

**RECOLLECTIONS OF WINDSOR, ORWELL AND WWII
- AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTES (MARCH 2005)**

by

Kenneth T. Waters

3/20/05



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PREFACE TO AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

This collection of autobiographical notes has been written in sections over the past 50 (+) years. The illustrations are mostly photos I either took myself or acquired from friends and in some cases from the base photo labs of the 96th and the 388th bomb groups. Some still photos were obtained from the Air Force film documenting the Aphrodite Project.

I made these notes for my own amusement and edification in trying to understand the big picture of what propelled me into a war I didn't want. I did want to fly airplanes and like so many other flyers took the Army Air Corps Aviation Cadet Training route for learning to fly. Many of us discovered that it could have a very high price. It was a time of exhilaration and an obsession with flying even though I got very tired and strung out from long missions. I was not overly religious but I attended church most Sundays when I wasn't flying. Most nights I could get to sleep but many others had trouble sleeping. I drank moderately and never much if I was flying the next day. You didn't want to be impaired if you fly formation through flak and under attack by fighters. We only got hit by fighters a couple of times. Fortunately, the strategy in the spring of 1944 to attract fighters and shoot them down worked and so by the time our missions started, we were left with the flak problem. I have seen flak hit B-24s and B-17s and blow them apart, and all you see then is a lot of burning debris raining down. Sometimes our crewmen called out that they saw parachutes but I never saw any because I was usually too busy flying and from the pilots window you have limited visibility downward.

Anyway, these notes are made in hopes a grandchild will eventually be interested in what it was like to come from a small town in Ohio and do combat missions as a pilot, copilot and tail gunner/formation officer in B-17 bombers in the Eighth Air Force in WWII. My three grandchildren, Corrine Amy Johnson, Christian William Johnson and Ryan Kenneth Johnson are my pride and joy!

My wife Dorothy Anne Ransome Waters has helped me over the years with editorial corrections and suggestions. She is my teammate in every way and we have shared in our successes and trials and tribulations.

Ken Waters

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KENNETH THEODORE WATERS (3/17/2005)

1ST Lt. US Army Air Corps, 413th Sqdn., 96th Bomb Group, EIGHTH Air Force at Snetterton, England. SN A0-700379 & SN 35519799 (enlisted).

The son of Theodore Bidwell Waters and Edith Elizabeth (NIMS) Waters; was born at Bala Cynwyd, Pa. on June 18, 1922. He was educated at the Colebrook and Windsor, Ohio elementary schools and at Windsor and Orwell High schools graduating from Orwell, Ohio, High School in the class of 1940. He was married on August 17, 1942 to Dorothy Anne Ransome at Napoleon, Ohio while they both worked at Weatherhead Co. on 131st St., Cleveland, Ohio. He started pilot training on June 12, 1940 at Warren, Ohio and received his Student Pilot Certificate (S197914) on October 9, 1940. He soloed on July 27, 1941. His instructor was Roy G. Lyon #26396. His total civilian flying hours were 10 hours and 55 minutes prior to entering Aviation Cadets.

He was drafted into the Army in October, 1942 for training at the Basic Infantry Replacement Training Center, Ft. McClellan, Alabama. His company was a select group of officer candidates based on the Army's comprehensive testing program. He refused the OCS opportunity and insisted on being sent to the Army Air Corps Cadet Training program. Surprisingly, after being threatened with an assignment to the fighting in Africa as an Infantry Private, he was transferred to the Aviation Cadet program at San Antonio. He was trained to be a pilot at Pine Bluff, Ark. (Primary), Coffeerville, Kan. (Basic), and Altus, Ok. (Advanced twin engine). He graduated as a pilot from Altus and was sent to Salt Lake for assignment. He was assigned to the 398th Bomb group for combat training as co-pilot on B-17's. He completed training with Robert Dunbar's crew (#1947) and they flew a new B-17 to Scotland from Grand Island, Neb. landing at Bangor, Me.; Goose Bay, Labrador; Iceland; and delivered the aircraft at Prestwick, Scotland in May, 1944. The crew was then transported by train to Stone, England, for replacement crew assignment and then to Oxford for group assignment and familiarization classes. They were assigned to the 338th Sqdn. of the 96th Bomb Group at Snetterton in May, 1944. They flew their first combat mission as a crew on June 8, 1944. Later in July they were transferred to the 413th Sqdn. for Lead Crew training with PFF (pathfinder radar equipment). During this training period they continued to fly missions leading formations and Waters became a Formation Officer flying in the Tail Gunners position when the co-pilots seat was occupied by the Squadron and Group Commanders leading the mission. His job was to report on anything of note dealing with the formations and disabled planes/shot down etc. that could only be seen to the rear.

After flying 14 missions he volunteered for the "Aphrodite" Project as a jump co-pilot on detached service with the 388th Bomb Group. The drone B-17 was loaded

with 20,000 pounds of high explosive to bomb V1 and V2 launching sites, Submarine Pens and Heavy Industries in France, Netherlands, and Germany. His job as co-pilot was to assist in take-off and setting up the auto-pilot controls for the drone and then parachute out over England. (Note; there were 19 total Aphrodite missions and four fatalities)** Waters flew his mission with pilot Robert F. Butler on December 5, 1944 and they successfully bailed out, but the drone was shot down on the approach to the industrial target at Herford, Germany. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross for this mission and was promised a credit of 5 missions.

Meanwhile Dunbar's crew was shot down on September 13, 1944. They all parachuted to safety into Germany and were POW's until released in May 1945 as the war ended.

After Aphrodite, Waters was transferred back to the 413th Sqdn. 96th BG to complete his missions. However the required number of missions had been raised from 30 to 35 during his 5 months with the Aphrodite Project so he finally completed his 30 missions on April 21, 1945 (which was the last mission flown by the 96th BG in the war). In addition to the Aphrodite mission he flew 28 bombing missions over France, Netherlands, Germany and Czechoslovakia; bombing oil refineries, railyards, seaports, aircraft engine and parts factories, airfields etc. Notable targets were Magdeburg, Paris, Munich, Schweinfurt, Berlin, Kitzengen, Dortmund, Kiel, Handorf and Ingolstadt. On one mission supplies were dropped to the Maquis (French Resistance) in southern France on Bastille Day, July 14, 1944. He was awarded the DFC for the Aphrodite mission, and the Air Medal with 4 oak leaf clusters for his combat missions.

At war's end on May 8, 1945 he was at Stone awaiting transport back to the US. He came back on the Ile de France with 11,000 US and Canadian troops and flyers onboard. He was on the upper deck in the ballroom and hammocks were strung 3 deep. There was no fresh water for bathing and 2 meals were served per day so everyone took a lot of sandwich materials (bacon and bread from breakfast) and carried it around for lunch and snacks. The trip over took 5 days and the Ile de France sailed alone. The ship was still under wartime conditions of blackout at night because it was feared that all German U-Boats had not got the word or were rogues that would not acknowledge the war had ended. The Ile de France docked at New York and he was shipped by train to Camp Atterbury, Indiana. His wife Dorothy drove from Cleveland to pick him up for a leave. Subsequently they drove to Miami for reassignment (in June). He was offered an assignment to B-29 co-pilot training in preparation for bombing Japan. He was informed that he had 94 points and could be put on inactive status. He immediately signed and was honorably discharged, effective September 7, 1945. He returned to Cleveland and went to work at Weatherhead in his old job as parts inspector. After a few weeks Dorothy convinced him to enroll at The Ohio State University, under the GI Bill, where he got his BAeroEngineering degree in March 1950.

**** on August 4, 1944 Lt. John Fisher's drone went out of control as he was bailing out and when he attempted to regain control, the drone crashed into the Thetford Forest and blew up; on August 12, Navy Lt. Joe Kennedy and his co-pilot Lt. Wilford Willy blew up in a Navy PB4Y drone over Hinton Lodge, England and were killed and; on September 11, Lt. Richard Lindahl became entangled in his static line during bailout and his chute didn't open.**

Postwar note; Waters graduated from the Ohio State University with a degree in Aeronautical Engineering in 1950. His class was part of a 5 year (experimental) engineering degree course. Subsequently OSU reverted to the standard 4 year course. He attended year round and completed his course work in 4 years, from January 1946 to March 1950. For several years he was an assistant Editor of an Aviation News Monthly published by AERO students. In 1949 he was elected President of the student branch of the Institute of Aeronautical Sciences (IAS) by his classmates; and appointed to the OSU Engineering Council as a student representative of "Texnicoi". Throughout this period he was in the Reserves flying week-ends on training flights to retain proficiency, at Lockbourne Air Force Base in Columbus. He went on inactive Reserves status in 1949 in order to bring up his scholastic average and assist in the care of his son who was born in April, 1949. He completed his Engineer-in-Training requirements and in 1963 he received his Professional Engineer License (E-27592) from the Ohio State Board of Registration. He is also a registered Professional Engineer in Pennsylvania (PE-055896-E). He holds a Single & Multi-engine pilots license (224078 FAA) which has never been used.

After graduation from OSU he was employed in the helicopter Industry by Piasecki and Boeing Helicopters working as a Project Engineer on Research and Development and Testing projects for 40 years until retirement in 1990. He was then employed part-time for 14 years as an Engineering Consultant on New Product Development, with an EATON Aerospace division, a small company manufacturing aircraft diagnostic sensors and systems. Currently he is retired.

His wife Dorothy went to OSU also, but had their first child (Eric) in 1949 and a daughter (Amy) was born on January 31, 1955. Therefore she did not complete her college studies until later, graduating from the University of Pennsylvania in June, 1970. She graduated with a law degree from Villanova in June 1977, passing the bar and becoming an Attorney in 1978. She was an Attorney in the Pubic Defenders office of Delaware County until 1985 when she retired.

Father in Service - #448571 Corporal Theodore Bidwell Waters, Company A, 329th Battalion, 302nd and 305th Tank Corps, stationed in France from September 1918 to March 1919, in World War I.

Brother in Service - Corporal Allen Eugene Waters, 202nd Combat Engineer Battalion. Was in combat from July 1944 to May 8, 1945 in the drive through Europe.

Ancestors in Service - Revolutionary War of 1776, Private Nathan Fobes, Sgt. Samuel Hubbard, Private Joseph Millen Jewett and Capt. Simon Fobes.

ILLUSTRATIONS & PHOTOS:

1. Windsor High School Junior Class of 1939.

Prof Slane, Alex ?-----, Frank Holley, Tony Lindenmeyer, Ken Waters,
Paul Bazilius ?, Willie Soloweko, Bob Loomis, Harland Kinney
Sophie (Sonia) Stepanuk, ?-----, Carolyn Czomba, Rosie German, Betty
Alderman, Ernestine Mrachko, Frances Lucas

2. Windsor High School Basketball Champions 1937/38

Prof. Slane, Frank Holley, Harland Kinney, ?-----, John Shuminski, Ken Waters
Ken Rogers, Rich Vort, Jay Stearnes ?, Ralph Isbestor, Allen Waters

3. Windsor Honor Roll of Military Service Xmas 1944

Add Ken Lawrence, Ray Loomis, and Mary Stepien to the list.

4. Orwell High School Senior Class of 1940

5. Orwell High School Class of 1940 (some of the boys)

Frank Holley, John Plizga, Bob Loomis, Jack Fulton, Lynn Brown, Alf Avery,
Harland Kinney, Roy Hinger

6. Orwell High School Class of 1940 (some on the trip to Dearborn, Mi.)

Harland Kinney, Doris Shipman, Frances Lucas, Carolyn Czomba, Norman
Gillmore, Jack Fulton, Mary Bailey, June Haynes, Frank Holley, John Plizga,
Bob Loomis, Roy Hinger.

7. Orwell High School Commencement Announcement Class of 1940 (two pages)

8. Ken Waters' AGO Identification Card & 30 Mission Record with Awards

9. Bob Dunbar's B-17 Combat Crew

10. Enlisted Crew in front of their Nissan Hut

Ken Waters Photo credit. At 96th Bomb Group June 1944. Note Norman Hyde In group, he usually didn't want to be photographed.

11. Al and Ken Waters in England

Photo taken in Oxford where Ken came to visit Al in June 1944. Al, Swifty Havel and Mel Fox were all in the 202 Combat Engineers awaiting shipment to France to build bridges, clear minefields and take soldiers across rivers. When Al and I looked for Swifty we found him sleeping in the back of a truck proving His nickname was true..

12. Notice of Frank Holley Missing In Action (July 1944)

This notice appeared in local papers probably "The Orwell News Letter". Frank (Bud) Holley was KIA but not found until after the war was over at his B-24H plane crash site. The crash site was stated by Germans as at Hugolust near Birkam, District Cosel O/S. Another record says crash site was, between Ehrenforst and Blechhammer/Upper Silesia near Heydebrock. The target was an oil refinery at Blechhammer, Germany. Details can be found in a notebook assembled by Gene Holley entitled "Francis R. Holley, "BUD", S. SGT ARMY AIR FORCE.

13. Dropping supplies to the Maquis on July 14, 1944

Photo credit Ken Waters, taken from the tail gunner's position with C3 Argus 35mm near Limoges, France a few miles from Doms at about 9:00 AM. Note gun-sight in photo and widely dispersed parachutes.

14. Aphrodite Project Jump Pilots getting in plane

Bob Butler, pilot and Ken Waters, copilot getting into the forward hatch of the drone prior to take-off. Photo from a documentary film taken at the 388th Bomb Group and Fersfield in November 1944. Copy of film is available from Ken Waters.

15. Aphrodite pilot jumping out of drone B-17 with static line at 2,000 ft.

After the first six Aphrodite missions and 4 fatalities the pilots were trained to Jump free fall from 10,000 ft. No more fatalities.

16. B-17 Drone with smoke tank "On" going in to a Simulated Target

Simulated mission run on the target, in this case Cambridge, England. Smoke was used to keep track of the drone at 300 feet altitude in bad weather, while the mother plane with the controller pilot was at 10,000 feet.

17. Drone controller Pilot in Mother Ship (practice mission)

The controller pilot has a TV screen and can see what the transmitter which is in the drone is "seeing" ahead approximately 45 degrees down in front. His controls were; engine power throttles adjustment; smoke tank "on", "off"; turns, climb and descent, through the automatic pilot and; radio altimeter "terrain following system, "on", "off", which held the plane at 300 feet over the terrain..

18. Typical Flak Bursts around a B-17 over the target with bomb doors open to drop bombs

19. Mission Map of Bombing Mission Route to Leipzig, Germany showing Flak Battery locations

20. Adjusted Service Rating Form

This shows that I have 94 points out of about 80 required to be released from active duty from the Army. Thus, I was released early from active duty and when Japan surrendered I was back at work. This early release was a complete surprise to me but I took it immediately when offered!.

21. Copy of Distinguished Flying Cross Citation for Ken Waters for Aphrodite Mission

22. Dorothy and Ken Waters at the 1947 Military Ball at Ohio State University

Ken was flying in the Air Force Reserves at Columbus, Ohio while attending Aeronautical Engineering courses at OSU under the GI Bill. Dorothy was also Attending Ohio State.

23. Ken Waters' Military Records (3 pages)

①



②





John E. Jones



Walter Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones



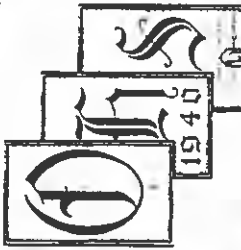
Robert Jones



Robert Jones



Robert Jones





5



6

Class Motto

"Across the Bay of Learning Lies the Ocean of Success"

Class Colors

Navy and Coral

Class Emblem

Carnation

Class Roll

Elizabeth Alderman
Alfred Avery
Mary Bailey
Doris Boyles
Jack Brake
Lynn Brown
Margaret Corron
Carolyn Czomba
Esther Durkalski
Melvin Fox
John Fulton
Norman Gillmore
Robert Hall
June Haynes
Roy Hinger

Ruth Hodge
Frank Holley
Edith Kemmer
Harland Kinney
Helen Kleczy
Anton Lindemeyer
Robert Loomis
Frances Lucas
Ernestine Mrachko
Agnes Nemeth
John Plizga
Ethel Sender
Sophie Stepanuk
Jean Warren
Kenneth Waters

Faculty

Roy E. Ferguson, Supt.

E. Stanley Melick
Clyde J. Kinney
Clifford Varney
Paul C. Brake

Louise Kensy
George L. Arms
May R. Martin
Mary G. Roberts

Commencement

Week

Orwell High School

May 19 ~ 24, 1940

Baccalaureate Service

Sunday, May 19, 1940

Processional, "Grand March from Aida"—Verdi Mrs. Junius Dixon
Hymn No. 1 "All People That on Earth Do Dwelling"
Invocation Rev. F. A. Lehn
Scripture Lesson: Philippians 3:1-14 Rev. G. Taylor Wright
Anthem: "Finlandia" Sibelius Choir
Sermon: "Carried Forward" Rev. G. Taylor Wright
Hymn No. 81 "All Hail The Power" Congregation
Benediction Rev. F. A. Lehn
Recessional "Coronation March" (Le Prophete) Mrs. Junius Dixon

"Apron String Revolt"

Tuesday, May 21, 1940

Elizabeth Holt
Anabelle
Mrs. Alden
Mrs. Lanigan
David
Mary Lou
Henry
Miss Martin
Mr. Wade
Jack Alden
Messenger Boy
Grocery Boy
Clancy

Margaret Corron
Edith Kemmer
Jean Warren
Frances Lucas
Lynn Brown
Mary Bailey
Harland Kinney
June Haynes
Roy Hinger
Norman Gillmore
John Pilzga
Anton Lindenmeyer
John Fulton

The action of the entire play takes place in the living room of Mrs. Holt's home. The Present. Autumn. Exit at left leads to front door. Exit at right leads to stairway, kitchen and back door.

ACT 1. Scene 1. About four o'clock on a Friday afternoon.
ACT 1. Scene 2. That evening.
ACT 2. Morning of next day.
ACT 3. Scene 1. Less than an hour later.
ACT 3. Scene 2. Immediately after dinner, the same day.

Director, George L. Arms

PROPERTIES

June Haynes, Alfred Avery, Betty Alderman

STAGE COMMITTEE

Norman Gillmore, Jack Brake, Sophie Stepanuk, and Ethel Sender
Produced by special arrangement with Row Peterson and Company

Commencement

Friday, May 24, 1940

Processional, "War March of the Priests"	F. Mendelssohn
High School Orchestra	
Invocation	Rev. John Bialick
Theme: "Weaving the American Tapestry"	
Prologue	Carolyn Czomba
Trombone Solo "Friends" — Smith	John W. Fulton
Our English Heritage	Kenneth Waters
Woolen Woof from Scotland	Doris Boyles
"The Bonnie Banks of Loch Lomond"	Scottish Air
Ruth Hodge, Jean Warren, John W. Fulton, Lynn Brown	
Irish Linen from the Emerald Isle	Robert Hall
German Genius	Ruth Hodge
Scandinavian Designs	Helen Klecz
"Tis Morning"—Ira B. Wilson	Girls' Chorus
French Embroidery	Frank Holley
Italian Coloring	Ernestine Mrachko
Slavic Fiber	Esther Dunkalski
"Paeon to Summer"—F. von Suppe	Girls' Chorus
Jewish Threads	Agnes Nemeth
Oriental Designs	Robert Loomis
Epilogue	Lynn Brown
America (first and last stanzas)—Smith	Audience
Presentation of Class	Roy E. Ferguson
Presentation of Diplomas	Howard J. Ruetenik
Benediction	Rev. F. A. Lehn
Recessional, "Hope March"—Guido Papini	High School Orchestra

The audience will please remain seated until the conclusion of the recessional. Friends and relatives will be received in the first floor corridor following the recessional.

WAR DEPARTMENT
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE
WASHINGTON

This is to identify

Kenneth T. Waters
(Name)
AUS
2nd Lt.
(Grade)
0700379
(Serial number)

whose signature, photograph, and fingerprints appear hereon,
in the ARMY of the UNITED STATES

Kenneth T. Waters
(Signature of office)

Losses (to be reported to The Adjutant General without delay)
by the officer notified hereon, with the circumstances.
W.D. Form 1, 1-1-41, Rev. 1-1-41, Form No. 60-1, March 1, 1941.

Date of birth June 18, 1922
Color eyes Blue Color hair Brown
Weight 150 lbs. Height 5 ft. 9 in.



0-700379
2nd LT. KENNETH T. WATERS

Date issued DEC 5 1943

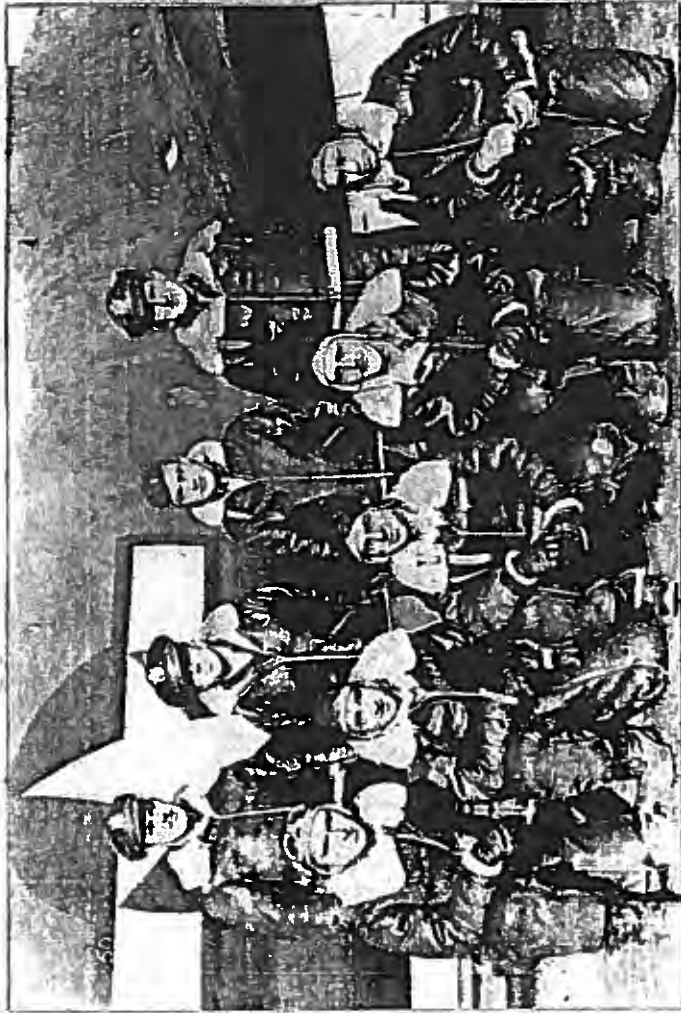
LEFT HAND

THUMB

WATERS, KENNETH T. 0-700379 4134

NAME			COMBAT SORTIES		
No.	Date	Place	No.	Date	Place
1	8 JUN 44	TOUREKA RICHE	13	28 JUN 44	HEISEBURG-LEONE
2	11 JUN 44	PONTAUBAULT	14	7 AUG 44	LA FERE
3	12 JUN 44	ROYE AMY	15	5 SEP 44	BERLIN
4	20 JUN 44	MAGDEBURG	16	1 FEB 45	SAAFELD
5	21 JUN 44	RUHLAND	17	15 FEB 45	COTTBUS
6	22 JUN 44	PARIS	18	19 FEB 45	OSNABRUCK
7	23 JUN 44	WITTENBURG	19	23 FEB 45	KITZINGEN
8	7 JUL 44	DAHLFEN	20	10 MAR 45	DORTMUND
9	8 JUL 44	LIMAY-BARENTIN	21	13 MAR 45	SIEGEN
10	11 JUL 44	MUNICH	22	27 MAR 45	RUHLAND
11	14 JUL 44	CADILLAC SERIES #3	23	17 MAR 45	BERLIN
12	19 JUL 44	SCHWEINFURT	24	19 MAR 45	PLAVEN
25	21 MAR 45	HANDORT	26	26 APR 45	KIEL
27	6 APR 45	GERA	28	14 APR 45	ROYAN
29	17 APR 45	KARLSHAD	30	21 APR 45	INGARTAD
31					
32					
33					
34					
35					

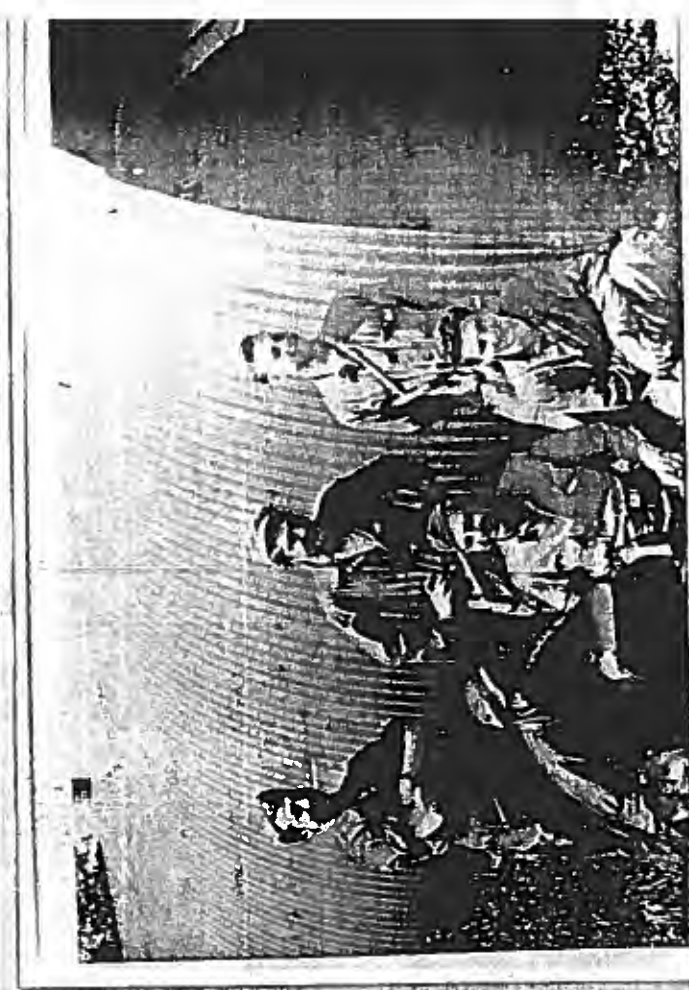
AM. GO #250, 26 29 JUNE 44, 14 DEC 44 GO #333, 3BP 23 JULY 44, 21 GO #26
AWARDS 3 AD, 25 FEB 45, 1 GO #20, 3 AD, 26 MAR 45, 4 GO # 9373 AD 26 APR 45
DFC GO #118 3BP 27 FEB 44



Robert S. Dunbar's Crew - Rapid City, SD.,
March 1944 at the end of Combat Crew Training.

Top: Bob Dunbar (P), Ken Waters (CP),
Jack Krempasky (N), Art Upshaw(B)

Bottom: Mike Lazur, (TG), Harold Boardman (R),
Carl Kennedy (TT), Art Dennis (WG),
Ken Crast (Engineer)(WG)



Robert S. Dunbar's Crew - 96th Bomb Group,
June 1944 after combat missions

Top: Harold Boardman (R), Mike Lazur (TG),
Ken Crast (Engineer) (WG)

Bottom: Art Dennis (WG), Carl Kennedy (TT),
Norman Hyde (BT)



WINDSOR GUNNER REPORTED LOST



FRANCIS R. HOLLEY.
Staff Sgt. Francis R. Holley, 22,
son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Holley.

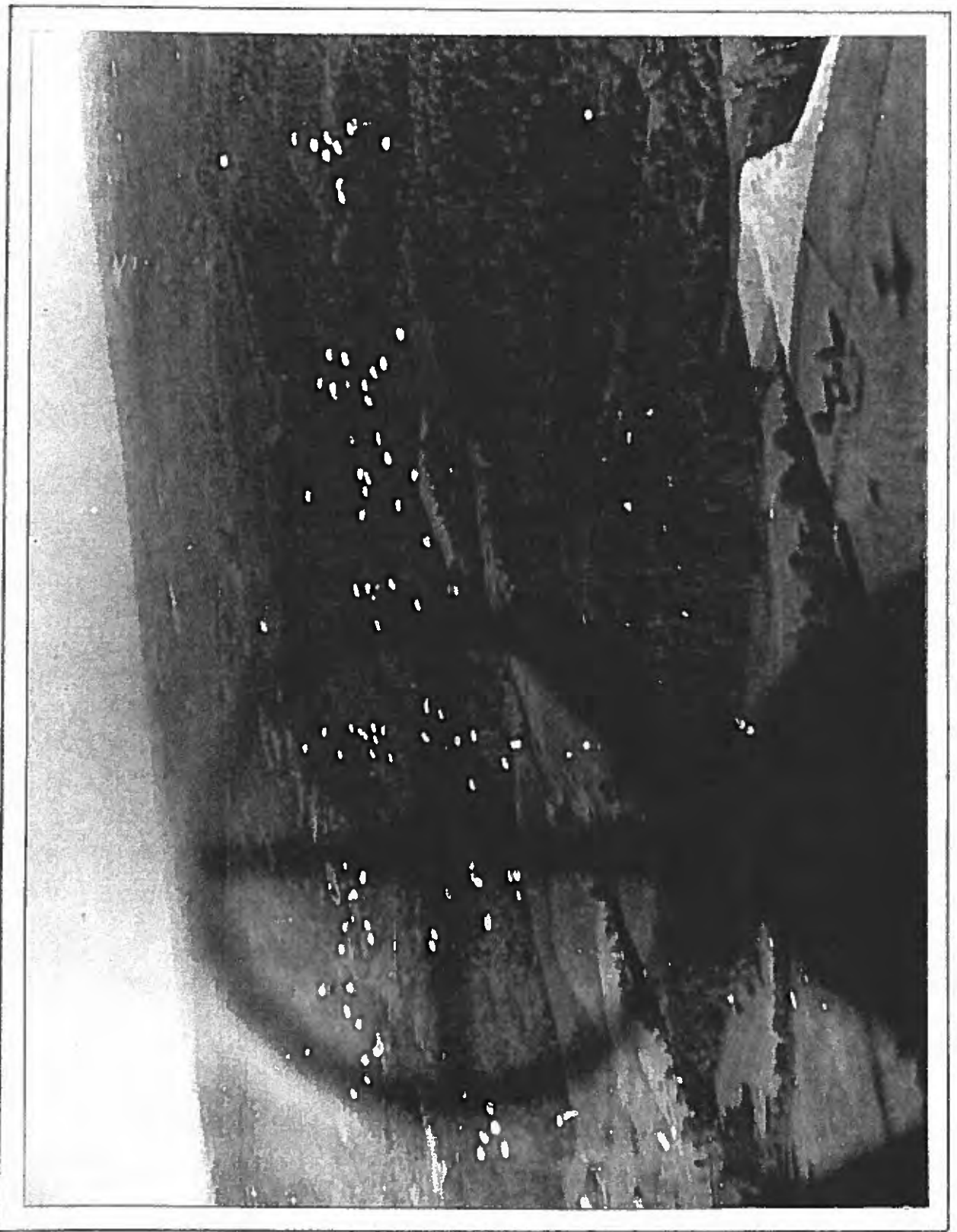
Windsor, who had been over nearly every major target in middle and southeastern Europe and had completed over 30 missions, has been reported missing in action over Germany since July 8.

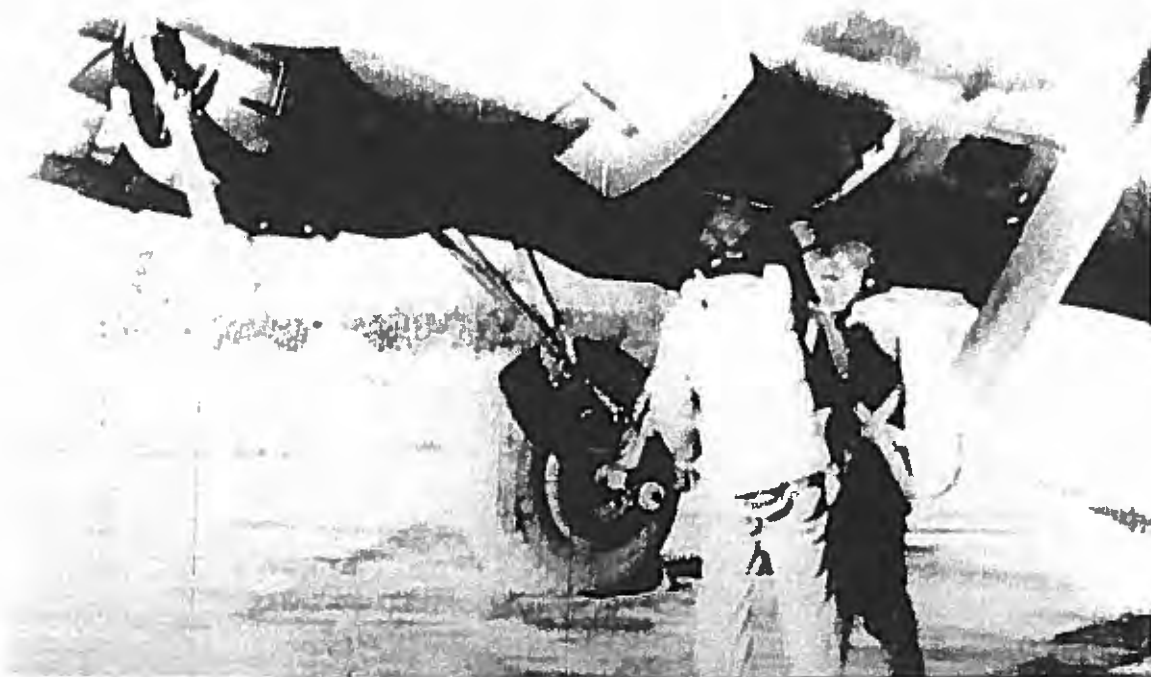
Lower ball gunner on a Liberator, Holley had been awarded the Air Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster for completion of his first 15 missions over occupied Europe. He had seen much action and at one time was miraculously saved from death by two thin aluminum tubes.

Holley, who was credited with shooting down a JU-88 on the same mission, felt the impact of an 88 mm. shell as it burst inside the waist. No one was hit so the gunners continued with their work. Finally, when the blazing refineries were left behind, the waist gunners relaxed to investigate the damage.

Directly above Holley's ball turret the explosion had torn out the main supporting beam, leaving Holley connected to the ship's belly by only two thin aluminum tubes.

The power system was intact but the hydraulics were shattered. Over the interphone Holley was notified of his precarious position. Working up through the recess of his fish bowl, he surveyed the two tubes that saved his life as the bomber landed per schedule.



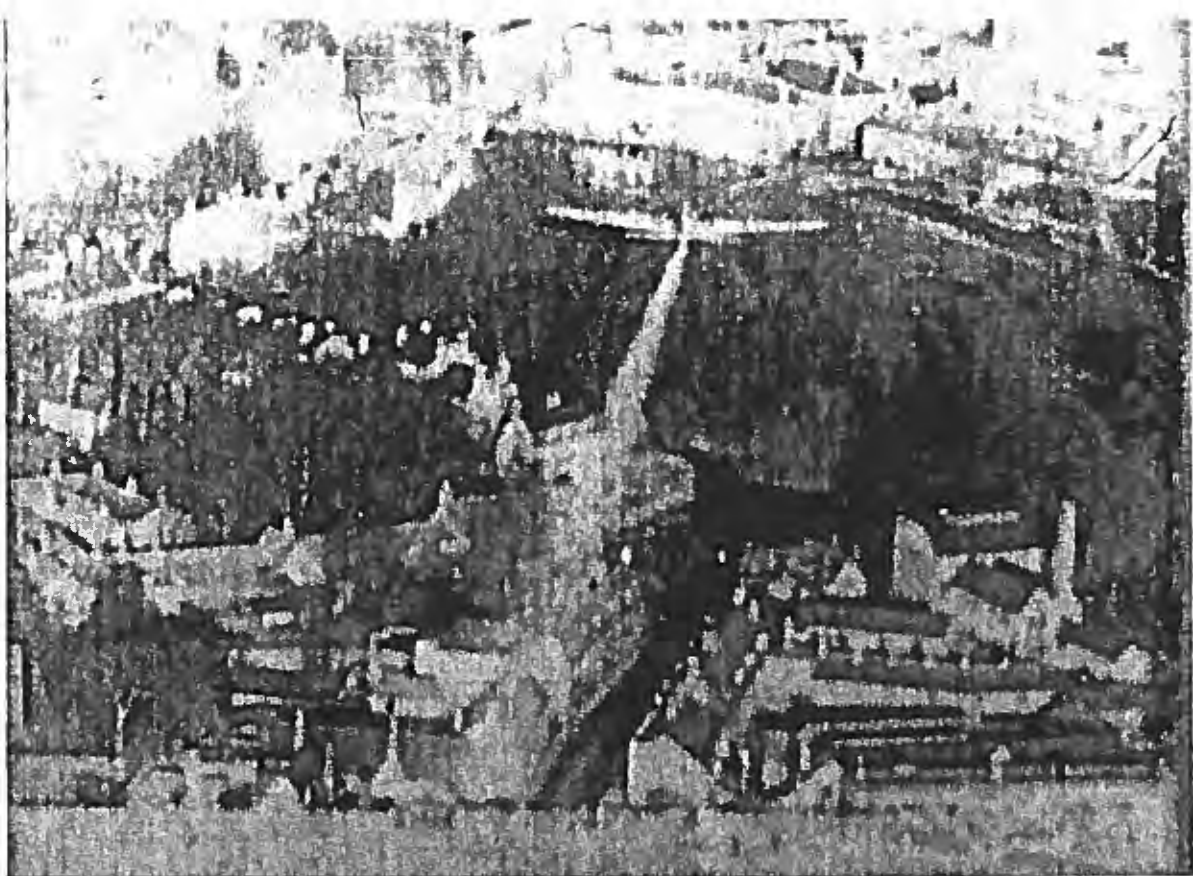


14



15

PRO Ultra

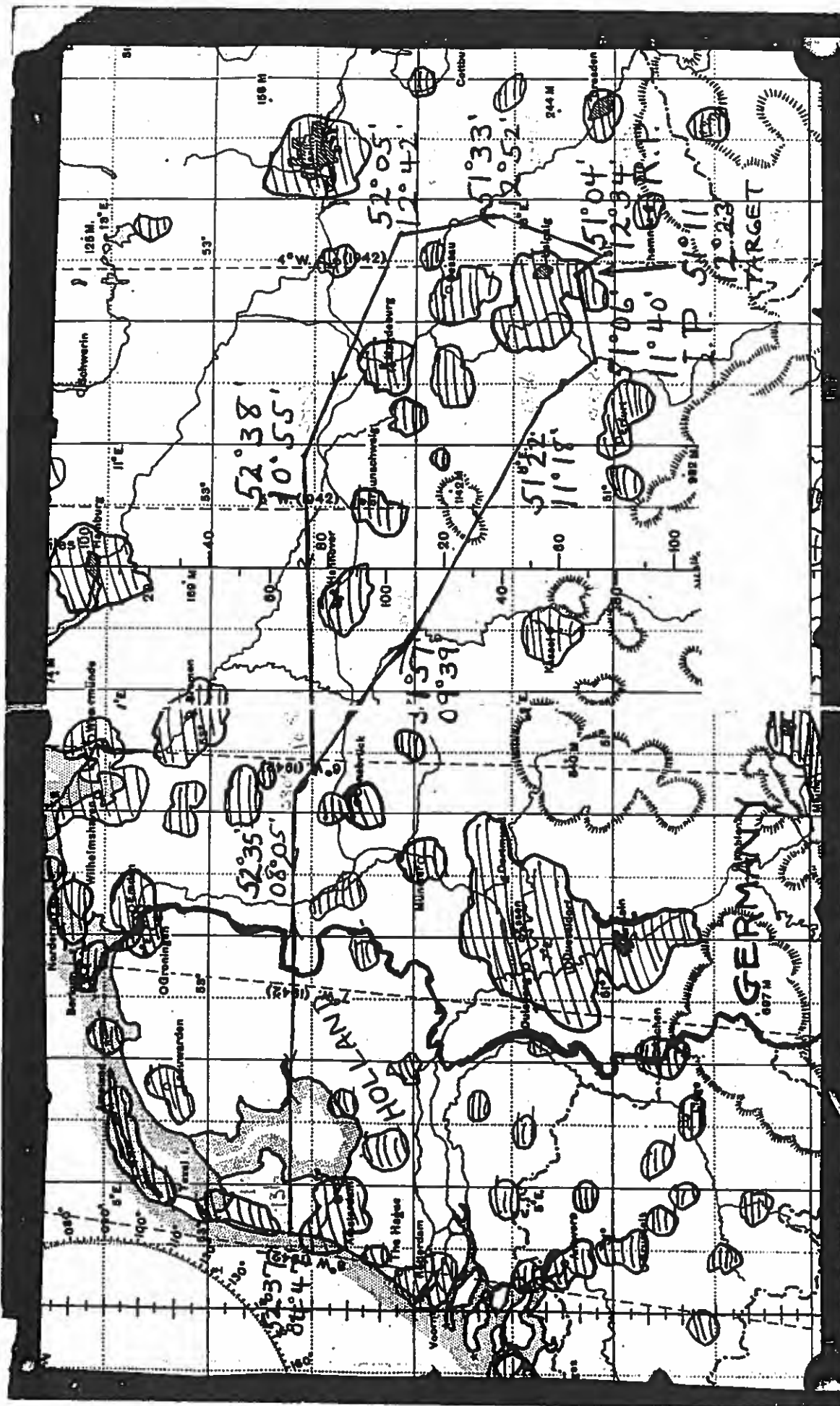


16



17





OFFICER'S ADJUSTED SERVICE RATING FORM

Waters Kenneth T. 0-700379 1st Lt. Air Corps
Last name First name Middle initial Army serial No. Grade Arm or service

Type of credit	Number	Multiply by	Credits
1. SERVICE CREDIT. (Number of months in Army since 16 Sep 40).....	31	1	31
2. OVERSEAS CREDIT. (Number of months served overseas since 16 Sep 40).....	13	1	13
3. COMBAT CREDIT. (Number of decorations and bronze service stars awarded for service since 16 Sep 40).....	10	5	50
4. PARENTHOOD CREDIT. (Number of children under 18 years old).....	0	12	0
TOTAL CREDITS.....			94

Individual Desires——

to be retained in the service during the present emergency (see par. 4b).

YES K.T. W.

Kenneth T. Waters 1st Lt. A.C.

(For those of the above who are interested in Regular Army appointments, further information and an opportunity to apply will be forthcoming.)

Efficiency Index——

(see par. 4c and appendix IA)

(For officers of the AAF, use four (4) digit OER)

Certified by John S. Johnston 1st Lt. A.C.
(Officer who prepared form)

21 KENNETH T. WATERS, O-700379, First Lieutenant, Army Air Forces, United States Army. For extraordinary achievement while serving as co-pilot on an experimental heavy bombardment mission against the enemy, 5 December 1944. Fully realizing the dangers involved, Lieutenant Waters volunteered to participate in a highly important and new type of aerial warfare. His mastery of the intricate mechanism employed resulted in the successful completion of the operation. Lieutenant Waters' willingness to participate in this important and dangerous work reflects the highest credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of the United States.

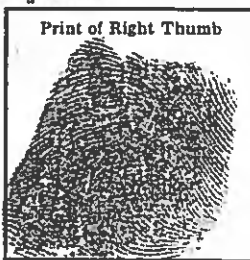
20 # 21

1947 MILITARY BALL



ENLISTED RECORD OF

Waters, **Kenneth** **T.** **35519799** **Avn Student**
(Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Army serial number) (Grade)
 Born in **Bela-Cynwyd**, in the State of **Pennsylvania**
 Inducted **October 31**, 19**42**, at **Cleveland, Ohio**
 When ~~inducted~~ inducted he was **Twenty and Four-twelfths** years of age and by occupation
 a **Machine Shop Inspector**
 He had **Blue** eyes, **Brown** hair, **Buddy** complexion,
 and was **Five** feet **Seven & One-half** inches in height.
 Completed **1** years, **1** months, **3** days service for longevity pay.
 Prior service: **None**
 Noncommissioned officer **Never**
 Military qualifications: **Not Qualified**
 Army specialty **AIRPLANE PILOT**
 Attendance at **AAFPS, Pine Bluff, Ark. 5-26-43 to 7-28-43; AAFBFS, Coffeyville, Kans. 7-29-43**
(Name of noncommissioned officers' or special service school)
to 10-2-43; AAFAPS, Altus, Okla. 10-3-43 to 12-4-43.
 Battles, engagements, skirmishes, expeditions **None**
 Decorations, service medals, citations **None**
 Wounds received in service **None**
 Date and result of smallpox vaccination **11-16-42 Vaccinia; 1-28-43 Immune.**
 Date of completion of all typhoid-paratyphoid vaccinations **11-27-42.**
 Date and result of diphtheria immunity test (Schick) **None**
 Date of other vaccinations (specify vaccine used) **Tet. Tox. 12-30-42.**
 Physical condition when discharged **Good** Married or single **Married**
 Honorably discharged by reason of **Completion of Training, per Par 11a, AR 615-150.**
 Character **Excellent** Periods of active duty **11-14-42 to 12-4-43.**
 Remarks: **No time lost under AW 107. Not entitled to travel pay.**



Signature of soldier

Kenneth J. Waters
John R. Francis
JOHN R. FRANCIS,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Personnel Officer.
 Commanding

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ENLISTED RECORD

- ¹ Enter date of induction only in case of trainee inducted under Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 (Bull. 25, W. D., 1940); in all other cases enter date of enlistment. Eliminate word not applicable.
- ² 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.
- ³ Enter qualifications in arms, horsemanship, etc. Show the qualification, date thereof; and number, date, and source of order announcing same.
- ⁴ See paragraph 12, AR 40-210.
- ⁵ If discharged prior to expiration of service, give number, date, and source of order or full description of authority therefor.
- ⁶ 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.
- ⁷ In all cases of men who are entitled to receive Certificates of Service under AR 345-500, enter here appointments and ratings held and all other items of special proficiency or merit other than those shown above.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CERTIFICATE OF DISCHARGE

AR 345-470.

Insert name, as, "John J. Doe" in center of form

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

The name and grade of the officer signing the certificate will be typewritten or printed below the signature

☆ U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1943 O-508889

(23) (a)

OHIO WORLD WAR II
COMPENSATION APPLIED FOR CLAIM No.

338059

THIS FORM WILL NOT BE REPLACED
IF LOST, SEPARATION SAVE IT.

ARMY QUALIFICATION

RECORD

LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL WATERS, KENNETH T	ARMY SERIAL NUMBER 0 700 379	GRADE 1stLt	DATE OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE 5 Dec 43	SEX M	DATE OF BIRTH 18 Jun 22
PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES (Street and Number - City - County - State) Rural Route, Windsor, Ashtabula, Ohio					

CIVILIAN EDUCATION	
HIGHEST GRADE COMPLETED 12	LAST YEAR OF ATTENDANCE 1939
HIGHEST DEGREE RECEIVED None	MAJOR COURSE OF STUDY Academic
NAME AND ADDRESS OF LAST SCHOOL ATTENDED Orwell High School Orwell, Ohio	
OTHER TRAINING OR SCHOOLING	
COURSE	NO. WKS.
None	

SERVICE EDUCATION				
SERVICE SCHOOL	COURSE	YES	RATING	ARMY SPECIALIZED TRAINING PROGRAM
San Antonio, Tex	Pre-flt Pilot Tng	8	comp	INSTITUTION WHERE ENROLLED None
Pine Bluff, Ark	Primary Pilot Tng	8	comp	CURRICULUM AND TERM (COURSE OF TRAINING PURSUED)
Coffeyville Kans	Basic Pilot Tng	8	comp	NO. OF WEEKS
Altus, Oklahoma	Adv. TE Pilot Tng	8	grad	GRADUATED YES NO

CIVILIAN OCCUPATIONS	
MAIN OCCUPATION (TITLE) PRECISION INSPECTOR	SECONDARY OCCUPATION (TITLE) NONE
JOB SUMMARY Precision Inspector: Inspection of machine parts for aircraft, tanks, etc.	JOB SUMMARY
NO. OF YEARS HERE 1	LAST DATE OF EMPLOY- 6/12 Oct 42
NAME AND ADDRESS OF EMPLOYER Weatherhead Company Cleveland, Ohio	

MILITARY SPECIALTIES				
YEARS	MONTHS	GRADE	PRINCIPAL DUTY	ARMY CODE NO.
1	8	1stLt	Pilot B-17	1051

SUMMARY OF MILITARY OCCUPATION AND CIVILIAN CONVERSIONS (Shown by title)
PILOT, B-17, HEAVY BOMBER: Piloted B-17 aircraft and commanded crew in aerial offensive operations against the enemy. Required to have a thorough knowledge of operation and maintenance of B-17 aircraft, also radio navigation, radio aids, meteorology, instrument flying, local flying rules and CAA Rules and Regulations. Completed 30 combat missions in the European Theatre of Operations, with the 8th Air Force. Has 250 combat hours, total flight time 861 hours.

SUMMARY OF MILITARY OCCUPATION AND CIVILIAN CONVERSIONS (Shown by title)
NONE

* THIS INFORMATION BASED ON SOLDIER'S STATEMENT. (Indicate by * any items not supported by military records)

DATE OF SEPARATION 7 Sep 45	SIGNATURE OF SOLDIER Kenneth T. Waters	SIGNATURE OF SEPARATION CLASSIFICATION OFFICER W. Sonnier W. SONNIER, Captain AGD
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MILITARY RECORD AND REPORT OF SEPARATION CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE


1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL Waters Kenneth T			2. ARMY SERIAL NUMBER 0 700 379		3. AUS. GRADE 1st Lt		4. ARM OR SERVICE AC		5. COMPONENT AUS	
6. ORGANIZATION 413th Bomb Sq 96th Bomb Gp			7. DATE OF RELIEF FROM ACTIVE DUTY 7 Sep 45		8. PLACE OF SEPARATION Separation Center On Atterbury Indiana					
9. PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES RFD Windsor Ohio					10. DATE OF BIRTH 18 Jun 22		11. PLACE OF BIRTH Bala-Cynwyd Pa			
12. ADDRESS FROM WHICH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE SOUGHT Cleveland, Ohio					13. COLOR EYES Blue		14. COLOR HAIR Brown		15. HEIGHT 5'9"	
		16. WEIGHT 145 lbs		17. NO. OF DEPENDENTS One						
18. RACE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WHITE <input type="checkbox"/> NEGRO <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (specify)			19. MARITAL STATUS <input type="checkbox"/> SINGLE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MARRIED <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (specify)			20. U.S. CITIZEN <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		21. CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND NO. Precision Inspector No Code		

MILITARY HISTORY

22. REGISTERED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		23. LOCAL S. S. BOARD NUMBER 49		24. COUNTY AND STATE Cuyahoga Ohio		25. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY ON ACTIVE DUTY South Euclid Ohio	
26. DATE OF ENTRY ON ACTIVE DUTY 5 Dec 43				27. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY AND NO. Pilot B-17 1051			
28. BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS Air Offensive Europe Normandy Northern France Ardennes Rhineland Central Europe							
29. DECORATIONS AND CITATIONS Distinguished Flying Cross GO 1118 Hq 3rd BD 27 Dec 44 Air Medal GO 937 Hq 3rd AD 26 Apr 45 w/4 Oak Leaf Clusters to AM European African Middle Eastern Service Medal							
30. WOUNDS RECEIVED IN ACTION None							
31. SERVICE SCHOOLS ATTENDED PreFlt San Antonio Tex May 43 Primary Pine Bluff Ark Jul 43 Basic Coffeyville Kan Sep 43 Adv Altus Okla Dec 43				32. SERVICE OUTSIDE CONTINENTAL U.S. AND RETURN DATE OF DEPARTURE DESTINATION DATE OF ARRIVAL 28 Apr 44 European Theater Operations 1 May 44 13 May 45 U S 21 May 45			
33. REASON AND AUTHORITY FOR SEPARATION Relieved from Active Duty, RR 1-5 (Demobilization) TWX Hq AAF Wash DC							
34. CURRENT TOUR OF ACTIVE DUTY						35. EDUCATION (years)	
CONTINENTAL SERVICE			FOREIGN SERVICE			GRAMMAR SCHOOL	
YEARS	MONTHS	DAYS	YEARS	MONTHS	DAYS	HIGH SCHOOL	COLLEGE
0	8	9	1	0	24	8	4

INSURANCE NOTICE

IMPORTANT: IF PREMIUM IS NOT PAID WHEN DUE OR WITHIN THIRTY 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 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nat. Serv. <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Govt. <input type="checkbox"/> None		37. HOW PAID <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Allotment <input type="checkbox"/> Direct to		38. Effective Date of Allotment, Discontinuance 30 Sep 45		39. Date of Next Premium Due (one month after 38) 31 Oct 45	
				40. PREMIUM DUE EACH MONTH \$ 6.50		41. INTENTION OF VETERAN TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue <input type="checkbox"/> Continue only <input type="checkbox"/> Discontinue	

42.  RIGHT THUMB PRINT		43. REMARKS (This space for completion of above items or entry of other items specified in W. D. Directives) FOR DISBURSEMENT, A CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY NO. 519949 HAS BEEN ISSUED BY THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION TO BE USED FOR THE FUTURE REQUEST OF ANY SECURITY OR INSURANCE BENEFIT UNDER TITLE III OF THE SERVICEMEN'S READJUSTMENT ACT OF 1944, AS AMENDED, THAT MAY BE AVAILABLE TO THE PERSON TO WHOM THIS FORM WAS ISSUED.	
		44. PERSONNEL OFFICER (Type, name, grade and organization) signature Ralph L. Rowe 1st Lt. AUS	
45. SIGNATURE OF OFFICER BEING SEPARATED Kenneth T. Waters		46. LABEL BUTTON ISSUED ASR Score (12 May 45) - 102	



ORWELL HIGH SCHOOL - CLASS OF 1940 COMES FROM WINDSOR, OHIO

(Recollections of Ken Waters)

In 1939 there were 15 graduates from the 3 year Windsor High School. Thirteen (13) then went on to the 4th year at Orwell High School. This write-up is therefore about my impressions of the 4th year at OHS. Class members from Windsor were Betty Alderman, Marge Corron, Carolyn Czomba, June Haynes, Frank Holley, Harland Kinney, Tony Lindenmeyer, Bob Loomis, Francis Lukus, Ernestine Marachco, John Plizga, Sonya Stepanak and Ken Waters.

I had the impression that Orwell was a big town because that's where the doctors, dentists, a lumber yard, a drug store, a Ford Agency, and a movie house were. Windsor had a population of about 200, mostly farmers, a couple of stores and gas stations and little else.

Bob Loomis and I knew Norm Gillmore, an Orwell classmate, because his father was in the VFW with our fathers, and we saw him at VFW picnics. Norm was expert in everything like rowing boats, making flying model airplanes, and had traveled to Florida, very impressive. I didn't know any others from Orwell and the farthest I had traveled was Buffalo, New York.

On our first day at Orwell High the boys were greeted by a little kid named Louie Bowers who informed us that we were to stay away from Mary Baily because she was his girlfriend. I immediately asked if anyone knew who this Mary Baily was? Frank Holley said to just butt out and that he had got her spotted and would get a date with her. To my knowledge he never did. Later, in the winter, a bunch of us Seniors were coming back from the drugstore after lunch break and there was snow on the ground. Louie Bowers said he would beat the daylights out of anyone who threw a snowball at him, so we all did and drove him off.

Frank Holley and I tried to sign up for Home Ec but Mr. Ferguson wouldn't let us, saying that all we wanted to do was meet girls and disrupt the class. This wasn't true of course but he was boss. What we really wanted to do was fly airplanes and work on them. In 1941 after Frank and I got back from California and had been cooks for several months I visited Mr. Ferguson and told him he thwarted Frank and I in our careers as cooks. He wasn't very apologetic but laughed a lot about it.

During chemistry class one day I asked Mr. Melick what the formula for nitroglycerin was? He started yelling, ran down the aisle and grabbed me by the ear

and smashed my head down on the desk. I just can't understand people who have no sense of humor and are easily upset. I really was very interested in chemistry and it seemed easy for me to understand, but Mr. Melick wouldn't let me compete in the state scholarship; because "you are a wise-guy and Norm Gillmore is more serious even though you are both qualified". So Norm took the test but I don't remember how he made out.

In wood shop class with Mr. Kinney I did a very poor job on gluing a lamp block for turning on a lathe. Mr. Kinney used my block as the example of how not to do it and predicted that it would fly to pieces when I tried to turn it. He used Ken Childs' similar lamp block as the example of how it should be done. Well, mine held up fine and I still use the lamp and I will never part with it; even if the glue joint is lousy! Ken Childs' lamp flew apart, of course - so much for predictions. Woodworking is now one of my hobbies.

For the Senior Prom Mr. Ferguson made a rule that the girls could not bring their boyfriends unless they were in the class. Frank Holley and I double dated with June Haynes and Marge Corron. I think the girls asked us in this case but Frank and I were very happy with the arrangement. After all both June and Marge were very desirable dates but were going steady with older men, Howard Green and Don Moss. Howard and Don had graduated and had jobs! In those days the big thing that attracted girls was supremacy in sports or having a job, money and a car.

Mr. Ferguson set up a lunch time dance class so that the girls could teach the boys how to dance for the Prom. The big night finally came and we had a good time until it was over and both Howard Green and Don Moss were waiting outside to take the girls home. That was the first time Frank or I heard about the abbreviated date, and I say that was unfair!!! I think that was when Frank and I decided to go into Aviation.

At graduation I had a little stand up piece to say (Our English Heritage), and I bravely memorized it and left the paper home. Therefore no-one could prompt me if needed. My confidence was misplaced however, because I forgot it in the middle. After about a one-minute pause Harland Kinney hissed at me to "come on Waters". So I backed up a line or two and finally got through it OK amid a lot of suppressed laughter.

The year before in a Windsor High play I had forgotten my lines and Harland Kinney saved me then also. In that play I got to kiss Sonya who played my wife, which led to complications with her boyfriend. Do boys fight over girls these days, I wonder?

The class trip to Detroit was the culmination of the OHS experience for me. We got

on a boat in Cleveland and went overnight to Detroit. Of course some of us didn't sleep at all so we were zombies all day for the tour of the Ford Museum, Greenwich Village, and other places. Mr. Ferguson said that we who had kept everyone else awake all night were not allowed to nod off during the next day so I really slept coming back on the boat, after being awake about 36 hours continuously. My photos of the trip are pretty good, however.

INFANTRY TRAINING AT FT. McCLELLAN, ALABAMA

Narration by Private Kenneth Theodore Waters - SN 35519799

After trying to enlist in the Army Air Corps Aviation Cadet Program in Cleveland in August/September 1942, I was drafted into the Army in October, 1942 in Cleveland, Ohio. I took a train to Camp Perry, Ohio and was there for a few days while we took tests and it was decided where we would go next. This was a very lonely time, I didn't know anyone and naturally I was homesick for my new wife Dorothy (we had been married on August 17, 1942 about 6 weeks before).

Fort McClellan, Alabama. - We traveled by train to Fort McClellan and I remember it as a long ride that went on through the night and we slept in the seats and on the floor of the passenger train. We went through tunnels in the mountains, the cars were full of smoke, and it was not pleasant. When we arrived the next afternoon at Fort McClellan we all got off the train and lined up in a big drill field with our barracks bags full of clothing that was issued in Camp Perry. One thing about this clothing was that everything seemed to fit pretty well just by the guesses of the Supply personnel. Except the shoes. I told them that I wore an 8 shoe and they gave me a size 9. I tried it on and proved it was too big. The clerk told me to quit bitching because I had the right size and if it was a little loose wear two pairs of socks, and that within a few weeks my Army shoes would fit fine. He was right and I never could get my size 8 dress shoes on again. Walking, hiking and climbing mountains will change your shoe size in a hurry! We lived on our feet.

As we stood in the hot sunshine in the drill field they called out names and told us to run, not walk to the designated Platoon. Early on, Kennedy who was a high school classmate of my wife in South Euclid, Ohio, decided that he was not going to run with all this equipment and started to saunter over to the appointed Platoon leaders. He made about 5 steps before 2 non-coms hit him and ran him over the field yelling at him. I didn't like being yelled at so I ran like hell. Kennedy got KP that night along with other selected individuals. It turned out that there were several other men at Fort McClellan with me that knew Dorothy from high school. Ray Wronka, Richard Stamberger and Willy Williams. Wronka and Stamberger both decided that Army life wasn't for them and spent all their time scheming to get out or else get some cushy job. All of us had done well on the tests at Camp Perry and were put in a select Company of potential Officer Candidate material. 1st Lt. Gude was head of the Company and a west Point graduate, we were informed and he would make sure we got special notice in our Basic Infantry Replacement Training. I made sure that I did everything properly and learned as much as I could about the Infantry even though I schemed to get out and into the Army Air Corps. I figured I might get stuck in the

Infantry and I wanted to know how to protect myself in a knife fight or a bayonet duel or how to kill Germans or Japanese in dirty fighting with bare hands or improvised weapons. I remember one Sunday afternoon when we were off duty another man and I decided to go out and run the obstacle course for the fun of it! Now this was carrying it too far! Lt. Gude decided one night to improve the Day Room surroundings and after dark about 8:30 a bunch of us were invited to do a midnight requisition with him. So we went to an area where they kept building supplies, bricks, concrete blocks and lumber etc. We made a couple of trips and then proceed to dress up the area and plant shrubs etc. A couple of days later we were caught and had to undo everything and take it all back.

We learned to clean rifles and equipment, tear down a BAR and our rifles and reassemble them under a blanket so we could do it in the dark etc. We learned how to fold up our blankets and roll them into our tent and keep everything (mess kit and personal effects) together. After a few days of this instruction from a Corporal we were suddenly called out in the late afternoon for a hike carrying the full field pack. . Everyone was lined up for inspection. Then the Officers made everyone jump up and down several times. Then we took off on the hike at a fast pace. The noise of canteens and mess kits hitting the ground is still remembered. Several men hadn't packed the equipment correctly so they were eventually left behind, although some tried to carry the stuff in their arms. Another amusing thing was the tall lanky guy from North Carolina who could never seem to keep in step with everyone else when marching. The Lt. would yell out; everyone except ---- change step and so we changed to his step. But soon he was out of step again. This went on all through training so I guess he never learned. He probably made a good Officer though because he could just yell orders and didn't have to keep in step?

Dirty fighting was another example of it being OK to be aggressive; We were out one morning on the drill field and Lt. Gude was instructing us in dirty fighting. The Platoon 2nd Lt. from Chicago was his opponent. Gude wiped the drill field with him and he spent a lot of time in the dirt and I can still see his uniform all full of dust and dirt as Gude threw him to the ground. Then we all took turns teaming up and practicing the throws. I had a small, wiry southerner for my match, and I grabbed him by the shirt and threw him over my hip in the accepted fashion. He flew through the air and onto his left hip. He was furious but unhurt and then I learned he had an apple in his left hip pocket which was now applesauce. He was never my friend.

One night late in the course we were called out after dinner for a night hike in full pack. There was no moon so the hike through the mountainous woods, through streams and along a trail was tough. The Lt. asked for volunteers, and I stepped forward with a very few others. No one was supposed to volunteer in the Army.

Then we were informed that we had volunteered to be "connecting file" for the hike which was hiking singly in between two platoons in trail formation to help keep proper spacing between them. Since it was very dark and you couldn't see more than a few yards we had a white handkerchief around our wrists to help the platoon leader behind to see us and keep a few yards between us. I think it was only about a 3-mile hike, but everyone except the connecting file kept stepping on each others feet and banging into each other over that rough terrain and through several streams with rocky bottoms. After that I was not reluctant to volunteer

Then in the last week of the course we were each called in the evening for an interview with Lt. Gude and the Battalion Commander (a Major). I knew the Major a little by then because he showed up at 10-minute break time a couple of times on the mountain when we were practicing hand grenade throwing etc. He would just ask questions or talk with us. I believe he said he was a teacher in real life and he acted that way. Kind of a father figure. Anyway he was there at the 1st interview when Lt. Gude asked if I wanted to be an Infantry Officer. Of course I said no, I wanted to be a pilot and go to the Army Air Corps for Aviation Cadet training, Lt. Gude was furious but controlled because of the Major I suspect. Anyway they couldn't get anywhere with me so they ended the interview after I told them about my qualifications with the Cadet board in Cleveland. I didn't tell them that I had written the Board and asked for them to get me out of the Infantry. I did this on advice from the 2nd Lt. from Chicago in one of our talks at 10 minute break. I had promised not to reveal that he suggested this and never did. I believe it was at that 1st interview that Lt. Gude threatened that if I didn't want to go to OCS, then perhaps I wanted to go to North Africa as a replacement which was what I'd been trained for! I said no, I didn't want to go to North Africa, just the Air Corps. So for several weeks I was badgered to go to OCS by a captain and another Major I think. Most of the Company left for OCS, but there were about 4 of us who were disqualified for one reason or another. Then it was Christmas and my wife came down for a visit. But they wouldn't let me off base because I was a holdout and had latrine duty and had to clean the orderly room and do all sorts of dirty work. I got a terrible cold and was close to pneumonia I guess. At first they let me see my wife on post, which was agony, and finally the 1st Sgt let me go on pass. Dorothy and I had a great time and I seemed to recover from the cold. Then the holidays were over and I was back in limbo. New guys came in for training, and still the four of us were unassigned. I was really beginning to feel I had made a mistake in not taking OCS. The four of us didn't go out for formations because we were not part of anything. Then one day we were sitting in the barracks and the Officers came through for inspection and gave us hell for being there. So I said to hell with this, tomorrow morning we will go to the PX and loaf over there. We did and got hell for being there at that time of the day. So the next few days I went out into the street and called the other three to attention

and we marched off into the woods. We stayed out that way for a few days and did nothing. Then one day the 1st Sgt got to me in the afternoon and gave me my orders to the Aviation Cadet Training in San Antonio, Texas. He helped me pack in about 5 minutes, and got me onto a truck to go to the train station. He kept trying to find out how I did it and got transferred. I kept saying that the Army finally came to its senses. He and I both knew the Army doesn't have any senses and he told me so. I never revealed how I thought it happened. I believe the letter to the Cadet Board in Cleveland did it. I traveled with 5 other guys who were transferred to the Air Corps and they told me they went to the Aviation Cadet Board on the post at McClellan and asked for a transfer and got it! All this proves is that you have to be aggressive and use initiative and find out how the system works because all the Officers with their own agenda won't help you out.

The trip to San Antonio was long but I enjoyed it immensely because I felt free. We had a layover in New Orleans for half a day, went to the French Quarter and did tourist things and had a good dinner before taking the train on to San Antonio. We arrived the next day at the San Antonio Army Aviation Cadet Classification Center (the SAAACCC). We were in the Classification center for several weeks awaiting assignment to a class. I got pilot training as I wanted and assigned to the class of 43K which graduated 5 December 1943. We could have visitors on Sundays so Dorothy and my sister Elinor drove our 36 Ford car to Texas for a visit. After a few days Ellie got on a train and returned to Ohio but Dorothy stayed and followed me around the country as I trained as a pilot. Dorothy became friendly with other wives and got a job in a clothing factory but the pay was awful and the work was a sweat shop. We were at San Antonio for about 4 months in all while I went through classification and Preflight training. It was hard on Dorothy and it was lonely but there were other wives to talk with. She doesn't regret doing it. After I got my wings and was a 2nd Lt. in training at Rapid City, S. D. we lived off post and life was easier, but it only lasted about 3 months.

ARMY AIR FORCES CADET TRAINING IN WORLD WAR II

Narration by Kenneth Theodore Waters - Army SN 35519799, Army Air Corps SN AO700379

I was 20 years old and living in Cleveland, Ohio in September 1942 and registered for the draft. My job as an inspector at Weatherhead Company wasn't critical to the war effort so I expected to be called any day. Dorothy and I had just gotten married in August 1942, and I really didn't want to go into the service, but it looked as though I soon would. Therefore I tried to enlist in the Army Air Force Aviation Cadets program. I passed the entrance exam and the Army 64 (aircrew) physical exam. They told me to come back and be sworn in but to bring along my release from the draft board. There was no release, because that meant that they couldn't fill their quota without taking some other man to fill my place. Without the release they wouldn't take me. Had I to do it over again I would have got sworn in without mentioning the lack of draft board release. I would bet money on their taking me without a word. I learned later that you have to take the initiative, and it's easier to be forgiven than to get approval. But I did get great Infantry training before becoming a pilot. I may have lucked out anyway because I probably would have ended up in heavier fighting if I was in air combat earlier.

A few weeks later I was drafted, and sent to Fort McClellan, Alabama, for Basic Infantry Replacement Training, perhaps to replace the soldiers killed or wounded in North Africa. I scored high enough on the entrance exam to qualify for Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, Georgia. I refused to go and stated that I had already qualified for Aviation Cadet Training. After several weeks of harassment and interviews by Lt's, CPT's, Majors and the 1st Sgt. said I would never go to the Air Corps because they needed replacements in North Africa, I was finally released. For example, at Christmas time Dorothy came down to visit me, and I was restricted to the post with extra duty cleaning the latrines and the office. I caught a terrible cold and almost had pneumonia I think. At the last minute I was given a pass. There was no way I was going to give in and stay in the infantry if I could help it. No one knew that my platoon leader, a 2nd Lt. from Chicago, had advised me to write to the Cadet board in Cleveland and outline the situation. Anyway, after my class all went to Officer Candidate School, I suddenly got my orders. The 1st Sgt. begged me to tell him how I did it and asked if I had a high government official backing me? I said I didn't know anyone but that probably the Army finally came to their senses. He just shook his head knowing full well that the Army didn't have any senses. I went to the Cadet center by train with 5 others who had gone to some place on the post, requested a transfer and got it.

While at Fort McClellan I learned a lot about marching both night and day, packing field packs, firing the M-1 and Enfield rifles, and cleaning and disassembly/re-assembly of rifles and the BAR machine gun. Bayonet drill and running the obstacle course, climbing mountains etc. was fun. I got in excellent physical shape at PT. I did well at marksmanship and made sharpshooter.

Classification Center at San Antonio, Texas

In mid January 1943 I arrived at San Antonio, Texas at the San Antonio Army Aviation Cadet Center (SAACC). We spent about 6 weeks there and I got a lot of KP and guard duty which I hated. With guard duty you walked a specified path all night long but had 2 hours of rest (sleep?) then 2 hours of duty. Officers kept trying to sneak up on you to see if you were on the ball. If you didn't challenge them properly you got more guard duty. The other problem was that there were a lot of guys that would order a taxi from San Antonio and then sneak out through the fence and go to town. Since they were buddies you weren't supposed to see them, especially when they came back in at 3:00 AM. Anyway I asked the Cadet who had volunteered to make up the duty roster (he was in our hut and therefore a buddy??), if I could substitute KP for guard duty when it came up. He said sure and then put me on almost continuous KP, the SOB. Then one morning we fell out at 6:30 AM for roll call. The duty cadet announced that they wanted 6 volunteers for special duty. I stepped forward because we had nothing to do anyway. He told us to get breakfast, dress up with ties etc and be there at 8:00 sharp. We did and much to our surprise we were loaded into a truck and taken to Randolph Field and delivered to the high altitude chamber. We learned that we had volunteered to undergo high-altitude testing by the Medics. There were doctors and nurses taking data, with emergency respiratory equipment on standby. As I recall the test only took a couple of hours and no one had any problems, although I don't remember how high we went. After the test the truck driver took us back through San Antonio and stopped in an alley. This was around lunch time and he told us to be at this exact spot at about 4:00 PM. We all had a good time and that was the 1st time I saw the Alamo. We of course said nothing when we got back, but the next time they asked for volunteers many stepped forward. The next time Stein went and got drunk and didn't make it back to the truck, so that ended the stopover in San Antonio.

Pre-flight Training at San Antonio, Texas

I was assigned to Pilot Training Class 43K and started Pre-flight Training at San Antonio. This consisted of trying to emulate West Point by hazing lower-class men to teach them discipline and how to take orders, while the upper-class man learned how to give orders. We also had ground school and a lot of courses related to flying such as meteorology, Morse code, navigation, flight regulations etc. A very few of us had our

wives living in San Antonio and working there. Dorothy lived with a couple of the other wives, and we got into town for one afternoon each week but not overnight. One of the wives was Katie Wade who was married to Hallie Wade, one of my classmates. Wives were discouraged from following their husbands through pilot training but that didn't stop some of us. One of our cadet officers was Bill (Bounce) Walker who was a cadet CPT I think. Bounce was aptly named because he had a swagger and "bounce" that was something to behold as he took us through our drills. I never heard where the nick name actually came from, although we eventually became good friends.

These songs we sang in Pre-flight as marching songs:

Jolly Jolly Sixpence

I've got sixpence, jolly jolly sixpence,
I've got sixpence to last me all my life.
I've got tupence to spend, tupence to lend,
and tupence to send home to my wife.
"No cares have I to grieve me,
no pretty little girls to deceive me,
Happy is the day when the Cadet gets his pay,
as we go rolling rolling home."

I've got four-pence, jolly jolly four-pence,
I've got four-pence to last me all my life.
I've got tupence to spend, tupence to lend,
and no pence to send home to my wife, poor wife.
"....."

I've got tupence, jolly jolly tupence,
I've got tupence to last me all my life.
I've got tupence to spend, and no pence to lend,
and no pence to send home to my wife, poor wife.
"....."

I've got no pence, jolly jolly no pence
I've got no-pence to last me all my life.
I've got no pence to spend, no pence to lend,
and no pence to send home to my wife, poor wife.
"....."

Air-cadets (Wiffenpoof Parody)

Sing the air-cadets assemble,
To the place where Billy* dwells, * Billy Mitchell
To the good old --- bar we love so well,
We will serenade our Billy while life and love shall last,
and pass and be forgotten with the rest.

Sing the air-cadets assemble,
with their heads held proudly high,
and the magic of their singing casts a spell,
The magic of their singing all songs we love so well,
jolly sixpence, wild blue yonder and the rest,
We will serenade our Billy while life and love shall last,
and pass and be forgotten with the rest.

We are little black sheep who have gone astray,
Poor air-cadets who've lost our way, ba, ba, ba.
Gentlemen flyers off on a spree,
Doomed from here to eternity, baa, baa, baaa.
We will serenade our Billy while life and love shall last,
and pass and be forgotten with the rest.
baa, baaa, baaaaaaa.

Three Jolly Coachmen

Three jolly coachmen sat, - in an English tavern,
And they decided, and they decided, and they decided,
to have another flagon.

Landlord fill the flowing bowl till it doth run over,
Landlord fill the flowing bowl till it doth run over,
For tonight we'll merry be, for tonight we'll merry be,
for tonight we'll merry be, **tomorrow we'll be sober!**

Now here's to the man who drinks dark ale and goes to bed quite mellow, here's to the
man who drinks dark ale and goes to bed quite mellow, he lives as he ought to live, he
lives as he ought to live, he lives as he ought to live, **and dies a hearty fellow.**

Now here's to the man who drinks water pure and goes to bed
quite sober, he falls as the leaves do fall, he falls as the leaves do fall, **and dies before
October.**

Now here's to the maid who steals a kiss and stays to steal another, she's a boon to all mankind, she's a boon to all mankind, for she'll soon be a mother.

Now here's to the maid who steals a kiss and runs to tell her mother. She's a foolish, foolish thing, for she'll not get another.

WILD BLUE YONDER

Off we go into the wild blue yonder,
climbing high into the sun,

Down we dive seeming to split asunder
We live in fame, go down in flame
Nothing can stop the Army Air Corps

Here's a toast to the host,
the men we love the most,
The Army Air Corps

Other songs were "She wore a Yellow Ribbon"; "The Little Red Drawers that Maggie Used To Wear";

Primary Training at Pine Bluff, Arkansas

Each phase of pilot training was about 2 months and we next went to Primary to start flying. In Texas Dorothy and Katie Wade drove our 36 Ford to Pine Bluff after trying to get a suntan and getting horribly burned instead. They could only wear bandanas as halters and were covered with Unguentine and must have been a sight on that trip through the South-land from San Antonio to Pine Bluff.

Primary Flight Training at Pine Bluff, Arkansas
Grider Field (See references 1 & 2 below)

References:

1. "Take 'Er Up Alone Mister", 1943 Whittlesey House by John J. Hibbits, 2nd Lt. Army Air Forces.
2. "Student Pilot Handbook", 1943, Books, Inc. By Jack Hunt and Ray Fahringer.

The Cadets were all sent by train to Pine Bluff, Ark. in early June, 1943. I will never

forget the thrill of coming to the airfield and as we got off the bus the air was full of PT-19 "Cornell" low wing monoplanes. What a beautiful sight! We started flying almost immediately. My instructor was a deep Southerner, heavy-set with dark hair and a mustache, but I don't remember his name. He started with 5 cadets and soon washed out 3 with only Webster M. (houndog) Watson and I remaining. Washout rate in those days was about 50% so he didn't waste any time. Houndog got his name from his slow southern drawl, a wide grin and a very friendly attitude at all times, a good buddy. I had flown some and soloed before getting into the program so I had no trouble at first. My most difficult time was in making simulated forced landings when the instructor suddenly cuts the engine power. You have to pick a good landing spot and bring the plane into it on a landing approach, usually over trees into a cotton field or hayfield if you are lucky. Just before touchdown the instructor pours on the power, and you can climb out. He then tells you what you did wrong, yelling through the gosport speaking tube from the back seat. I had no trouble with anyone on forced landings, simulating engine failure, except Mr. Trimble who seemed to make me very nervous and I couldn't do it right. Since he was the one who did the 20-hour and 40-hour check-rides you had to pass him. At 20 hours I flunked and got a repeat ride with another check pilot with no trouble. On spot landings, simulating engine failure, I drew Trimble again and flunked. He made me repeat several times until someone (Bob Walker? I think) told me how to hit the spot by coming in a little low and goosing the throttle slightly to bring it in perfectly, which was cheating but I did it without getting caught and finally passed. The goosing had to be imperceptible or you would get caught. Since Trimble was on the ground looking at where you touched down, and at what attitude, you couldn't fly in fast and hit hard either, but you could goose the throttle a little and it not be noticed.

During the first 20 hours, without being taught aerobatics some of the guys tried loops etc. and would come back and brag that they had done the loop. I listened carefully and tried it the next day. Imagine my fright when I stalled out upside down and fell into a spin. I managed to spin out and that night I asked a lot of questions about how to go into a loop. The technique was to go into a shallow dive and build 180 mph airspeed and then pull up firmly and lay your head back look over the tail and see the horizon, keeping wings level, then pull it on over into a shallow dive and then level out. Next day I did it, piece of cake! When my instructor started teaching me aerobatics, he soon asked if I had been practicing, and I admitted it. Houndog Watson and I were roommates and so we each paid 50/50 for a nice little Student Pilot Handbook that probably cost \$3 in the PX. The illustrations are marvelous, and it was of great help to all the cadets that had it. I still have the handbook, which means that I've owed Houndog \$1.50 plus interest for 47 years.

Then I drew Trimble for the 40-hour check ride, flunked the forced landing again,

picking a cotton field and coming in across the hills or corrugations and also landing short which means you would hit the trees. So I was scheduled for a "wash ride" with the "old man," the chief pilot of the school. After successfully completing all the course work! Primary schools were run by civilians under contract with the Army. An Army 1st Lt. did the Army "Acceptance" check rides on each student, after the school said he was qualified. As I waited for my wash ride from which no one ever survived because it was just a formality, the Army Lt. came in and asked who was ready for their Acceptance ride, and of course I said I was because I had completed all my course work! I passed the Acceptance ride with no trouble. When my instructor caught up with me he was grinning. He said I still had to go for the wash ride and that no cadet had ever pulled that stunt before. However, I could see he was proud of me, telling me to take it easy and not be nervous and good luck! The next day I flew with the "old man" and passed. He even seemed to be on the controls helping me and I wasn't nervous and did most things fine, although my forced landing wasn't as good as I would have liked. So, on to Basic training.

Meanwhile, Dorothy had a job as waitress in the Palace Cafe in Pine Bluff, and since they sold beer and she is very pretty she had a lot of trouble with customers. While we were at Pine Bluff Dorothy had an attack of stomach pains and the local doctor said she had to have her appendix removed "before night." I went to the Army doctor on the base, and he agreed to look at her. He came back and said that if it was him he would never let the local doctor cut into his belly. So she let it go and didn't have to have it removed until about 1962.

Bill (the same Bounce Walker from pre-flight) and Marion Walker got married in Pine Bluff, Arkansas on a Saturday. Bill got me off early so we could use our car for the wedding. Marion's father came down with her to give her away and pay for a nice wedding party. After that Katie Wade and Dorothy became friends with Marion Walker, and our 36 Ford was busy every time we could get off the base. In Pine Bluff Dorothy and Katie Wade stayed on one room together. Dorothy and I rented a Motel room on Saturday's and until Sunday night.

Basic Training at Coffeyville, Kansas

My instructor in Basic was Lt. Faust from Indiana. He had a good sense of humor and I enjoyed flying the BT-13 Vultee Vibrator although at first it seemed like a wild racehorse because it had so much power and vibration. Notable occurrences were; (1) getting lost on a perfectly clear day and having to explain to the class how to get lost and then find your way home. This was after getting back an hour late and everyone late for dinner; (2) witnessing one of my classmates brushing through some trees trying to make a short field landing. I had to explain to the base safety officer how the

instructor had badgered the student to get lower and lower until he just flew right through the tree tops; (3) getting a new instructor whose best friend was killed when a wing broke off in a snap roll while instructing one of our classmates (Wasney? who bailed out successfully). My new instructor insisted on doing snap rolls for an hour to prove he wasn't scared (but I was frightened to death of this nut); (4) another instructor who got crazy angry with me on a night check-out because I asked him a question, and told me to fly night solo and he hoped I killed myself. Then made me walk tours all the next afternoon with a parachute banging into my legs and him peering around the building to make sure I didn't cheat. How would you like to be on a combat crew with this guy?

We still had our wives with us and got to see them every Saturday afternoon and stay overnight and they could visit the base on Wednesday evenings. The fact that Dorothy had our 36 Ford was a blessing. When the Army found out some of us had our wives with us; a "regular officers" wife gave them a lecture on being an Army wife and tried to convince them it would be better if they went home and left us to the business of learning to fly. No way!

Since Dorothy and I had taken horseback riding lessons in Cleveland before getting married we decided to take advantage of the riding horses at Coffeyville Army Basic training base. Mostly the officers rode them but cadets were also allowed so we tried it. I nearly had a horse fall on me when he reared up and over on the saddle to try and kill me so we gave it up. The stable man told us that the horse I took, the only one available, was very hard to control because an officer had mistreated him. Being over confident I said I would ride him. My mistake! This officer sounds like the nut that gave me the hard time on the night flying. At Coffeyville, Dorothy stayed in a house with Marion Walker in separate rooms.

On the last day of flying Hank Webb needed some more hours of instrument flying which requires dual so I went along so he could fly under the hood. After about an hour Hank popped the hood and started doing aerobatics to celebrate our last flight, I guess. I suddenly noticed that we were going straight down at about 400 mph and exceeding the redline speed, so I took over and yelled at him to take it easy. I always was a spoil sport, but couldn't see getting killed in training. So, on to Advanced training.

We had a couple of bachelors in our group George B. (GB) Ward and Edwin (Ned) Wanner. They had a technique for getting dates. As soon as they could get to a phone at a new location they dialed "operator" and asked for dates. It usually worked.

Advanced Training (Twin Engine) at Altus, Oklahoma

We moved next to Altus, Oklahoma. The Army was very non-supportive of wives both on the base and in travel. When we got there Dorothy stayed with a young couple in a room with kitchen privileges, and the other wives found other rooms.

We started flying at Altus: I had a very sober instructor (Lt. Whitesell), but we got along well and there were no problems of tours or flunking check rides etc. I was in the half of the class that was assigned to fly the AT-17 Cessna Bobcat twin engine trainer, while the other half got to fly the AT-9 Curtis twin engine trainer which had a higher wing loading and was said to be more difficult to fly. The Bobcat was a piece of cake to fly, and I was happy it was when one day I came in for a landing and got too close to the plane ahead and was thrown around by the prop-wash. It wasn't dangerous with the AT-17 but probably would have been with the AT-9.

One day two of us were out flying in the Bobcat and the guy I was flying with asked if I had tried weightlessness? I said no, so he showed me how it worked, one pilot would lie on the back seat which was wide enough for 3 people and the other would do a push-over and suspend the guy on the back seat in the air between the seat and ceiling. The trick was to do it just right so you just hung there for as long as possible. We got good at it until I misjudged, pushed over too hard and the man loose in the back along with the landing gear emergency crank handle flew up to the ceiling and then smashed down in a heap on recovery. The crank was normally held in a bracket but it came loose and hit him in the head. Anyway the Astronauts have nothing on us because we did "weightlessness" in 1943 before they were invented.

About halfway through the course we were all (including wives) in the base theater on a Wednesday night watching Rita Hayworth in "Gilda. Dorothy was there because wives could visit the base on Wednesday evenings. A terrific hailstorm came up, and the noise drowned out the movie for several minutes. The next morning the AT-17's were literally in shreds because they had fabric covered wings. So I completed the course in AT-9's, which I loved because they were like a frisky racehorse compared with the AT-17 plow horse. I flew formation and instruments and excelled in both. The instrument instructor Lt. Redmond, kept pushing me to do more and more complicated flying including instrument takeoffs. He implied that I was his best student: He may have done the same with all his students, but it sure built up my confidence. I even did extra duty on the Link trainer to improve my proficiency and challenged the Link instructor to try to confuse me, which he couldn't. I know this training saved my life later on because I never hesitated to believe the instruments and act on this belief in emergencies. When we were given A-2 leather jackets I got Lt.

Redmond's old used one, which he had turned in for a new one. I wore it proudly all through the war.

When we started flying the AT-9 we began night flying training. After checking out and doing OK with the ship one night, I was flying pilot with Weiss as copilot and shooting practice landings. My technique with the AT-9 with its high wing loading was to come right down onto the runway before leveling out on landing. This gave me more control and reduced the possibility of stalling out too high. Weiss got scared that I was going to fly into the runway so he grabbed the controls and tried to take over. Naturally, we both lost all feel for the controls and we hit like a ton of bricks, the doors popped open, and I thought we had wiped out the landing gear. I was so angry that I could gladly have killed Weiss. He thought we had damaged the aircraft, and he wanted to report it. I would have none of it, we continued flying after I yelled at him. Fortunately, the AT-9 was a strong aircraft and everything went well on subsequent landings. I saw Weiss once after that in Labrador on the way over to England, and I still hadn't forgiven him. In fact I still haven't!

My last flight at Altus was with Truxtun Whitney who considered himself the hottest pilot in the Army Air Corps. I was through training, but he needed an hour of night flying so I went along as copilot. He proceeded to fly aerobatics in the AT-9 and did a great job. He asked if I had ever rolled the "9." I said no whereupon he actually slow-rolled it, I got disoriented. I could not convince myself that we were not flying upside-down, the stars and the sky looked just like the sparsely populated farmland with a few lights. I could see the instruments were saying we were right-side up. The only problem would be if the artificial horizon gyro tumbled and became inoperative because of the slow roll. Fortunately Whitney wasn't disorientated, but I really learned to trust the instruments even more than previously. And I have never rolled an aircraft at night!

Near the end of the course we had a visit from a team of B-26 Martin Marauder combat experienced pilots who were trying to get volunteers for B-26 Transition Training. It seems that the B-26 was very unforgiving, especially in training, a lot of pilots were getting killed, so the new pilots weren't asking for them. My recollection is that "Hound dog" Watson and Truxtun Whitney volunteered. I've never heard if they made it OK. Anyway, most of us volunteered for the B-25 Mitchell, after seeing the movie "30 Seconds Over Tokyo" starring Van Johnson and Spencer Tracy. We graduated on 5 December 1943 in Class 43K. Dorothy pinned on my wings. I got a couple weeks leave, and Dorothy and I drove home to Cleveland, Ohio, with me in my newly sprouted Army Air Corps wings and gold 2nd Lt. bars on my officers uniform. Life doesn't get much better than that!

Combat Crew Assignment at Salt Lake City, Utah

After a leave, I took the train to Salt Lake City and was assigned as a copilot in heavy bombardment; which meant B-17's or B-24's. Bill Walker and Hallie Wade asked for troop carrier and got it. Bill Bauer from Cleveland was at Salt Lake for assignment in fighters. I had last seen him in San Antonio before preflight training. He took me to town to get my whisky and rum ration, and we drank it up in one night with some of the other guys. After a few days I was assigned to a B-17 crew with Bob Dunbar, and we went to Rapid City, South Dakota for combat crew training.

BOB DUNBAR'S COMBAT CREW FLYING B-17'S OUT OF ENGLAND

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is a summary of my association with Bob Dunbar and his crew. I was with them for approximately 7 1/2 months from early January to August of 1944. We were assigned as a crew at Salt Lake City, rode a troop train to Rapid City, South Dakota and joined the 398th Bomb Group, 602 Squadron. We started training as a B-17 Combat crew on January 8, 1944. Hank Webb and George B. (GB) Ward from our graduation class were also at the 398th as copilots. Most of our other 43K classmates signed up for troop carriers, whereas Hank, GB and I wanted B-25's so we got to be copilots on B-17's. Dunbar's crew completed training in April and were declared surplus to the 398th BG so we flew a new B-17 over to Prestwick, Scotland and then went by train to an assignment center at Stone, England. By the end of May we were assigned to the 96th BG at Snetterton Heath located on the rail line between Cambridge and Norfolk near the Thetford forest. This was in the 45th Combat Wing of the 3rd Bombardment Division of the Eighth Air Force. The 1st and 3rd Divisions had B-17's and the 2nd Division had B-24's. We were provided fighter cover with P-38's and P-51's in June and then exclusively with P-51's after they got their long range drop tanks. The P-38's were sent to the Pacific to fight the Japanese. I completed 14 missions as copilot with Dunbar's crew and then went on detached service with the Aphrodite Project on 10 August 1944. This chapter covers that 7 1/2 month period. We flew as a crew for 136:30 flight hours in training, 27:50 flight hours on the way over to Prestwick and 172:40 flight hours in the combat theater some of which was also training. Thus we flew 337 total flight hours together as a crew before I left them. They were shot down and all became POW's on September 13, 1944 and survived the war.

Crew Position	Last Name, First	Rank	Serial No.
1. PILOT	Dunbar, Robert S.	2/LT.	0-810844
2. COPILOT	Waters, Kenneth T.	2/LT.	0-700379
3. NAVIGATOR	Krempasky, John F.	2/LT.	(deceased)
4. BOMBARDIER	Upshaw, Arthur M.	2/LT.	(deceased)
5. ENGINEER, WG	Crast, Kenneth J.	S/SGT.	
6. ASST. ENG. TT	Kennedy, Carl	SGT.	(deceased)
7. RADIO OPERATOR	Boardman, Thomas Harold	S/SGT.	(deceased)
8. ARMORER BT	Hyde, Norman F.	SGT.	
9. ARMORER WG	Dennis, Arthur D.	SGT.	
10. ARMORER TG	Lazur, Michael A.	SGT.	

Current Addresses: (as of March 2005)

Boardman, T. Harold (Radioman) (POW) (H) (314) 471-7469
P.O. Box 604, Sikeston, Mo. 63801 (W) (314) 471-8560

Crast, Kenneth J. (ENGINEER, WAIST GUNNER)
18 Shagbark Lane, Pennelville, NY 13132

Dennis, Arthur (WG) (POW) (503) 829-5672, 835 E. Main St. #220
Molalla, Oregon 97038

Dunbar, Robert (PILOT) (803) 766-3701, 1527 S. Pinebark Lane
Charleston, SC 29407

Hyde, Norman (BT), 526 W. 11th
Peru, Indiana, 46970

Waters, Kenneth T. (COPILOT) (302) 234-1158, 726 Loveville Rd. Cottage 60
Hockessin, DE 19707-1522

Combat Crew Training at Rapid City, South Dakota (398TH BG, 602 Squadron)

Our training with the 398th BG took place between 8 January and early April 1944. One of my main problems was that I never got to make take-off and landings, because Bob Dunbar needed practice, I guess. Dorothy and Viola Webb were always together and we had next door apartments so the girls got Webb's car and Hank and I rode the bus into and out of the base. The enlisted men were Carl Kennedy top turret, Harold Boardman Radio operator, Ken Crast Engineer waist gunner, Art Dennis waist gunner and Mike Lazur Tail Gunner.

Some examples of our problems were:

1. We had a lot of snow that winter and Rapid City was closed down and we got behind in our training. So, they sent us to Ardmore, Oklahoma for practice bombing. During this flight Dunbar pulled a tight turn suddenly and Lazur in the tail was thrown around: an ammo can rolled over and hurt his leg and he was angry. After landing at Ardmore we parked at the end of the runway so Bob could take the ammo can out and dump it, because he had an episode of diarrhea. The next day we were assigned to the practice bombing range so Art Upshaw could do his stuff. At this time Bob and I weren't speaking for some reason so I was mostly along for the ride. Anyway, Bob and Art couldn't find the bombing range, and we got hopelessly lost. I had noted the

crossover from the "A" and the "N" signals on the radio beam, but I didn't comment. We turned east instead of west as we should have, and I just said nothing. After a couple of hours we were well over into Arkansas and I seemed to be the only one who knew that we were flying way too far to the east. Finally we buzzed a little town in the Ozarks that had a water tower and a sawmill. I don't remember the town name but it was so far east as to be off any charts we had. I dialed the radio compass and listened for awhile and tuned into Oklahoma City. I then suggested that we turn about 45 degrees to the left of where the Radio Compass was pointing because I guessed we were approximately east and south of Ardmore. Bob said that if the compass was pointing to Oklahoma City then that's where we were going. We did so, and then turned south to Ardmore and got back in with very little fuel left and just before dinner time. I forgot to mention that we took off in the morning after breakfast! Two pilots who are not communicating are not much use to each other or anyone else. Nor was our Navigator a help when we got lost. Bob did show a little more respect for me after that.

2. After we returned from Ardmore, Rapid City was still snowed in so we were sent to Piote, Texas, for more off-site training. After landing we were assigned quarters and assembled at the Officers Club bar. Our Operations Officer, John Ward invited us to have a drink on him and proceeded to set them up. Since I had brought my own liquor, and we were not especially friendly with Ward I was puzzled about why he had become so generous. We were all getting pretty happy with all this free booze when suddenly a group of Piote Base Officers came in and started glaring at us. We had been drinking their booze. Ward just read the name on the bottles behind the bar and ordered drinks from "his" bottle. I was the first one out the back door and never went into that bar again while we were there.

3. During the last few weeks back at Rapid City we had gunnery practice. This gave our gunners practice at their assigned stations but also guns at other stations. Even the pilots fired guns and I tried the ball turret and Jack Krempasky's navigation station gun. During one of the runs Dunbar flew lower and lower on the return run where we were not firing at targets. We came up a low undulating hill right over the road and met a 1936 Ford coming up the other side. The car skidded to a halt right in front of us and a man and woman in the car jumped out into the ditches on either side. We flew by the targets and fired some more. Then Bob spotted a farmhouse with about 1000 white Leghorn chickens in the yard between the house and barn. As the B-17 "hawk" came into the yard 1000 chickens flew all over. On the return leg we also saw a number of dead horses and cows in the fields. When we returned to base there was hell to pay. Those in charge informed us that the Army would have to pay a lot of money for dead animals and loss of eggs. The hens were upset and wouldn't lay eggs for days. Not surprisingly no one confessed to shooting the livestock or buzzing. It sounded like

everyone was raising a little hell because it was only a couple of weeks before the group was due to fly over to England.

4. The last training we received at Rapid was Formation Flying. Bob hadn't done any before but we kept up OK until they started doing tight turns. When the group turned, we were low on the inside of the steep turn. We nearly stalled out, fell out of formation and had to make a recovery before rejoining the group.

5. One day we were not flying so the whole group was milling around outside our quarters. I had just came out of the Officers quarters after lunch, and a snowball fight started. Soon it was Officers against Enlisted men. Since I loved snowball fights I joined in enthusiastically and with careful shots I got a few hits. Then I noticed a few Enlisted men standing against their barracks and out of the fight. I threw my balls against the barracks so they would spray snow on these men. I got lucky and hit a Sgt. in the ear. A few seconds later he had me and started to punch me out. Fortunately, his pilot pulled him off me before he could do any damage. His pilot and officers pleaded with me not to press charges because he was a good man and it would ruin him and all that. I readily agreed because it was my fault in the first place. Some other officers were angry with me for not throwing the book at him; it would be bad for discipline, etc. I couldn't see it that way because this Sgt. had been avoiding a fight until I provoked him.

During all this training Dorothy and Viola Webb had been sharing Webb's car to get around in while Hank and I were flying. The Webb's had an apartment right next to us in the same building, which was convenient for us all. The bus to and from the base went right by our door so Hank and I didn't need the car. After Hank and I were settled in Rapid City, Dorothy took a train to Indianapolis and rode with Vi in their car to Rapid City. Dorothy and I rented a car one Sunday to see the Mount Rushmore monument. Very impressive! We got stuck in the mud because it was thawing and I took a shortcut on a mud road. We also went up in an old Waco with 2 seats in front and an open cockpit with a pilot who let me try it for fun.

Finally, it was time to leave for combat in England. Four crews were declared surplus and ours was one of them. GB Ward was a copilot on Klare's crew and they were also surplus. GB didn't get along with Klare and suggested that we really ought to trade crews since Klare and I liked each other. I never had to fly with him however, so it was still questionable and we probably couldn't have made the change anyway. I think GB's biggest problem was that Klare was very straight-laced and, GB was a ladies man. For example, he brought his girlfriend from Rapid City down to Grand Island, Nebraska and they lived in the Hotel Yancy as did Klare and his wife and Dorothy and I, until our crew was assigned a plane to fly over to England. GB told me after the war that Klare

kept finding one reason after another for not leaving Nebraska. They didn't get to England until a week or two after we did.

While at Grand Island awaiting our plane, Dorothy and I went to church and became acquainted with the Methodist minister, Rev. Hubbard. We toured the area in a 1941 Model Mercury Coupe belonging to a 2nd Lt. navigator who asked Dorothy to drive it to Louisville, Ky. on her way home.

The Flight Over From Grand Island, Nebraska to Prestwick, Scotland

We took off in questionable weather on the morning of 24 April 1944 flying from Grand Island to Bangor, Maine. Klare and GB Ward were right behind us but Klare found a reason to abort and return. They were delayed for another couple of weeks. Krempasky dialed in Des Moines, Iowa, on the radio compass, and Dunbar centered the needle to take up the course. We were flying southeast, although Des Moines is northeast of Grand Island. I checked the signal out and it was Des Moines all right, but for some reason the needle was telling us to go southeast. I finally got enough courage to tell Dunbar what I suspected. After a little argument, Krempasky and Dunbar agreed I must be right and we headed northeast. With some dial fussing the needle pointed correctly, and I was assigned the task of navigating us to Bangor, Maine. We flew to Chicago then Cleveland, Buffalo and on to Bangor in the evening. We flew over my home town (Windsor, Ohio) but only circled at 13,000 feet, the assigned altitude. Not very spectacular, but I had so little rapport with Dunbar that I couldn't ask if I could buzz my home town! And he didn't volunteer which made me a little peeved. We got to Bangor without incident and landed at nightfall. My credibility with Dunbar was going up. The next day we took off for Goose Bay in Labrador. I flew the radio compass until we ran out of civilization, even estimating the heading by watching the needle pointing backward to radio stations in Canada. Then Krempasky took over and brought us in to Goose Bay. The runways were plowed out, and the snow was up to the wing tips. You couldn't run off the runway's on this field! We stayed over and took off for Iceland at night so we would reach Iceland next morning, after an 8-hour flight. I had my 1st powdered milk in Goose Bay and met Weiss from Class of 43K. I still hadn't forgiven him for interfering with my night landing in the AT-9 and nearly causing us to crash.

Now Jack Krempasky was in charge and we were to fly at 13,000 feet altitude from Goose Bay, below the tip of Greenland and on to Iceland. Over the iceberg-strewn, freezing waters of the North Atlantic in May. It was tacitly understood that a war was on, and if you had trouble and went down there was little likelihood of a search. As we approached the tip of Greenland, Jack called and asked me to check the time we crossed the radio beam coming south from Blui West airfield on the tip. I tuned in and

got the signal loud and clear. Ten minutes later he called to inquire why I hadn't notified him of the time check. The signal was still the same and had no "build" which would indicate that we were approaching the beam. I told him this but he cussed me out for incompetence and went off the air. Exactly one hour later than the originally expected time check we crossed the beam and I notified him! He found his addition error and we went on. Dunbar was by this time getting a little apprehensive. Then we got to the frontal weather system. It was nearly daylight and we could see these towering Cumulonimbus clouds up to about 30,000 feet and awesome. We couldn't fly over it because we had no oxygen, so we started threading our way through the cloud canyons trying to stay in the clear. Dunbar and I became more and more anxious, and finally one of us suggested we go down closer to the water. Dunbar put the plane into a steep descent, meanwhile turning and banking to stay in the clear. By the time we got to 2,000 feet the sky seemed more ominous and we could see the waves on the sea through the clouds, I was scared to death. Then we chickened out and started to climb back to 13,000 feet. As we got back up we went through some scattered clouds and then were in the clear at sunup. Krempasky got us back on course and we proceeded towards Iceland.

When we were about one hour from ETA (estimated time of arrival) at Iceland, Boardman got busy on his radio and got us a "fix" on our position. As we approached Iceland there developed a cloud cover up to about 10,000 feet so we were still flying in the clear. Suddenly, I saw what looked like a bunch of bees circling up ahead on top of the cloud layer. We estimated we would be there in about 10 minutes so Dunbar said, "call in for landing instructions" which I did. I got an immediate response and was asked my position. I lied a little and was given an immediate letdown procedure and told the ceiling was 300 feet at ground level. Because I was good at instrument flying Dunbar gave me the instrument letdown responsibility. I had no trouble in bringing the plane right in over the end of the runway. Dunbar took over as soon as he could see the runway, at about 150 feet altitude after some nervous moments because we were so low. A few seconds later Dunbar had us rolling down the runway after a perfect landing. Iceland was nothing but a lot of rocks, no trees and a number of crashed B-17's and B-24's alongside the runway. I knew that Harlan Horton (a high school buddy from Windsor, Ohio) was stationed here so I called him, and he came over in a jeep. I took a short drive around the base with him and had a nice visit.

After a night's rest we took off for Prestwick, Scotland. The flight was uneventful, and we came in to Prestwick on a cloudy, hazy afternoon. An RAF Spitfire raced by as we entered the landing pattern, just looking us over I guess. To me the Spitfire is the most beautiful airplane ever. That was my first sight of it. We signed some forms, collected our gear and were taken by truck to the Glasgow Railway station. We had a few hours to wait for the train so we had Scotch (first for me) in a PUB and explored a bit.

Awaiting Assignment for Combat in England

We rode the train for a long time and eventually arrived at Stone, England, where we stayed for a week or ten days awaiting assignment. As Dunbar, Upshaw, Krempasky and I went through the chow line at Stone for our first meal in England our crew were doing KP and had to serve us; were they ever PO'd! I sure didn't blame them. We learned how to chug-a-lug pints of bitters, which I found is a good way to get sick. Other activities were reading, playing softball, watching some of the guys jump over the fence and play tennis at a neighboring house with a lot of young ladies on clay courts. Day and night the fighter aircraft, P-51's and P-38's, buzzed the mess-hall and showed off, probably returning from sweeps.

Finally we were trucked down to another assembly center near Oxford, (Bassingborne?). We were allowed to review daily bombing mission statistics and records at this center. For example they were doing raids from several hundred, to 1000 planes and sometimes lost more than 5% (50 bombers). It didn't take much knowledge of arithmetic to realize that you had to be very lucky to complete the required 25 missions. We learned later that they were trying (successfully) to attract German fighter aircraft so we could shoot them down; so they wouldn't be such a nuisance when "D" day came!

A few days before we left for the 96th Bomb Group, which was our assignment, Krempasky found we could get a pass into London for an afternoon and evening so we went together. We went in by train and shortly Jack found us a huge bar or Pub somewhere in London. It seemed to be full of American troops, Officers and girls. We had a good time seeing the sights of London and suddenly I found that it was midnight and we were supposed to be back at the base. I left Jack and went by bus and train to Oxford, arriving at about 1:00 AM. There was no way to get to the base, and I was just standing outside the station which was completely blacked out of course, wondering what to do when a cab pulled up and asked if I was the American Officer who had called a cab. I looked around and seeing no one else, agreed it was me. Then I found I was sharing a cab with a young lady whom I insisted he drop off first, and then the cabby took me to the base. The cabby even took me at my word that I was short of money, which I was, and didn't overcharge me. No one was in the office when I got there at about 1:30 AM so I signed in, just before midnight. Jack got in about 4:00 AM and also signed in at midnight! Then we moved to the 96th Bomb Group to start flying missions.

B-17 BOMBING MISSIONS OVER CONTINENTAL EUROPE DURING 1944/45 – Typical Mission recollections by K. Waters

INTRODUCTION:

Each B-17 bombing mission was unique relative to all the others, because of diverse targets, varying seasons and weather, altitudes, enemy actions and position within the formations. Movies about these missions usually combined these factors in one specific mission as in the movie "Memphis Belle." In reality they were composites of many missions and aircrew experiences. Therefore the following will also be a composite of my mission experiences; not what happened on any one mission. Each mission that I flew has been described in detail in my mission log.

My missions began on June 8, 1944 and by August 10, 1944 I had flown 14. At this time I went on detached service with the 388th BG, Aphrodite Project and remained there until mid January 1945. I was credited with 5 missions, and received the Distinguished Flying Cross for the Aphrodite mission, in which I parachuted out of a drone B-17 over England. I was checked out as a 1st pilot in January 1945 and then returned to the 96th BG, 413th Squadron, to resume combat flying. I completed 15 more combat missions (my 30 missions requirement) on 21 April 1945. On that date, the 96th BG flew its last combat mission in the war.

In summary, I flew 12 missions as a copilot in the tail gunner position as "Observer" on "Lead" missions, 1 mission as copilot on the Aphrodite Project when I parachuted out of a B-17 drone over England, and 17 missions as copilot with several crews, including 4 missions to check-out new crews on their 1st mission. This mission record is therefore a composite of my mission experiences during 1944 and 1945.

MISSION PLANNING

Mission planning began the day before and sometimes weeks before the mission. Crew and aircraft selection was made the day before, and by 9:00 PM the bulletin board in the Officers club usually showed which crews would be called out the next day. This was the signal to get to bed and try to get some sleep. Many times I would already be in bed because I was tired and had had little sleep the previous day owing to flying practice missions, maintenance test flights or from completing a mission that day. Therefore, many times the call-out in the early AM was a surprise. In summer months we were sometimes called as early as midnight. The objective was to take-off at dawn so that you could form up in daylight, which made it easier to fly formation. I do remember forming up in darkness occasionally, if it was clear, and a long mission was planned.

CALL-OUT FOR A MISSION

At call-out we were roused by the Squadron Sgt's; they shook you and made sure someone in the hut was on his feet before leaving. For many months I was in a hut that didn't have my crew in it, so I was the only one being called out. I frequently I went back to sleep momentarily (or longer) so I got a special shaking. We assembled in the mess-hall and had a good breakfast of eggs, bacon, and all the rest. I even got up early to get a good breakfast sometimes because only if you were flying combat did you get the royal treatment. On one mission I was called to replace a co-pilot who had got into a fight and couldn't wear a oxygen mask. I promptly went back to sleep, and the next thing I knew I was pulled out of bed because the plane was waiting on the end of the runway for take-off, and everyone was very upset. I insisted on stopping by for some breakfast and ate it on the way out, after picking up my parachute and flight gear. As I got into the plane and started moving to the cockpit the pilot took off while I got dressed. I learned we were the Deputy Lead flying the right wing of the Lead plane. We formed up in time and proceeded with the mission.

THE BRIEFING

Next we traveled by truck to the briefing area on the flight line. When everyone was assembled, the Operations officers or the Colonel or the Executive Officer did the briefing. Our group might be the "lead" for the wing, or the Division, or the whole 8th Air Force. The higher the responsibility the higher rank of the leader in the lead aircraft. The target was discussed, with its defenses, fighter opposition and fighter supporting groups, as well as technical matters such as altitude and weather problems. We were given secondary and tertiary targets in case the main target was not visible. If the leader had PFF (pathfinder radar) we could bomb through the clouds. The routes in and out were discussed, with expected hostile defenses, both flak and fighter intensity. These routes were selected by intelligence to minimize exposure but were only guesses in some cases. Navigators were given a special briefing and charts with timing etc. Split second timing was essential because there were as many as 1000 B-17's and B-24's in the bomber stream. If one group was late at the target it could throw off the whole bombing run. Wings frequently had separate targets however, so everyone didn't have to go over the same target. But the control of 1000 bombers and supporting fighters in the skies over England was a formidable task, and it was a credit to the planners that we only had occasional collisions.

A group would put up squadrons of 12 or 13 planes - up to 39 planes in a group of three squadrons. Individual squadrons might be assigned to fly with another group of two to make up the group. Several (2 or 3) groups formed up to make a wing. Several

wings made a Division. In the European Theater of Operations (ETO) we had the 1st and 3rd divisions flying B-17's and the 2nd Division flying B-24's. The 96th BG was in the 45th Wing of the 3rd Division. Because timing was crucial, everyone at briefing set our watches to the same time to the second, using the standard Army Air Corps "Hack Watch," which was issued to every airman.

TAKE-OFF PREPARATION

We had lockers for our flight clothes and were issued parachute chest packs which were attached to the front of a harness with "D rings." At various times we were ordered to wear our 45 automatic pistols in a shoulder holster. This varied with the reports being sent back about civilians killing descending airmen when they parachuted from a damaged airplane. It was safer (usually) to be captured by German Army soldiers who would turn you over to authorities. The 45's were usually optional. I wore it sometimes but didn't like it. Flight clothes consisted of electrically-heated suits (coveralls), which plugged into the receptacles at crew stations, sheepskin-lined boots over shoes, and heavy or light flight jackets depending on the altitude and season.

In preparation for take-off each crew member was assigned his duty. Gunners had to mount the guns and fill ammunition boxes. The aircraft was checked by the copilot and the pilot, with the ground maintenance crew chief and the flight engineer. All defects were recorded and finally the pilot signed off that the plane was flight-worthy. The copilot had to check that the crew didn't have too many extra flak suits and sheets of armor plating on board that would adversely effect weight and balance. The aircraft were heavily loaded with gas and bombs and take-off was always risky, and too much added weight or imbalance could cause a crash. Further, added weight could cause higher fuel consumption and danger of running out of fuel. If the aircraft was not flight worthy, another could be assigned or standby crews were there to take over to replace an aborted aircraft. Our maintenance was excellent, and to my knowledge we had very few aborts. The 388th BG records show a large number of aborts from engine trouble, for example. Many of these occurred after the mission was underway.

One morning it was cold, foggy, and raining and I was called out to replace a sick copilot on Kramer's crew. We sat in the plane on this miserable morning in the dark, waiting for either a take-off or scrub signal. This crew had been badly shot up several times and every mission seemed worse than the last to them. They had crash landed in France once and they all were sure they would be shot down and it was only a matter of time. I tried to cheer them up and told them it wouldn't be today anyway because I was with them. But I still remember how really depressed I actually was to hear all this gloom so imagine how relieved we were when the mission was scrubbed. They went

missing a few days later but I heard they made it to Sweden and had to be interned for the remainder of the war. What a tough break!

TAKE-OFF

At take-off Group Operations signaled time to start engines. All aircraft lined up on the taxi strips in proper order for take-off. The tower flashed a green light when the preceding aircraft had cleared the runway and you were clear-ed for take-off. You climbed to a prearranged altitude on an assigned heading to get to the form-up area. All groups followed this procedure, and therefore were directed to areas where there was open space so that collisions would be avoided.

Bad weather made take-off hazardous, and we found, on our 1st mission, that the assigned altitude of 13,500 feet was completely covered over with cloud by the time we got up there. Flying around in cloud at daylight we narrowly missed a B-24 that flew right in front of us. Having no instructions about going to a new altitude we went up in the clear to 15,000 feet but never found our group. Therefore our 1st mission was a tag-a-long to a B-24 group and we never knew where we were or where we dropped bombs. We eventually got credit for the mission. Reference "Snetterton Falcons 96th Bomb Group" mission on 8 June 1944: "The piece de resistance came as yet another 96'er plastered the target amid a formation of B-24's. But as Colonel Hand would put it later; "the 96th would do anything to get to the target."

FORM UP

The correct procedure for form up was to climb to the assigned altitude and location and follow the leader as he circled (to the left I believe). We circled inside the leaders who flew a large flat circle so we could catch up. If it was dark or the weather was bad the leader fired double red flares at intervals to identify the 96th BG. Other groups had their own flare code. Every plane had a flare pistol - it was fired for wounded on board upon return from a mission and other reasons. Thus any plane firing a flare pistol was identified by a group. At a designated time the form-up was complete, and the group started off for the channel. If all planes weren't in formation by that time, they were left. As the formation proceeded, the time could be adjusted by "S"-ing or speeding up and cutting corners. As each group left form-up they started climbing to the assigned route altitude. At 10,000 feet oxygen masks were donned and oxygen checks started. All crew members were required to respond to the copilots call for oxygen check every few minutes. Remote locations such as the tail and the ball turret were especially vulnerable because no one could see them, Oxygen starvation came on slowly and one was unconscious before being aware of it. Our navigator flew with another crew on one mission and woke up over Germany to hear the bombardier saying he thought Jack

Krempasky was dead. Jack's oxygen hose had disconnected.

THE ROUTE IN TO THE TARGET

It was crucial to arrive on time at the check points along the route. The objective was to arrive precisely at the Initial Point (IP) for the run-in to the target. Each group expected that they had a clear run in to the target without interference from others. As we continued to climb we went over the enemy coast in the southern sector in northern France or the northern sector over Holland and the center of the Zuider Zee. This route fascinated me particularly because we would go over this same route day after day when bombing northern and middle Germany. There was never any flak right on us, although flak bursts were occasionally seen off to the side as we flew through this corridor. We were told the flak guns along the coast were on flak boats and could move around that way. Why the German flak boats didn't move into the corridor frequently, I'll never know. They could have given us a nasty surprise once in awhile. My map of the flak positions over the northern route showed us what to avoid. As we approached the enemy coast we donned flak vests and steel helmets with ear flaps (to permit earphones). Pilots always made sure they had the piece of armor plate in the seat pan to protect important areas. The B-17 also had a long piece of armor plating permanently attached to the back of the pilot's seats and extending above their heads. I always carried a separate extra flak vest which I hung suspended from the oxygen control valve handle at my right side. This vest protected my right side between my flak vest and the seat back armor. The pilot covered my other side pretty well.

One day however, there was a very strong north wind and each group had to "crab" as it flew the corridor. Col. Schultz, was flying command pilot, and I was the tail gunner "observer." The navigator told the Colonel we were off course to the south because Schultz insisted on lining up with the group we were following instead of crabbing into the wind and following the proper path. We had all donned our flak vests and helmets, and I had just test-fired my twin 50 caliber guns as we came over the coast line. Then all hell broke loose as flak came up all around the group. I was amazed and scared because we had never got flak at this point before. The navigator convinced Schultz to fly the rest of the way in the corridor.

We eventually arrived at the bombing altitude (usually around 25,000 feet) over enemy territory and leveled off. These routes took us to the Initial Point (IP) of the target we were to hit that day, and then we would turn at the IP onto the target run.

On at least one mission we went in high at 20,000 feet and, after coming out over a frontal system, dropped down to 14,000 feet. It was a beautiful clear spring day as we dropped bombs on a rail yard and on bridges over a river. I was in the tail of the lead

plane flying "observer" for the last Squadron over the target, in the cleanup position. Our instruction was to bomb anything that hadn't been hit. Since everything was bombed effectively, our bombardier rolled back his Norden bomb sight to the courthouse square of this small city, with devastating effect. LTC Nolan, command pilot flying the co-pilots seat in our plane, was very surprised to see what we hit when the strike photos were developed. We obliterated the court house and town square in addition to many houses.

TARGET RUN-IN

As we turned onto the target run at the IP we could see exactly where the target was because the air was full of flak smoke as the gunners tracked in on our altitude so they could shoot us down when we got closer. The flak was very demoralizing, causing us to sweat - our goggles fogged up, and our formation flying suffered. Usually when flying copilot I preferred to fly the target run-in because it kept me occupied. I could fly very tight formation, and most pilots I flew with were happy to let me fly the target run while they monitored the outside group radio for instructions and watched the engine instruments for any sign that the engines were hit or failing. On several missions I flew with new crews as copilot to check them out. I had a lot of freedom this way and took advantage of it by maneuvering the plane to try and avoid flak bursts. I would judge where the next group of four bursts would hit and move out of the way. Then move back in formation when they were no longer hitting where I wanted to fly. As the copilot, I always monitored the crew by inter-phone and knew what was going on at the various crew stations. Thus enemy fighters or planes going down, hits on the target, etc. were reported. The lead bombardier dropped our bombs and the other bombardiers dropped when he did. In case the lead plane got shot out of formation, his right wing-man was the deputy lead and took over to lead and drop bombs. In some instances, other planes also had to take over because of both the lead and the deputy aircraft being incapacitated. However, this was rare.

If the flak ceased suddenly on the target run you knew there would soon be a fighter attack. This was timed perfectly and only lasted a minute or two while the fighters came through, and then intense flak resumed. Fighters attacked from all directions but usually were driven off by our fighters. Early on, for my missions in June 1944 we had P-38 cover and they couldn't go all the way in with us; (to Berlin, for example) because of limited range. By July 1944 we had P-51 cover and they could go all the way with us, using drop tanks. They would fly faster than we did, slowly overtaking us, "S" turning in a flight of four aircraft and proceeded up to the head of the column. They then turned around and flew back over us, providing cover until they had to make for England and refuel. Upon sighting German fighters the P-51's went into a fighting mode by dropping their tanks and diving into the Jerries, which were usually Focke

Wulf 190's or Messerschmitt 109's. Later on the ME 262 Jets and ME 163 Komet rocket-engine fighters did attack at very high speed. The P-51's could not catch them, but I saw them drive them off us a couple of times by high-speed dives. After bombs away, the group went into a steep turn to head back to England. Usually the leader also changed altitude to confuse the flak gunners.

On one mission, hitting an oil refinery near Paris, a plane just above and slightly in front of us was hit in the waist. The tail was blown off, and the debris, including the tail, the tail gunner, and guns etc. came blowing back over us. Then the plane, minus the waist and tail, went down right in front of us. We went through the prop-wash from the spinning propellers with a jolt but no major damage. Parachutes were seen by our crew.

On another mission the pilot's windshield outer glass was smashed out and a few small pieces flew around the cockpit but no-one got hurt. On another, the bombardier's bomb sight window got smashed out, but no one got hurt.

In one instance, we had a No. 3 engine that was smoking because oil leaked onto the hot exhaust because of flak damage. The engine still had oil pressure and that was OK, but it couldn't pull power without danger of fire, so I just ran it at idle to show that we weren't crippled and followed along behind the group. In the event of fighters we had the option of pulling power and taking a chance of fire to avoid being separated from the group. Since we got hit on the way in, and the target couldn't be seen, we flew around for about a half hour this way, until our bombs were dropped just behind the group. Then we made for the cloud layer below, shut down the engine over friendly territory, and went home alone on three engines.

THE RETURN FLIGHT TO ENGLAND

After hitting the target our biggest problem was to bring a wounded plane back safely. Nearly everyone got flak hits somewhere, and engines were failing sometimes which necessitated leaving the formation. A "cripple" was an invitation to German fighters to attack.

On my 30th and final mission I got vertigo because the group leader insisted on flying through clouds at 25,000 feet altitude on the way in to the target. I was checking out a new crew, and fortunately the new pilot did not have vertigo. When we entered the clouds the group formation broke-up, and we had to re-form when we came out into the clear again. We finally dropped bombs and continued this risky practice on the way back. I had had enough! As we entered the clouds again I turned 5 degrees off course, and when we got clear the group was nowhere to be seen. So we went home alone,

letting down rapidly into the clouds again to avoid enemy fighters. I nearly got us killed, however, by barrage balloon/cables over Antwerp at 4000 ft., just under the base of the clouds. I didn't hear any "squeakers" on the radio, which warned of barrage balloons, but fortunately saw the balloons lurking at the base of the clouds in time. Mooring cables were designed to cut off the wings of airplanes. I climbed up over and around them and continued back to base. What a way to finish my last mission!

Note: The only other time I heard "squeakers" was on my last flight with Dunbar on 8/9/44 while we were out on a practice bombing mission. It was about 4:00 PM, sunny and very hazy. We had been watching very heavily loaded Lancasters climbing at about 8,000ft., with a long bomb bulging, at least partly below the belly of the aircraft. This was probably the RAF "Tallboy" bomb. When we heard "squeakers," Bob did a hard left turn, got to "hell out of there" and went back to the base. You could never relax, because if you did something stupid flying airplanes you could be killed! You had to know what was going on around you and make quick decisions.

Usually we flew home in formation and again the route avoided flak installations. Occasionally however, something went wrong and we would suddenly be in intense flak concentrations. One such occurrence happened near Rouen, France. We had come off the target near Paris and I was in a pool of sweat and exhausted from the flight in. The pilot was flying, and I had rolled my flak vest down into my lap and took off my flak helmet. A group of B-24's were flying nearby when heavy flak hit them. One blew up in a sheet of flame, and big flaming pieces dropped to the ground. Then we were in it! All hell broke loose as I climbed into my helmet and pulled the ear flaps down to my hips. When we got home from that one, we had 127 holes, big and small, in the plane. You could see right up through the left wing in a couple of places.

RETURN TO BASE AND LANDING

As we came back over England, the weather was the next hazard. Therefore the British had devised a simple system to get us down safely. We would fly in at any altitude to the base, to the so-called "buncher beacon," still in formation. As the lead plane arrived over the station the planes started peeling off one at a time at 30-second intervals, on a specified heading, and letting down at 500 foot per minute. The heading for the 96th BG was 270 degrees. When we had let down to half the original altitude, we did a 180 degree turn to the left to the reciprocal heading of about 90 degrees and used the radio compass to "home in" on the "buncher" again. Continuing the letdown at 500 feet per minute on the new heading brought us back to the base at landing altitude. If the weather was really bad as we arrived at the base, we flew right down low until we could see the ground and the perimeter lights which circled the field. We then followed them around to the left until a funnel of lights designated the active

runway, and we followed it in to a landing. Because East Anglia, where these airfields were located, was flat farmland with virtually no hills, this system had very few accidents. But it was hair raising at times to fly right down to about 200 or 300 feet in rain and fog before you could see the ground. You just had to rely on your knowledge that there were no hills about.

Once coming back after losing one engine at Leipzig, with No. 3 feathered, we were at about 10,000 ft. just above the clouds as we reached the channel. We were a little short on fuel and decided to make a letdown over the channel and come in under the cloud base, reported to be 500 ft. Jim Byers was making the letdown at a standard 500 ft./minute and looking out the left window to see the water when we broke through. I was looking out the right window but keeping an eye on the instruments. At about 300 ft. we still hadn't seen anything. The rate of descent was rapidly increasing, the altimeter was alarming, the heading gyro indicated a rapid turn to the left, and the artificial horizon was standing perpendicular at 90 degrees bank. We were in a spiral dive to the water but still in clouds! I wrenched the controls to right the plane, yelling at Byers to help me. Fortunately he believed me, and we got straightened-out, pouring on power to climb back up to make a procedure letdown at the base. We never saw the water, and a spiral dive from 200 to 300 ft. would have probably been fatal even if we had seen it in time to start corrective action.

LANDING AT BASE

Landing at the base was always tricky because you never knew whether you had a flat tire or any other damage that would cause trouble. Sometimes one landing gear wouldn't come down, in which case it became a question of where you wanted to crash-land. An airfield designated for crash landings was Woodbridge. It had a very large, wide, long runway and lots of fire fighting equipment if you crashed and burned. It was located near the coast, and was one of the first airfields available upon returning, and therefore the home field wasn't blocked or damaged. However, for some pilots it was a point of honor to bring the plane back to Snetterton and not land elsewhere even though it was prudent to do so. Lyle was one such pilot and he came back against his copilot's desires, when shot up and very low on fuel. They ran out of fuel on the approach, crashing into a tree at the edge of the field. Lyle and the navigator were killed, and the copilot (Leigh Mann) was badly injured. This crew were our former hut-mates, and we attended the funeral.

I crash landed B-17's during landing practice but never when returning from a mission. Once I inadvertently made a wheels-up landing; a perfect three-point on the propellers and the ball turret. On another, I let a copilot land short, stalling out and hitting hard; which broke one landing gear drag strut, resulting in a one wheel landing. This one

was hairy, but I did a beautiful job of keeping power on the two engines on the side with the broken gear, and braking on the other side so there was minimum damage. There was a lack of appreciation for my skills in the operations office on both of these crashes.

Another problem on landing was that we were exhausted from too little sleep and the long, tiring hours on oxygen at altitude. We didn't help it much either by smoking cigarettes on the way back to relieve tension. The way you smoke cigarettes at altitude on the way back from the target was to alternate taking oxygen from your mask held in your right hand and taking puffs on the cigarette held in your left hand. It worked OK, and you only got a little dizzy at times. The danger of blowing up the plane because of lighted matches and cigarettes near the oxygen was unknown to us.

Missions ranged from 6 hours to 10.5 hours with no relief, just sitting in a seat in a pool of sweat. We had a couple of candy bars to eat during the mission but no liquids because the relief tube in the bomb bay always froze up (from as much as 60 degrees F below zero) when at altitude. I only tried mine once and it got all over me. Another problem was that after about 8 hours on oxygen your face was raw from the chafing oxygen mask. Then I had a bad habit of chewing my cheek until it was bloody inside, when in flak and when flying formation with extreme concentration. I was unaware of this until I relaxed and felt the pain.

After landing, if you had wounded aboard you fired the flare pistol which was always installed in the socket above and back of the copilots head. On one mission I was so relieved at our safe return I shouted "fire a red flare," and Kennedy obeyed. I got hell for wasting the time of the ambulance which came rushing up to take off our wounded. Dunbar said to hell with it we want a pass in London, and we got it.

After landing, the pilots wrote up the log and anything wrong with the plane. On a mission where I substituted for a copilot who had a fight, the aircraft had just had a wing replaced by the ground crew who were working all night. Usually a major repair job such as this required a maintenance test flight before the plane could be flown in combat. Because of a shortage of planes however, this one was released. The controls were sloppy, and it was difficult to maintain formation. We had no major trouble, but I insisted on writing it up, although the pilot thought I was being picky. CPT. Barkalow and another pilot gave it a maintenance test flight, and, as they were coming in for a landing, a fuel leak which had been undetected caught fire, and a small explosion puffed out the wing skin. They got it down safely and reported that the controls were miss-rigged as I said. Somebody up there must have been looking out for me that day!

DEBRIEFING AFTER THE MISSION

At debriefing we were issued a shot of whisky if we wanted it. Fortunately, Boardman our radio operator always got airsick and usually refused the whisky. So I got my share of the extras. After one long mission I got his and mine and was so tired I collapsed, giggling, into my locker. This may have been the Magdeburg mission where we were attacked by fighters and Hyde got credit for half of one. He held his mike button down, firing his guns and cursing amid all the noise and vibration.

At one debriefing, I stated to the intelligence officer that I had seen some new kind of fire bombs being dropped from B-24's over Berlin. He said, "don't you know those were B-24's being shot down in flames?" I didn't until then. Very sobering.

POST MISSION

Usually after the debriefing we were so hungry we returned to the mess hall. Sometimes this was a special meal prepared just for returning crews. On many days it was nearly mealtime when we landed so we got cleaned up first and had a normal meal. We usually tried to take a shower and get cleaned up but many times by the time I got there, the water was cold or hot water had been had been turned off. My recollection of the showers was rough cement walls, dank and dark and uninviting, not well lighted. There were wet slippery floors, and we tried to dress without getting clothes wet, not at all pleasant. Furthermore, I hated shaving my raw face with cold water so I left it until the next day. Then we went back to the club and started drinking to relax, if we hadn't started earlier. We then read, wrote letters, played cards, and gambled etc. At 9:00 PM the crew assignments for the next day's mission were posted, and we went to bed if we were "on." I never drank much if I was scheduled for a mission.

MISSIONS FLOWN WITH DUNBAR'S CREW WITH 96TH BOMB GROUP IN 1944

Narration by Ken Waters copilot

INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 1944 all normal missions of Robert Dunbar's crew were flown out of Snetterton Heath with the 96th Bomb Group. I flew over to England with Dunbar's crew as copilot in April/May 1944 and after a few weeks we were assigned to the 96th Bomb Group. Our first mission was on 8 June 1944, 2 days after "D" day. We were originally assigned to the 338th Bomb Squadron and flew three missions there before being transferred to the 413th BS. After seven missions we were assigned to "lead" crew status. The 413th was the "Pathfinder" Squadron for the 3rd Division and all pathfinder missions were led from this squadron, according to Stewart Evans, a historian. I don't recall this but he says all Pathfinder aircraft were maintained at the 413th even though some missions were led by crews from other Groups. It is certain, however, that the Pathfinder aircraft carried a radar (PFF) operator in the radio compartment and we trained one on Dunbar's crew. I don't recall ever hearing how many other crews had their PFF operator. Sam Massey was a copilot in the 413th BS with Braithwaite's crew but they didn't have a PFF operator to my knowledge. Later I joined Red Smith's "lead" crew in the 413th and he didn't have a PFF operator and I don't remember bombing by PFF even with complete cloud cover, when with Smith. I flew a total of 14 missions with Dunbar's crew before volunteering for detached service on the Aphrodite Project. This chapter deals with our combat missions and how we evolved from a green crew to a lead PFF crew. My opinion is that the prime reasons that we were selected for lead crew and pathfinder training is that Upshaw was a mature, experienced bombardier, Krempasky was an excellent Navigator and made exceptional notes and records of the mission log's, and by then Dunbar was known to be a cool plane commander pilot. Since I was stuck in the tail to be a "formation observer" my contribution was minimal. My letters indicate that Lt. Gates was assigned to our crew as a PFF Navigator on 26 July 1944. The records show that Lt. Sacks went down with the crew on 13 September, 1944, while PFF lead for the 490th BG and they all became POWs.

My sources for the following information are the "Snetterton Falcons", notes I have made over the years about some of the more interesting happenings and also reference to letters I wrote to my wife nearly every day during this period. Although I wrote very little about the missions, so that I would not run afoul of censors, there is still a lot of useful information to jog my memory and put happenings in their proper chronological sequence.

THE FIRST 14 MISSIONS

During the week before "D" day (June 6, 1944) Dunbar and I were having a coffee with a couple of Red Cross girls in the canteen and discussing when "D" day would be. One of the girls said it would be June 6th, but I scoffed that she could know such a secret and she said, "just you wait and see". In 1983 Goeff Ward informed me that General Touy Spatts' daughter was a Red Cross girl at the 96th. Maybe it was she? The 6th of June was the last possible day they could go because of the tides. On June 5th we were in the hut playing cards around 11:00 o'clock PM, when CPT Baxter's crew got called out for a briefing. When they returned at about 12:30 we knew that "D" day was "on." Baxter flew 2 missions on "D" day and later said they had very little air opposition. Baxter was a very cocky little lead pilot and "knew" he would not be shot down. He finished up shortly after this. He was probably the author of the sign on the door of our hut, **"Eat Drink and Be Merry for Tomorrow We Fly."**

Lyle's crew was also assigned to this hut. They moved in the same day we came. Joe Loudermilk the bombardier, was a classmate of our bombardier, Art Upshaw. On 29 July 1944 Lyle's plane got shot up and nearly made it back to Snetterton but crashed on the approach to the airfield. Joe Loudermilk told me the copilot (Leigh Mann) wanted Lyle to land at Woodbridge because they were low on fuel and had lost 2 engines, but Lyle insisted on going on. Joe got most of the rest of the crew into the radio compartment and in the crash position-facing to the rear sitting on the floor. When they ran out of fuel on the approach and crashed into a tree, Lyle was killed, also the top turret gunner and the navigator, and smashed the copilot up badly. Stewart Evans gave me a slide of the crashed plane which shows the complete nose smashed back into the cockpit. Joe said the copilot lived, he carried him to the ambulance, crying all the way. (Pg. 175, Snetterton Falcons for details).

To get checked out, Dunbar flew with another crew for his 1st mission on 4 June 1944, and again on 6 June 1944. Anyway we were finally up for our 1st one as a crew on 8 June 1944.

Mission No. 1 (8 June 1944) - TOURS LA RICHE, FRANCE

- 8:00 hours flight time.
- Anti-personnel troop support
- No 96th BG losses

On our first mission we took off in the early dawn and were assigned to form up at 13,500 feet. The cloud cover was up to 15,000 feet so we couldn't find anyone as we circled around. Suddenly a B-24 went right in front of us in the clouds and we got a

prop-wash jolt. I started yelling at Dunbar to get this thing up where we could see as we climbed out at 15,000 feet.

Our group signal was 2 red flares for form-up. The technique was simple, the group circled (to the left I believe) while climbing and the lead plane occasionally firing a double (2 red flares) for identification. During form up you climbed inside the circle of the leader who was in a larger circle. It was easy to form up this way and as long as you could see the red flares you knew you were in the right group. However on this day, our 1st mission, we couldn't see any red flares because we had waited around at 13,500 feet too long. We finally formed up on a B-24 group, flew formation over to France with them and dropped our bombs with them. A fine start to a combat career!

The B-24 gunners on the planes around us kept their guns on us all the way, just in case we were a German crew in a captured B-17. Of course we had no communication with them because they were on a different VHF radio frequency. I don't believe we even told our own group what we were doing.

The mission was an anti-personnel mission for troop support. Our navigator, Krempasky thought he saw the Cherbourg Peninsula through the clouds at one time. We had no losses in the 96th and no fighters or flak on our B-24 mission. Dunbar got to explain our error and eventually got us credit for the mission.

See Snetterton Falcons, page 156: "The piece de resistance came as yet another 96er plastered the target amid a formation of B-24's. But as Colonel Hand would put it later, "the 96th would do ANYTHING to get to the target."

Mission No. 2 (11 June 1944) PONTAUBAULT, FRANCE

- 6:25 hours flight time
- Tactical Target anti-personnel troop support
- One 96th BG loss MIA (all but one KIA)

Mission No. 2 was another anti-personnel mission in support of the troops, but I can't recall anything notable about it.

Mission No. 3 (12 June, 1944) ROYE/AMY, FRANCE

- 6:00 hours flight time
- 500 pound bombs and frags for an airfield
- No 96th BG losses

We dropped 500 pound bombs on an airfield but I didn't note any enemy action. We

were transferred to the 413th BS, and moved there this afternoon after returning from the mission.

Letter to my wife, 18 June 1944. I'm 22 years old today but no celebration just a working day.

Mission No. 4 (20 June 1944) MAGDEBURG ROTHENSEE, GERMANY (20 miles West of Berlin)

- 8:05 hours flight time
- Load: 100 pound incendiaries, Target: Huge Oil Refinery Complex
- 3 lost for 96th BG

On this mission we dropped incendiaries on the oil refinery at Magdeburg, Germany. This is where we got our first real taste of what was to come. As we turned on the Initial Point (IP) for the bomb run, the flak was being sent up over the town of Magdeburg and it was a huge black cloud as the flak gunners sighted in on the altitude and our range. They started tracking us as soon as we got in range, and it was scary.

Dunbar let me do the formation flying through the flak although it was his turn to fly. We had agreed on about 15 to 20 minutes in turn so neither one got too tired. It suited me fine to fly through the flak because it kept me busy. The flak had red centers which means it was close, and a few pieces hit the plane sounding like gravel being thrown against a window. Suddenly it stopped just before the "bombs away" and someone yelled "fighters" coming in from the tail. Then Hyde held his mike button down as he started firing at the Focke Wulf 190's. He was breathing hard, cursing and the twin fifties were making a hell of a racket. The whole ship was vibrating from the gunfire. I yelled for Hyde to get off the mike button. It was over in a minute or two and, the flak came back with a vengeance as we dropped the bombs and turned away for home. Hyde claimed a FW 190 and later did get credit for 1/2 a fighter. Apparently another B-17 gunner also claimed the same fighter. Anyway, our story was convincing enough to get him the claim for 1/2. Crast and Dennis in the waist had put extra flak suits on the floor to protect them from flak and a big piece came through the floor right where they each had a foot to brace themselves for firing the waist guns. They were both knocked up against the windows and guns but were not hurt. The piece of flak was about 6-8 in. long and about 5/8 in. square. Art Dennis had the souvenir but I don't know if it got sent home after they were shot down in September, 1944.

Normally, during the missions, I was monitoring the intercom so I could communicate with the crew, while Dunbar monitored the VHF radio to get instructions from the group commander. Also Dunbar and I kept watching the instruments when we were not flying, because when you are hit you must make fast decisions especially if the

engines are going out or in danger of runaway, or on fire, in which cases they have to be shut down instantly. Any sign of oil pressure dropping is also a candidate for shutdown so the engine won't seize up and maybe tear things up.

On the way back we could see smoke columns to about 15,000 feet from oil refineries going up at Hanover and Hamburg. Anyway we survived our first real mission and everyone was hyped up for days.

Mission No. 5 (21 June 1944) - BASDORF/BERLIN, GERMANY

- 8:50 hours flight time
- Load: M47's and 500 Pound bombs , Target: Aircraft engine Factory
- No 96th BG losses

This day we bombed a FW 190 engine factory (N.E. outskirts Berlin) Heavy flak, but no one got hurt. Art Upshaw's bombardier window got smashed out with flak but he was unhurt. We had P-38s for escort because the mission was long range. On the way back we passed Hamburg and saw a huge black smoke column up to about 20,000 feet altitude. The smoke was from bombing the previous day by others and probably by the RAF at night. At the mission debriefing with the intelligence officers, I reported that I saw some fire bombs falling out of the B-24's that were bombing Berlin nearby as we went in on our bomb run. The intelligence officer said, "Are you kidding, those were B-24's being shot down in flames." A very sobering thought. On this mission Dunbar again let me fly on the bomb run; this was the pattern we used on most missions. Dunbar watched the instruments and I flew the formation.

Mission No. 6 (22 June 1944) GENNEVILLIER, FRANCE

- 6:45 hours flying time
- Target: Oil refinery on the Seine, Standard Oil Plant and storage facilities
- 2 lost 96th BG

We bombed an oil refinery located on the Seine River. I think we were assigned the oldest aircraft in the Group, an old "F" model with supercharger control handles for each engine. Went out in the afternoon at about 4:00 PM and got back in the evening. The engines had little power and we couldn't keep up with the other planes. The cylinder head temperature gauges kept going above the 220 °Centigrade red-line, Dunbar kept telling me to open the cowl flaps to cool the engines, which created more drag and slowed us up even more. I then noticed that the sealing wax was missing in all of the calibration screws for the instruments I put my fingernail into the screws and "re-calibrated" them about 20 degrees lower, closed the cowl flaps, set the throttles at the power we needed, and we had no more trouble.

During our briefing the intelligence officer said that usually, when we went near Paris, we got the hell shot out of us so he had planned how to overcome this. This day we would fool the Germans and turn and fly right over Paris after "bombs away." We found the Germans are not that stupid and apparently had flak guns in every chimney in Paris. We finally hit the target and turned off over Paris, and all hell broke loose. We were flying tail-end Charlie in the low element. No one was below us and the plane right above and ahead of us got a flak hit in the waist back of the radio compartment and blew the tail off. I was flying and sweating, and my goggles were fogging up as the plane blew up.

Recently Darrel Carlson, whose father was on George Martin's plane 42-97524 and killed that day, has researched the National Archives in Washington, D.C. Darrel says Dunbar's crew was flying in a different group of planes than Martin's plane.

The plane we saw was the 339th BS crew of Lt. Jay Horne aboard plane 42-102552. There were only three survivors, bombardier Steve Manzek, navigator Harry Ubins and radio operator T/S Frank Cowen. After the tail was severed at the point of the waist door, the plane fell upside-down. Frank Cowan got his chute on, walked out on the ceiling, past the intact ball turret and the waist gunners tangled in their ammo belts, oxygen line, and heated-suit cords, and jumped out the opening at the waist door, where the fuselage was severed. The severed jagged fuselage with no tail, went down right in front of us with engines and propellers turning and gave us a jolt. The debris that flashed over our plane contained the tail from the waist door back, including the tail gunner..

I couldn't see because my goggles fogged up, nearly panicked, and yelled for Dunbar to take over. Dunbar reluctantly took over, thinking I had been hit or freaked out I guess. I had tried unsuccessfully to rip my goggles off because I needed both hands to fly formation.

A few minutes later we were on our way home. I took off my flak helmet and rolled my flak suit into my lap and sat there in a pool of sweat, trying to relax. As we went past Rouen, France, on the way to the channel, suddenly I saw a nearby B-24 group get into flak. A B-24 blew up in a flash and the burning engines fell down in flames with a lot of small debris, and then we were in it. I pulled my flak suit up and "climbed" into my helmet. Anyway my ear flaps seemed to be below my hips.

As we landed and started to roll down the runway, I was so relieved that I yelled "fire a red flare" in my exuberance at our survival. Kennedy in the top turret obeyed orders and did! The flare pistol was always kept loaded in the socket in the ceiling above and behind my copilots seat. Kennedy just reached up and fired the red flares which were

meant to signal an emergency or in this case tell the Medics that we had wounded on board. The meat wagons came roaring out to meet us, and we sheepishly waved them off. I got hell for that in the ready room, and Dunbar said, "to hell with it we need a leave in London" since we had flown 3 days in a row on tough missions. We got it with no argument. After the mission we examined the plane and counted 127 holes in it including a big one in the left wing outboard of the No. 1 engine.

(23 to 26 June 1944) LEAVE IN LONDON AND OXFORD

Dunbar and I went to Oxford where my brother Al was supposed to be camped. We spent the night in a hotel and had really good bourbon whisky because the waiter liked American flyers. Dunbar left for London the next morning, and I hired a taxi to find my brother. We drove all over the countryside which was filled with U.S. Army encampments and MP's directing traffic. I just asked repeatedly where the 202nd Combat Engineer's were camped. They directed me through a big gate to an estate with tents all over the huge lawn. Had a fine time visiting my brother Al and some high school buddies who were also with him (Swiftly Havel and Mel Fox). We found Swiftly sleeping in a truck! I hopped a train back to the base after having lunch with the 202nd Engineer's and getting a ride back into Oxford with Al and his Platoon Commander, a 1st LT. I have a good photo of Al and me in front of a pub in Oxford.

London was just starting to get "buzz bombs", the V-1 flying bombs that Hitler sent over. Lazur was reported to have been in bed and a V-1 buzz bomb hit nearby and he was thrown out of bed. He was already almost in shock from the missions and this finished him off. He believed that the Germans were after him even in London. After that he never got a good night's sleep until we had to take him off missions a couple of weeks later. Dunbar was made 1st Lt. at this time.

Mission No. 7 (29 June 1944) - WITTENBURG, GERMANY

- 8:30 hours flying time
- Target: Aircraft Components Factory
- No 96th BG losses

In a letter to my wife after this mission I commented that I shook the Protestant Chaplain's hand before each mission to "play it safe" The crew have stopped laughing at me and ask if I shook his hand before we go. I don't recall anything special about this mission except that Dunbar's windshield was hit with flak and the outer pane of the double window got smashed up so he couldn't see straight ahead. I was flying in flak at the time on the bomb run, and when I looked over at Dunbar after the "bang" he was leaning over looking at the instruments. At first I thought he had been hit. There was also a small hole on the inner pane, and some small chips flew around the cockpit.

1 July 1944 - In a letter to my wife I relate that my mother says that Chuck Norderer from my home town is a navigator at the 96th BG and I plan to look him up.

2 July 1944 - In letter to my wife I report that Chuck Norderer was a Lead Navigator on CPT Marne Wilson's crew but had volunteered to fly extra missions so he could get home to his wife sooner. He was shot down and reported killed in a crash landing in Germany. I knew his wife who is the sister of my 11th grade English teacher and had visited in Windsor. My teacher married Richard Norderer, Chucks brother. Marne Wilson advised me not to volunteer because of this. Advice I didn't follow as I will relate later.

Chuck Norderer was killed on the Rostock, Germany raid on April 11, 1944. Reference "Snetterton Falcons" pages 124 and 125.

We make lead crew and I learned that I would be a Tail Gunner "Observer" or "Formation Officer" when we did lead missions. The formation officer reports to the leader who flies in the copilots seat, to inform him of what's going on throughout the formation because he can't see to the rear. This is a chance to "rat" on your buddies if they don't keep formation.

We are moved to the 413th squadron and I met Sam Massey, a copilot in our new hut, on 3 July 1944. We start training for lead crew and don't fly missions immediately.

Mission No. 8 (7 July 1944) - BOHLEN, GERMANY

- 8:10 hours flying time
- Target: Oil Refinery
- No 96th BG losses

This is near Leipzig I think but I don't have any recollection of it.

Mission No. 9 (8 July 1944) - LIMAY/BARENTIN, FRANCE

- 6:00 hours flying time
- Load: 2,000 pound bombs, Target: Supply Site/Bridge
- No 96th BG losses

I don't remember anything about this mission, except in a letter to my wife I remarked that we got up at about midnight for breakfast and the briefing, in order to take off at dawn. The other alternative is to leave in the afternoon.

I believe this was the mission where Lazur finally went bonkers. He hadn't slept much since the event in London, and we were all worried about him. It didn't help that Hyde

was singing the gloom and doom either, telling the crew that we were unlucky and would get shot down. Anyway Crast pulled Lazur out of the tail because he was so paranoid and it's lonely back there. We were under attack and flak all around when he suddenly pressed the mike button and started shouting that they were after him or something like that and wouldn't stop. It was unnerving for the rest of us, and when we landed Dunbar and I went to the Doctor and got him in hospital for a few days. He never rejoined the crew and wasn't needed anyway since I was now the tail gunner. About this time Hyde left the crew because we didn't have a ball turret, which was replaced by the PFF radar Dome on Pathfinder B-17's. I met Lazur much later, in the spring of 1945, and learned that he was a base Ack-Ack gunner and apparently fully recovered and happy, with no stigma attached to his paranoia.

Mission No. 10 (11 July 1944) - MUNICH, GERMANY - LEAD

- 9:40 hours flying time
- Load: Incendiaries, Target: Aircraft Engine Factory
- No 96th BG losses

We were lead for the group, it was a long haul and very tiring. My recollection is that we bombed on PFF because of cloud cover and that the "Mickey operator", (Lt. Gates or Lt. Sacks) used the bend in the river and other distinguishing features to hit the target. The 388th BG records also say that we had 10/10ths cloud cover and had to bomb on the PFF. The bomb load was incendiaries in a fire bombing raid. Upon our return we all got an Air Medal and a Presidential Citation given to the 96th Group. I was told that the Citation was for the mission in which Chuck Norderer was shot down and killed; which was on 11 April 1944 on the Rostock, Germany mission. The 96th lost 11 aircraft on the Rostock mission. Since I had to fly tail gunner "Observer," I was put out and got drunk that night. To add insult to injury the missions were now increased from 25 to 30, we are a Lead crew and accrue our missions more slowly and I'm unhappy about that too.

Mission No. 11 (14 JULY 1944) - CADILLAC SERIES # 3, SOUTHERN FRANCE

- 10:05 hours flying time
- Load: Parachute Supplies for Maquis, Target: Maquis forces in a field near Domsps
- No 96th BG losses

This was "Bastille Day" and we did a supply drop to the Maquis in southern France. I "flew" the tail gun that day and took my Argus C3 35 mm camera and got a nice series of shots of the drop. I sent them to Geoff Ward in 1983 and two of them appear on page 180 of the "Snetterton Falcons". Geoff says there were two different drops that day, and I believe ours was the southernmost probably near Limoges and the little

village of Doms. It was another long mission but we had fighter cover and no opposition and no flak either since we avoided all of the defended areas. We made a letdown in the early morning about 9:00 and flew over the signal fires at 1000 feet (there were 2 smokey fires in a large field. Then we circled over a small town and came back in for the drop at 500 feet. My photos show that the drop was scattered around and one of ours dropped a couple of miles away from a very late drop. The shadows of the parachutes on the ground confirm it was early in the AM. I showed these to Bill Davis, a fighter pilot who was shot down and with the Maquis at the time, and he said he thought he was there. They didn't know there were so many supplies because our drop wasn't very accurate and they probably never recovered a lot of them. Apparently there were several targets because the 388th also dropped that day to the Maquis. See Appendix "A" for a detailed description of the mission and the photos.

SUPPLY DROP TO THE MAQUIS NEAR DOMPS, FRANCE ON 14 JULY 1944

BOB DUNBAR-LEAD 96TH BOMB GROUP, 413TH BOMB SQUADRON

Report by Ken Waters (revised 1/29/95)

INTRODUCTION:

I have recently re-read my comments and photo analysis on this mission as well as the comments of Mr. Decelle the French commander of the Maquis on the ground and have revised my estimate of our headings over the drop zone. This revision is necessary because I was the formation observer in the tail gun position on the lead aircraft. Being in the tail means that everything I saw and photographed was seen looking backward and I get easily confused as to the direction I was taking these photos. For example; I took the photo of the small town that I believe is DOMPS, France looking out the left rear pointing about 45 degrees to my right as Bob Dunbar circled to the left over the town?? The shadows indicate I was looking South West and from a map of the area I surmise the town was DOMPS. However, there are other towns nearby that we could have flown over and they also have several curving roads in and out. Mr. Decelle did not state positively that my photo was of DOMPS. With this disclaimer, I feel the following summery, photos and maps will give an accurate picture of this mission. I would like to add comments from the following: Bob Dunbar- Pilot, Art Upshaw-Bombardier, Jack Krempasky-Navigator, Norman Hyde-Ball Turret, Harold Boardman-Radio, Ken Crast Waist-gunner and Art Dennis Waist-gunner.

People will ask, why bother to report this mission? Well I got started because I wanted

to know where the drop zone actually was. Then after I sent copies of the photos to Geoff Ward-96th BG historian he partially answered my questions. Then later I got a contact from the Maquis historians and they wanted me to promote a 50th anniversary event with a group of airmen participants to come over to France in July 1994 for a Bastille Day celebration. I tried to weasel out and let the 96th BG people run it but they just encouraged me to run it! So I backed out completely because I was too busy etc. Anyway the photos eventually got to Mr. Decelle and he identified the drop zone and that's where it stands today.

#176 JULY 14, 1944: A "CADILLAC" MISSION (Snetterton Falcons)

"The group dropped supplies to the French Resistance in the southern part of the country. Three groups each of 36 A/C comprised the 45 CBW and a total of 413 containers were dropped without incident. A milk run. No fighters. No flak."

The Squadron led by Dunbar dropped an estimated 140 containers; by my count of the parachutes visible in my photos. We observed and I photographed two signal fires in the drop zone on which we dropped, not six as reported by another observer. This was undoubtedly another drop zone, and the remainder of the 413 canisters went there.

Geoff Ward statement on this mission as follows:

"In your mission record, July 14th, 1944 Cadillac Series Number 3 was the supply drop. Cadillac was the code name for that type of mission. Thirty nine aircraft from the 96th, making up the entire 45th CBW took off for southern France. There is no identification or location of target area given in the records, but Roger Freeman in his War Diary of the Eighth gives location of supply drops on that date as - seven dropping points in three regions - St. Lo, Vercose, and Limoges. Thirty five aircraft of the Group dropped a total of 413 containers, one aircraft bringing back its load because the bomb doors had jammed. There was excellent visibility and no enemy aircraft or ground fire was encountered. Some observations which may assist identification of the target were - Barrage balloons seen over a Dam at Argenton 4643N-0148E. Army Camp at La Courtrai at I002, 4542N-0216E. A single B-17 was acting suspiciously following the Group from North of the Target area finally leaving North of Rouen and heading south west for the Coast."

I (Ken Waters) took several photos of this mission from my position as the tail gunner "Formation Officer". This was where the copilot flew on lead aircraft when the group leader flew in the copilots seat to direct the mission. I had an Argus C3 35 mm camera and had the photos developed at the base photo lab or PX? The photo sequence is numbered as I took them, with the 1st (4) of the area as we came in to the drop zone.

According to Bill Davis a P-38 pilot who was shot down and with the Maquis at that time the supplies were: Money, guns, ammo, brandy, clothes, shoes, flashlights, etc. Bill participated in several drops both night and daytime on the ground with the Maquis. His comment on my photos was that he never realized there were so many chutes, so he may not have been on our drop. The Maquis used stretchers to collect the canisters. The canisters had a lid which was removed and the parachute pushed inside and closed up. They had plenty of manpower but received more guns and ammo than they could carry and use. Any complicated equipment was hidden and not used. He recalls his first drop in "Firthful Forest" near Orleans south of Paris. An RAF plane flew in on a beam at night and they had a big flashlight to signal with. They bicycled to southern France near Avignon during July 1944 and were there for several weeks.

Photo descriptions follow:

No. 1 Two 96th Bomb Group B-17's at about the time we started letdown.

No. 2 Two 96th BG B-17's during letdown over a small city.

No. 3 The general area seen on letdown, looks like it may be the dam and reservoir probably to the East of Limoges. Or it may have been the dam reported at Argenton which is North East of Limoges.

No. 4 Fog in a valley on run in to drop zone after let down to about 1000 ft.

No. 5 We came in over the drop zone at about 1000 ft. Note 2 signal fires indicating the drop zone. Plane heading North Easterly over the drop zone, photos from tail looking South Westerly, from the appearance of shadows in the early morning (9:00 AM estimate).

No. 6 We continue letdown and the group and squadrons split up so that individual aircraft or elements can come in over the drop zone to get accurate drops. This photo is of a small village probably just Northeast of the drop zone as we turned over it to the left. This could be DOMPS.

No. 7 We drop our load and chutes are deploying just after leaving the bomb bay. Not a good photo because of the reflections and sun flares. Note both black (dark colored) and white chutes and apparently two plane loads together.

No. 8 We have just made our drop and the drop zone is in the lower left hand corner just below the gun sight. I can't make out which group of chutes are from our drop.

Note the wide dispersion of chutes as they drift down and that the signal fires have been extinguished. Note shadows indicate we are heading North Easterly.

No. 9 As we climb out the entire drop zone is evident showing a lot of chutes that missed the target.

No. 10 Here we have a very late drop by one of the planes in our squadron. I think my photo No. 7 above proves it wasn't us. My count is either 11 or 12 chutes for this planeload. That confirms we led a 13 plane group for about one third of the 39 plane drop and nearly 140 canisters for our drop. This also confirms Geoff Ward's statement above. Note the shadows of the chutes which confirm my recollection that we went out early and the drop was at about 9:00 AM and the plane was heading Northerly.

No. 11 These farmers are about to receive some unexpected supplies. How do you get them to the Maquis without becoming involved?

Letter from Mr. Leslie Atkinson, 2, Rue A. de Musset, 66650 BANYULS s-MER, France on 31 January 1993 states the following:

"Mr. Decelle gave the following detail. That are only a start in the knowledge of these droppings. (Mr. A. Decelle, 19. rue AUGUSTE-VACQUERIE, 75116 Paris, France) Mr. Decelle was commanding the maquis O.R.A. in this area of the barrage de l'Aigle. Note: He has the copies of the photos I sent to Atkinson.

Your dropping was a D.Z. called "SALESMAN STATIONNER" 45 37' 25" N - 01 39' 00 E. in Haute-Vienne Department. at 6 kilometers SW of DOMPS, a small village 12 Kilometers South of EYMOUTIERS. That is 28 Km. East of ANGOULIME".

This letter also describes other drop zones and which squadrons dropped.

No. 12 (19 July 1944) - SCHWEINFURT, GERMANY Ball Bearings and an Aircraft Factory

- 7:05 hours flying time
- 500 pound incendiaries
- 96th lost 1 aircraft to enemy fire and 2 aircraft due to a midair collision over England.

I flew tail gunner "Observer" again and got chewed out by the Col. (probably Col

. Warren) for not being observant enough. One of the crews bailed out three (3) when 2 planes collided. Then they found the plane was fly-able and both came back safely. The rest of the crew stayed to help the ball turret gunner who was stuck in the ball and by then the plane was under control and only the 3 bailed out. The other aircraft in the midair collision and only two crewman got out, the others being killed. The 96th BG mission record shows that we lost 1 aircraft on this mission. We were very apprehensive about this mission because of the terrible day when the 8th AF lost 60 aircraft (the 96th lost 7) on the 2nd Schweinfurt raid on 14 October 1943. Later in 1945, I became the roommate of Fred Downs the copilot on "Paperdoll" which got back from the Schweinfurt raid with the pilot Bolick dead and Downs nearly unconscious. The Navigator flew the plane to the landing successfully with help from Downs. After recovery somewhat Fred became the base lawyer and stayed over to recover from his wounds. Fred taught me to play bridge and we also played catch with a baseball to strengthen his arm. (Fred had been a pitcher on his college team at the University of Kentucky where he was attending law school prior to enlisting and becoming a pilot). Jack Krempasky and Art Upshaw each made 1st Lt. yesterday.

22 July 1944 - LEAVE IN LONDON

London was still getting a heavy load of V-1 "buzz bombs". Naturally, we got our taste of them too.

Dunbar and I were together in Picadilly walking in front of the Polish restaurant across from the exit to the underground at about 4:00 in the afternoon on a sunny day when we heard the distinctive drumming sound from the buzz bomb coming our way. As it came into view at about 300 feet altitude on a flight path to pass right over us, Dunbar took off with a yell and headed for the underground exit. He managed to go down the exit successfully against traffic, throwing Englishmen and ladies every which way. I meanwhile leaned up against the restaurant doorway watching the buzz bomb and laughing at Dunbar. It went right overhead and down the street across Picadilly Circle and then the engine quit and it came down and exploded about a mile away.

Dunbar and I had to sleep in the lobby of the Red Cross Club in Picadilly that night because of the buzz bombs and at least once were wakened to run down into the cellar. No-one was allowed up in the rooms so we didn't get much rest.

23 July 1944 Letter to my wife - I GET THE AIR MEDAL

I was just back from flying and unshaven and raunchy with a Tom Collins in my hand. Everyone else was all dressed up but me with no blouse or wings or other identification except the drink in my hand. There were probably frowns all around. This was

probably discussing the award on 11 July 1944 after Munich.

26 July 1944 Letter to my wife

Lt. Gage a PFF Navigator added to the crew. Ken Crast says it was Lt. Sacks who was shot down with the crew on 13 September 1944 and the Snetterton Falcons agree. Hyde and Lazur gone and Dennis may go. I don't remember why I said this because Dennis went down with the crew.

No. 13 (28 July 1944) - LEUNA-MERSEBURG, GERMANY Synthetic Oil

- 8:55 hours flying time
- No 96th BG losses

Near Leipzig, a 500 pound incendiary bomb fire raid against a synthetic oil refinery. Two ME-163 Komet, rocket powered fighters (or ME-262 twin engine jets) were chased through the formation by P-51's but we were not shot at. They were only good for 1 pass and the P-51's couldn't catch them either. I was interviewed the next day by the Public Relations Officer for my description of the aircraft.

No. 14 (7 August 1944) - LEFRERE, FRANCE A bridge

- 6:00 hours flying time
- No 96th BG losses

There was a complete under-cast and we never found the bridge and had to bring our bombs back home.

9 August 1944 - PRACTICE BOMBING MISSION

We went out in the afternoon for practice bombing with our PFF operator Lt. Sacks or maybe Lt. Gates. When we returned CPT. Bob Maloney(?) took me aside and asked if I was interested in volunteering for a special mission. I really didn't think I was but curiosity got the better of me as usual and I said I was willing to listen. He said there was going to be a meeting to tell us about the mission and ask for volunteers after dinner. I got cleaned up and went to the club for a drink before dinner. CPT. Maloney bought me a drink and handed me my orders for detached service and I was to report the next morning. I protested and said to hell with it. Finally, he talked me into it and kept saying I could refuse if I really wanted to. He wouldn't tell me much about it but I believe he said I would have to jump out of a B-17 over England. The clincher was that I would get credit for 5 missions if I did it. So I agreed mainly because you could get killed flying missions and I hated to fly as tail gunner "Observer". I believe Dunbar and the crew were sorry to see me go, I hope so anyway. The orders were signed by CPT. Robert Johnston.

10 August 1944 - APHRODITE PROJECT with the 388th BG

I was packed and ready by about 8:30 AM and along with 3 other guys went to Fersfield airfield which was only 10 or 15 miles away. Reference "Snetterton Falcons", page 180, 181 & 182.

EPILOGUE

No. 17 ?? 13 September 1944 - LUDWIGSHAVEN, GERMANY

The Dunbar Crew's last mission, Reference "Snetterton Falcons" page 190; "the 413th again had to supply other groups with 3 PFF's. Lt. Dunbar led the 93rd CBW attached to the 490th BG. --- The 93rd CBW target was the I.G. Farbenindustrie at Ludwigshaven. --- Over Ludwigshaven Dunbar's ship 42-97993 had two engines knocked out by flak. (Captain) Dunbar pulled out of formation and headed for France. With friendly fighters in attendance Dunbar was only 40 miles away from allied territory when the third engine caught fire. All, including the command pilot, a Major Mulholland of the 490th, exited safely but became POW's. The plane crashed at Saargermund."

On a visit to the 96th base on 14 September 1944 to look up the crew and get my mail, I learned that the crew was shot down and there was a padlock on the door to their hut. I learned that they were all safe and were POW's, a short time later. I corresponded with Jack Krempasky's dad a few times until the war ended and still exchange Xmas cards with Dennis. After the war I received a letter from Ken Crast which related the events for the mission on which Dunbar's crew got shot down. All were safe and in POW Camps but Dunbar broke a leg and was in hospital. The tail gunner co-pilot "Observer" for that mission was Lt. W. Goble who was originally Red Smith's copilot, the Lead crew I joined when I returned to the 96th BG in January 1945.

H ello Ken:

It seems as if our letters crossed each other as I have your letter of the 4th. Thanks for your feelings toward them those these gallant airborne wolves that are still p.o.w.'s in Stalag Luft 1. Its rather a natural once you get use to a gang of boys such as Bob Art Jack Ken that you stay with them. Rather supriised you told us about your missinns as Jack never would let us have what he made. Recently we got another air med al with two oak leaf clusters in Newark and still don't know how many he made before they had to drop or else ? That is odd you meet up with Woody Gobles' crew ? Just got a letter from Mrs Goble telling us she is relived to learn we neither have any mail sinc as of Dec 11th. We know from Doris, poor Madelyn, they have no mail since Dec 16th. It is my knowledge that no mail is flying over from there as they are licked and Stalag Luft 111 is no more. I do hope there will be none when you get this letter as the picture appears bright to mean any day for a finish. It can be your four missions are by now at an end. May it be so. Don't take any further missions and you get no more for them. Be satisfied you made what you were to make and beline for God's country. I will inform Mrs Goble you took her husbands place with Smith. My brother's army, 9th Met up with the Russiens the past day or so. He has something up his sleeve as he still contenda he will release Jack. He has moxey first calls. Yes, I know Ken, its nice to get mail but dam tiresome to ans them back. Take it essay lad as it won't be long now. BUT, go out if you must, and kill many many germs for those atrocities committed by the germs. They deserve no pity. Kill them all and you get a bottle of pre war stuff. Do call us if you stop over nearby. It can be Camp Kilmer now as they bring no more to send over. Its all casuals, risoner of war boys, wounded and furloughed men coming here, which is only six mile from this shack. The POW's will get sixty day furloughs now. You may get only 21 days. Play sick boy. They are worried now in Washington many will go a w o l after this battle is over ? Why not ? Why the hell don't they have a heart on you lads. Get them stinkers who have been deffered as important cogs in undustries. Basters is what I call them. That would be swell to have them come back to Eccles Road and fly back home ? Finally determined where you were flying from. Right . Righto. Yes, my code worked wonders when Jack landed in Barth which is Stalag Luft 1 also know that

some of the boys tried to escape from there but caught. I just can't de-code who was the attempt. Got a row boat and headed for Denmark but a dity dirty baster of a guard past 65 years of age spied them and gave the alarm, so confined. I mean confined. I always mention you in my letters to Jack and gave him the dope you give me. How about going over Luft 1 with a couple of sky hooks and pick some of the boys up. I don't think its needed now as i said before, any day now. What say ? Bet ? I will state Jack will be released by the russians ? Alright a bet regardless. But I will stay on the ball with the russians as they are about sixty mile from there, but, it can be my bro data will be correct. WELL, I must go on the 12-8 trick now, so with my best wishes, I will close to gaive you any data I get from Barth as the good news comes in, I do hope it will be good. Jack did say, he is in good health etc not to worry, what the hell sort of a parent would we be if we did not worry about our off springs. May god be with you all at all times.

Yours very truly

John Krampasky
288 Washington St
Perth Amboy, N.J.

Greetings, Ken,

I was really glad to hear from you at long last. I sent a card from Germany to let you know how we made out but I guess it didn't arrive.

The guys I know of are still in the Army but expect to get out soon. I've been out for over a month now. Boardman is still happily married & recently smashed up his car, is still in the Army and doing O.K. Dennis is going to get married soon, is still in the Army. Kennedy, I haven't heard from in some time. Dunbar so far as I know is doing O.K.

I'll tell you all I can about our last mission and in return how about an idea of what you did from then 'till now. We as a crew are curious.

So here it is as well as time and human factors will allow.

Flew lead, the 490th that you know. The target was Ludwigshafen. The I.B. Farben Chemical Plant. The groups "Box Car Jockeys" were just as much off the ball as a guy could expect and we weren't worried about flak, it was fighters had us concerned. (T. S. sh) Had a Maj. for C. P. and a first mission pilot for tail observer, you know, the job you liked so well. (pilot to tail, and so on).

To start off with it was to be a PFF job and the Mickey was on the off color, few other things didn't work, Had a soft run to the target area, and then as our pal Robert S. would say, tough old stuff, it was free of clouds.

About time of "doors open" we heard the delightful sound of flak and about the same time No. 3 gets hit and is feathered. Flak was close as you can guess, it was one of those days when there's plenty of red in the stuff. On the run they just took us apart a little, knocked out all the oxygen in the rear of the ship. A close hit near the radio room put the radio & I believe the Mickey sets, out, put one hole in old Boardman, and Sacks got it in the right arm and leg. Another one put a couple pieces in my chest and put one in the seat of Dennis. I don't know about the rest but I took off my suit then and Boardman was back with a hungry look and trying to chew up an oxygen bottle. At bombs away No. 1 got hit & ran away, the controls in the left side for rudder and elevators came flopping on the floor with a big hole in the roof (the hole didn't fall down). I though Dunbar was really doing evasive action, we were doing a sort of spiral to the left as far as I know, anyway we were down so that I know we didn't need oxygen. Sort of leveled off at around 12,000 going in the direction of France (Metz). We had a couple of laughs (we still thought we'd make it back) and fixed the cables and all the rest we could.

We were back near the tail wheel having a time telling about how we'd enjoy that flak leave when the little bell began to ring. I for one went after my chute. Boardman and Dennis in this short space pulled off the door & Sacks called up for the dope. We didn't know then that No. 3 was practically out and was on fire. Kennedy and so on said it was popping and banging like a Model T. Fire was back past the radio room, in the mean, old Boardman looks out at the ground about 8,000 below, and with his old humor pretends he won't jump. I started (pretending) to push him out and he jumped. I went, then Dennis and Sacks.

I think Dunbar was about the first man out. I know there were four men below me with open chutes when mine came out. I believe Upshaw was the last out of the front. He's really a good man, he

hit the target using the sight alone and I mean he hit it good, he was standing on his head trying to see them hit. He stayed in to make sure all was in shape, I guess. Krempasky said he didn't think he was coming and was pretty scared about it when I met him on the ground. Anyway we all jumped and the chutes all popped okay. Krempasky was beside me in the air. The plane hit a hillside on fire and sort of blew up and burned. I didn't see it blow but I did see it burn. We thought we might be over France.

The biggest disappointment and shock of the day was when I hit the ground, I thought, that was it. Krempasky was near me and we got together. He had no shoes so I gave him my boots. He had a bad ankle too. We soon found it was the honored home of the Jerries we'd sat on and they in turn pushed us around, took away what we had, (they didn't get rich) and found us a little cell, formerly the roost of goodly hens. Wasn't long before they gave us back our belts (plus a few hand-made ones) and shoes, took us out and put us in a car with Dennis and Upshaw, had a good escort, they took us to the wreck of the plane where Sacks, Dunbar, and Boardman were camped.

The plane was no more - just a sound of 50 cal. going off now and then. Dennis didn't have any shoes but by good luck one of the few things saved were his shoes, blown clear, I guess.

From then on as P. W.'s life was not so hot, went to nearest town - Saatgumond, then on a train to Frankfurt, interrogated there and were split up. Dunbar went to a hospital for a broken ankle he received in jumping. Kennedy wasn't with us yet. Krempasky, Upshaw, Sacks, went to Barth and Boardman, Dennis, and myself went to Wetzlan and then to Gross Tychow (Pomerania).

We stayed there 'till Feb. 6th when the Russians got so close we started a march to keep out of their hands (German idea, of course). We had orders not to escape from our Government but we'd have met it quick if we'd left anyway. We marched from the 6th until the first part of April. They were going to put us in a camp, were there about a week when Patton started from Magdeburg. We were in the way so we marched again 'till, on this march - no orders about no escaping being put out - I left the other three at Annaburg and escaped. That was a boner in a way. I and my companions made it but were very nearly caught three times, and the group we were with was soon in American hands, we were in Russian. It was April 21st when we escaped. Met Dennis and Boardman in France before we came home. Also Upshaw, Krempasky and Sacks.

This is some letter so if you've made it out this far congrats. Write.

Your Friend
Ken Crast

APHRODITE MISSION - CHRONOLOGY OF B-17 DRONE PROJECT WITH 388TH BOMB GROUP FROM 10 AUGUST 1944 TO 15 JANUARY 1945

(by Ken Waters, from memory and letters to my wife)

INTRODUCTION

I was interviewed by Jack Olsen for his book "Aphrodite: Desperate Mission" in 1969. Since then I have reviewed my letters to my wife during this period and written up Aphrodite Project from when I was assigned to it on 8/10/44 to when I returned to the 96th Bomb Group to resume flying combat missions on 1/15/45.

SUMMARY

In early 1944, US and British intelligence sources revealed that Hitler was planning to launch secret weapons on Britain. These weapons were later revealed to be the "V-1 Buzz bomb", a radio controlled flying bomb, the "V-2 Rocket" and a long range high powered gun with explosive shells, all aimed at London. To counter this threat the British developed the 20,000 pound "Tallboy bomb" for dropping on submarine pens and the launch sites for the V-1, V-2 and the long range guns, on the coast across the channel from England. The US Army Eighth Air Force Project Aphrodite was formed up in June, 1944 to counter these threats. Targets selected were invulnerable to conventional bombs because of thick reinforced concrete emplacements. These targets were; submarine pens on Heligoland, V-1 and V-2 sites at Watten, Wizernes and Siracourt and a long range gun at Mimoyecques, France. Two other targets were attacked, the marshaling yards at Herford, Germany and the power station at Oldenburg, Germany.

The Figure 1 summary chart shows all of the Aphrodite missions, pilots and copilots and technicians who jumped, targets and degree of success. Out of the 19 missions, there were 4 casualties and several injuries. USAAF pilot, Lt. Fisher on 4 August 1944, lost control of his B-17 drone while attempting to jump and crashed with the aircraft and was killed. US Navy Lt. Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. and his copilot Lt. Wilford (Bud) Willy both perished when their Navy PB4Y drone exploded at 2,000 ft. over Hinton Lodge, Suffolk, England, probably from Electro-Magnetic Interference when the electronic arming device set off the explosive. This occurred just after Kennedy radioed that he was going to start the explosive arming and jump procedure. The next and final casualty was Lt. R.W. Lindahl who jumped from 2,000 ft. with his parachute static line tangled up. The jerk, in excess of 3,000 pounds which broke the static line, killed him instantly and neither his back-pack parachute or the emergency chest parachute opened.

There were several near misses but no direct hits, several were shot down, several lost control and were dived into the sea, and one was destroyed by US fighters after it landed intact and had to be dive bombed to set off the load. In spite of this bad record, the Air Force brass still had confidence that the bugs could be worked out and the project would eventually be successful. But the ground forces rapidly over-ran the potential targets and by mid January 1945 the Aphrodite project was disbanded and the air-crews went back to flying missions at their respective bases. Figure 2 is a letter from General Spaatz to General Arnold stating the disposition of the Aphrodite project and its possible future prospects against the Japanese.

APHRODITE PROJECT - FERSFIELD AND 388TH BOMB GROUP

10 August 1944

I was packed and ready by about 8:30 AM and along with 3 other guys went to Fersfield airfield which was only 10 or 15 miles away. I remember these guys as Noel Garvin, Charles L. Shinault and Edward Morris (called "Hukle-te-buck" because when he shot craps he would yell "hukle-te-buck, the more you lay down the more I pick up") who came from other 96th BG squadrons and were told what they had to do before volunteering. My orders confirm this.

8/10/44 - Moved to Fersfield, secret base attached to the 388th BG. Tour of base and projects. Assigned to fly as Hetherington's co-pilot. Naval officers and sailors on base. These projects included drone B-24's, a PB4Y, B-17's and bombs with wings and a tail that could be dropped under limited control from a "mother" plane.

8/12/44 - Navy Drone Project sends out their 1st Drone. Lt. Joe Kennedy Jr. and his copilot Bud Willy killed. PB4Y drone blows up in the air at 2,000 Ft. Kennedy was preparing to "arm" the explosive prior to bailout. Kennedy said to be some ambassadors son? Also learned that Lt. John Fisher had failed to bail out successfully on 4 August and crashed in Thetford forest with his B-17. There may be more danger in bailout than we jump pilots previously thought.

9/3/44 - A mission to Heligoland went off OK but missed the target. Navy pilot Spaulding flew mission alone and bailed out successfully from a B-24 drone.

9/11/44 - A mission was launched to attack the submarine pens on Heligoland Island. The copilot 1st Lt. D.E. Salles bailed out OK. The pilot 1st Lt. R.W. Lindahl got his static line tangled in his parachute harness and was killed on bailout. The static line broke which is about a 3,000 pound jerk. Neither of his two (2) parachutes opened.

9/12/44 - Promoted to 1st Lt. and notified today! Effective is 17 August 1944. Our 2nd anniversary! Dorothy and I were married on 17 August 1942. Also other promotions, Hetherington etc. My memory is Hetherington became ill and I was reassigned to fly with Bob Butler.

Two more mission jumps were successful but both failed to hit the target. Jump co-pilot 2nd Lt Charles L. Shinault 0819190 (337th Bomb Squadron, 96th Bomb Group) jumped successfully from 2000 feet with a static line and said when he hit the ground he just flexed his knees and didn't even fall down.

9/14/44 - Dunbar went down!! I'm very depressed. Several of us rode over to the 96th on our bikes to pick up the mail and when I went to the hut to visit Dunbar's crew there was a padlock on the door.

About this time the program was reviewed in light of no successful hits and four pilots killed. Several changes were made. The CO, LTC Roy Forrest was replaced by LTC Satterwhite from the 388th BG. It was decided to increase the altitude for jumping to 10,000 ft. to give the pilots more altitude for jumping. The Irwin back-pack parachute was equipped with a rip-cord so it could be pulled in free-fall and not with a static line as the pilot went out. We still had the emergency chest-pack chute hooked to "D" rings in front. Reasons were; (1) that 2,000 ft. was not high enough if something went wrong with control of the drone, as in 1st Lt. John W. Fisher's crash and; (2) the drone was traveling at about 150 mph which was very high speed considering the small pilots escape hatch and the possibility of tangling the static line as happened to Lindahl.

PARACHUTE JUMP TRAINING

Another change was to give us all parachute jump training by a US Army paratrooper instructor. We had already been issued paratrooper boots and some wore the pants tucked into the tops to look more like paratroopers. These boots were supposed to provide more support for your ankles on landing. Training lasted about a week or two and consisted of lectures and then jumping off the back of a moving truck tail gate onto the grass, so we would know how to hit and roll. They started off slow and then built up speed to give us experience in jumping in high winds. The key thing was to hit sideways, with your feet together, and roll hitting your knee, hip and shoulder and tucking your head in to avoid hitting it. We also were given instructions in pulling the parachute risers so that you turned the chute and were traveling sideways (downwind) when you got to the ground level. LTC Satterwhite personally took the training and made the 1st demonstration jump from a C-47 out the back door as a graduation exercise. He jumped out of a C-47 from about 1,000 feet and landed in the street between two buildings, getting a badly sprained ankle. He had crutches for about a

week afterwards. The paratrooper instructor also jumped and landed in a nearby farmers pigsty! Both jumpers were trying to land in the middle of the runways on the grass of Fersfield airfield. We also learned that the terminal velocity (airspeed) after jumping without a parachute open would be about 120 mph but depended on clothing, how you fell etc.

Another change was to add a smoke tank under the belly on the centerline of the aircraft. Thus smoke could be turned on and off from the "mother" plane and assist in seeing where the drone was when weather was hazy or foggy. This was very necessary on most missions when the "mother" was at 10,000 ft. and the drone was in let-down and at 300 ft. on the run-in to the target. Drone control had been lost several times in poor weather from lack of visibility. The only problem was that the jump pilots were afraid of hitting the tank which was located on the centerline of the plane and you had to go within inches of it on bailout.

9/29/44 - I have a mean headache because of what I was doing today (jump training no doubt). I am in no rush to get back to flying missions because they are as rough as ever over Germany. I'm still sad about my old crew getting shot down.

9/30/44 - I feel like I've gone through a meat grinder tonight! Strenuous exercise this afternoon. One of the boys broke his collarbone. I don't recall who this was but it was from jumping off the back of a truck. May have been Stein. After the war I wrote that the truck was traveling up to 25 mph when we jumped off, hit and rolled, to simulate a parachute landing. I suspect my 25 mph was more like 15 mph but it sure caused you to hit hard and you definitely rolled! This type of training was discontinued because of the broken collarbone. LTC Satterwhite (commanding officer) also took the training with us to show he was one of the boys, I guess, and got beat up as well. At least one of our jump pilots had taken some college courses and calculated how long it would take from jumping at 10,000 feet until you got to the ground in free-fall. My recollection is that he estimated about 35 seconds. Therefore we all discussed delayed jumps and how to make sure you pulled the rip-cord in plenty of time. My point was that I only intended to make one jump in my lifetime so I wanted to make the most of it and try free-fall. Also you could actually slow up some by holding out your arms and legs (spread eagle) which presented more drag and a slower free-fall and presumably less jerk when the chute opened.

10/7/44 - A nosy English boy visits us in the hut. Always a surprise since the base is supposed to be a secret, but English boys seem to come through the fences which are not guarded. Of course we also go out back of the base and forage for firewood etc. One day our English boy who brings eggs to trade for cigarettes came and said he couldn't get any because the sheriff was out riding last night. This was the 1st time I

realized that we were eating stolen eggs!

10/22/44 - Went out to fly with Hetherington and I taxied off into the mud and got the plane stuck.

11/1/44 - A group of us flew over to the 96th to get mail and get paid. While there we met Garvin's buddy a P-51 fighter pilot assigned to the 96th for gunnery practice by 96th BG crews. He flew us over to his base near Cambridge on 10/30/44 (Halloween night) in the 4 place Norseman. We borrowed uniforms and went into Cambridge for the night. I borrowed a CPT's uniform with Eagle Squadron RAF wings on it and was told a few stories if I got challenged. Appropriate for Halloween! We drank, shot darts in a pub. Next morning we took off in a very low ceiling, rain and fog. Garvin's friend flew right down on the roads just above the trees to stay under the clouds and we finally got to Fersfield where he dropped us off. No-one should have been flying that day but the base operations never seem to restrict combat pilots from doing whatever they think they can do. They just give you hell when you crack up!

11/5/44 - Sunday - Sam Massey, a copilot friend of mine from the 413th BS, 96th BG came over to Fersfield for a party last night. Party must have been a success because most of the women are still on the base today! After I was in bed Saturday night Butler came in drunk and set the fire extinguisher off. Then he sat on top of me jumping up and down, saying look at it fizzin "Katy". (my nickname was "Katy" for K.T.)

11/8/44 - Flew for 5 minutes today and washed out a B-17 for a complete loss. (It was an old one being readied for its last mission as a drone). Went along with Tom Barton and Frank Bruno as their crew chief so Bruno could practice landings. After they had finished Barton generously let me make the final landing. So I changed seats with Bruno on the final approach and made a beautiful landing on the propellers and the ball turret. As we came down, Bruno who is now the crew chief says, "why is the tower flashing a red light at us?" Barton said, don't pay any attention to them just make a good landing Waters, and I did. No one had thought to put the landing gear down! Butler and I are scheduled for our mission again tomorrow.

PRACTICE MISSIONS

Take-off on training missions was just like a real mission except that you were not loaded. For practice the pilot held the brakes while running the engines up to full power, then releasing the brakes. As we got up speed to about 60 mph I dropped 1/2 flaps to create extra lift and the plane took off when flying speed was reached and I retracted the landing gear. On training missions after take-off we jump pilots were in the drone and I practiced setting up the auto-pilot controls with the controller pilot in

the mother plane. He made turns, let downs and climbs etc and eventually brought us down from 10,000 feet to the 300 feet level for the simulated run-in to the target. A radio altimeter controlled the plane through the auto-pilot and was set for 300 feet. The objective of the mother controller pilot was to steer the plane to the target through use of the TV receiver in the nose of the plane and visually by observing the smoke trail from the smoke tank far below him. The smoke could be turned "on" and "off" at the controller pilot's discretion. When the drone was lined up the controller judged when to release the radio altimeter control and pushed the nose over with the beep control and try and crash us into a pre-selected castle, ammunition dump or other target. The controller could also pull off power to the engines in order to dive us into the target. So it became a contest between the jump pilots letting the drone go as far to the target as reasonable and the controller trying to hit it. Butler always wanted to go till the last second and then pull it off to avoid a crash. I was too conservative for him.

I wanted to disengage the auto-pilot and pull it up while applying power as needed. Butler preferred to pull hard and slip the clutches of the auto-pilot to pull us off. It took two of us to do it but it worked perfectly, thereby assuring the controller pilot of his accuracy in putting the drone on the target. One day our target was a very large castle or country house with a several acre lawn in front. The controller put us right up the lawn diving the plane at the house from 300 feet on the "ACE" (radio altimeter). A maid was airing and shaking blankets out the 3rd story window as we came down over the lawn. Butler insisted on holding off till we were looking right into the window before pulling it off. I was scared to death we would hit the roof but we missed. The maid disappeared just before we went over.

Another day we did the same thing on a big hangar-like building at a munitions storage dump of some sort and just missed the building. That would have made a nice explosion if we had gone in!

11/25/44 - They took moving pictures of Butler and I about the mission. All Secret stuff! I have a 16 mm movie and converted to a video tape of this Aphrodite mission record.

11/28/44 - Moved the project over to the 388th BG and we are in barracks again. I think the men in this hut were Russ Betts, Noel Garvin, Bob Butler, Ken Waters, Carl Schramm, O. W. Hetherington, Bob McCauley and Ed Morris. We have been called out for our mission about four times and it gets scrubbed because of bad weather.

12/5/44 - Got up and did our mission! I have a badly sprained ankle but OK. We got up at 4:00 AM. The mission apparently got off pretty much on schedule. I think Butler and I went off first and then Barton and Bruno. On landing I didn't keep my feet

together as I was trained to, and got a badly sprained ankle. It was x-rayed and had no broken bones. Butler bumped his hand and it was a little swollen. I use crutches. I told my wife I thought about her and wasn't very scared before bailing out. I told my wife I wouldn't jump again voluntarily but I wouldn't be afraid to. This "drone" mission is listed in my records as "Berlin" because of the secret nature of the mission. My flight log lists it as 1 hour duration as copilot, one takeoff and "0" landings. This was exactly one year after I graduated as a pilot at Altus, Okla. on 5 December, 1943.

No. 15 (5 December 1944) - HERFORD, GERMANY (APHRODITE MISSION)

- 1 hours flying time
- Mission from Fersfield with 388th BG (this is my recollection)

I flew copilot with Bob Butler (Jump Pilot) in a B-17 drone with 20,000 pounds of Torpex (25% more explosive than nitroglycerin). Butler made the takeoff and I called out airspeed and dropped 1/2 flaps at 60 mph to provide more lift on takeoff. Butler climbed to 10,000 feet while I set up the auto-pilot and other gear so that a Mother plane could fly the Drone on to the target. After ensuring the Mother plane had control of throttles, for airspeed, climb and letdown, turns left and right and that the radio control of altitude was working and the TV transmitter in the nose was OK, we bailed out over England.

I went out first as planned, but even though the exit was enlarged and skinned over to make it smooth so you could not grab onto anything I managed with reflex actions to hang on momentarily and was thrown up against the bottom of the plane and my boots kicked hard on the bottom. Then the smoke tank flashed by my face clearing by inches and I was free. I started counting and knew that after about 20 to 25 seconds I had to pull the rip-cord. I tried holding out one arm and started spinning violently then held out both arms, then spread eagle and after trying a few more maneuvers I was spread eagle floating light as a feather on my back and pulled the rip-cord. A point of honor was to not lose or drop your rip-cord so I slowly pulled it with both hands holding on. What a shock! It felt like the harness cut off my jewels! And my crotch hurt like hell. After checking and finding I was OK, I found I was floating down facing forward and probably at about 2,000 to 3,000 feet. Then I noticed that I was drifting toward an airfield with a lot of B-17's warming up and taxiing for take-off. I imagined that I would land among them and be chopped up by the spinning propellers. I worked frantically to pull on the risers and face sideways to the direction of drift. Finally I could hear the roar of the planes engines as I drifted over one of the squadrons warming up and taxiing. Then I was beyond them and coming down fast into an orchard and heading right for a big apple tree. By then I was looking over my shoulder and drifting exactly backward! Then I tried to climb up the risers to avoid the tree, missed it but hit with my feet not together and sprained my right ankle. I hit hard and as I untangled

myself a farmer came out and helped me. Within minutes someone from the nearby base came over and picked me up in a jeep and took me to the base hospital. There, I was questioned and gave them the telephone number at the 388th base and wouldn't tell them anything about why I jumped. After my ankle was bandaged up some-one arranged for me to get a jeep ride back to the 388th BG. I was given a couple of shots of whisky, and I felt no pain on the ride back.

I learned later that the observers didn't see my chute open because I delayed so long and Bob Butler was told that I may have gone in! After I bailed out, Bob Butler pulled the cables to arm the explosives detonators and bailed out. He was picked up and returned to the base before I got back.

The Drone was then flown to Herford, Germany and missed the marshaling yards by a mile or so. It was not certain if it was shot down or flown into the ground where it exploded doing no damage. The other drone sent that day, flown by Tom Barton and Frank Bruno, munched into a plowed field without exploding and had to be set off by fighters strafing it. There are several stories about that incident. In fact one story is that German soldiers tried to get into the plane after it landed and it blew up. We kidded Tom Barton that he had forgotten to pull the cables arming the fuses, before he bailed out.

12/17/44 - Looks like they will take no action on the wheels up landing. However, Tom Barton gets credit for it because he was the plane commander. I feel bad about that. After the war Tom told me he had no regrets, because he wasn't planning an aviation career anyway. Generous of him.

12/26/44 - Flew with Lt. Tilley and shot 13 landings today. I'm trying to get my own crew if I go back on bombing missions and need to brush up on landings especially. Received my 1st Pilot rating from Lt. Tilley! I had been flying a lot with Jack Hodson in November and December getting takeoff and landing experience.

12/28/44 - Casey Sulkowski and his crew finished up their missions today and are going home. He is from Rome, Ohio and we played basketball and baseball in high school against him. All the officers were pretty high in the club. Casey had flown a mother plane early in the Aphrodite project but had gone back to flying combat missions.

1/2/45 - Ran a mission today. Butler and I picked up the copilot (Lloyd Lawing) who had a large cut from his nose to his eyebrow. He hit the smoke tank on the weld seam projection. I rode back with him in an ambulance from another base. He was Jack Hodson's copilot. We all had a fear of hitting the smoke tank and I remember it

flashing by my face as I went out.

1/15/45 - Back at the 96th BG, assigned to a bed formerly occupied by a lead crew co-pilot formation officer who got shot down. My morale is low!

1/23/45 - Garvin and I go out to shoot landings and I crack up the plane. Garvin is the copilot and I'm the plane commander so I get credit for it. I shoot 3 poor landings and then Garvin shoots one. Garvin is coming in low and slow and short of the runway. I warn him but do not take over until too late and we hit hard, collapsing the right landing gear. So, we roll down the runway on the left wheel only, until it slows down. Then the right wing drops down and we make a 270 degree turn on the propellers and wing. I had held power on the two right engines to hold the wing up, left-braked and used rudder to keep it straight while it slowed down, so it didn't cause too much damage and no-one got hurt. It actually came to rest on the intersection of two runways, sort of turning up the other runway. I learned about 1st Pilot responsibility from this accident and the one with Tom Barton.

2/4/45 - Got my DFC for the "jump" mission and a General pinned it on at night. Probably General Partridge.

Here's the citation:

"For extraordinary achievement while serving as co-pilot on an experimental mission against the enemy. Fully realizing the dangers involved, Lt. Waters volunteered to participate in a highly important and new type of aerial warfare. His mastery of the intricate mechanism employed resulted in the successful completion of the operation. Lt. Waters' willingness to participate in this important and dangerous work reflects the highest credit upon himself and the A.A.F."

2/7/45 - Fly a check flight with CPT. Barkalow, did a lousy job and he reamed me out. This was the mandatory check ride after you crack up a plane. Barkalow was shot down and killed when his lead plane blew up on 3/19/45.

I resumed my missions in February 1945 and finally finished up on 21 April 1945 which was the last day the 96th flew in the war. I finally got credit for 5 missions but had to fly 30 because the missions had been raised again to 35. I had to fight hard to get the 5 mission credit. So much for promises.

ANECDOTES

The Aphrodite Project personnel were unusual in that the mission was top secret and

mostly made up of volunteers. The "jump pilots" were different personalities and several incidents serve to emphasize these characteristics. During training missions we would take-off with an empty B-17 which had exceptional climb and maneuver performance capabilities. Butler in particular was the son of an Army General and therefore an "Army Brat" and always did things differently. On take-off he wanted me the copilot to retract wheels just as we achieved take-off speed with 1/2 flaps. As we careened down the runway he was yelling "retract gear" while I yelled "pull it off". Finally we had ample flying speed and I would retract gear as we soared into a chandelle right off the runway pulling up at minimum flying speed and arriving directly over the tower at the center of the airfield, heading the other way. Butler would then ask the tower to "rock the tower if you see us" or "how do you like that one tower"? On one occasion we made a flat turn right across the airfield at Knettishall and flew over the tower about 50 feet above it. Butler got hell for that one! One day we packed a bunch of us into a B-17 and flew over to another base (I was riding along as a passenger). After messing around for awhile, we took off and gave the tower a good buzz job. This was also frowned on!

One of our guys always got very mean and picked fights when drunk. On this occasion he tried to pick up General Archie Olds' girlfriend at the bar at the 96th Bomb Group where we had gone for a party on Saturday night. Gen. Olds was home in Detroit we were told and his assistant a 1st Lt. was taking care of the lady. The Lt. did not like the pickup attempt and they went outside to settle it. It was raining and the jump pilot beat the hell out of the Lt. and left him lying in the mud.

Several of the guys got drunk and wrecked bikes (usually mine), or got into fights and beat each other up. We rode our bikes off the base and went into little towns such as Diss and rat raced in single file on sidewalks, through alley's chasing people and yelling and generally acting like schoolboys. Usually we ended up at pubs in the towns or countryside shooting darts with the natives etc. It was all in good fun but must have been a bit trying for the English.

Butler and I were out one day just flying around for practice in a stripped B-17 and we overtook a B-24 flying alone. We approached from the rear and he let us get even with him then started to pour on the power. Now a B-24 can out-fly a B-17 any day and everyone knew it, so we just kept pouring on more power and staying level with him. The B-24 pilot would have none of it so he fire-walled his engines and they were smoking. Then Butler fire-walled our B-17 and we pulled away (at about 220 mph) giving them the finger and "V" for victory sign. I have a photo of the B-24 as we pulled away.

We had a lot of time on our hands during the 5 months I was on the Aphrodite Project.

The weather prevented missions on most days but we could practice and just fly around. I went out with anyone who was willing to let me practice take-off and landings and finally I qualified as a 1st pilot.

PROLOGUE

Bob Butler and I corresponded for several years before we lost contact in the mid sixties. I tried to get a current address through the 8th AF locator service but no luck so far!

Tom Barton and I corresponded several times and he visited at my house in October 1987. Tom had a stroke and after about two years died in September, 1992. Tom had a career with Humble Oil (later EXXON) and retired in 1978 as Asphalt sales Manager for the Western Region. He lived in Houston, Texas and knew Roy Forrest who lived near there.

Charles L. Shinault had a career as an Air Traffic Controller and after retirement lives in Gulf Shores, Alabama. I carried on a correspondence with Charlie and he visited me at home in 1991. He had a heart problem and does not respond to letters?

Loyd Lawing and I have exchanged letters but have never met so far. He lives in Florence, N.C.

Willard Smith lived near Doylestown, Pa. and I knew this and always intended to look him up. By the time I got around to it in 1994 I learned that he had died the year before. His widow requested a copy of the Aphrodite film which I sent her. Haven't heard anything since.

Foster Falkenstine was a mother plane pilot on the Aphrodite Project and is a Realtor in the Watergate complex in Washington, D.C. He is married to a German lady who was a baby in Berlin while we were bombing it during the war. I met Foster in Washington and gave him a copy of the Aphrodite mission video tape I had made.

Stewart Evans was a historian interested in the Aphrodite Project. He wrote articles about it and was collecting data from us jump pilots. He finally abandoned the project and gave away all his notes and documents at the insistence of his 2nd wife Sue. After this Sue did divorce him which meant there were 2 divorces over this issue. He refuses to discuss things with his historian friends in the UK. When I visited him at their home in Bury St. Edmunds in 1983 he had a whole bedroom full of papers, books and photos etc on the 8th AF and Aphrodite. He said his mother was a young girl during the war and went to dances at the base of the 357th Fighter Group in Leiston. My P-51 fighter friend Pete Howell and Chuck Yeager both flew out of Leiston.

APHRODITE MISSION SUMMARY - 388TH BOMB GROUP 1944/45

No	Date	Pilot	Copilot/Tech.	Target	Remarks
1	8/4/44	1Lt F.H. Pool	S/Sgt P. Enterline	Watten	Two runs at target, would not dive, shot down by flak.
2	8/4/44	1Lt C.A. Engel	T/Sgt C.A. Parsons	Mimoyecques	Hit 1500 ft. short, controller error in judgement.
3	8/4/44	1Lt J.W. Fisher *	T/Sgt E. Most	Siracourt	Robot 42-39835 crashed at Sudborne, Suffolk, Pilot KIA.
4	8/4/44	1Lt F.L. Houston	S/Sgt W.D. Smith	Wizernes	Hit 500 ft. over, cloud covered target at release.
5	8/6/44	1Lt J.P. Andrecheck	Sgt R. Healey	Watten	No attack on target, robot crashed in sea.
6	8/6/44	1Lt J. Sollars	Sgt H. Graves	Watten	No attack on target, robot crashed in channel.
7	8/12/44	1Lt J.P. Kennedy *	Lt W. Willy *	Mimoyecques	PB4Y exploded @ 2000', Hinton Lodge, pilots KIA.
8	9/3/44	Lt R. Spalding	None	Heligoland	USAAF B-24 robot crashed on Dune Is. Heligoland.
9	9/11/44	1Lt R.W. Lindahl *	1Lt D.E. Salles	Heligoland	Hit 300 ft. rt from target, Pilot KIA static line tangled.
10	9/14/44	1Lt M.P. Hardy	1Lt E. Hadley	Heide/Hemmingstedt	Hit 200 ft. over in field.
11	9/14/44	1Lt W.G. Haller	2Lt C.L. Shinault	Heide/Hemmingstedt	Robot lost in haze crashed in sea.
12	10/15/44	1Lt W. Patton	1Lt J.W. Hinner	Heligoland	Hit by flak at 500 ft. blew up in air.
13	10/15/44	1Lt R. Betts	2Lt N. Garvin	Heligoland	Robot hit lower town of Heligoland.
14	10/30/44	1Lt G.A. Barnes	1Lt R. McCauley	Heligoland	Bad weather, robot aimed at Berlin, crashed in Sweden.
15	10/30/44	1Lt W.C. Gaither	1Lt W.M. Dunnuck	Heligoland	Robot aimed into North sea where it crashed.
16	12/5/44	1Lt R.F. Butler	1Lt K.T. Waters	Herford	Shot down, exploded, between Damme and Steinfeld.
17	12/5/44	1Lt T.H. Barton	1Lt F.E. Bruno	Herford	Mushed in 3 miles short of target, destroyed by fighters.
18	1/1/45	CPT J. Hodson	1Lt L. Lawing	Oldenburg	Hit 2 miles over target. Copilot cut cheek.
19	1/1/45	2Lt J. Stein	1Lt E. Morris	Oldenburg	Hit about 5 miles south of target.

* Killed In Action (KIA)

MISSIONS FLOWN WITH THE 96TH BOMB GROUP IN 1945

NARRATION BY KEN WATERS

INTRODUCTION

I was in the UK and flew 15 missions from February through April 1945 with the 96th Bomb Group of the 8th Air Force. I was a 1st Lt., checked out 1st pilot but flew these missions as a copilot, formation officer/tail gunner and as a check pilot with new crews on their 1st mission. I was officially assigned to Smith's lead crew but was an extra pilot assigned to various missions.

The reason for this variety of assignments was that I had previously flown 15 missions as copilot in 1944 and my crew had been shot down while I was on detached service. Thus I was an extra copilot/pilot.

I was assigned as copilot on Dunbar's crew and flew over in May 1944, started missions in the 96th Bomb Group on 8 June 1944 and completed 14 missions on 7 August 1944. On 10 August 1944 I volunteered to become a jump co-pilot on the Aphrodite Project with the 388th Bomb Group, and successfully completed one jump out of a drone B-17 on 5 December 1944. For this mission I was credited with 5 missions (one reason I volunteered) and a DFC. I returned to the 96th Bomb Group and completed 15 additional missions in 1945. The 30th and last mission I flew was also the last combat mission flown by the 96th Bomb Group; on 21 April 1945.

During my stay in England I wrote almost daily to my wife in the States and she saved the letters. Thus they are a good reference to jog my memory. I did not keep a diary but over the years I have filled a few notebooks with recollections. With the publishing of "Snetterton Falcons - The 96th Bomb Group in World War II", by Robert E. Doherty and Geoffrey D. Ward, Taylor Publishing C., Dallas, Texas; I have been able to connect my memory, notes and letters with the mission records.

1945 MISSION RECORD

No. 16 (6 February 1945) SAAFELD, GERMANY (south east of LEIPZIG)

9:50 hours flying time

Rail Yards 500 pound bombs

No 96th losses

I flew as copilot with Byers? On the way in the crew reported that there were a bunch of P-51's doing aerobatics up ahead. I took one look and said get on your guns because those are FW-190's not P-51's. They looked like a swarm of bee's. And then they

started a head-on run at us diving down in line one behind the other. Fortunately (4) P-51's came down out of nowhere and chased them off in a dive for the ground. The normal procedure was for the P-51's to fly in elements of (4) aircraft and slowly overtake the B-17's since they were faster. They flew an "S" pattern to go slowly up to the head of the column and then came back and went home. Thus there was a steady stream of fighters covering us as we went in and came home. The P-51's had long range drop tanks and if they had to fight they dropped the tanks and went after the enemy. Thank God for little friends!

No. 17 (15 February 1945) COTTBUS, GERMANY Russian troop support

9:15 hours flying time

500 pound bombs

No 96th losses

I flew the tail with Smith's crew but I don't remember anything about this mission. I had been assigned on this crew on 13 February as Co-pilot and flew the tail as "Observer" when on Lead missions. CPT. Robert M. Smith, Lead Pilot, Dobson, Bombardier and Milford R. Knauf, Navigator. Smith's original co-pilot, Woodruff W. Goble had gone down with Dunbar in September, 1944 and was a POW.

No. 18 (19 February 1945) OSNABRUK, GERMANY Lead with Red Smith Rail Yards

5:50 hours flying time

500 pound bombs

No 96th losses

I flew the tail gunners position as observer with Red Smith's lead crew. We had light flak and nothing unusual reported.

I think this was the day we flew all over trying to find targets. Dobson, our bombardier was always very lucky and on this day he found a hole in the clouds and got a perfect hit. Other groups weren't so lucky and dropped bombs all over at "targets of opportunity" because they couldn't see the assigned "primary", "secondary" or the "tertiary" targets. When we got home we listened to German radio accusing the US 8th air force of bombing hospitals and civilian targets. We had no opposition that I can recall.

No. 19 (23 February 1945) KITZINGEN, GERMANY Marshalling Yards and bridges over a river.

9:15 hours flying time

250 pound bombs

No 96th losses

I was flying in the lead aircraft as tail gunner observer but the bombardier was not Dobson from Smith's crew so it was another lead crew. Anyway LTC Bob Nolan, Group Executive Officer, was the group leader flying the copilot seat. We came in at 18,000 to 20,000 feet over a cloud layer until we broke out on a beautiful sunny spring day as we passed the weather front. There were absolutely no clouds at the target and we let down to 14,000 feet to get good bombing accuracy. There was no enemy opposition. We were the cleanup squadron "C" after "A" and "B" squadrons had bombed. The target was a large marshaling yard on the near side of a river and there were 3 bridges over the river. On the approach side of the marshaling yards was the town with the courthouse and a town square centered on the yards. The objective was to completely destroy the 3 bridges and the marshaling yards. Our squadron was to clean-up any incomplete areas. We made a clean run and at the last moment the bombardier saw that everything had been hit good so he bombed the courthouse and town square. This was without any prior discussion with LTC Nolan. As usual I attended the debriefing with Col Warren since I was the lead crew observer. The young bombardier explained that he had seen that the target was completely destroyed so he just rolled the Norden bombsight cross-hairs back onto the courthouse and dropped. No-one said anything, they just looked at him and turned away. The strike photos that we always took confirmed that he had gotten a perfect bomb pattern centered on the courthouse. Snetterton Falcons says "Results were excellent. So excellent that General Partridge would commend the Group". (see page 231, #278 and page 233, #282). But note that he commended the "A" and "B" Squadrons (only!). "The pattern was excellent and many bombs fell directly into the yard -". "C" squadron is not mentioned. I can't forget that day.

In 1997 the 2nd 96th book entitled "Snetterton Falcons II In the nest and on the wing" was published and I found out what happened to Kitzingen that day. There are two photos of destruction and the following newspaper account: "The 23rd of February 1945 was the most painful day in the history of Kitzingen. During the mid-day between 1200 and 1400 hours, the town became the victim of total war. A terrific bombing had a most destroying effect; 700 people were killed; families halved and 809 houses, 30 public buildings, many factories and the station were destroyed. Herr Doppert, the first post-war burgo-master, commented as follows: 'A lot of citizens lost the courage to continue living-a complete apathy permeated business life. Even rebuilding the town was not considered because no one could imagine life continuing after that terrible day on the 23 of February'". In 1991 the area shown in the two photos was rebuilt. The same working families lived in this section for centuries before the bombing. Ninety Five aircraft attacked the target and dropped over 284 tons of bombs.

PRACTICE MISSIONS

Smith's crew had a couple of weeks layoff from flying missions and did practice bombing and made a couple of trips. We went over to a base near Liverpool one day. This base was where new aircraft were brought in from the states for assignment to the bases. I don't recall why we went there but in one of the hangars we saw a secure area with canvas to prevent anyone from seeing what was behind it. It was also guarded by soldiers. Smith and I managed to get a look through a gap in the canvas at a P-80 Jet fighter while the guard wasn't looking.

Smith was intrigued with my discussion of short field takeoff techniques that we used on the Aphrodite project to get our overloaded drones off. The technique was simple and only required the copilot to drop 1/2 flaps after the heavily loaded plane got up to about 60 mph and then retract the wheels as soon as we were flying. Every takeoff we made we practiced this technique and I soon found out what Smith had in mind. One morning (March 6, 1945) he woke us all up early and said it was all set and we were going to fly down south and land at an RAF training field and be picked up by some girls from the "Flak Home". The normal procedure was for a crew to get a "flak leave" for a week or so after completing 1/2 their missions. The Flak Home we were going to was where Smith's crew had gone on their flak leave. I should note that I never had a flak leave because I was always moving around. Anyway, we flew down and landed at the RAF training station which had very short runways because normally only RAF Oxford's flew out of there. The RAF base personnel were angry that we landed because anyone knew that you couldn't fly a B-17 out of there. Smith assured them that we would fly out at 4:00 PM using a new takeoff procedure and we went off with the girls from the flak home. After a fun day in this old English mansion used for the flak rest home playing snooker, eating, having tea etc. we went back to the RAF base to go home to the 96th. All of the base personnel turned out to see a B-17 crash on takeoff.

We taxied out on the grass to the fence beyond the end of the runway and revved the engines up to full power before releasing the brakes, for the takeoff run. I should note that the airfield had a tree line at the edge of the field beyond the end of the runway that we had to climb over. Also, the field was situated in a big bowl shaped valley with low hills on all sides that we also had to climb over. Even though we were not heavily loaded it looked awfully short to me. As we got up to 60 mph I dropped the flaps and we mushed out over the trees as I retracted the wheels. Then we went into a medium turning bank as we circled inside the hills and came out after about a 3/4 turn. We climbed up a little and came back in at high speed and flew by the tower to say goodbye and I wiped the sweat off me!

No. 20 (10 March 1945) DORTMUND, GERMANY Railyards saturation bombing

7:10 hours flying time Lead

1000 pound bombs
No 96th losses

I flew the tail gunners position with a different lead crew. Flak was reported to be sparse. We bombed on PFF and through an error in setting the "Mickey" we missed the target and bombed open fields.

No. 21 (12 March 1945) SEIGEN, GERMANY Rail Yards

6:45 hours flying time
250 pound bombs and incendiaries
No 96th losses

I don't recall who I flew with but it was as a replacement copilot because theirs was sick with a bad cold. When we came out to start the mission I learned that they had just completed changing the wing. I can't remember why it needed changing but the controls weren't rigged properly and we had a hard time keeping in formation. We had no other problems with the mission and upon returning I wrote up the miss-rigged controls. The next day the maintenance officer and Cpt. Barkalow went out to see what was wrong with the controls. They agreed that the controls were miss-rigged but the most serious thing was that there was also a fuel leak in the wing and during the landing they had a small explosion and some wing skin was blown off or puffed out. We considered ourselves lucky that it hadn't happened on the mission. CPT. L. Barkalow was KIA on 19 March when his lead plane was hit by flak over the target and blew up.

No. 22 (17 March 1945) RUHLAND, GERMANY Oil Depot

8:50 hours flying time
500 pound bombs and incendiaries
No 96th losses

Letters to my wife show that I flew copilot to check out a new crew, Lt. Edward Murphy's crew. My formation flying was sharp and I was surprised at how much I know compared to new crews.

I think this was the 1st mission where I flew as "checkout" pilot with a new crew. Usually new crew pilots flew their 1st mission with an experienced crew and then took over their own crew for their 1st mission together. However, Maj. Jerger asked me if I would fly along with new crews replacing the copilot on their 1st mission. I agreed, and although I could have flown in the pilots seat I elected to continue in the copilots right seat which was more familiar to me and also the new pilot could be in his customary left seat. I don't note anything about this mission. I had noted earlier when on duty in the operations office that no crew had been shot down in the 96th BG on

their 1st mission. Anyone familiar with statistics would say that they were due for it but I was too ignorant to know this so I figured it would be a good deal. The pilot was 2nd Lt. Edward Murphy and the crew mascot was a pet skunk, which they left behind when on missions. This crew was shot down and all but one KIA on 31 March 1945 in the area of Fulda, Germany. The sad thing is that the 1st crew I checked out was shot down a few missions later. Nor do I remember who got the pet skunk.

No. 23 (18 March 1945) BERLIN, GERMANY Industrial target

8:00 hours flying time

1000 pound delayed action bombs

(1) 96th loss

I flew copilot with Byers. On this day my brother-in-law Eugene Holley was shot down over Berlin and safely parachuted out to spend the remainder of the war in Stalag Luft No. 1 at Barth, Germany. I only learned this later because he was a Navigator at the 401st BG.

We were element lead in the lower echelon which was to the left and below the leader. We had heavy flak at the Initial Point (IP) and on the target run. Just before the IP the leader took us right through the prop-wash of the group in front of us. As we were rocking around Byers was trying to keep us in position when suddenly the top turret yelled look up or look out! The plane above us was falling out of formation and down on top of us. Just before I hit the controls I saw the ball turret gunner right in front of my upper window looking at me. I hit the control wheel and knocked it right out of Byers hand and we dropped out of formation. A friend (Hinner) flying on our right wing said he thought we had hit each other it was so close. Anyway we climbed back up into formation in time to drop bombs with the group. The "Snetterton Falcons" reports the problem of intense contrails and so many groups trying to hit the same target caused a massive air traffic control problem. We were just too close behind the group we were following and went right through their prop-wash. Other groups had at least one collision over the target and another on the way in because of this congestion.

No. 24 (19 March 1945) PLAUEN, GERMANY Lead

9:30 hours flying time

(2) 96th lost

I flew copilot with Byers. This was a day the group flew all over looking for a target we could see. The flak was severe and there are lots of good descriptions in the "Snetterton Falcons". My records show this mission as lead but I flew as copilot according to letters to my wife. This was the day Cpt. Barkalow's lead plane blew up and he was KIA from a direct hit over the target. The records show that only 2 of the

crew got out and were POW's. We may have been element lead or squadron lead. As we neared the target area we went through flak and the ball turret gunner called me to say the No. 3 engine was smoking so I punched the fuel cutoff and propeller feathering emergency button which was located right in front of the throttles. As the engine shutdown, we dropped out of formation. I asked the ball gunner about the engine and he said it stopped smoking and it looked like oil was running on the exhaust which got hot and smoked. The situation was this; (1) it was (-) 60 degrees F outside so the engine would freeze up fast and not be able to be restarted; (2) there were reports of fighters in the area; (3) we hadn't dropped our bombs yet but the group was about to make the bomb run and we were below and following them and; (4) the oil pressure was still up when I shut the engine down. Byers and I quickly decided to restart the engine before it got too cold and see how it acted. It restarted OK but as soon as it started to pull normal power it started to smoke again so I gradually eased off until it was helping a little but not smoking. Therefore we had an engine (with a propeller pulling some power) and could decide to use it if we wanted to take the risk of fire. We followed along and eventually dropped the bombs on the target but still couldn't keep up with the group so we went home alone down at the top of the clouds so we could dive in if necessary. The "Snetterton Falcons" report that Lt. Jim Byers 413th, lost his # 4 engine on A/C 232 to Rhuland flak and jettisoned his bombs. I believe this was us but it was Ralph R. Byers according to the February "new crews" list. Further I'm sure it was # 3 engine because I can still remember inspecting the small hole in the oil line on the lower cylinder when we got back. As reported, oil was running down on the exhaust. Further I recall that we dropped bombs with either our group or another one that overtook us as we slowly dropped back; **we did not jettison our bombs.**

When we got to friendly territory near the coast we shut down the engine and continued on (3) engines still right on top of the cloud layer. About this time an RAF Lancaster bomber overtook us and acknowledging our (3) engines gave a wave and "V" for victory sign as they passed us. We decided to let down through the clouds over the channel, so we wouldn't have to make a procedure letdown at the base. The weather was reported to be clear below 500 feet. Byers was flying and I was looking out to see when we would break out and see the water. I looked over and saw Byers also looking out his window and trying to see the water. Then I noticed that the rate of decent was going down at 1000 feet per minute, the altitude was 400 feet, the artificial horizon was standing on end (meaning we were in a 90 degree bank! and we were in a spiral descent left turn). I wrenched the controls into a full turn to the right, put full power on the (3) engines and full right rudder yelling at Byers what I was doing and why. Fortunately he believed me and helped to recover and we climbed out to 10,000 feet again and went home and made a proper procedure letdown. I can assure you I had extra whiskey that night!

No. 25 (21 March 1945) HANDORF, GERMANY

6:05 hours flying time

No 96th losses

I rode the tail as "Observer" with Smith's crew. Flak wasn't rough but came close. I note that its my 11th mission as "Observer" and I hate it.

No. 26 (3 April 1945 KIEL, GERMANY Port facilities and submarine pens

6:40 hours flying time

1000 pound bombs

(1) 96th loss

I checked out another new crew probably 2nd Lt. George Larkin. The flak was medium to heavy and we were flying on the right side of the group in the high echelon. As we came into the IP the flak guns were putting up groups of (4) bursts and one group was tracking in at our level and location in the formation. I was flying at the time and being in the copilots right seat was flying formation on a plane to our left and ahead of us. Glancing out of my right eye I could see these bursts getting closer and closer. When I judged that the next group of (4) bursts would hit right where we were I slid right out of formation towards the last shot. I guessed correctly and the next bursts were right in the squadron of 13 planes. We were of course then on the target run so I had no choice but to slide back into formation even if we got hit. We dropped successfully and we didn't get hit either which shows how proficient you get after a lot of formation flying. It surprised me that no-one called attention to my antics but the important thing was to be in formation at bombs release. We went out in the afternoon and bombed at 1715 (5:17 PM). Accuracy was good. Upon landing I smiled and saluted Col. Warren whom was watching us taxi in. He scowled and motioned to slow down.

No. 27 (6 April 1945) GERA, GERMANY Jet airfield

8:25 hours flying time

100 pound anti personnel bombs

No 96th losses

I overslept and almost missed the mission. They finally got me up, rushed me to the plane and 15 minutes later we were airborne. It was an easy mission. I flew replacement copilot with the Deputy lead because his copilot got into a fight and his face was bruised, so he couldn't wear an oxygen mask. I think this was the morning that I was awakened and told I had a mission which wasn't scheduled. Then I went back to sleep for a minute. Usually we knew of our mission assignments the evening before, about 9:00 PM so we could get a good sleep (??). Anyway I usually could sleep

OK. The plane was sitting at the end of the runway waiting for me after the rest of the group had taken off. I insisted on having breakfast so we stopped at the mess hall, then to the locker room and out to the plane. As I climbed aboard still trying to get my flying clothes on the pilot took off. We were the deputy lead and would take over lead for the squadron if the leader got shot down. I remember we were nearly attacked by (2) Me 262's or (ME 163 rocket powered "Komet's") that came up to our altitude at an extremely high rate of climb and then started in on us pouring out jet trails all the time so they were easy to spot. Just at that moment (4) P-51's came down on them and they dove for the ground and left us alone, much to our relief. Once again thank God for "little friends".

No. 28 (14 April 1945) ROYAN, FRANCE, German pocket of resistance near Bordeaux.

7:00 hours flying time

All A/C carried fragmentation bombs

No 96th losses

I was again the tail gunner observer probably with Smith's crew. I recall the lone flak gun crew that kept sending up one burst at a time tracking in on us. He got close but did no damage and after we dropped the fragmentation bombs there was no more shots from him.

No. 29 (19 April 1945) KARLSBAD, CZECHOSLOVAKIA, Railway marshaling yards

8:00 hours flying time Lead

500 pound bombs

No 96th losses

This was another check-out of a new crew and I flew copilot, probably 1st Lt. Richard E. Allen. The trip was uneventful with light flak.

No. 30 (21 April 1945) INGOLSTADT, GERMANY, Jet airfield

9:00 hours flying time

No 96th losses

I checked out another new crew, probably 2/Lt Dale Dassler. Maj. Jerger had stopped by in his jeep on the flight line, a couple of days before and asked if I wanted to finish up my 30 missions and I said yes. So here I was on the last one. I don't remember being anxious about it or anything either. We were assigned to fly at 25,000 feet in to the target and the cloud tops were about 25,500 feet and scattered at that level, but it was very annoying flying in and out of clouds and trying to maintain formation. A little

while before getting to the target we had broken up the whole formation and had to reform. Then we went into clouds again and I was flying and I got vertigo, the whole group seemed to slowly roll in space and I nearly panicked. I think it was worse for me because I was flying looking out the right window and had no reference at all except the other aircraft. Anyway I yelled for the pilot to take over and he did instantly and had no problems such as I did. I believe we were the squadron that had to go around for a 2nd bomb run. We then dropped the bombs on the target and headed for home but still maintained the same altitude and went in and out of clouds. Finally I asked the navigator if he knew where we were and he assured me he was on the ball. Then I said he had better know because if we went into clouds again when we came out we would be lost from the group. That's exactly what I did; as we entered cloud I turned left 5 degrees and sometime later when we came out the group wasn't in evidence. So we continued on down to the top of lower clouds until we got over friendly territory and then let down through the clouds. The cloud base was at 4,000 feet and we were coming over Antwerp which was friendly right? Wrong, there were barrage balloons all over, just hanging in the base of the clouds waiting for some unwary airplane to fly into their cables and cut a wing off. Fortunately, I saw them because I didn't hear the "squeekers" in our earphones, that usually warned us of their presence. We went around them and climbed up into the clouds also, and went on home to the 96th. Sgt Grey was working on the next plane from us as we came in and congratulated me on finishing up. I had seen him off and on for about a year since he first serviced our planes when I flew with Dunbar's crew.

The mission on 21 April, 1945 was not only my 30th and final mission but also the 96th BG's last combat mission of the war. After that the 96th BG flew 5 missions in "Operation Chowhound", which dropped food and clothing etc. to starving civilians in Europe as the war ended. I was sent to Stone, England to await a troopship and the war ended while I was there. I returned to the U.S. in May 1945 on the "Ille de France", an ocean liner converted to a troopship.

MEANWHILE IN WINDSOR, OHIO – Gene Holley Shot Down

My sister, Elinor Waters married Eugene Holley in Windsor, Ohio on 7 October 1944. Gene was a B-17 navigator and went to England in early 1945 assigned to the 401st Bomb Group.

My most vivid memory of Gene and Ellie began on March 22, 1945 when I went to visit Gene. I learned he was "missing in action" on the March 18 mission to Berlin, which I also flew as copilot with another group. Lt. Sites who was Gene's bombardier but wasn't with them, told me that other crews saw parachutes and thought they all got out because the plane was under control. They also thought they may have made it to the Russian lines. I wrote to my folks in Windsor telling them about Gene, and my sister Barbara relates that she picked up the mail that day and told our mother that I had written. Mom said well, open it and read it. So Barbara was the first to learn that Gene had been shot down. My mother said, what's wrong and Barb couldn't answer. At the time, my father and Ellie were working in Johnson & Jennings in Cleveland and stayed there during the week, returning only for the weekend. That same day the bad news came via the formally dressed telegraph man in his black hat and as Mom and Barb answered the door they said they knew about it. He was astounded because no-one could have known before the official messenger. Then Barb and Mom went to Gene's father and mother and told them Gene was missing. Mom waited until the weekend to tell Ellie.

I finished my 30 missions on April 21, 1945 at almost the same time that the Army learned that Gene was a POW. According to Barbara, she and Mom went to Warren that day and as they came back through Windsor, Pauline who ran the telephone exchange and knew everything ahead of everyone saw them in Windsor and ran out to tell them that Gene was found in a POW camp that was liberated and he was coming home, and also that I was through my missions and coming home. They then went home and told Dad who already knew from phone calls - which is how Pauline knew. He was on a tractor plowing the garden and singing at the top of his voice.

Ellie related to me that she got the good news from Pauline at J & J and everyone stopped work. Finally the boss gave everyone the day off because no work was being done anyway.

Ken Waters

Waters speaks about importance of history

BY MICHELLE WANN
Valley News

Ken Waters spoke at the Grand Valley Public Library Tuesday evening.

Waters was in the Air Force during World War II, serving at the same base Joe Kennedy was stationed at prior to his death.

"I didn't know Kennedy personally, but I arrived at the base on Aug. 10, 1944 and Joe Kennedy was killed on the 12th," Waters said.

Waters felt it was important for him to participate in the series of WWII speakers because today's youth should know about the sacrifices and other things he and other soldiers went through.

Waters said he thinks politically, the military is as important now as it was during WWII.

"There are still a lot world threats that affect us today," Waters said.

"Terrorists attacks and other unknown crimes that vary in potential are still prominent now."

Waters feels even with all of the technology advances in today's world, the situations he faced close to 60 years ago aren't

Ken Waters

all that different than what today's youth may have to face should they be called upon to serve their country.

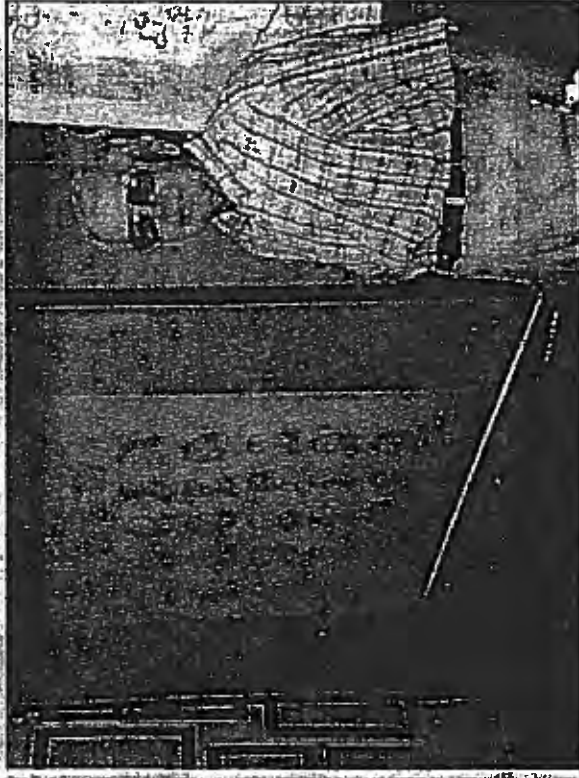
Chad Holley, one of the younger members of the audience, said he finds the stories interesting.

"My grandfather (Gene Holley) was also in the Air Force and I like learning what they went through during the war," Holley said.

Waters had a map of Europe to show where he fought during World War II.

He also brought a picture of his graduating class of 1940, from Orwell High School.

"I am proud to be from Windsor and Orwell and I think it is important for people to know that small town people can do anything they want to if they work hard enough for it," Waters said.



World War II speaker series continues

Orwell native Ken Waters will be the guest World War II speaker at 7:15 p.m. Monday, Sept. 11 at the Grand Valley Public Library.

Ken served in the 8th Airforce in WWII as a copilot on B-17 bombers.

The majority of his missions were with the 96th Bomb Group. His missions were flown from June 8, 1944 through April 21, 1945.

Waters flew one mission for the 388th Bomb Group, which was part of the secret 'Aphrodite Missions.'

Joe Kennedy (brother of President John F. Kennedy) was killed on one of these missions.

Come and hear about these dangerous suicide missions and about our nation's history from one who helped make it.

Hope you know
how much
it's appreciated.

UNCLE KEN,

CHAD AND I FELT COMPELLED TO DROP YOU A QUICK NOTE AND THANK YOU FOR GIVING THAT TALK AT THE LIBRARY, IT WAS AMAZING TO SEE YOU GIVE SUCH A GREAT TALK WITH NO NOTES, ETC... THAT A DEFINITELY ONE OF THE BEST WAA TALKS I'VE HEARD AND WHAT MADE IT REALLY STAND OUT WAS YOUR GOOD HUMOR AND OBVIOUS HONESTY ABOUT THE ENTIRE MATTER. I HAD NO IDEA YOU WERE ON SO MANY MISSIONS. THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR COURAGE. GUYS LIKE US HAVE IT VERY GOOD BECAUSE OF GUYS LIKE YOU, AND WE WILL NOT FORGET THAT FACT!!

LOVE

Mark + Chad