot up. No enemy fighters. 6 1/2 hours.

Nov. 22-24 had a two day pass and went to Halesworth to see my best friend. (He was later best man in our wedding.) His group, the 489<sup>th</sup>, was packing up to go back to U.S. and then to Pacific. Had Thanks giving dinner at Halesworth and another at Norwich Red Cross that night.



Nov. 29, 1944 flew twenty fourth mission to bomb railway viaduct about eight miles NW of Paderborn. We flew deputy group lead and our group led second Bomb Division. Down the bomb run the lead ship's GH set went out and we had to take over. We had dropped our bombs accidentally in the channel on the way over while checking bomb bay doors. Over the target we shot flares at bombs away. It was another very SNAFU mission. Col. Thomas (our group CO) was command pilot in the original lead ship. Major O'Dwyer rode command pilot in our ship. Rode the waist. No flak over target. No fighters. Five hours 45 minutes. Lt. Col. Jimmy Stewart attended our briefing.

Dec. 3-5, 1944 spent 48 hour pass in London. Saw show, ate steaks and saw several old friends from home.

Dec. 10, 1944 flew twenty fifth mission to Bingen, Germany to bomb railway yards by GH. We flew deputy group lead. No flak. No fighters. Five hours 40 minutes.

Dec. 11, 1944 flew twenty sixth mission to Hanau, Germany just east of Frankfurt. It was a maximum effort mission and we led three of the four and a half squadrons our group put up. Maj. Cingam flew command pilot and

(over)



I rode the waist. There was meager flak - no fighters.  
Seven hours 45 minutes.

Dec. 19, 1944 flew twenty seventh mission to Bitburg, Germany near Koblenz to bomb supplies in support of 1<sup>st</sup> Army. Weather on take off was terrible (visibility 100 yards). We flew left wing of group leader and bombed GH unobserved. On return our group was diverted to Dunkeswell Naval Air base in S W England because of bad weather. We stayed there until Dec. 23 and were treated swell. Had American beer and ice cream. We saw no fighters, little flak over the target. Six hours 40 minutes.

Dec. 24, 1944 flew twenty eighth mission to Mayen, Germany just west of Koblenz to bomb tactical target in support of army ground troops. Our group put up 64 planes, more than any in 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force. We led high right squadron. Bombing was visual, but we bombed wrong town. Flak was accurate over battle line and our group set an 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force record - 64 planes up, 62 attacked targets - 5 of 6 squadron. Bombing results expert to superior - also at town we bombed. We had a few hits. Three ships in our squadron had to land in France, one at Woodbridge. No enemy fighters. 6 hours. Some notables attended briefing - Paul McClellan, a U.S. Senator,



(6)

a general, and Jimmy Stewart. Our squadron bombed Hilleslaem and found out it was a priority target when we returned.

Dec. 30, 1944 flew twenty ninth mission to Euskirchen, Germany south of Cologne to bomb railroad and road junction in support of ground troops. We led high right squadron and bombed GH by groups. There was very little flak over target and no enemy fighters - a milk run - Two hours 30 minutes.

Jan. 2, 1945 flew thirtieth mission to Koblenz, Germany. to bomb railroad bridge. Our route was a cook's tour of west Germany. Enemy fighters were reported twice but we saw none. Bombing was GH and there was no flak. I rode in waist. Capt. Bailey was command pilot and we flew deputy wing lead. a milk run - Six hours.

Jan. 4, 1945 Went to London on three day pass.

Jan. 25, 1945 Went from London to Nottingham and spent 6 days.

Jan 31, 1945 arrived at Stone to go home.

(over)

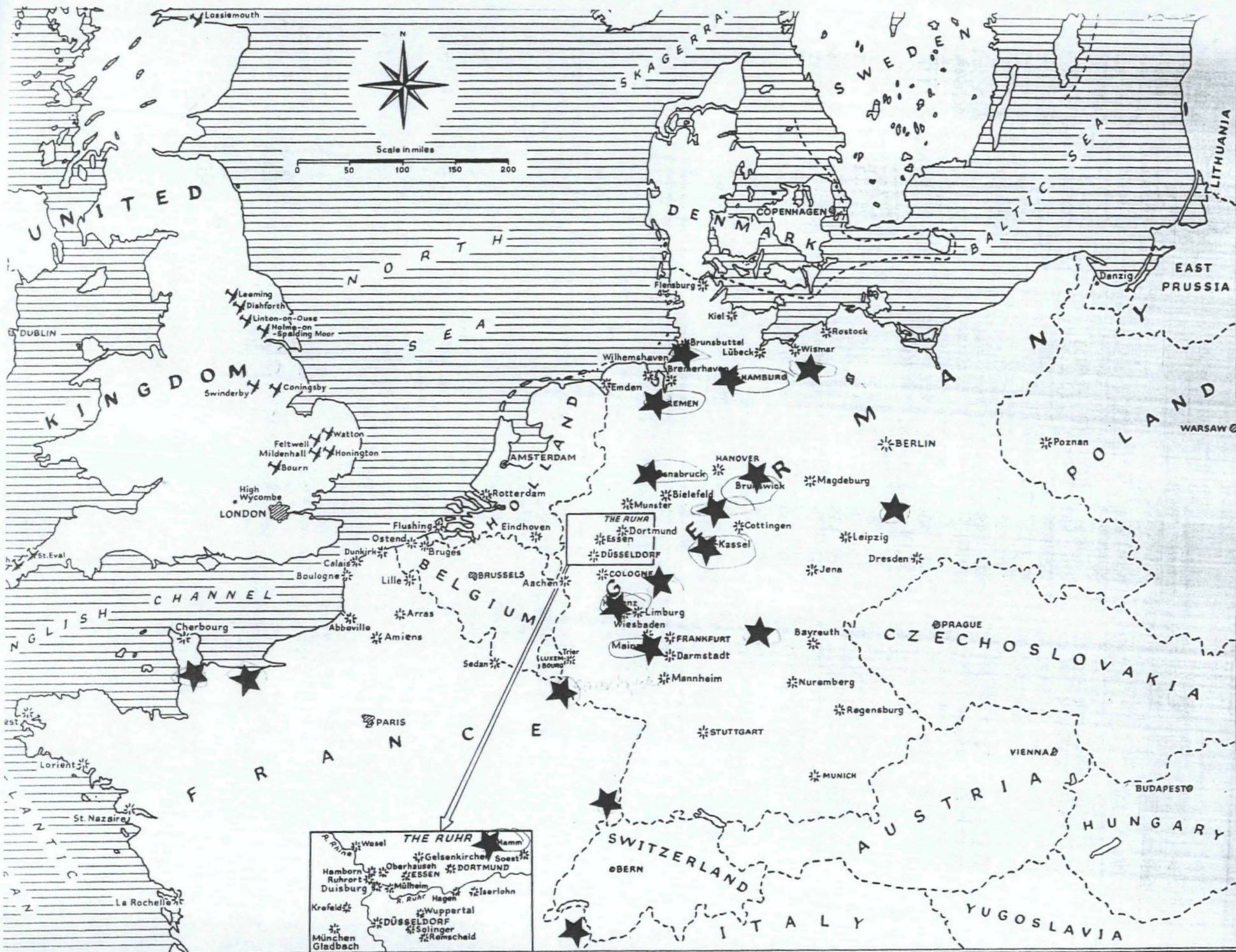


Feb. 17, 1945 left Stone and went to Prestwick, Scotland  
to fly home. Stayed at Red Cross in Prestwick  
five days waiting for plane.

Feb. 22, 1945 left Prestwick about midnight on a C-54  
with 17 other returnees, a dog and a crew of 6.  
Woke up in the Azores seven hours 50 minutes later.  
Ate breakfast and took off for Bermuda. Landed  
in Bermuda ten hours 35 minutes later. Ate supper  
and took off for New York. Landed at La Guardia  
Field four hours 30 minutes later. Went to Fort Totten, N.Y.  
END

The reason it took so long to fly 30 missions was  
mostly because of the bad weather in England in winter.  
Our crew was unusually lucky. All ten of the original  
crew members flew every mission together, which I  
think was unusual. And though the plane was shot  
up some on some missions, nobody on the crew was  
ever hit. We had a very good pilot. I think he told  
me he had several hundred hours in the air as an  
instructor in B-24's at Smyrna, Tenn. Most of the pilots  
were fresh out of flying school with little time in B-24's.  
I had never been a B-24 until I went to Westover  
Field.





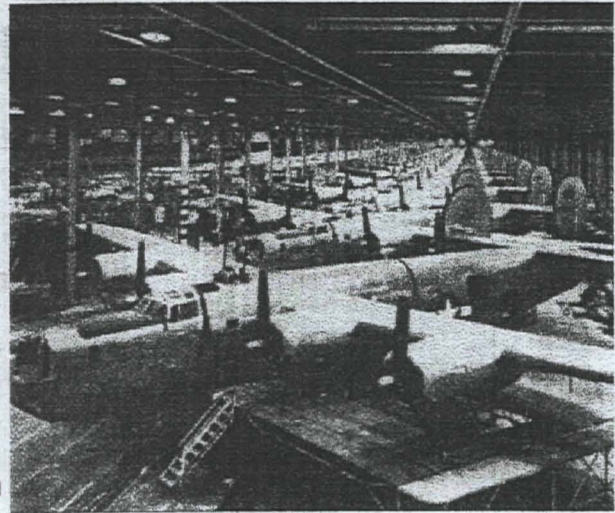


## B-24 Information



*B-24s Under Construction at Consolidated Aircraft in San Diego, California*

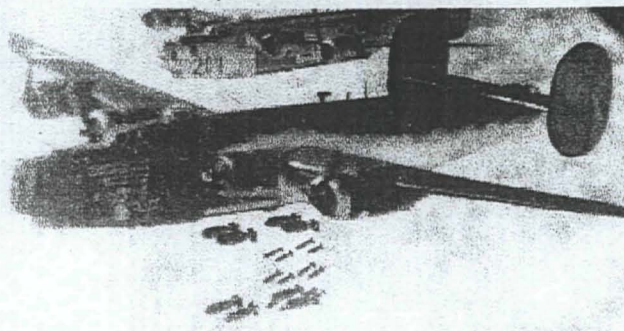
The B-24's first flight took place on December 29, 1939. Consolidated Aircraft (which later became General Dynamics) produced the first B-24 at its plant in San Diego, California, and later went into full production as shown in the photograph on the



right. In addition to Consolidated's B-24 production plant in San Diego, also manufactured the bomber at its plant in Ft. Worth, Texas. By the time the B-24 was in production by four different aircraft companies with sites in four cities. In addition to Consolidated's San Diego and Ft. Worth plants, the bomber was also produced by North American Aviation in Dallas, Texas; Douglas Aircraft Company in Tulsa, Oklahoma; and the Ford Motor Company churned them out on the production line at its Willow Run plant in Michigan.

During World War II, B-24s flew more missions and dropped more bombs than any other aircraft. B-24s were used by the United States Army Air Corps (USAAC) in every theatre of the war, and flew for 15 Allied nations.

A fully armed and combat-ready B-24 carried a crew of 10 men. Its gross weight when loaded was greater than 46,000 pounds. The most common mode of armament was four movable turrets, each with two .50-caliber machine guns and two individual .50-caliber machine guns in the waist for a total of ten guns. The B-24 was powered by four 1200-horsepower engines and carried 2750 gallons of fuel. Many B-24s made round trips of 1500 miles and some extended ranges were near 20,000 miles.



*The 8th AF, 467th Bomb Group, "Witchcraft" Makes a Delivery*

The most common bomb load was ten 500-pound bombs, or five 1,000-pound bombs. The planes were used in a high-altitude environment against heavy targets in the European Theatre. They flew at an altitude of 18,000 to 20,000 feet, although many missions (particularly in the Pacific) were flown at much lower altitudes. The planes were not pre-

the Pacific) were flown at much lower altitudes. The planes were not pre-



heated; crewmen wore oxygen masks on high altitude missions and were to temperatures of -30 degrees Fahrenheit and lower.

An estimated 180,000 crew members and 500,000 ground personnel were in the flying and servicing the B-24.

San Diego is the home of the B-24, but it also has a rich history in early San Diego Aerospace Museum chronicles this. Rockwell Field was one Army Air Service fields (now called North Island, part of the Navy's base Pacific Fleet and docking for their aircraft carriers.) Charles Lindbergh's *Louis* was manufactured here. Most of the early Army Air Corps leaders Rockwell Field and/or nearby March Field.

Consolidated Aircraft Corporation (which later became General Dynamics) accepted the Army's request in 1939 to be the second manufacturing source for the B-24, proposing instead to build a new and better, four-engine bomber for the B-24, soon to be called "Liberator", was produced in five different cities and served in every theatre of WWII, and flew for 15 Allied nations. An estimated 180,000 crew members and 500,000 ground personnel were involved in servicing the B-24.

We will celebrate the 60th anniversary of Consolidated Aircraft Corporation's flight of the XB-24, which took place on December 29, 1939. Join us in the home of the B-24, and hear from the people who built it, flew it, crew serviced it."

### B-24 Specifications

The B-24 Liberator, designed by Consolidated Aircraft, was built to the following specifications:



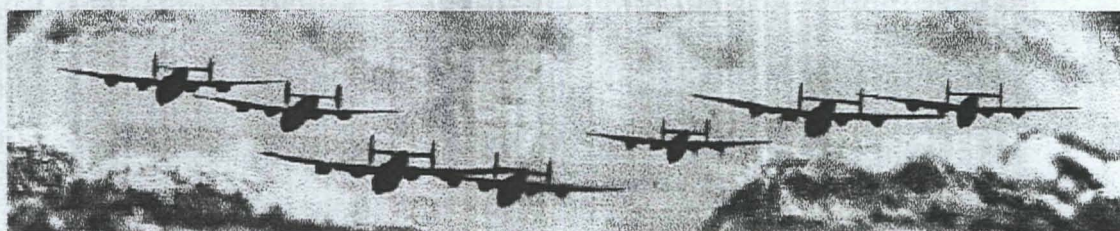
- \* Wingspan: 110 feet
- \* Wing area: 1,048 square feet
- \* Length: 63 feet 9 inches
- \* Height: 18 feet 8 inches
- \* Weight:
  - ◆ Empty: 27,500 pounds
  - ◆ Gross: 38,360 pounds
  - ◆ Maximum: 46,400 pounds
- \* Armament:
  - ◆ Machine guns: ten 50-caliber
  - ◆ Bombs: 8000 pounds
- \* Engines: Four Pratt & Whitney R-1830-33 (S3C4-G) Twin V air-cooled reciprocating radials
- \* Speed:
  - ◆ Cruising: 175 MPH
  - ◆ Maximum: 303 MPH
  - ◆ Landing: 90 MPH
- \* Range:
  - ◆ Empty: 4700 miles
  - ◆ 2500-pound bomb load: 3000 miles
- \* Altitude: 31,500 feet
- \* Original Cost: \$336,000



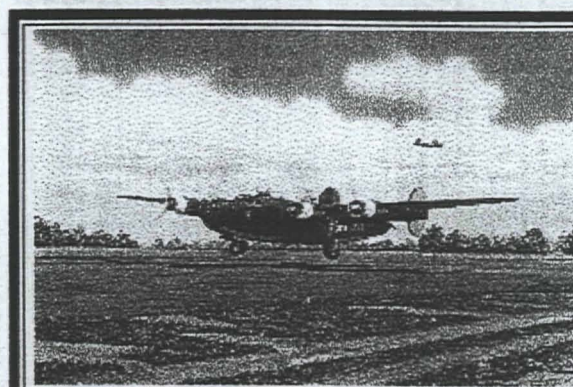
The B-24 Liberator was produced in greater quantities and flown in more theaters of war by the air forces of more countries than any other four engine bomber in World War II. 19,256 planes (in several versions) were produced by Consolidated Vultee, Ford Motor Company, Douglas Aircraft and North American Aircraft between the years of 1939 and 1945. Today there are only two flight-worthy B-24's in existence, and it's history and role in WW II is only dimly recalled except by those who flew in them.

The other four-engine heavy bomber, the Boeing B-17, received most of the publicity, particularly in the strategic air campaign against the Germans in Europe. Yet B-24's outnumbered the B-17's even there. B-24's could fly higher, faster, farther, carry a bigger bombload and take more punishment from enemy fire than the fabled B-17. But as all B-24 crewmen knew, the B-17 had one feature that the B-24 never had, a built-in press agent!

There just was no way for an airplane known as the "Box Car" to compete in the public's eye with the fabled "Flying Fortress."



A fully armed and combat-ready B-24 carried a crew of ten men. Its gross weight when loaded was greater than 60,000 pounds. It had, in the most common versions, four movable turrets, each with two .50 caliber machine guns and two individual .50s in the waist, making a total of ten. It was powered by four 1,200 horsepower engines and carried 2,750 gallons of fuel. Many B-24 missions were round trips of 1,500 miles and some extended ranges were near 2,000 miles.



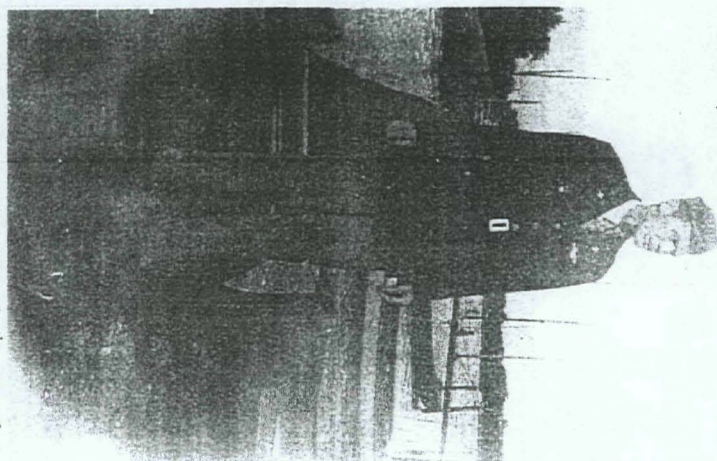
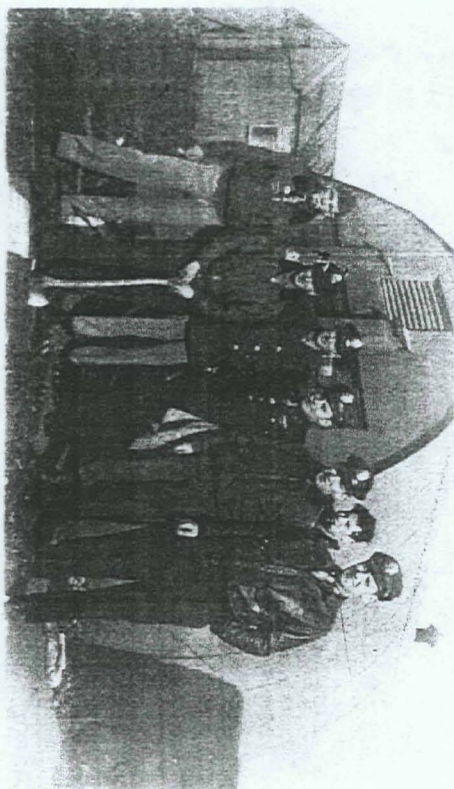
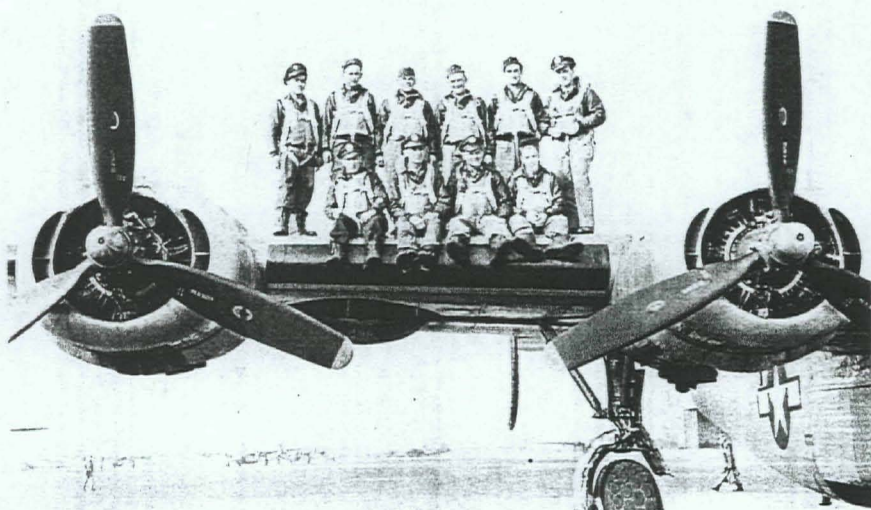
**"The B-24 could fly higher, faster, farther, and take more punishment than any other plane in World War II."**

The most common bomb-load was ten 500 pound bombs or five 1,000 pounders. It's operating environment against heavily defended targets in the European Theater was from 18,000 to 28,000 feet, although many missions (particularly in the Pacific) were flown at much lower altitudes. The planes were not pressurized or heated; crewmen wore oxygen masks on high altitude missions and were exposed to temperatures that reached -30 degrees fahrenheit and below.





GP-265-453 (2-12-44) (Capt. Gulley (734<sup>th</sup>))



LEE GULLEY 1944





our crew

Pilot - Lee R. Gulley  
 Co pilot - Paul C. Darden Jr  
 Navigator - Myron M. Abel  
 Bombardier - Robert H. Ronaldest  
 Engineer - Arthur Pinkerton  
 Radio operator - Dino Bartolino  
 Gunner - Joseph Godek  
 Gunner - Harry Buckel  
 Gunner - Mike Aguerre  
 Gunner - Kenneth Kropf  
 Radar navigator - Herman Leaps  
 Bombardier - Robert A. Wabbl

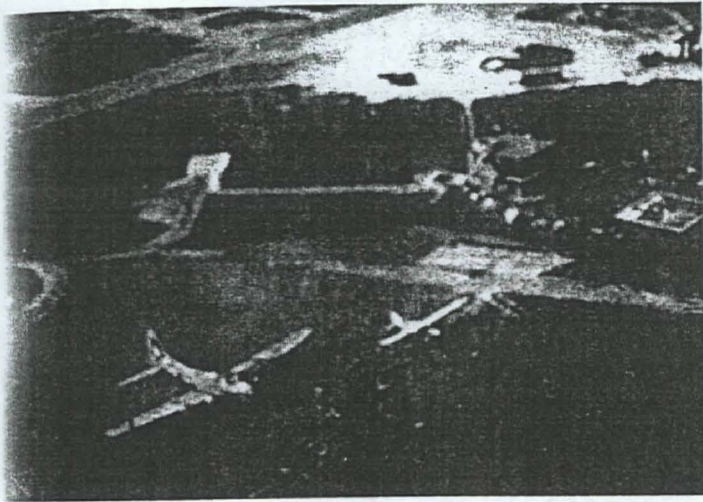
these men flew all  
 30 missions together

joined our crew after 15  
 or so missions - after that  
 became a bad crew.

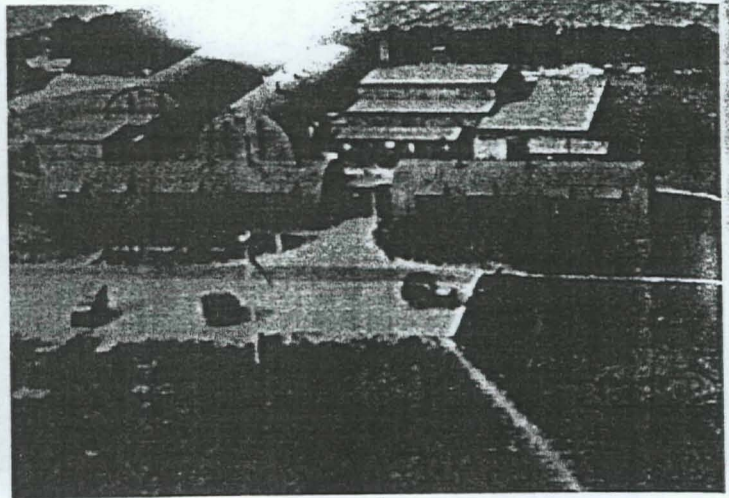


# Old Buckenham

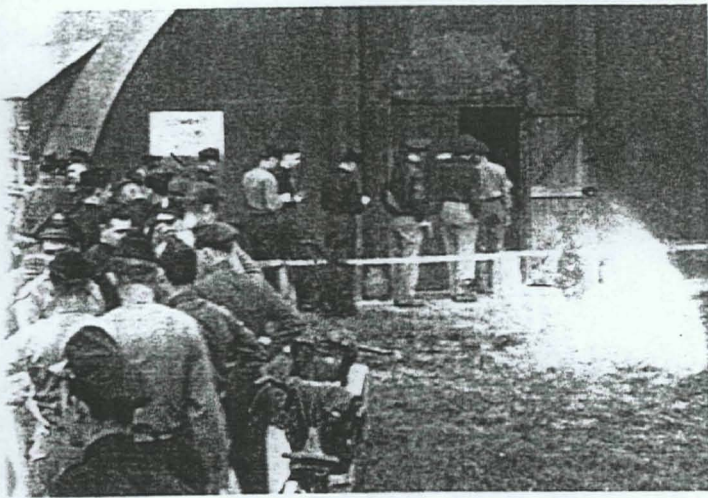
*Home of the 453rd Bombardment Group (H)*



A Visitor



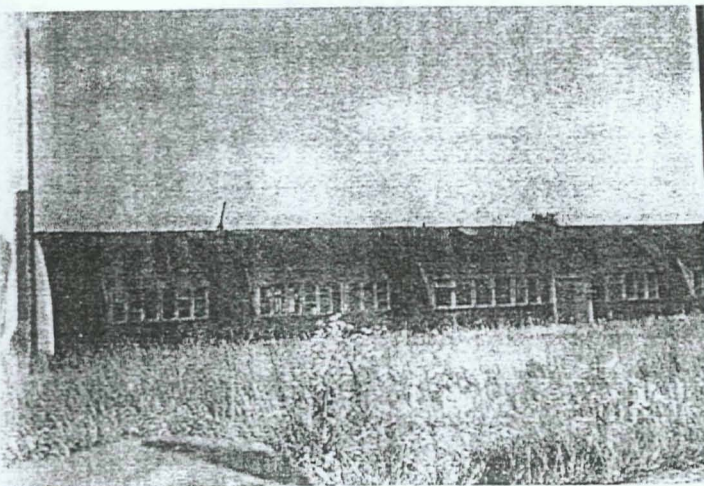
Group Hospital



Air Crew Mess



NAFFI Wagon

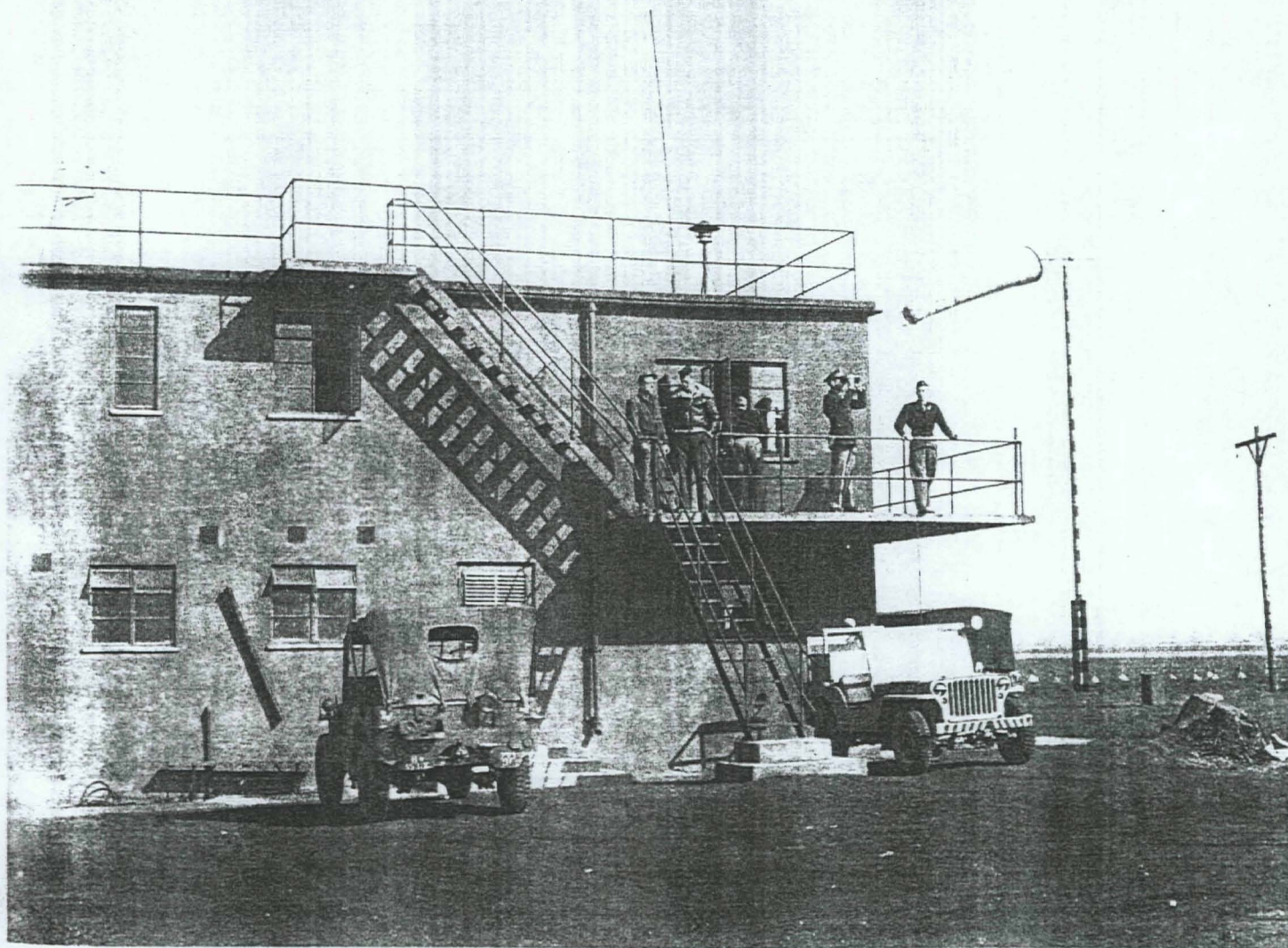


Non-Commissioned Officers Club

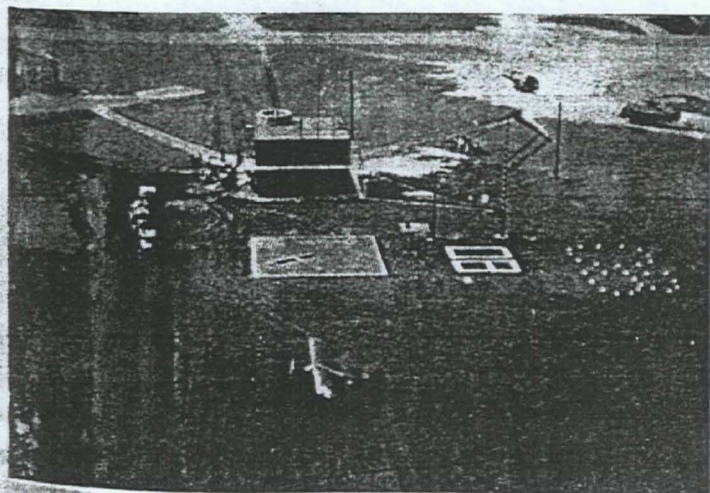


Medical Clinic

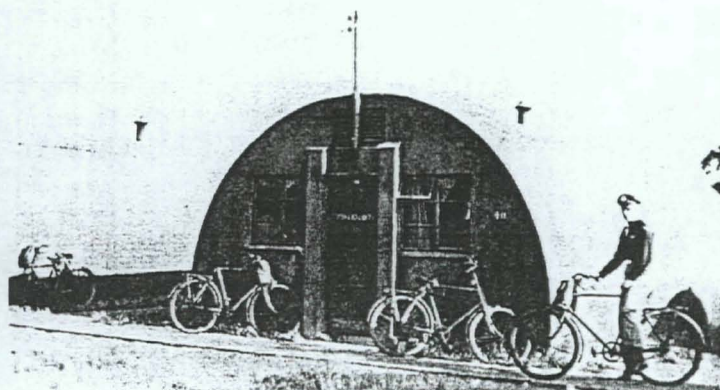




Old Buck Control Tower



Control Tower Station 44



Stalag Luft 6, Quarters for Morris & Kramers Crew  
Tommy Owen is on the bike



## 453th BG Unit Markings



### 453rd Bombardment Group

The 453rd Bombardment Group (Heavy) was constituted on 14 May 1943, and activated at Wendover Field, Utah, on 1 June 1943, under the command of Col. Joseph A. Miller. The group trained in B-24s at Pocatello AAFld, Idaho, and March Field, Calif., until it deployed for England between December 1943-January 1944. The 453rd BG was stationed at Old Buckenham from 22 December 1943-9 May 1945. The component squadrons were the: 732nd, 733rd, 734th and 735th BSs, which were all activated with the group.

The 453rd BG flew its first combat mission on 5 February 1944, when it attacked an airfield at Tours, and returned unscathed.

Throughout the war, the 453rd BG concentrated on strategic targets in Europe. In addition, the group participated in **Operation BIG WEEK** and struck **NOBALL** targets. During the Normandy Invasion, the 453rd BG bombed shore installations between Le Harve and Cherbourg and other targets farther inland. The group supported both the *Saint-Lo Breakout* and the *Battle of the Bulge*. The unit also flew *Trucking* operations during September 1944, and dropped supplies to troops near Wesel for the assault across the Rhine.

The 453rd BG flew its last combat mission in April 1945, and returned to the ZI in May. The group was inactivated at Fort Dix, NJ, on 12 September 1945.



Standing: Bartolino, Dodek, Buckel, Kropp,  
 Pinkerton, Aguirre  
 Kneeling: Gulley, Darden, Abel, Roubles  
 May 10, 1944 at Watson Field, Mass.



May 18, 1944 after  
 coming from 2nd mission.  
 Standing: Darden, Gulley,  
 Roubles, Abel, Kropp

Standing: Dodek, Buckel,  
 Bartolino, Pinkerton,  
 Aguirre

734th Bomb Squadron  
 453rd Bomb Group  
 2nd Bomb Division  
 OK N. I. T.





STANDING: MAJ. O'DWYER, GULLEY,  
ABEL, RONALDES, WEBB, LEFCO,  
DARDEN

KNEELING: AGUIRRE, KROPF,  
BUCKEL, GODEK, PINKERTON,  
BARTOLINO

AFTER 24<sup>TH</sup> MISSION  
NOV. 29, 1944

STANDING: M. AGUIRRE, ARMORER GUNNER: K.D.  
KROPF, ASST. ENGINEER: H.J. BUCKEL, TAIL  
GUNNER: J.W. GODEK, ASST. RADIO OPER-  
ATOR: G.I. BARTOLINO, RADIO OPERATOR:  
R.H. RONALDES, BOMBARDIER.

ATTENDED: M.M. ABEL, NAVIGATOR: L.R.  
GULLEY, PILOT: P.C. DARDEN, CO-PILOT:  
A. PINKERTON, ENGINEER.

NOV 10, 1944 - WESTOVER FIELD, MASS.

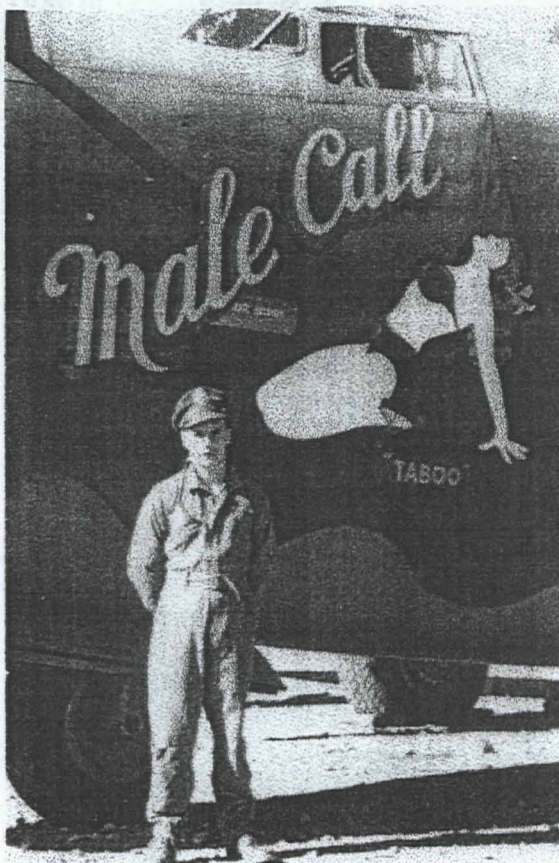
Standing: Herman Leeco, Bob Ronalde,  
Bob Webb, Lee Gulley, Myron Abel  
Kneeling: Kenneth Kropf, Ted Lodek,  
G.I. Bartolino, Arthur Pinkerton, Mike  
Aguirre.  
Sitting: Paul Darden, Harry Buckel

Winter, 1944

Nov. 1944 Behind our hut  
at Old Buck

Lee Gulley  
Jack Cabala  
Ed Mayton  
Dave Dobrev  
Myron Abel  
Robert Webb  
Herman Leeco





*Male Call*, was B-24H 42-52154, from the 453rd BG, 734th BS, with Battle Letter G. She was flown by Maj Jimmy Stewart, of Hollywood fame. This was the only original group ship to be with the unit at the end of the war, when she had accrued 95 missions and returned to the ZI. (via D. Olds)



42-52154	MALE CALL	B-24H-10-FO	G	(#92311 on fuselage is project number) The only one of the original 61 A/C still with the Group at war's end. (per Wib Clingan: 09/25/44 repaired at Bovington, Hertfordshire for flak damage to nose & tail. 03/17/45 repaired at Thorpe Abbots for damage to #1 engine.) Xferred to 44th BG after 05/05/45. Eventually 95 missions, ret'd to ZI. Assigned to storage facility @ Altus, OK on 10/09/45
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The following posted on the crew bulletin board

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Headquarters 453rd Bomb Group (Heavy)  
24 December Mission Summary

To Whom it may Concern.

The Target came in early including all necessary information excepting the routes and times. This was our biggest effort yet with every flyable aircraft -65- scheduled. We also had the Division weather ship to put up. At 0430 the weather flight was scrubbed and the war weary a/c was loaded as the only spare..

Pre-briefing was delayed thirty (30) minutes waiting for routes and times. The delayed arrival did not give the briefing team enough time to plot any routes except our own, and there was no way of knowing what interference our force might expect on the route in or out to the rally point after the bombing.

Lt. Col. James Stewart came down for the briefing along with several guests: Paul V. McNutt, U.S Congressman , General Griswold 2BD, General Ott, Commanding General 65th Fighter Wing, and another wheel. The formation was so large even the extra movable black boards were not enough to show distinctly where each man flew. The briefing went off as smoothly as could be expected with the last minute arrival of routes and times.

There were just barely enough parachutes for each man. The Flak suits were divided equally since there were only enough for sixty (60) crews.

The ships were marshaled on time and sixty-four (64) aircraft got off. One aircraft had a runaway supercharger on takeoff so the pilot feathered the prop. The plugs were fouled so the ship was unable to take off. One ship had a supercharger malfunction on preflight and the crew, Lt. Duncans, took the war weary aircraft, and completed the mission even though he had engine trouble. One ship turned back before leaving England and another returned just before reaching the IP. Sixty-two (62) aircraft got over the target Some aircraft went in to attack in spite of engine trouble

Group, Wing and Division assembly went off in a manner we all like to see, but after leaving the DAL the trouble started. The first error was turning 60 degrees too far and getting seventeen (17) miles off course. The Group also missed the IP by eight (8) miles. Everyone made a good recovery except Capt. Gulley. Capt. Gulley chose a target of opportunity which was a very high priority target. Naturally he shellacked the target. The other five (5) squadrons bombed the primary. Four (4) with excellent results and one (1) with poor to fair results.

The trip home was uneventful although three (3) aircraft landed in France, and one (1) at Woodbridge.



The weather map at briefing boosted moral one hundred per cent as the only mark on the map was the freezing level. The weather was as briefed fortunately, and only a few high cirrus clouds were seen

The Group could have never have gotten sixty-two (62) aircraft over the target without the co.-operation of every person on the base, and the effort expended is greatly appreciated.

Van D. Downer

Lt. Col. Air Corps  
Operations Officer.



Herrman, co-pilot, (as he was accustomed to do) said, "The Big Boy still has us by the hand." We had descended to approximately 2,000 feet by this time and nearing the Baltic Sea. With luck, we would be in Sweden before that 2,000 feet shrunk to zero.

Our next problem was crossing into Sweden. We were in no position to comply with international law requiring a damaged military plane to complete three complete circles with bomb-bay doors open, wheels down and firing yellow flares before crossing the border of a neutral country. Luck still rode with us. We were below the Swedish radar and one was aware of our presence at this time. Some anti-aircraft crews spotted us from their ground batteries and fired a few rounds but with no attempt to actually hit us. Our next cause for concern was a Scandinavian snowstorm which severely hampered us in our search for a place to set down.

Everyone but Whitehead and Herrman had moved to the waist section, preparing for a crash landing or to bail out. Just as we emerged from the snowstorm, two Swedish Fighters appeared...one on our right wing and one on our left wing. The pilot began to signal that we were to drop our landing gear and open our bomb bays. We played it real dumb and waved back as if we thought he was just a one-man welcoming committee. Whitehead gave the order for us to bail out if we were not on the ground in five minutes. I asked his intention. He said, "We're riding her in." I replied, "The intercom has just gone dead, we can't hear a thing." He repeated his order. I spoke to the crew, "No need to try the intercom...we can't hear a thing. Hope you can hear us. We have put up the crash belts and are ready to ride her in. Hope we are not alone. No need to waste any time trying to talk with us...just concentrate on setting the Sister down in one piece." Whitehead made a beautiful

landing (as we knew he would) at Malmo. Just in time because Dolly's Sister had just about had it. The next thing I knew, a Swedish soldier (at least I hoped he was Swedish), was on the bomb-bay catwalk just in front of me as I headed for the flight deck. The soldier had a "sub-machine gun" in the crook of his left arm and he sunk the end of the barrel in my stomach. Sticking out his right hand he said, "Welcome to Sweden."

The second soldier had a pistol pressed against Whitehead's temple and was motioning for him to taxi to the right. At this time, Whitehead asked me a very interesting question...preceded by a statement. "Tom, there's a Swedish soldier with a pistol at my head motioning me to taxi to the right. The second soldier is on the ground armed with a rifle pointed at me motioning for me to taxi to the left, which one should I obey?" I replied, "I have problems of my own, but in my opinion, follow the request of the soldier nearest you." Slipping in under the radar screen had caught the troops at Malmo by surprise. We learned later that the soldiers were devoid of any ammo and were just as fearful we would come out shooting as we were that they might pull the trigger.

Number two engine had had the oil rocker line shot out, number four gas line had worked loose and the fire in number three was caused by the gasoline, intended for number four engine, running down the wing and burning in number three's exhaust. The buckets of number three's supercharger were burned out due to the external fire. Battle damage was very little. We heard there were 268 German fighters in the air over Hamburg that 21st day of November. See what I mean about the "Luck of the Tourist?"



# A MISSION ESPECIALLY FOR HITLER

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*A Record Load of Destructive Force Was Loosened on the Group's Targets*

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Mission #192: December 24, 1944, Christmas Eve, the 8th Air Force presented Hitler with a Christmas gift with excellent results, their greatest effort ever. More than two thousand four-engine bombers took part in the display of air might over Mayen, Germany.

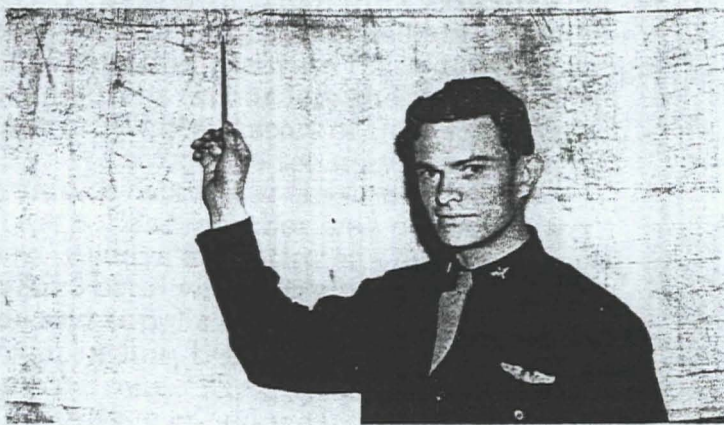
The 453rd was honored by the presence of two distinguished visitors: Commissioner Paul V. McNutt and Brig. General Griswold, Chief of Staff of the 2nd Bombardment Division, watched as members of sixty-four crews filed into the briefing room.

They listened intently as a picture of the day's operation was drawn by Capt. Hoffman, of Operations, and Lt. Meen, of Intelligence. Capt. Strahan, the weather officer, gave one of those rare briefings in which he predicted no clouds whatsoever along the route.

From the central tower, the group's guests watched as the first of the more than three-score planes took to the air with the aid of their landing lights and the light of the moon. It was an all-out effort, and the 453rd was proud of its contribution.

Six and a half squadrons directed their

attack against the road and rail junctions of Mayen. These small communication and supply centers were the crux of Van Ronstedt's offensive, for his supplies were being taken right up to the front lines by rail. In perfect flying weather, a record load of destructive force was loosened on the group's targets with excellent results: one hundred and sixty-six tons of bombs, by far the greatest load yet carried by the 453rd, dropped from the bellies of their sixty-two attacking Liberators.



Lt. Robert Hoffman, 732nd Asst. DPS Officer

another reason for celebration: it was Christmas. And to celebrate the combined occasion, as the group was returning and nearing their home base, some unknown person chose to use the command radio. "Put on your Christmas lights."

The voice was obeyed and suddenly a festive Christmas tree with lights was in place. The tower and ground support personnel applauded the display. Christmas Eve had started!

Despite war, Christmas was a special time to remember.

The 453rd Bombardment Group had that day established a new record in the Division - if not the 8th Air Force - for the number of planes from one bombardment group over one target.

With that kind of new record there was reason to celebrate. There was



# SEEING THE WAR FROM THE WAIST GUNNER POSITION

5th Mission - 24 December, 1944.

Our target was the marshalling yards at Mayen which is 15 miles west of Koblenz on the Rhine River. The 8th Air Force, and all flying, had been shut down for the last 12 days due to heavy weather. This was a maximum effort mission, to stop Von Runsted's winter offensive.

Load - twenty four 250# GP's: temperature at altitude -36°C. Bombed from 22,000 feet. Visual bombing. Flak along route - meager and inaccurate. However, our lead ship was hit and #2 engine knocked out. Flak was really heavy and accurate just out of our range. The squadrons on our left and right really caught it. Fighter escort of P-47's, P-51's and P-38's. We didn't see too may. However, it was said at debriefing they engaged the Luftwaffe. The weather was perfect, after almost 10 days of continuous fog. Our object (8th Air Force) was to try to cripple the railroads and supplies the Germans were bringing up front in this, their biggest offensive on the Western Front. Their timing was perfect, plus the advantage of bad weather which prohibited the 8th Air Force from flying the past 12 days.

Results - bulls eye - right on the target, plus a few bombs hitting throughout the small town. Gottman, Tracy, and I saw the bombs hitting, and plenty of dark black smoke on the target. It was a pretty sight and picture the town surrounded by a snow-covered landscape of farms. Communiques claim over 70 fighters of the Luftwaffe shot down. For the 8th Air Force, this was probably the largest air armada to hit the Reich. At least 3,000 planes (bombers and fighters) were launched. Our Christmas gift to the Reich was twenty four 250# GP's, wrapped in steel casings. This was the largest air attack that was ever put up by mankind. Three cheers for the 8th Air Force.



# DAYS REMEMBERED

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*"I don't know if it makes any difference,  
but number three is on fire."*

---

by Technical Sergeant Frank R. Thomas

Earlier days and times of your life have a way of returning to haunt and taunt. However when a request is received to set these memories down in print, they seem to have faded completely. Such a request has been received to record some remembrance pertaining to becoming internees in a neutral country while flying with the 453rd Bombardment Group (Heavy).

Kaylor

Whitehead was pilot of the crew to which I was assigned. We arrived in the European Theater of Operation on July 4th, 1944 and were assigned to the 453rd a few days later. We were now a part of a combat operation.

So many new faces to learn had become a necessity once again. One of the first, of course, is the Squadron Commander (Major Van Dowda of the 734th). Then, and not necessarily in order were: First Sgt. Agee; M/S John N. Wilson; Sgt Wayne (The Genius) Conklin and Sgt Tourida A. Rogledi. Wilson, Conklin and Rogledi were the ground crew members assigned to the B-24H "Never Mrs." These were important people to know! Crew members learned to depend on these men more than ever thought possible.

We quickly learned the names of other planes and their assigned Crew Chiefs....Male Call (Jackson); Lucky Penny (Karr); Crow's Nest (Clint Colvin) only to mention a few. These were the backbone of the well-maintained fleet of heavy bombers.



July became August, followed quickly by September and a new experience for Whitehead's Tourists. September 7th taught us that we were never very far from becoming prisoners of the enemy. The scene is

set for our becoming internees some two months later.

✱ Our first to Hamburg, Germany came on October 30, 1944. We found the area of Germany blanketed with a fog so thick and deep the mission was scrubbed ..just as the bomb run should have begun. The absence of a PFF ship made it impossible to locate the target and complete the run. Everyone aborted except the "Tourist". We had no choice really. All our controls had iced up and the Never Mrs continued on her journey over Hamburg. We were in no way sure of the manoeuvres performed by her, until her wild gyrations and vibrations caused the ice to lose its grip on control cables



and surfaces. We joined another B-24 group in the Cuxhaven area and returned to England. There we were accused of going on another sight-seeing tourist excursion! (This was on the same day that Col. Hub Zempke iced up, lost a wing on his P-47 and become a P.O.W.)

The stage for my second and third visits to Hamburg had been set. On my second scheduled visit to Hamburg I was called out to fly with another crew. Luckily, the mission was scrubbed but, by this time, the entire crew had developed a thing about Hamburg. The final omen was the loss of Never Mrs. on November 11, 1944. She exploded over the Ruhr Valley on her seventieth mission...still running on the four original engines. She was carrying a new crew on their fourth mission and there were only four survivors. Your plane became almost as much a part of your life as did the men you flew with. Of course, the human life remained more important than the machine.

★ We were awakened on the morning of November 21, 1944 and informed the "Tourist" would fly today. Breakfast at the usual 12:30-1:30 a.m., briefing at 3:30 a.m., and take-off at 5:45 a.m. The same breakfast we had eaten so many times before—the trip to the line and the briefing room. Target: Harburg-Hamburg oil storage. Command Pilot (lead-plane) was Colonel Van D. Dowda; his right wing plane

(deputy lead) was Captin E. E. Traylor's Crew. (Traylor was a schoolmate of mine.) I believe Lieutenant Rollins' crew flew the left wing position and the "Tourist" flew slot.

The announcement that our target was Hamburg did not create a fear or desperation. Though I must admit I had a feeling of resignation and a deep seated conviction that this was to be my last mission. This feeling or premonition was so great that when a fellow Hoosier (resident of Indiana) said, "See you about 4:40 Frank", I replied, "Not me—we can't possibly make it over Hamburg for the third time." I am not sure what I expected, (not death), unlike a high percentage of Eighth Air Force crew members. I did not have any doubt at any time that I would live through the Second Wold War. I believe this feeling was also shared by the other members of the crew. Leaving the briefing sessions, we caught our 6x6 transportation to our individual planes. This was to be our first mission in the new B-24L assigned to us as a replacement for the Mrs. We had taken this plane up for a shake-down flight a few days earlier and many requests for modifications were on our list. We wanted to make sure she deserved the honor of being christened Never Mrs Too. But we never flew the new 'L' model on a combat mission..she didn't check out on the 21st.



Falun, Sweden 453rd. 734th Squadron Interned Crew - Front Row: Charles A. Christburg, Bombardier; Edward C. Herrman, Co-Pilot; Kaylor C. Whitehead, Pilot; Howard A. Middleton, Navigator. Back Row: George R. Roby, Nose Gunner; Russell L. Harriman, Flight Engineer; James B. Taylor, Left Waist Gunner; Martin K. Boone, Right Waist Gunner; Frank R. Thomas, Radio; and Charles B. Rubbo, Tail Gunner.



*"Incidentally, we're losing altitude at the rate of 2,000 feet per minute."*

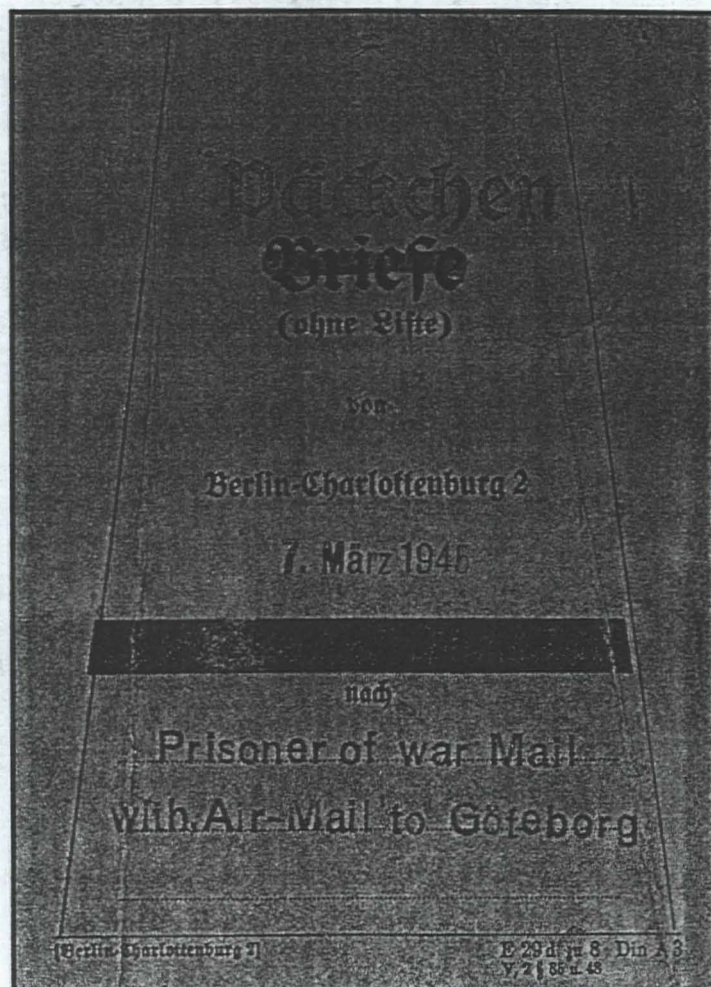
The stand-by was Dolly's Sister which had been assigned to Wendell Faulkner's Crew...Crew Chief was Mosgar. So that was the baby we took off in. Number four engine began to act up before we reached the Channel. This was a new engine, just installed and presumably slow timed. We had a run again, die again bout with number four all the way in to the target. I was not on intercom until the bomb run began. As radio operator I left my post and went to the bomb bay to check and see that no bombs hung up at the time of release. Upon arrival in the bomb bays from the flight deck, I joined the rest of the crew on the intercom. This day, after reconnecting my oxygen mask, I connected to the intercom system just in time to hear H. A. Middleton, navigator, ask, "You just feathered another engine?"

I waited until all bombs had cleared the bays before inquiring how many engines we had lost. Whitehead informed me number two and number four were feathered and number three was losing power rapidly. Number three was on full throttle plus booster, manifold pressure had passed the red line. and was pulling in excess of 60 inches mercury pressure. He concluded by saying, "Incidentally, we're losing altitude at the rate of 2,000 feet per minute."

Most air crews in trouble talked about going to Switzerland or Sweden, depending on their proximity to the target. Whitehead's next question to the crew was, "Shall we try to make Sweden?" The silence was deafening. After what seemed hours of waiting for someone to voice an opinion, I said "Let's go home, Boss." Whitehead informed us we had no more than 45 minutes in the air, and this would mean ditching in the North Sea. I replied, "In that case, let's shoot for Sweden." Middleton cut in and gave a heading for England, followed by a heading for Sweden. In order to stay airborne, we began to throw everything we could over-

board including ammunition, auxiliary power source and tuning units for my transmitter. During the madhouse cleaning operation, James Taylor, left waist gunner, called in, "I don't know if it makes any difference but number three is on fire." His voice expressed no alarm or concern. I answered him by saying, "No, it doesn't matter just keep throwing out everything you can pry loose." I doubt if any of us realized what Taylor had said until we had eliminated all the weight we could and were beginning to level off. I can only speak for myself, when it did soak in..I was scared as hell.

The "Tourist" luck continued to hold. As we leveled off, the fire either burned itself out or was blown out. We didn't try to determine which was responsible, just gave thanks.





*From the Desk of*

**John N. Hackney, Jr.**

04/27/09

Hi Berry Roy,

Add to  
Paul  
Darden

This one is from

A Brother of Norley  
Harrell Harrell (Mrs. William)  
and a Brother-in-law of  
Susan Darden Harrell  
(Sister of Paul Darden)  
(See His History We Have  
AL Rensay)





## Battle Experience:

I was drafted immediately after graduating from High School, and was always teased for being the youngest in my outfit. I received almost 16 weeks of basic training at Fort Blanning, Florida. While in training, I met Alfred J. Hoffman from Charlotte, N. C. and we became good friends. After basic training, our outfit was sent overseas so fast that we never were issued any winter clothing.

We crossed the Atlantic on the Queen Mary ship, and had to shut down the engines several times because German Subs got too close. We landed in Northampton, England, then crossed the English Channel by boat to Larve, France. We were put on a train in a boxcar we called "40 & 8", meaning the boxcar would hold 40 men or 8 horses. It took us seven days to cross France to Luxemburg. We had to take turns sitting down on the floor of the boxcar and sleep anyway that we could.

It started snowing when we were halfway across France and was extremely cold. The weather was so bad the American planes could not fly over and drop ammunition and supplies to the 101st Airborne troops who had been cut off near Bastogne. Our outfit was being sent in to rescue them.

We were taken to the front lines on a kitchen truck (still dressed in our Florida clothes) and dropped off behind a huge manure pile beside of a destroyed home. (Germans use manure to heat their homes). The snow was three feet deep, and it snowed each day on the battlefield.

We were there less than an hour when I saw my friend take a direct hit and was blown to pieces. I was also wounded in the leg at this time. I fired shots into the area where the attack came from, but I was never forced to shoot anyone in a "face to face combat". However, survival meant "kill or be killed", and that was a horrible lesson.

Finally the firing stopped and I looked around and could not see another living soul. I decided to crawl to the hedgerow surrounding this open field. Little did I know there were German SS Troops on the other side of the hedgerow. They were considered the toughest German soldiers--all hand picked, same size, blue eyes, blond hair, and specially trained. I found a foxhole and crawled in, putting branches over the top which caught the snow and gave me some protection. At night you could hear the Germans talking as they walked near the foxhole.

I would have been an easy target in the snow if I had left the foxhole, so this was my home for 12 or more days. I ate  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a D-bar each day and snow for water. About the 10th day, an American Medic soldier fell into the foxhole with me. He had a walkie-talkie, some aspirins, but no food. I shared my last D-bars with him. After our food gave out, we decided we had to try to find some more Americans. As soon as we exposed ourselves in the snow, the Germans who were hiding up in the trees started firing at us. Two other Medics who were in a foxhole nearby joined us for about 200 yards, but the firing was so intense they decided we might have a better chance if we split up again. The Medic and I crawled along a ditch in the snow until we reached a safe distance, then he helped me walk.

We wandered for several days before we found some more Americans in a house that had been destroyed except for one room. They had some D-bars, a few supplies, and a Jeep. One of them drove me to a Field Hospital



in the Jeep. The driver seemed to be lost part of the time and it took several more days. The Medic and I parted here and I realized that I did not even learn his name.

At the Field Hospital they put me in a rubber suit packed with ice to keep me from thawing out too fast. I had severe frostbite and my toes, ears, nose and fingers had cracked open. I had a high fever and gangrene had set-in in my leg. I only weighed 87 pounds.

Then I was taken by Jeep to an Evacuation Hospital near Paris, France where the doctors treated me with sulphur drugs. From there, I was flown to a hospital in England where I stayed for nine months.

With high fever, I cannot be sure of the time lapse between hospitals because I was in and out of consciousness, but I do know it was 21 days before I received any medical treatment after I was wounded. After thawing out, I sat on the bed and combed my hair and it all fell out. That was a shock, and I was very self conscious about it when I came back home.

The doctor came in on Friday and told me they needed to amputate my leg. Amputation was the standard treatment for gangrene back then, and to lie in bed and listen to that saw was almost unbearable. I asked the doctor to please wait until Monday and if my leg was no better, I would sign the papers for permission to amputate then. With a lot of prayers and the new drug, Pennicilin, my leg was better on Monday and was saved. The climate is so humid in England that wounds did not heal fast. No one soldier received much time during psychological treatment because there were so many who needed help.

After a long recovery, I was released from the hospital. Being the only survivor of my outfit, the Army did not know where to place me. On my records, they saw that I had driven a school bus in high school, so they assigned me to Truck Detail. I hauled Troops and supplies through France and Germany until I was discharged.

Time never let me forget that I had fought in one of the toughest battles during World War II, "The Battle of the Buldge".

JILES PICKTEN HARRELL

3rd Army Infantry

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