

MACR# 15568

~~RESTRICTED~~

WAR DEPARTMENT
HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES
WASHINGTON

R-939

MISSING AIR CREW REPORT

IMPORTANT: This report will be compiled in triplicate by each Army Air Forces organization within 48 hours of the time an aircraft is officially reported missing.

1. ORGANIZATION: Location: England Command or Air Force 8th AF
GROUP 306th Bomb (H); SQUADRON 367th Bomb (H) DETACHMENT
2. SPECIFY: Point of Departure England; Course
Intended Destination Lorient, France; Type of Mission Bombing
3. WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF CRASH OR WHEN LAST REPORTED:
4. GIVE: (a) Date 6 Mar 43 Time 1400 hours; And Location of Last known whereabouts of missing aircraft Lorient, France
(b) Specify whether () Last sighted; () last contacted by radio; (X) Forced down; (Seen to Crash; or () Information not available.
5. AIRCRAFT WAS LOST, OR IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN LOST, AS A RESULT OF (Check only one: () Enemy Aircraft; (X) Enemy Anti-Aircraft; () Other Circumstances as follows
6. AIRCRAFT: Type, Model and Series B 17 F: AAF Serial No. 42-5130
7. ENGINES: Type, Model and Series _____; AAF Serial No. (a) _____
(b) _____ (c) _____ (d) _____
8. INSTALLED WEAPONS (Furnish below Make, Type and Serial Number)
(a) _____ (b) _____ (c) _____ (d) _____
(e) _____ (f) _____ (g) _____ (h) _____
9. THE PERSONS LISTED BELOW WERE REPORTED AS: (a) Battle Casualty X
or (b) Non-Battle Casualty _____
10. NUMBER OF PERSONS ABOARD AIRCRAFT: Crew 10; Passengers 0; Total 10
(Starting with pilot, furnish the following particulars: If more than 11 persons were aboard aircraft, list similar particulars on separate sheet and attach original to this form).

Crew Position	Name in Full (Last Name First)	Rank	Serial Number
1. Pilot	✓ Ryan, John L	Maj	0-430620 RMC
2. CP	✓ Simmons, Gerald L	1st Lt	0-661879 DE.D
3.	✓ Herman, Robert B	1st Lt	0-660491 RMC
4.	✓ Laine, James A	1st Lt	0-661003
5. E	Blakemore, Glenn A	S/Sgt	17 032 540
6.	Forrester, William	S/Sgt	15 099 498
7. W4	✓ Greene, James C	S/Sgt	18 058 542
8. R0	Perry, Chas E	T/Sgt	11 009 583
9.	Chapman, John R	S/Sgt	18 081 398
10.	Mumaw, Robert G	S/Sgt	15 082 521
11.			

12. IDENTIFY BELOW THOSE PERSONS WHO ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE LAST KNOWLEDGE OF AIRCRAFT, AND CHECK APPROPRIATE COLUMN TO INDICATE BASIS FOR SAME:

SEE SR4D#547
547

HEADQUARTERS 306TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Commanding Officer

A P O 634,
7 March 1943.

SUBJECT: Operations Report.

TO : Commanding General, Headquarters, First Bombardment Wing APO 634.

(In compliance with Memorandum, Headquarters First Bombardment Wing, dated 21 February 1943, the following report is submitted.)

1. Narrative of Mission.

On mission of 6 March 1943, 21 A/C of 306th Bombardment Group (H) began taking off at 0945 hours. The Group was air-borne at 0955 $\frac{1}{2}$ and assembled in formation over base. Formation flown was two Squadrons of seven in "V's" echeloned to the right and one Squadron of seven in "V's" echeloned to the left. Lead Squadron was at base altitude with right Squadron high and left Squadron low. The Group proceeded to Basingbourne and rendezvoused with the 91st Bombardment Group (H) forming the 101st Provisional Combat Wing. The Combat Wing proceeded to Thurleigh arriving at 1027 hours. Four minutes later rendezvous was made with the 102nd Provisional Combat Wing at Rushden and the First Bombardment Wing proceeded to Frome with the 306th Bombardment Group (H) leading, arriving there at 1109 hours at an altitude of 500 feet. The formation flew on from Frome, crossing the English Coast out at 1145 hours, maintaining the same altitude of 500 feet. The formation arrived at the Scilly Islands at 1220 and made a left turn at 1000 feet. Proceeding on course, another left turn was made at a point 47-14 N, 06-12 W, maintaining the same altitude. At a point 46-38 N, 05-43 W, a sharp left turn was executed at 9000 feet. Arriving at a point 47-28 N, 04-33 W, a slight right turn was made at 22,500 feet and formation proceeded to the I.P. where a slight left turn was made. The bomb run was made at 22,000 feet and bombs were dropped from this altitude at 1440 $\frac{1}{2}$ on the primary target at Lorient, France. Results were good with hits in the target area. Flak was heavy and there was some fighter opposition. A wide left semi-circular turn was executed and two aircraft were lost due to flak, at this point, namely No. 42-5378 and No. 42-5130. Formation crossed French Coast out at 1447 and proceeded to a point 47-05 N, 06-27 W, descending to an altitude of 4500 feet. A sharp right turn was executed and the formation proceeded to a point 48-15 N, 07-00 W, at 1548 descending to 1000 feet and making a slight right turn. Another right turn was made at 1624 hours at 49-45 N, 06-20 W, maintaining the same altitude. The formation crossed the English Coast in at 2000 feet at 1650 hours and our Group split. Eight aircraft proceeded to Chivenor and landed there at 1735. One aircraft, due to its being low on fuel landed at Davidstowe. The remaining ten aircraft proceeded direct to Exeter landing at 1726 hours. On 7 March our aircraft at Exeter took off at 1350 and proceeded to base, landing at 1526. Aircraft No. 42-2978 which

was badly damaged was left at Exeter. Aircraft No. 41-24507 with a broken expander tube and aircraft No. 41-24487, which was bogged down at it's dispersal were also left there. The eight aircraft at Chivenor took off at 1400 hours, landing at base at 1546 hours. Aircraft No. 42-5729 took off from Davidstowe at 1400 hours and landed at Thurleigh at 1604 hours.

Tract Chart. Enclosed.

Tactical Doctrine. It is extremely bad to make up-wind bombing runs. It is realized that this problem was so laid out that any other axis of attack was impossible, but up-wind bombing is definitely more dangerous than down-wind runs. The turn back to the water proved to be a good deferment to the fighters, who left our Group almost alone after leaving the target.

2. Bombing.

Bombs were released at 1440½ over the primary target, the Naval Power Station at Lorient, France at an altitude of 22,000 feet. Formation bombing was conducted on a heading of 550 with wind of 25 degrees at 65 miles per hour. 105 GP 1000 pound bombs were dropped on the target area, with some direct hits observed and some bombs scattered slightly to the right.

Bombing Plot. Enclosed.

Annotated Photographs. Forwarded to First Bombardment Wing.

The bombing of this Group was thought to be very good and the bombs which were to the right landed there due to the evasive action of tail end aircrafts of the formation.

3. Abortives.

There were no abortions by aircraft of this Group on this mission.

4. Air Combats.

a. Enemy Tactics.

Twelve to fourteen FW 190's and one ME 109 were first seen over the target. Several attacks were made, most of which were feeble and not pressed home. Frontal attacks were most numerous, but they came from all positions. The FW 190's were camouflaged various pastel colors and the ME 109's were black. The duration of the attack was comparatively short and fighters did not follow the formation out to sea. However the gunnery on this mission was exceptional. We claim five destroyed, three probably destroyed and two damaged. In addition several crew members saw one FW 190 shot down by aircraft No. 42-5130, which itself was lost over the target due to flak.

b. Our Tactics.

The gunnery on this mission was very good, with many attacks repulsed and few failures of equipment. The usual method of fire control was employed with gunners being assigned an area of fire to cover prior to take off. The positions of attack were called out by the clock method. The same defensive formation was flown as on previous missions.

c. Armament Failures.

(1) Aircraft Nos 42-2978, 42-5422 and 42-5714 reported the following failures in the Lower Ball Turrets. Turret had a loose plug resulting in an oil leakage, a blown fuse caused one solenoid to stop and another solenoid went out, with cause unknown at this time.

(2) The only Upper Turret failure was a broken solenoid wire on aircraft No. 42-5422.

(3) A weak or bent driving spring caused the left hand tail gun on aircraft No. 42-5218 to feed improperly.

d. Suggested Changes in our Tactics or Equipment.

The operation and function of armament equipment was very efficient on this mission and there are no recommended changes in doctrine.

5. Flak.

Flak from flak ships and the island of Groix was very light and inaccurate. However at the target it was intense and accurate as to both height and direction especially in the low Squadron of the formation. Over the target aircraft No. 42-2978 was shot down by flak with two parachutes seen to open. Directly after leaving the target aircraft No. 42-5130 was badly damaged and when last seen was heading inland under control, with two engines on right side out. The flak was white, black and red in color.

6. Communications.

a. Procedure employed.

Generally correct procedure was followed during the mission. Radio silence was maintained prior to and during take off.

b. Navigational Aids.

Eight aircraft used F, D or B multi-group beacons with good results up to 100-120 miles. Three aircraft reported erratic results, thought due to meaconing.

Ten aircraft used Splasher Beacons Nos 12, 13, 14 and 15 and reported good results up to 120 miles. Three aircraft reported possible beaconing on these.

One aircraft contacted Exeter and two homed on base station. No. "J" Beams were used.

c. Radio Discipline.

No breaches of radio discipline occurred on this mission.

d. Failure of equipment.

Aircraft No. 41-24467 reported IFF out due to a blown fuse which has been replaced. Aircraft No. 42-5171 reported interphone in upper turret out due to slip rings, which is being checked. The trailing antenna motor burned up on aircraft No. 42-5431 due to a short circuit. This is being replaced. Pilot's interphone on aircraft No. 42-5072 cuts out, with brushes in wheel not contacting the plate. This also is being checked. The liarson receiver on aircraft No. 42-2978 went out, the trouble being in the band-change switch. The VHF was reported noisy in most cases and the dynamotors are being checked and cleaned.

e. Suggestions.

The fact that some navigators report beaconing of beacons and that others do not is confusing. It has been suggested that the former check their radio compasses over England to see if similar results are obtained.

7. Other equipment failures.

There were no serious equipment failures, but many minor things were reported. One supercharger was erratic and another ran away. One aircraft reported No. 3 engine tachometer fluctuating. Scratched nose glass on aircraft NO. 42-5072 reflects the sun badly.

8. Battle Damage.

With a few exceptions the battle damage on this mission was very moderate. One aircraft No. 42-2978 was badly damaged, but returned to Exeter. The left outboard wing was severely damaged and also No. 1 fuel tank. The No. 1 propellor will have to be changed and electrical wiring in navigator's compartment, cut by flak must be repaired. This ship has been transferred to the VIII Air Force Service Command. The right main landing strut on aircraft No. 41-24467 was hit and the ship will be out of status until this has been repaired. Flak holes in skin surfaces on two aircraft put them out of status for a few hours, but they will be repaired and back in morning 8 March.

9. Aircraft down away from home base.

The nineteen returning aircraft of this Group all landed at bases other than their home station. Eight landed at Chivenor remained over night and proceeded to base 7 March 1943. One landed at Davidstowe because of fuel shortage, remained over night, and proceeded to base 7 March 1943. The other ten landed at Exeter. One was transferred to VIII AFSC due to battle damage, one because stuck in the mud and one blew an expander tube, necessitating these aircrafts to remain there. The other seven aircraft returned to base 7 March.

10. General Recommendations and Corrective action adopted.

It is recommended that the First Bombardment Wing be joined up at a low altitude whenever possible. The assembly with the 102 Combat Wing was accomplished with no trouble and it is felt that this was due largely to its being done at low altitude.

The general impression on the Wing formation on this mission is that it was flown over too deep an altitude. The lead Group stayed at or below 500 feet over the land and water. The second Group was well down, but the other two Groups flew too high to accomplish the desired results. This was especially true on the trip back to the emergency bases when the chances of interception were high.

This Group used five double nose gun installations on this mission, and it is felt that this arrangement is highly satisfactory. It is known that these installations definitely turned several attacks due to their volume of fire, and it is to be regretted that the Groups are limited as to the numbers of these installations available. If each Group had eight or nine of these installations it would be possible to keep six of them in combat commission at all times, thereby giving the Group the fire power it needs in the nose. Of the ships without this installation, it is impossible to deal adequately with nose attacks.

4 Incls:

- Incl 1 - Bomb Chart.
- Incl 2 - Formation Diagram.
- Incl 3 - Radio Tract Chart.
- Incl 4 - Bombing Flight Record.
- Incl 5 - Recommendation.

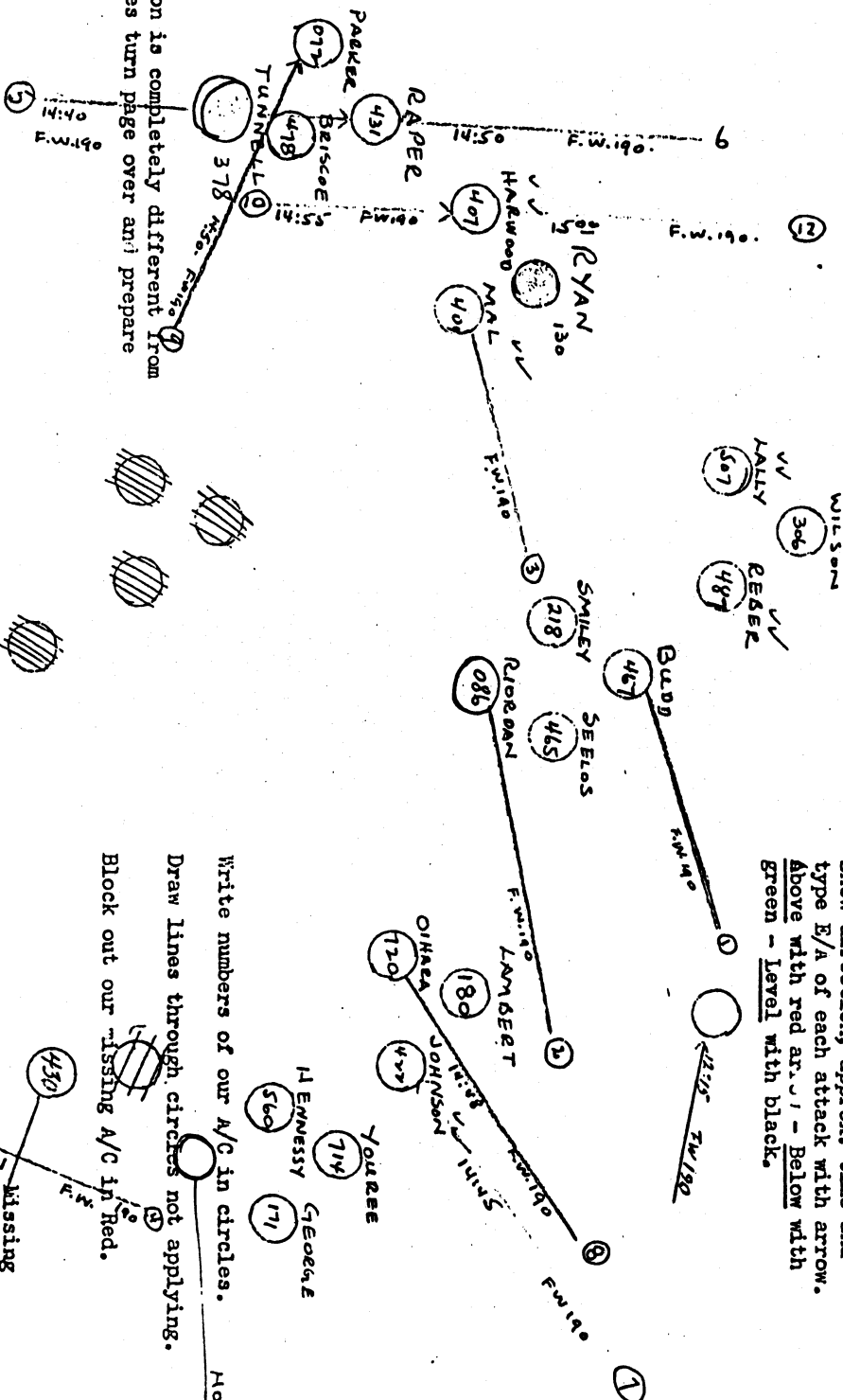
Claude E. Putnam
CLAUDE E. PUTNAM,
Lt. Col., AC,
Commanding.

SECRET

GROUP 306
DATE 6-3-43

COMBAT DUPLICATION CHECK FORM

Show direction, approx. time and type E/A of each attack with arrow. Above with red arrow - Below with green - Level with black.



Write numbers of our A/C in circles.
Draw lines through circles not applying.
Block out our missing A/C in Red.

SWIF IN POSITION
3 E NIND

If actual formation is completely different from position of circles turn page over and prepare diagram on back.

Double nose guns

La Mairie de LAÏBEZELLEC communique :

Alerte du 6 Mars 1943 - de 13 H. 20 à 15 H. 40 :

Bombardement de 6 minutes. Avions dispersés.
Nombre : une vingtaine. Altitude : 3 à 4.000
mètres. Nombre de bombes : 25. - Poids : 600 à
1.000 Kilogs. Dispositifs pour éclateurs instan-
tanés.

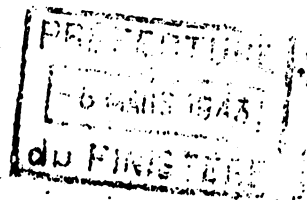
Nombre de tués : 32 dont 17 ensevelis.

- - blessés : 9 -

Maisons détruites : 15

partiellement détruites : 6.

endommagées : 25.



La Gendarmerie de QUIMPER communique :

à PONT-L'ABBE : un parachutiste américain tué
hier dans la soirée à ST-JEAN-YROLIMON. Sera
inhumé ce jour à 9 H. Les gendarmes sont sur
place.
