

## S/Sgt. Russell T. Hatchett “Tom” Ball Turret Gunner

### Listing of 27 combat missions

#	Area/Target	Date	Pilot & A/C #	Comments
1	St. Pol-Siracourt, France, V-1 Launch Site	May 30,1944	Lt. J. A. Sollars A/C# 238052	Awaken at 3:00 am for 1 <sup>st</sup> combat mission. Bomb load was six 1,600 lb. armor piercing. There was a little Flak but was not hit by any of it. Landed at 11:45. Still Lost 12 Bombers & 9 fighters, but destroyed 50 Luftwaffe planes.
2	Hamm, Germany Marshaling Yards	May 31,1944	Lt. J. A. Sollars A/C# 238052	Awaken at 3:00pm for second mission. Briefing at 4:00, Took off at 7:00. Bomb load was 1000 lb. GP. Had a lot of Flak but missed most of it. No enemy fighters. We had good fighter support on our side. Landed at 1:30pm. There were no losses from the Bomber or fighter force
3	Boulogne, France Heavy Guns on coast of France	June 2,1944	Lt. J. A. Sollars A/C# 238052	CO woke me up at 4:00 for 3rd mission. Briefing at 6:00, Took off at 9:10. Bomb load was 500 lb. GP. Could not see target so we brought the bombs back. Landed at 1:30. There was little Flak and no enemy fighters. There were no losses from the Bomber or fighter force.
4	Northwest France Beach Defenses	June 5, 1944	Lt. J. A. Sollars A/C# 238052	Got up at 3:00 this morning. No briefing. Bomb load was 500 lb. GP. We were supposed to bomb some big German guns but because of cloud cover we bombed the secondary target which was ten miles up the French coast. Landed at 1:30. Later that day Sollars & the boys said we had to get up at 1:00 tomorrow for a mission. Rumor around that D-Day invasion was about to start. “Let’s hope so” Lost 6 Bombers & 2 fighters. There were no Luftwaffe planes losses reported.
5	Caen, France French coast	June 6, 1944 <b>D-Day</b>	Lt. J. A. Sollars A/C# 238052	Awaken at midnight & briefed about the D-Day invasion. Bomb load was 500 lb. GP. We were supposed to bomb French coast a few minutes before the invasion started. Most ships brought bombs home due to poor visibility. Returned home at 10:45. Two B-24s were lost. Eighth air force fighters destroyed 30 Luftwaffe fighters.

6	Lisieux, France Normandy area	June 6, 1944 <b>D-Day</b>	Lt. J. A. Sollars A/C# 238052	Awaken at 3:00pm for second mission on D-day. Bomb load was six 1000 lb. GP. We got out of formation so we bombed with B-24s. We finally got back with our own formation. Weather was real bad. Had a heck of a time landing, but the pilot made a good landing. Returned to base at midnight. Lost one B-17, one B-24 & 8 fighters. Downed 2 Luftwaffe fighters.
7	Nantes, France Rail Bridge	June 7, 1944	Lt. J. A. Sollars A/C# 297296	Up at 11:30 am. We didn't fly our own ship. Bomb load was 500 lb GP. Took off at 4pm. Did not drop bombs due to overcast. "When we returned to base, the Jerry's were bombing the airfield. We flew around in the dark for a long time before landing at an air field near London. Had chow (which was very poor) and a double shot of Scotch there. Took off for home field the next morning. Made four approaches on landing strip before finally landing. We are darn lucky to be alive. Two Forts & three Liberators were shot down over here last night."
8	Boulogne, France Costal Guns	June 11,1944	Lt. J. A. Sollars A/C# 238052	Up at 1:30, Bomb load was twenty 200 lb. GP bombs. Had to make two runs on target. Landed at 10:00. The bomb group returned to base without issue.
9	Florennes, Belgium Airfield	June 14,1944	Lt. J. A. Sollars A/C# 238052	Awaken at Midnight. Bomb load was 250 & 500 lb. GP. "Had a little Flak but wasn't hit by any. Was expecting enemy fighters, but had good escort support". Landed at 9:30 am.
10	Hannover, Germany Oil Refinery	June 15,1944	Lt. J. A. Sollars A/C# 238052	Awaken at midnight & briefed. Jerry's were over the air field again. Shot twenty 10 millimeter shells and dropped bombs. The bombs did not explode. We took off at 4:10. Had a lot of Flak on this mission. Ship was hit in three places that we could see. Had to feather No. 1 engine. Came back on three engines, but was able to stay in formation.
11	Hannover, Germany Oil Refinery	June 18,1944	Lt. J. A. Sollars A/C# 238060	Awaken at midnight & briefed. Bombing the oil refinery again. We went over at 18,000 ft and got the heck shot out of us by Flak. It was the heaviest I've seen. The 447 <sup>th</sup> lost two ships. One from the 711 <sup>th</sup> squadron and one from the 708 <sup>th</sup> squadron. We got about five Flak holes. Landed at about 11:35.
12	St. Jean D'Angely, France, Air Field	June 19,1944	Lt. J. A. Sollars A/C# 238052	Awaken at 1am & briefed. We didn't bomb the target because of cloud cover. No. 1 & No. 2 engines began to fail so we had to jettison the bombs. We had to leave the formation. Four P-38's brought us back. We were the last to land.

13	Cuxhaven, Germany Air Field	July 18, 1944	Lt. A. W. Dahlgran A/C# 231582 original crew	Back with original crew flying with Lt Dahlgran in A/C# 231582 that we named "Ol Scrapiron" Got us up at 1:30am for mission. Took off at 4:20. Bomb load was ten 500 lb. bombs, dropped at 19,000 ft. Had a little Flak, no fighters. Seven hour trip. Home at 11:15.
14	Merseburg, Germany Leuna synthetic Oil Refinery	July 20, 1944	Lt. A. W. Dahlgran A/C# 231582	Got us up at 1:00am, took off at 4:20 for mission. Bomb load was ten 500 lb. GP bombs, dropped at 20,000 ft. Had a hell of a lot of Flak. Saw no enemy fighters. Saw one ship go down, two parachutes from it. Home at 2:40.
15	Petiers/St. Lo area Enemy Lines	July 24, 1944	Lt. A. W. Dahlgran A/C# 231582	Got us up at 7:30am. We were supposed to bomb the enemy lines to help ground troops on the French front but did not because of overcast. Hardly any Flak but still got a hole in the nose. Landed home at 4:30.
16	Ostend, Belgium Coastal defenses (large guns)	August 4, 1944	Lt. A. W. Dahlgran A/C# 231582	Mission started at 10:30. Bomb load was six 1000 lb. bombs, dropped at 24,000 ft. It was the 1 <sup>st</sup> mission as leading group. Bombing results were good. Mission was short & uneventful. Landed at 4:00pm.
17	Belfort, France Marshaling (railroad) yards	August 11, 1944	Lt. A. W. Dahlgran A/C# 231582	Got us up at 4:00am. Take off time was 6:45am. Bomb load was ten 500 lb. bombs; dropped at 15,000 ft. Second mission as lead group. Bombing results were good. The return trip was uneventful. Landed at 3:10pm.
18	Seine River Area Marshaling (railroad) yards	August 13, 1944	Lt. E. L. Duke Flying w/Dahlgren's crew A/C# 231582	Up at 7:30am, take off time was 9:45am. Bomb load was 38 100 lb. bombs; dropped at 29,000 ft. 3rd mission as lead group. Bombing results were good. Landing gear nearly fell down, finally landed at 3:30pm. We just made it.
19	Bremen, Germany Industrial Port city	August 30, 1944	Lt. E. L. Duke Flying w/Dahlgren's crew A/C# 231582	Up at 11:00am. Take off time was 1:00pm. Bomb load was 38 100 lb. incendiary bombs, dropped at 24,500 ft. Had plenty of Flak. 4th mission as lead group. Landed at 8:15pm.
20	Gustavsburg, Germany Aircraft Plant	October 9, 1944	Lt. F. A. Gunn Flying w/Dahlgren's crew A/C# ***804	Started take off at 11:00am. Bomb load was five 1000 lb. bombs, dropped at 25,000 ft. Reached the target without problems. Results of the bombing were unknown. Started landing at 5:20pm.

21	Hamburg, Germany Oil Refinery	October 25, 1944	Lt. F. A. Gunn Flying w/Dahlgren's crew A/C# 231582	Briefing started at 6:30. Bombing the oil refinery again. We went over at 24,500 ft and dropped twenty 250 lb. bombs. The trip was uneventful both ways. The group made it back without losses.
22	Hannover, Germany Oil Refinery	October 26, 1944	Lt. A. W. Dahlgran A/C# 231582	Briefing started at 8:00. Bombing the oil refinery again. We went over at 26,000 ft and dropped twenty 250 lb. bombs. There was the usual black cloud of Flak bursts over the target. The trip was uneventful both ways. All planes made it back without losses.
23	Neumunster, Germany Air craft plant	November 6, 1944	Lt. A. W. Dahlgran A/C# ***572	Take off started at 6:30. We went over at 23,000 ft and dropped twenty 250 lb. bombs. The return trip was uneventful. The group made it back without losses. Started landing at 1:42pm.
24	Koblenz, Germany Marshaling (railroad) yards	November 21, 1944	Lt. M.A. Lefebvre w/ A.W Dahlgren's crew A/C# 231582	Take off started at 7:30. We went over at 26,000 ft and encountered heavy Flak. Dropped twenty 250 lb. bombs. The group lost 7 B-17's. Started landing at 3:15pm.
25	Mainz, Germany Marshaling (railroad) yards	December 4, 1944	Capt. J. F. Robertson w/ A.W Dahlgren's crew A/C# 231582	Briefing started at 7:30. Bombing the railroads again. We went over at 22,000 ft and dropped a mixture of GP & incendiary bombs. The trip was uneventful. All planes made it back. <u>Of note:</u> One might think that bombing targets repeatedly meant that we were not doing a good job. The Germans, using slave labor from overrun countries became quite adept at repairing railroads.
26	Koblenz, Germany Marshaling (railroad) yards	December 10, 1944	Lt. A. W. Dahlgran A/C# 231582	Take off started at 7:30. We went over at 24,500 ft and dropped a mixture of GP & incendiary bombs. The trip was uneventful. There were 290 B17's in the armada attacking Koblenz, along with the escort of 226 P-47's & P51's.
27	Darmstadt, Germany Marshaling (railroad) yards	December 12, 1944	Lt. M.A. Lefebvre w/ A.W.Dahlgran's crew A/C# ***819	Take off started at 8:27. We went over at 25,500 ft and dropped a mixture of GP & incendiary bombs. Led mission as lead low group. Flak was our only opposition. Bombing results were poor. Landed at 3:51 pm. "My last Combat Mission"

See next page for summary

## **RT Hatchett Combat Missions,**

### **Summary of Pilot, Crew, Air Craft**

<b>Pilot/Crew/AC #</b>	<b>Combat Missions</b>
A.W. Dahlgren & original crew, AC# 42-31582 Ol' Scrapiron.	7
Different pilots & original crew, AC# 42-31582 Ol' Scrapiron. 2W/E.L. Duke, 1W/F.A. Gunn, 1W/M.A. Lefebvre, 1W/Capt. L.F. Robertson	5
Different pilot & original crew, different AC (10 W/J.A.Sollars AC# 42-38052) (1 W/ J.A. Sollars AC# 42-97296) (1W/ J.A. Sollars AC# 42-38060) (1 W/F.A. Gunn AC# ***804) (1W/M.A. Lefebvre AC # ***819)	14
A.W. Dahlgren & original crew, in a different AC # ***572	1
Total Missions	27