1921

The Long Haul

THE STORY OF THE
497th BOMB GROUP (VH)

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RELLAND

Foreword

This book has been prepared and published in the belief that every member of the 497th Bomb Group will want to have its glorious combat history preserved and that every member will desire to have a copy. It is hoped, as you browse through this book in future years, it will serve to remind you of your many friends and team-mates with whom you served. It is hoped, as you glance through the "Roll of Honor", it will keep alive your memory of our brave friends who did not return, and of the great sacrifices a war exacts. Because these gallant men made the supreme sacrifice, we are living to enjoy the "Four Freedoms" for which this war was fought.

As I think back to those days on Saipan, where we lived, worked and fought together, I think of the smoothest functioning team it has ever been my pleasure to serve with. I think of every man performing his duties with loyalty and cooperation and to the best of his ability. Men in the kitchens, on the maintenance line, in the offices, on board the airplanes; each seemed to take pride in making every mission a little better than the last; each knew that his efforts brought the war to a close just a little sooner.

Every man who fought with the 497th Bomb Group deserves the highest praise and commendation. To each of you I extend my sincere appreciation and congratulations for the job you did so well.

Preparation of this book did not begin until five months after the group had returned to the States. The group was then stationed at MacDill Field, Tampa, Florida. Very few of the enlisted personnel had returned, many of the officers had returned but there were also many new ones assigned. Many staff positions were filled by personnel who were new to the group. The records of the group, including the squadron records, arrived home in a thoroughly disorganized fashion and a considerable amount of the records were never found. These facts together with the difficulties in obtaining the correct status of missing personnel and present locations of all former personnel have made the task of preparing this book very difficult.

It is desired to acknowledge that this book will contain many imperfections and perhaps many errors. The errors are regretable but everything has been done to avoid them, insofar as has been possible. In spite of this, it is believed that this book is well worth while and will be thoroughly enjoyable to all former personnel of the group.

It is impossible to give credit to all who have contributed to the preparation of this book. However, it is particularly desired to give credit to the following:

Major Harry A. Stewart and Captain John E. Power for preparing the official history from which much information has been taken and for writing the narrative history included in this book.

Captain Arthur J. Loeb for compiling the group statistics and for the mission summary.

Captain Pat E. Goforth, Editor, who planned this book and directed the following editorial staff: Captain Anthony D. Herbst, Research Editor; Captain Frank T. Hastings, Research Editor; Captain John J. LeGrand, Layout Artist; 1st Lt. Rafael C. Arellano, Artist; 1st Lt. Otis L. Shealy, Photo Editor; Tech. Sgt. Stephen Constande, Photo Reproduction; Staff Sgt. Jack R. Stiles, Photo Reproduction.

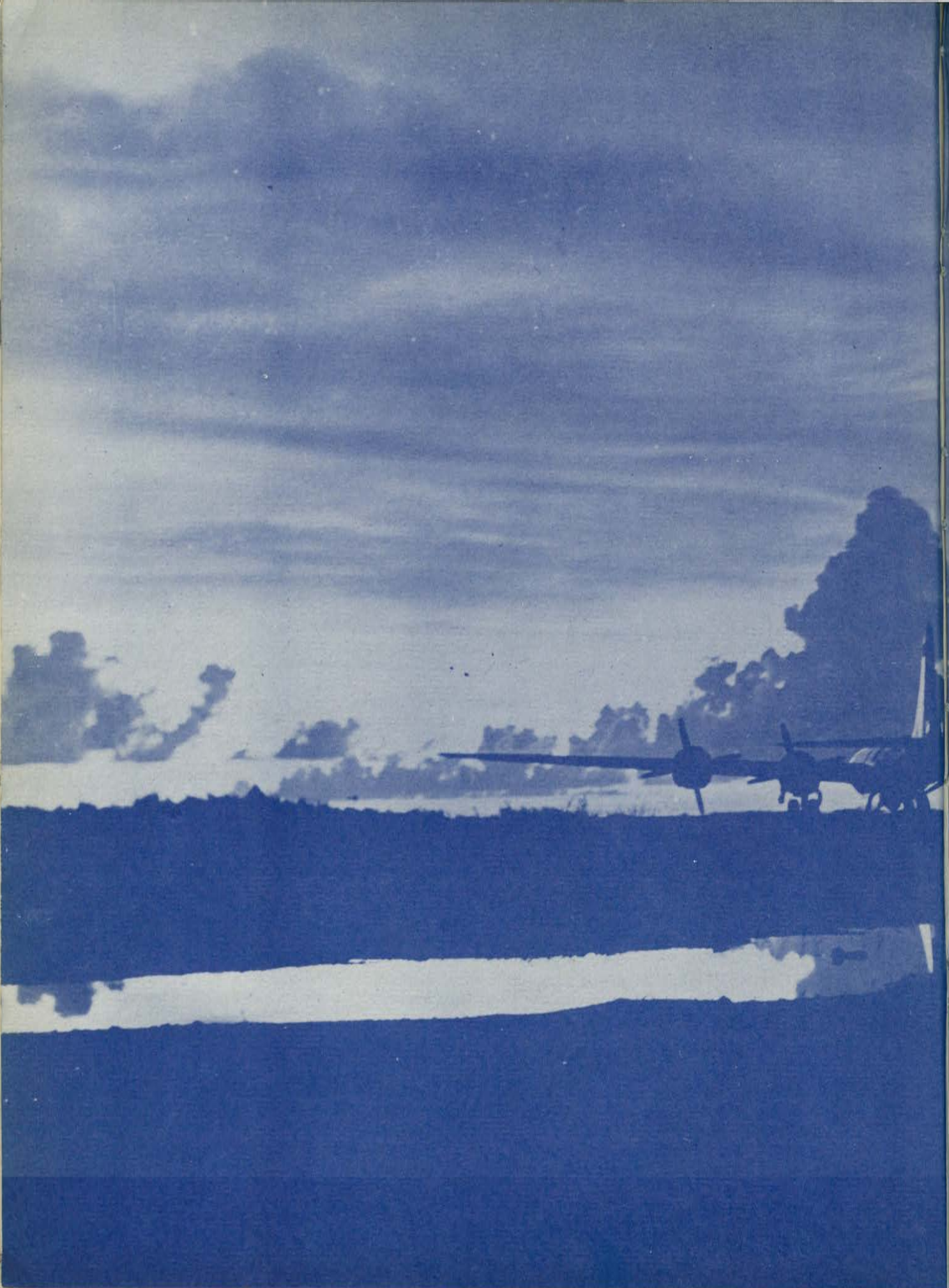
Captain Hugh G. Fly and Captain Joseph P. Morgan gave valuable aid in compiling the list of personnel assigned to the group with home addresses and decorations earned.

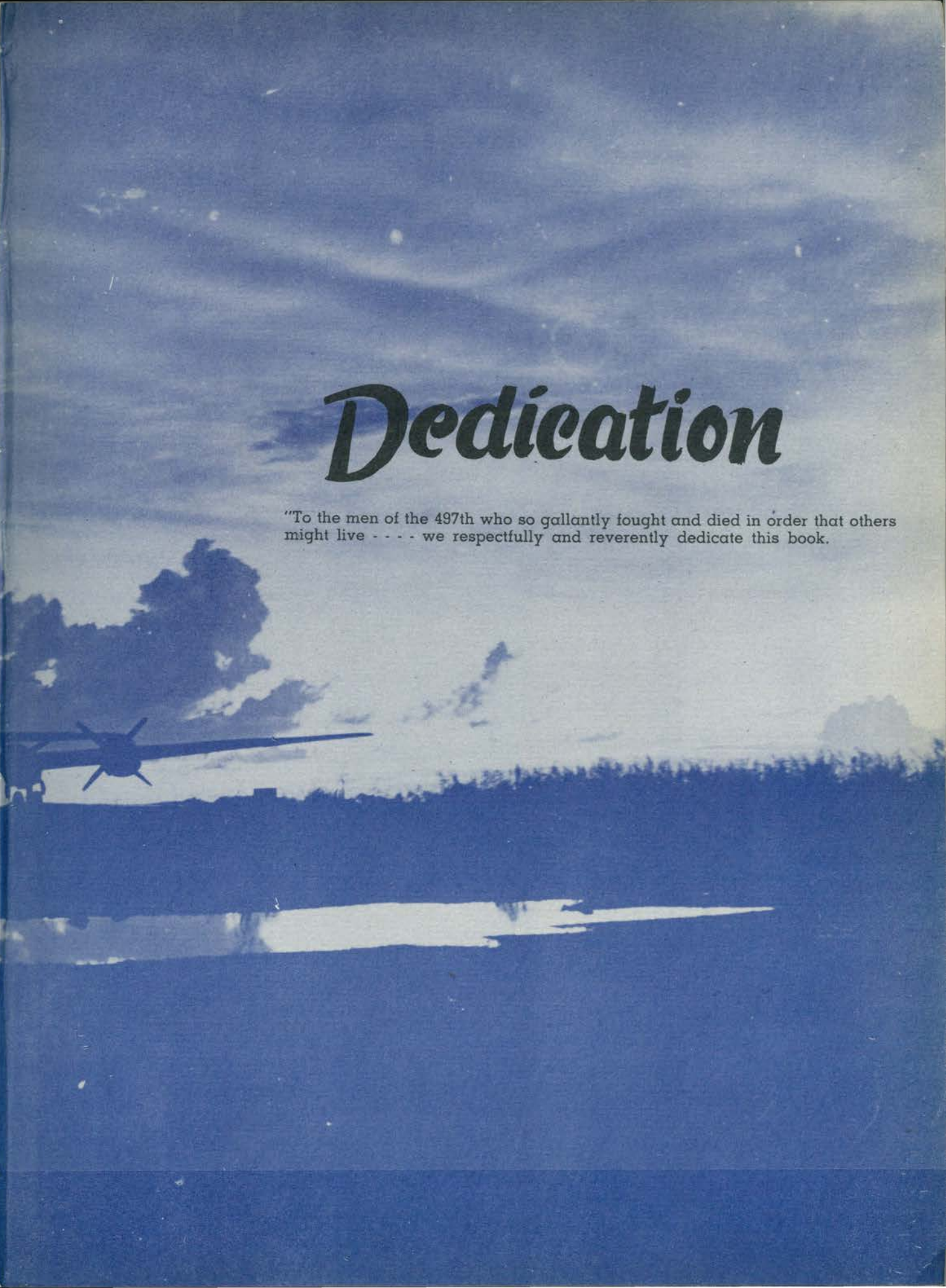
The following should be mentioned for valuable assistance in proof-reading and suggestions:

Lt. Colonel Neil D. VanSickle, Lt. Colonel Albert L. Haley, Major Walter B. Dossett and Captain Clifford B. Mandell.

Lastly, Mr. Reed and Mr. Webdell of the Newsfoto Publishing Company, which is publishing this book, have been most helpful with their suggestions, have prepared the original proof and submitted it for corrections, and have been most courteous and patient in the time allowed for proof-reading and accepting numerous changes and corrections.

ARNOLD T. JOHNSON, Col. A. C.
Group Commander
January 1947





Dedication

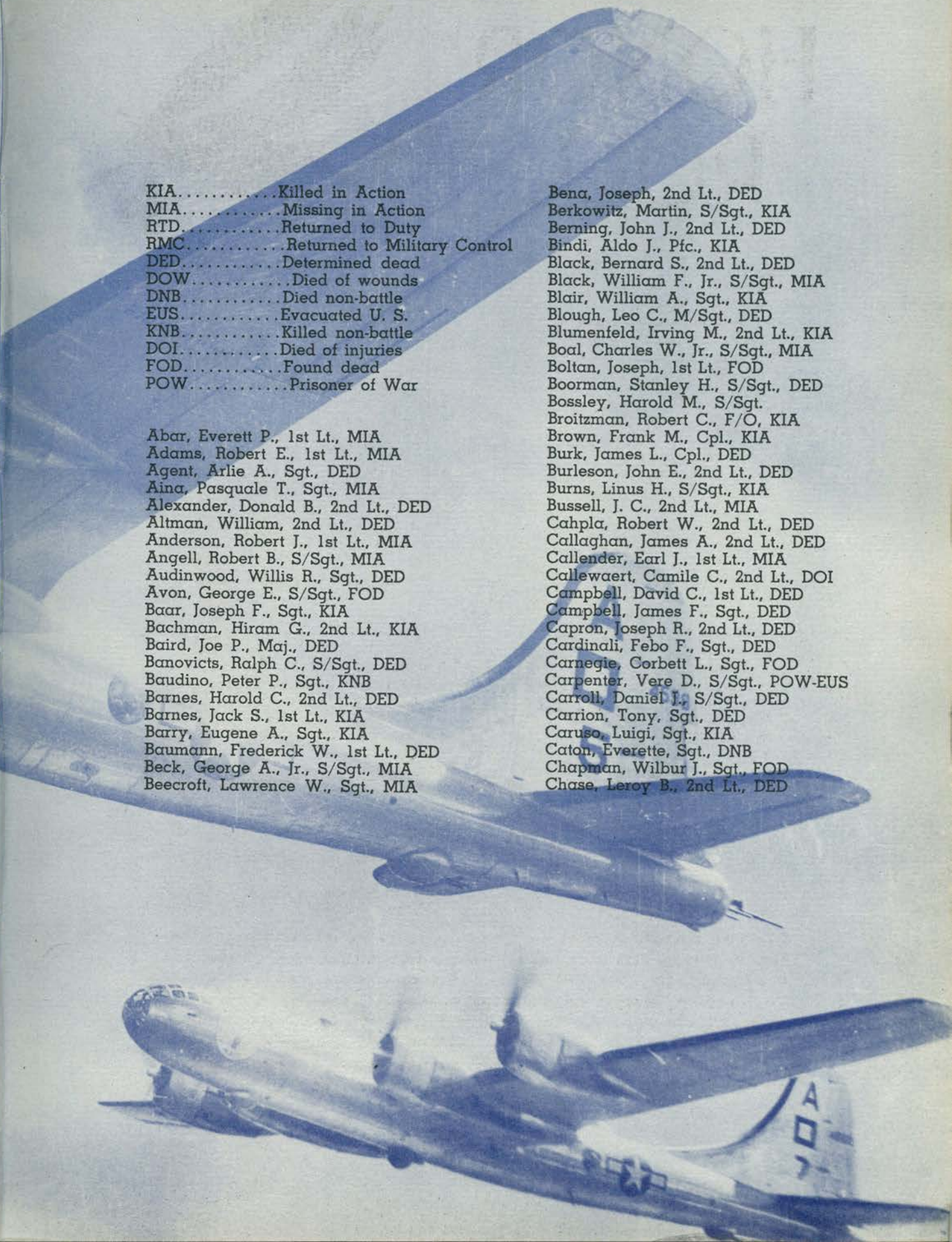
"To the men of the 497th who so gallantly fought and died in order that others might live - - - - we respectfully and reverently dedicate this book.

HONOR ROLL

"To more than 300 men whose names appear in the following pages, the love of country, love of wives, sweethearts and families, love of freedom, equality and the fundamental rights of man, were greater than their fear of death and led them on the greatest crusade of all times—that of stamping oppression and aggression from the face of the earth. What matter whether they were Officers or Enlisted Men? Rich or Poor? Farmers or Bankers? Their gallant sacrifices have made them our real heroes and their names will burn ever bright in our hearts as on our ROLL OF HONOR."

KIA.....Killed in Action
MIA.....Missing in Action
RTD.....Returned to Duty
RMC.....Returned to Military Control
DED.....Determined dead
DOW.....Died of wounds
DNB.....Died non-battle
EUS.....Evacuated U. S.
KNB.....Killed non-battle
DOI.....Died of injuries
FOD.....Found dead
POW.....Prisoner of War

Abar, Everett P., 1st Lt., MIA
Adams, Robert E., 1st Lt., MIA
Agent, Arlie A., Sgt., DED
Aina, Pasquale T., Sgt., MIA
Alexander, Donald B., 2nd Lt., DED
Altman, William, 2nd Lt., DED
Anderson, Robert J., 1st Lt., MIA
Angell, Robert B., S/Sgt., MIA
Audinwood, Willis R., Sgt., DED
Avon, George E., S/Sgt., FOD
Baar, Joseph F., Sgt., KIA
Bachman, Hiram G., 2nd Lt., KIA
Baird, Joe P., Maj., DED
Banovicts, Ralph C., S/Sgt., DED
Baudino, Peter P., Sgt., KNB
Barnes, Harold C., 2nd Lt., DED
Barnes, Jack S., 1st Lt., KIA
Barry, Eugene A., Sgt., KIA
Baumann, Frederick W., 1st Lt., DED
Beck, George A., Jr., S/Sgt., MIA
Beecroft, Lawrence W., Sgt., MIA
Bena, Joseph, 2nd Lt., DED
Berkowitz, Martin, S/Sgt., KIA
Berning, John J., 2nd Lt., DED
Bindi, Aldo J., Pfc., KIA
Black, Bernard S., 2nd Lt., DED
Black, William F., Jr., S/Sgt., MIA
Blair, William A., Sgt., KIA
Blough, Leo C., M/Sgt., DED
Blumenfeld, Irving M., 2nd Lt., KIA
Boal, Charles W., Jr., S/Sgt., MIA
Boltan, Joseph, 1st Lt., FOD
Boorman, Stanley H., S/Sgt., DED
Bossley, Harold M., S/Sgt.
Broitzman, Robert C., F/O, KIA
Brown, Frank M., Cpl., KIA
Burk, James L., Cpl., DED
Burleson, John E., 2nd Lt., DED
Burns, Linus H., S/Sgt., KIA
Bussell, J. C., 2nd Lt., MIA
Cahpla, Robert W., 2nd Lt., DED
Callaghan, James A., 2nd Lt., DED
Callender, Earl J., 1st Lt., MIA
Callewaert, Camile C., 2nd Lt., DOI
Campbell, David C., 1st Lt., DED
Campbell, James F., Sgt., DED
Capron, Joseph R., 2nd Lt., DED
Cardinali, Febo F., Sgt., DED
Carnegie, Corbett L., Sgt., FOD
Carpenter, Vere D., S/Sgt., POW-EUS
Carroll, Daniel J., S/Sgt., DED
Carrion, Tony, Sgt., DED
Caruso, Luigi, Sgt., KIA
Caton, Everette, Sgt., DNB
Chapman, Wilbur J., Sgt., FOD
Chase, Leroy B., 2nd Lt., DED



Christensen, Donald A., 1st Lt., MIA
Clapp, Edgar L., 2nd Lt., DED
Clark, Tom B., S/Sgt., DED
Clouser, J. A., Sgt., KIA
Cobb, Robbie L., Sgt., DED
Collins, Edward B., Jr., 2nd Lt., DED
Comer, Willis J., Sgt., DED
Connell, John J., S/Sgt., DED
Contos, Charles C., 1st Lt., KIA
Coone, John J., S/Sgt., DED
Cornejo, Anthony W., Sgt., DED
Coster, Lloyd H., Sgt., KIA
Cox, Leonard L., Capt., KIA
Craig, Walter J., 2nd Lt., DED
Crane, Frank J., S/Sgt., KIA
Cripps, John M., Jr., 1st Lt., KIA
Croake, Thomas J., 2nd Lt., MIA
Crowe, Franklin W., 1st Lt., MIA
Crowell, Benjamin E., Jr., 1st Lt., DED
Crucitti, Joseph D., Cpl., KIA
Cyran, Chester C., Sgt., KIA
Dahl, Odne N., 2nd Lt., DED
Dall, George R., 2nd Lt., DED
Dauth, Raymond C., Capt., DED
Dawson, Sam B., 1st Lt., KIA
Deitz, John G., Sgt., DED
Desimone, Albert, S/Sgt., KNB
Dietzel, Edwin F., Jr., 1st Lt., DED
Dlugokencky, Chester C., Sgt., DED
Donham, Charles C., Jr., 2nd Lt., KIA
Dugan, Charles R., Sgt., KIA
Dunholter, John H., 2nd Lt., DED
Dutschke, William R., Sgt., DED
Eber, Edward J., Cpl., KIA
Edman, Herbert, 2nd Lt., DED
Elewaut, Alphonse, Cpl., KIA
Ellis, John F., 2nd Lt., DED
Elmer, Francis E., Jr., 2nd Lt., DED
Evans, Harry L., Jr., S/Sgt., MIA
Ewing, Richard A., 1st Lt., MIA
Estes, Jack F., Sgt., DED
Fair, Richard D., Sgt., DED
Falk, Horace R., Capt., KIA
Farris, Jone W., 2nd Lt., DED
Fast, William R., Sgt., DED
Fate, Richard E., Capt., KNB
Fike, Walter H., Jr., 1st Lt., MIA
Flanagan, Earl P., S/Sgt., MIA
Flick, Robert C., Sgt., KIA
Foley, Harry J., 2nd Lt., MIA
Foster, Charlie C., S/Sgt., DED
Franson, Elroy E., T/Sgt., MIA
Frazier, Robert C., 2nd Lt., KIA
Frederick, Cecil E., Cpl., DED
Freeman, James L., 2nd Lt., KIA
Frorillo, Gerald F., S/Sgt., MIA
Garavel, George R., Sgt., DED
Garrison, Paul R., Jr., 2nd Lt., DED
Gatto, Joseph J., S/Sgt., DED
Gawron, Edward F., T/Sgt., MIA
Glynn, Charles F., Pfc., KIA
Goldstein, Edward R., S/Sgt., KIA
Gray, Will H., Sgt., KNB
Green, Robert L., Jr., 2nd Lt., KIA
Griffith, John H., Lt. Col., MIA
Griffith, Melvin L., S/Sgt., KIA
Hahn, Elmer G., Capt., KIA
Hall, Edward W., Sgt., KIA
Hanley, Edward J., 2nd Lt., DED
Hansen, Elvin E., 1st Lt., KIA

Hanson, Richard H., Cpl., KIA
Hardy, Craydon V., 2nd Lt., DED
Hassell, Cecil V., S/Sgt., DED
Hauser, Louis J., T/Sgt., MIA
Hawkins, Raymond A., S/Sgt., MIA
Heddens, Earl E., Sgt., KIA
Heiden, Robert L., 2nd Lt., DED
Helmke, Lawrence D., T/Sgt., KIA
Henderson Emil A., Jr., KIA
Hensell, Ervin A., 2nd Lt., DED
Hermann, Kurt J., II, T/Sgt., MIA
Hesser, Jack R., F/O, MIA
Hibler, Homer W., T/Sgt., MIA
Hill, Harry R., S/Sgt., MIA
Hoffman, Alvin R., 2nd Lt., DED
Holloman, James D., 2nd Lt., KIA
Holsclaw, John R., Sgt., DED
Hoover, Glen J., Sgt., KIA
Horowski, Walter J., Sgt., DED
Harrington, T. B., 2nd Lt., MIA
Harris, Benjamin L., 2nd Lt., KIA
Hart, Alvin R., T/Sgt., MIA
Hudson, Elby W., Jr., 1st Lt., KIA
Hayes, Robert F., 1st Lt., KNB
Isley, William H., Cpl., MIA
Jackson, Robert E., Cpl., KIA
Jacoby, Robert M., Sgt., DED
Jenkins, John T., Sgt., MIA
Johnson, Buford P., 1st Lt., MIA
Johnson, Howard R., Sgt., MIA
Jones, Glenn W., T/Sgt., KNB
Jones, Jesse C., 1st Lt., DED
Jorstad, Oswald J., 1st Lt., MIA
Katchmir Wassil, 2nd Lt., KIA
Keenan, James E., S/Sgt., MIA
Keith, Austin R., 1st Lt., KIA
Kelley, John J., Sgt., KIA
Kelley, William A., Capt., DNB
Kennedy, Maurice E., 2nd Lt., MIA
Kennedy, William J., Jr., S/Sgt., KIA
Kessler, Wilbur A., 1st Lt., KNB
King, Ronald H., 2nd Lt., DED
King, Wilson K., 2nd Lt., MIA
Kisti, Joseph F., S/Sgt., MIA
Kolb, William E., Sgt.
Kolodner, Saul, 2nd Lt., KNB
Kopenitsi, William, Sgt., MIA
Kovach, William, 1st Lt., KNB
Kromer, Nicholas, Cpl., KIA
Krysiak, Chester P., Sgt., DED
Lamoglia, Joseph V., 1st Lt., MIA
Lamoureaux, Cleo E., Sgt., DED
Land, Garland V., Sgt., DED
Lanning, Virgil G., S/Sgt., KIA
Lawson, John W., 1st Lt., DED
Lee, Lawrence L., S/Sgt., DED
Leu, Werner S., 2nd Lt., KIA
Levonas, Winfield A., T/Sgt., DED
Levy, Jules, 2nd Lt., DED
Lindenstruth, Elmer C., Sgt., DED
Lodovici, Olinto F., Sgt., POW — EUS
Lopes, Ernest D., 2nd Lt., DED
Lovvorn, Lowell E., S/Sgt., KIA
Lowe, Harry, Jr., 1st Lt., KIA
Manning, J. V., 1st Lt., MIA
Mansir, Kenneth M., S/Sgt., DED
Martin, Delmas D., Sgt., DED
Martin, Robert E., S/Sgt., KIA
Mathews, Edwin C., Jr., 2nd Lt., DED
McCarty, William E., 2nd Lt., KIA

McCausland, Robert E., 1st Lt., MIA
McClay, Allen, Jr., Sgt., DED
McDonald, Edward W., 1st Lt., DOW
McDonell, Walter S., Capt., DED
McElwee, Raymond J., Sgt., DOW
McSpadden, Joe S., 2nd Lt., MIA
Meding, Erric M., 2nd Lt., KIA
Meeker, Roy E., 1st Lt., DED
Meier, John A., S/Sgt., MIA
Meldrum, Richard G., S/Sgt., DED
Merrill, Keith N., Maj., MIA
Merritt, Rex E., Pfc., DED
Meza, Isais, 2nd Lt., DED
Miller, H. L., 2nd Lt., MIA
Miller, Richard F., S/Sgt., MIA
Miller, Robert D., Cpl., KIA
Miller, Robert H., 2nd Lt., MIA
Mitchell, Robert N., Sgt., DED
Monroe, Robert F., S/Sgt., DED
Mount, Eugene C., Cpl., KIA
Moye, James R., S/Sgt., DED
Murphy, Paul E., Pvt., DED
Myhra, Clifford A., Sgt., DOI
Nederson, Lt., KIA
Nelson, Norman W., Sgt., KIA
Niece, Oscar L., Sgt., DED
Norelli, Vincent E., 2nd Lt., DED
Northup, Theodore D., Sgt.
Norton, William H., 1st Lt., KNB
Novak, John T., M/Sgt., KNB
Oden, Odell K., Sgt., DED
Olson, Vaughn R., S/Sgt., DED
Overmire, William, Jr., S/Sgt., KIA
Owens, Ruey S., Sgt., KIA
Pace, Conrad, 1st Lt., KIA
Pence, Otto B., S/Sgt., KNB
Penman, John S., S/Sgt., KNB
Peterson, Dale W., Capt., DED
Peterson, Lemuel B., Sgt., DED
Pettibone, Alfred B., S/Sgt., DED
Phillips, Robert M., 2nd Lt., DED
Pleus, William, 1st Lt., DED
Plotka, Robert J., Cpl., KIA
Points, Clyde U., 2nd Lt., KIA
Powell, John L., S/Sgt., MIA
Preble, Quinton N., S/Sgt., DED
Prestley, Hugh D., 2nd Lt. KNB
Prusser, Albert W., Sgt., DED
Quattlander, George T., S/Sgt., MIA
Quinn, Patrick B., 1st Lt., MIA
Ray, John M., Jr., S/Sgt., KIA
Rea, James C., Sgt., DED
Redinger, Eugene J., 2nd Lt., KIA
Reid, Clifford E., 2nd Lt., DED
Reinhardt, Marvin N., 2nd Lt., KIA
Richards, John E., 1st Lt., DED
Richters, George G., Sgt., DED
Roberts, Willard W., S/Sgt., MIA
Rogers, Ernest T., 1st Lt., KNB
Romero, Frank W., Pfc., DED
Rosecrans, Robert E., Sgt., DED
Ross, Howard G., S/Sgt., DED
Rouse, Joseph R., Jr., S/Sgt., DED
Russell, Cyril F., Jr., 2nd Lt., KIA
Samela, Connie N., T/Sgt., MIA
Saucier, Conrad J., Sgt., MIA
Schnaars, David J., 2nd Lt., DED
Schnecker, Clayton A., S/Sgt., MIA
Schramn, Harold F., Capt., DED
Schroeder, John B., 2nd Lt., DED
Schwieger, Raymond E., Pvt., KIA

Seel, William M., Sgt., KIA
Shaffrath, Paul W., Capt., KIA
Shanaway, Jesse J., S/Sgt., MIA
Shank, William E., Cpl., KIA
Shanklin, Roy E., Jr., 1st Lt., KNB
Shaw, George W., S/Sgt., KIA
Shea, Daniel J., Jr., S/Sgt., MIA
Sheriff, Roland, 2nd Lt., KIA
Sheshansky, Harold, S/Sgt., KIA
Shoemaker, Richard E., Jr., Cpl., KIA
Simon, Oakley A., S/Sgt., KIA
Smith, Irvin L., Capt., MIA
Smith, Milton E., Jr., 2nd Lt., KIA
Smith, Raymond L., Sgt., MIA
Smith, Robert G., Sgt., KIA
Snowden, Donnie L., Jr., 1st Lt., KNB
Sodomora, Alexander, S/Sgt., MIA
Sparks, Logan M., S/Sgt., MIA
Stambaugh, Harold E., 2nd Lt., DED
Stammerjohn, Carl W., 1st Lt., KNB
Stevens, William, 2nd Lt., MIA
Strong, Russell W., S/Sgt., MIA
Studdard, David C., Sgt., KIA
Sturdivant, Gerald W., Sgt., DED
Sumner, Robert C., Sgt., KIA
Sutton, Bernard F., Sgt., DED
Swenson, Harvey L., 1st Lt., KIA
Swiler, Lloyd K., 2nd Lt., MIA
Swiler, Lloyd K., 2nd Lt., M
Swisshelm, John J., 1st Lt., KIA
Toelle, Kenneth R., Sgt., DED
Tompkins, William A., S/Sgt., DED
Tramp, Robert L., Sgt., KIA
Tsatsopoulos, John, Sgt., DED
Turner, Ray F., Sgt., KIA
Tuttle, Robert R., 2nd Lt., DED
Wadsworth, Robert M., 2nd Lt., DED
Wagner, Harold W., S/Sgt., DED
Wagner, Sam P., 1st Lt., DED
Walling, Granville H., 1st Lt., DED
Walling, Thurman, S/Sgt., KNB
Watson, James C., Capt., KIA
Westervelt, Lt., KIA
Wendler, William, S/Sgt., DED
Wheeler, Hubert D., Sgt., MIA
Whitaker, Bernard E., Sgt., KIA
White, Robert P., Cpl., KIA
Wier, Chester J., 2nd Lt., KIA
Wildner, Carl A., S/Sgt., KIA
Williams, David C., Jr., 2nd Lt., KIA
Williams, Leo F., S/Sgt., FOD
Wills, George L., Sgt., MIA
Wilson, William D., 1st Lt., MIA
Wittee, Harrison K., 1st Lt., MIA
Witucki, John J., 2nd Lt., DED
Wright, Dale D., Sgt., KIA
Wright, Murel F., Sgt., DED
Young, Millard E., 2nd Lt., MIA
Young, Walter R., Capt., FOD
Zeock, Joseph R., 2nd Lt., MIA
Zylla, Frank L., 1st Lt., DED

Col. A. T. Johnson
Deputy Group Commander
April 20, 1944 to Feb. 25, 1945
Group Commander
Feb. 26, 1945 to April 1, 1946

Col. Stuart P. Wright
Group Commander
April 25, 1944 to Feb. 25, 1945

Lt. Col. J. H. Griffith
Deputy Group Commander
Feb. 26, 1945 to July 4, 1945

Col. Karl Truesdale, Jr.
Group Commander
March 6, 1944 to April 22, 1944

Lt. Col. N. D. Van Sickle
Deputy Group Commander
July 13, 1945 to March 1946

Lt. Col. Norman J. Campbell
Group Executive
May 1944 to Sept. 1945

CHRONOLOGY

497th Bomb Group

1943

NOV. 20. Group activated at El Paso, Texas. Authority: Par I GO 176, dated 24 Nov. 43. Hq. 2nd AF, Colorado Springs, Colo. Original organization consisted of the 869, 870, 871 and 872 Bombardment Squadrons (VH); and 17, 18, 19 and 20 Maintenance Squadrons; and the 15th Photo Laboratory Detachment.

DEC. 1. First personnel assigned, being drawn from the 491st Bombardment Group (VH). 57 Officers and 499 EM form the Cadre.

DEC. 5. Group transferred to Clovis AAB, Clovis, New Mexico and first Headquarters is set up. At the same time all personnel, except one Officer and three EM are transferred to 40th Bombardment Group.

DEC. 10. Lt. Col. John P. Veerling, arrives and assumes command.

1944

JAN. 1. Officers and EM begin to report for duty. Most personnel were members of the 480th Anti-submarine Group, back from 12 months in the ETO.

JAN. 26. Maj. Alfred J. Hanlon, Jr. assumes command.

JAN. 31. Headquarters for the four tactical squadrons have been setup and some personnel assigned. The four maintenance Squadrons are being formed at Pratt Field, Kansas where they are furnishing maintenance for the 58th Wing.

FEB. 29. Organization continues to grow. Strength is 264 Officers and 165 EM for Group Hqs and the four tactical squadrons. The maintenance squadrons at Pratt have 1200 Officers and men. Flying very limited since only a few B-25s and B-24s are available.

MAR. 6. Col. Karl Truesdell, Jr. joins Group as the new Commanding Officer.

MAR. 8. Commanding Officers of the tactical squadrons are: 869th, Maj. Robert K. Morgan; 870th Maj. Robert W. Ryder; 871st, Maj. Frank L. Davis; 872nd, Maj. Alfred J. Hanlon, Jr.

MAR. 31. Group Hqs and four tactical squadrons strength is 404 Officers and 286 EM. With only a few B-17s available during the month, 60 pilots have been checked out and 396 training hours flown. Ground Training program is underway.

APRIL 7. Movement of Group to Pratt Field, Kansas begins with air echelon leaving.

APR. 13. Ground echelon arrives at Pratt, completing the move.

APR. 14. Group reorganized to eliminate the maintenance squadrons and the 872nd tactical squadron. Lt. Col. Robert E. Haynes appointed CO of 870th Sqdn.

APR. 20. Col. Arnold T. Johnson reports as new Deputy CO.

APR. 22. Col. Truesdell leaves Group on orders for overseas duty.

APR. 25. Col. Stuart P. Wright takes Command of the Group.

APR. 30. Group has total of 31 B-17s and 3 B-29s. Flying training and ground echelon get underway.

MAY 2. Experimental mission flown to Cuba.

MAY 8. Lt. Col. Norman J. Campbell arrives as new Group Exec.

MAY 19. With six B-29s now available, ground and flying training programs expand.

MAY 31. Group operating at full strength. Since activation a total of 6750 hours have been flown. Group now has 10 B-29s and 26 B-17s.

JUNE 2. Processing men for oversea's duty begins.

JUNE 3. 869th Sqdn. has the first of a series of picnics and outings that was typical of social life at Pratt.

JUNE 13. B-29 of the 870th Sqdn. crashes on take-off killing two Officers and injuring the remainder of the crew. A B-17 and AT-23 were destroyed on the side of the runway.

JUNE 15. Awards are presented by Brigadier General O'Donnell, 73rd Wing CO, at a Group review. First "Wing-Ding" is held and first Wing mission with airplanes in formation.

JUNE 30. Processing of personnel for overseas has been accomplished. The Group has 15 B-29s and 18 B-17s. Total flying time is 10,081 hours.

JULY 10. First training mission flown to Cuba and return—non-stop.

JULY 12. General O'Donnell makes full inspection of Group.

JULY 18. Ground Echelon leaves Pratt for POE with Lt. Col. Campbell in command.

JULY 30. Ground Echelon sails from San Pedro, Calif. aboard the SS Fairisle.

JULY 31. At Pratt Field, the Group has 18 B-29s, 15 B-17s, and have completed 13,398 flying hours.

AUG. 6. Ground Echelon arrives at Hawaii when SS Fairisle docks at Pearl Harbor.

AUG. 8. Fairisle sails from Pearl Harbor bound for Eniwetok.

AUG. 17. Fairisle arrives at Eniwetok where it lay at anchor for 27 days with all personnel aboard.

AUG. 31. Echelon of fly-away crews leaves Pratt for Herrington Kansas, the final combat training and staging base. The Group has 19 B-29s, and 7 B-17s. Of the 16,067 flying hours, 34% is B-29 time.

SEPT. 1. Personnel traveling ATC to Saipan leave Pratt for Kearney, Nebraska for staging.

SEPT. 6. 15 fly-away B-29s have been accepted.

SEPT. 12. SS Fairisle with Ground Echelon aboard, sails from Eniwetok for Saipan.

SEPT. 14. 30 B-29s, the total number to be flown overseas, have been accepted.

SEPT. 16. SS Fairisle arrives at Saipan.

SEPT. 30. Ground Echelon is on Saipan setting up a permanent Camp. The Air Echelon is at Herrington, Kansas and Kearney, Nebraska, processed and ready for the overseas flight.

OCT. 4. Group has first contact with the enemy when a prisoner is taken on Saipan by EM of Ground Echelon.

OCT. 6. First B-29 leaves Herrington for Saipan via California, Hawaii and Kwajalein.

OCT. 11. Personnel leave Herrington and Kearney for Hamilton Field.

OCT. 18. First Group of Personnel leave Hamilton by C-54.

OCT. 19. First 497th B-29 arrives on Saipan.

OCT. 29. Group flies first combat mission. Truk is the target.

OCT. 30. Last B-29 arrives on Saipan. All Aircraft and crews arrive safely.

NOV. 24. Group leads first B-29 raid on Tokyo with Gen. O'Donnell and Maj. Morgan, 869th CO, in the lead plane.

NOV. 27. Tokyo raided for second time. Bad weather encountered. Japs make retaliatory raid on Saipan damaging many B-29s.

NOV. 29. First night incendiary raid on Tokyo. Unfavorable weather hampers mission.

DEC. 6. The Group flies first of the night weather-strike missions over Japan.

DEC. 19. Three - plane night weather strikes have been flown every night since Dec. 6.

DEC. 31. Six bombing missions flown over Japan during the month with 246 tons of bombs dropped. Nagoya and Tokyo as principal targets.

1945

JAN. 19. Kawasaki a/c plant at Akashi severely damaged on most successful mission to date.

JAN. 27. Group tours "Flak Alley"; loses 5 a/c and 8 damaged on toughest mission to date. Weather prevented bombing of Musashino a/c plant and bombs were dropped on Tokyo in face of very heavy fighter interception. See 'Flak Alley" for details.

JAN. 30. During the month, six bombing missions were flown over Japan. 301 tons of bombs were dropped.

FEB. 2. Maj. Fred L. Trickey is appointed CO of 870th Sqdn. succeeding Col. Robert E. Haynes who transferred to 73rd Wing.

FEB. 26. Col. Arnold T. Johnson assumes command of the Group as Col. Wright returns to the States. Lt. Col. John H. Griffith appointed Deputy CO.

FEB. 28. On five missions this month, 307 tons of bombs were dropped on Japan.

MAR. 11. Group plane uses Iwo Jima as emergency landing strip for first time.

MAR. 31. Group completes most successful month in combat with nine major missions and dropping 1879 tons of bombs which is five times the average for previous months.

APR. 5. 120 awards of Air Medals, Soldiers' Medals and Bronze Stars made at large Group formation.

APR. 13. Additional 10.7 sq. miles of Tokyo Arsenal Area burned out on fire bomb mission.

APR. 15. Additional 5.2 sq. miles of Tokyo Urban Area burned out by fire bombs.

APR. 30. 15 bombing missions flown over Japan during the month and 1641 tons of bombs dropped.

MAY 7. 15th Photo Lab is moved to Wing Hq. for special duty.

MAY 8. V-E Day.

MAY 9. Group drops propaganda leaflets on Japan for first time.

MAY 25. Japanese Premier broadcasts that most of the City of Tokyo is now destroyed beyond restoration.

MAY 26. Stage show, "The Man Who Came to Dinner", plays at Group Theater.

MAY 31. 9 major missions were flown against Japan during the month with 1686 tons of bombs dropped.

JUNE 2. First combat crews completing their tour of duty leave for the States.

JUNE 8. First crew returning to States crashes at Kwajalein. All but two were killed.

JUNE 10. Hitachi Engineering works at Tokyo are 85% destroyed on one of the most successful raids to date.

JUNE 30. 10 major missions were flown over Japan during the month with 2117 tons of bombs dropped.

JULY 3. Lt. Col. John H. Griffith, Deputy CO is lost in night raid on Kochi.

JULY 9. Maj. John W. Carroll is appointed CO of the 871st Sqdn. succeeding Lt. Col. Frank L. Davis who is made Group S-4.

JULY 13. Lt. Col. Neil D. Van Sickle is appointed Deputy Group CO.

JULY 31. 10 major missions flown over Japan during the month with 2106 tons of bombs dropped.

AUG. 15. While crews from last mission are being interrogated, Pres. Truman announces the surrender of Japan.

AUG. 27. First mission dropping supplies on POW Camps is flown.

AUG. 28. EM with 85 or more discharge points leave for Redeployment centers.

SEPT. 14. Last POW supply mission flown. Col. Johnson orders preparation for move back to the U.S. in two echelons, air and ground.

SEPT. 20. 17 crews of 314 Wing arrive to fly some of Group's planes back to U.S.

SEPT. 29. Col. Johnson holds last staff meeting, announcing air echelon will start to fly back to U.S. on Oct. 1, and that Ground Echelon has received warning orders.

SEPT. 30. All passengers returning with flight echelon are briefed on use of emergency equipment.

OCT. 2. First B-29 takes off with personnel returning to U.S.

CHRONOLOGY—War In The Pacific

1941

DEC. 7. Japanese carrier planes attack Pearl Harbor, strike Hickam and Wheeler 5 battleships, sunk or put out of commission; Fields, Hawaii. U.S. losses: 10 ships, including 8 ships, including 3 battleships, damaged; 97 Army planes, including 23 bombers; 80 Navy planes; 2,343 Army and Navy personnel killed, 1,272 wounded, 960 missing, extensive damage to installations.

DEC. 7-8. In carrier and land-based strikes, Jap planes, raid Clark, Nichols and Iba Fields in the Philippines, destroying three-fourths of an approximate 300 U.S. planes in the islands.

DEC. 8. United States declares war on Japan. Japs invade Thailand.

DEC. 9. In the first U.S. bombing mission of the war, B-17s of the 19th Bombardment Group attack enemy ships off the east coast of Vigan, P. I. Several hits are scored with one ship believed sunk. Bombs from B-17 commanded by Capt. Colin P. Kelly hit 29,000 ton Japanese battleship of the Haruna class.

DEC. 10. Japanese occupy Guam.

DEC. 18. Japanese occupy Hongkong.

DEC. 20. American Volunteer Group in China breaks up Jap bombing raid on Kunming, destroying at least four bombers without loss.

DEC. 22. In the first U.S. bombing mission from Australia, B-17s attack ships in Lingayan Gulf and off Davao, Philippines. On the return trip, they evacuate as many Americans as the planes will carry.

DEC. 23. Japanese occupy Wake Island.

DEC. 24. 4th Air Force sinks U-boat off California.

1942

JAN. 2. Manila falls.

JAN. 14. Tarakan, one of the last Dutch garrisons in Borneo, is overcome.

JAN. 15. Alaskan Air Force Headquarters activated at Elmendorf Field, Alaska.

JAN. 20. Japs raid Rabaul heavily.

JAN. 22-23. U.S. naval units, joined by B-17s and other Allied bombers, sink 8 to 12 Jap ships in the Battle of the Macassar Strait. Japs occupy Rabaul.

JAN. 24. RAAF attacks shipping and supplies at Rabaul, beginning a long Allied air campaign against that Jap stronghold.

JAN. 31. First U.S. air units sent out from States since beginning of war arrive in Australia.

FEB. 3. One Jap bomber and one fighter downed in the first P-40 operation in NEI.

FEB. 5. Hawaiian Air Force redesignated 7th Air Force; Alaskan Air Force redesignated 11th Air Force; Caribbean Air Force redesignated 6th Air Force.

FEB. 9. Gasmata, New Britain, and Macassar, Celebes, occupied by Japs. In China, AVG's report 101st aerial victory.

FEB. 12. B-17s from Java and Australia start using tail guns. At Patterson Field, Ohio, 10th Air Force is activated.

FEB. 15. Singapore falls.

FEB. 17. British battleship Prince of Wales and battle cruiser Repulse sunk by Jap air action.

FEB. 19. In first Jap raid on Australia, Darwin is heavily damaged.

MARCH 1-31. Japs occupy Batavia, Java; Rangoon, Burma; Lae and Salamua, New Guinea. General MacArthur arrives in Australia on B-17. U.S. Fighters make first interception of enemy planes over Australian territory.

APRIL 8. 10th Air Force begins flying supplies over the Himalayas to Ynnan Province, China.

APRIL 9. Bataan falls.

APRIL 13-14. Three Australia-based B-17s and 10 B-25s attack Jap installations and shipping off Philippines.

APRIL 18. Lt. Col. James H. Doolittle leads 16 B-25s from the U.S. carrier Hornet in a daring but costly attack on Tokyo, Nagoya, Kobe and Yokohama.

APRIL 25. Five B-17s of 10th Air Force bomb Andaman Islands in Bay of Bengal.

APRIL 28. AVG reports shooting down 22 Jap planes over Lashio terminus of Burma Road.

MAY 1. Jap occupation of Burma complete. Burma Road, last land link with China, severed; Japs begin invasion of southwestern China via Burma Road.

MAY 4-8. In Battle of Coral Sea, 11 Jap vessels are sunk and U.S. loses its carrier Lexington. Allied land-based planes participate with naval air units.

MAY 5. Jap invasion of southwestern China stopped on banks of Salween River by AVG bombing and strafing attacks which destroyed Jap armored spearhead.

MAY 6. Corregidor surrenders. Japs occupy Hollandia, New Guinea.

JUNE 3. Japs bomb Dutch Harbor, Alaska, and landings at Attu, Agattu and Kiska follow.

JUNE 3-7. 7th Air Force B-17s and tor-

pedo-carrying B-26s join naval air forces in repulsing a Jap invasion fleet in Battle of Midway; Japs lose 20 ships; U.S. losses: one destroyer and the carrier Yorktown.

JUNE 11. 11th Air Force bombers make first attack on Kiska, principal Jap base in the Aleutians.

JUNE 21. First counter blow by 7th Air Force struck by B-17s against Wake Island, only Jap target accessible from Oahu.

JUNE 27. First American bombers (six B-25s) reach China.

JULY 4. China Air Task Force activated at Peishiyi. AVG becomes 23rd Fighter Group.

JULY 3-8. First American raids on Hankow, Canton and French Indo-China by China Air Task Force.

JULY 6. Japs land at Guadalcanal.

JULY 12. ATC activates Pacific wing.

JULY 22. Japs occupy Buna and Gona, head for Kokoda.

JULY 30. B-17s make first land-based raid on Guadalcanal from New Caledonia bases.

AUG. 3. In their first combat action, P-38s of 11th Air Force shoot down two Jap flying boats.

AUG. 4. Maj. Gen. George C. Kenney assumes command of Allied Air Forces, Southwest Pacific Area.

AUG. 6. Fifteen B-17s strike Vunakanau, Rabaul, in preparation for Solomons landing; 75 Jap planes destroyed on ground and 11 in air.

AUG. 7. U.S. Marines recapture Tulagi and Lunga, Guadalcanal, preceded by 56 strikes by B-17s.

AUG. 23-25. Jap attack on eastern Solomons turned back in large-scale surface and air battles.

AUG. 27-SEPT. 7. Japanese repulsed at Milne Bay. U.S. units of Allied Air Forces in Australia become 5th Air Force.

SEPT. 12. Parafrags are used for first time in 5th Air Force attack on Buna airbase; 17 of 22 Jap planes destroyed on ground.

SEPT. 14. First XB-29 completes initial test flight over Seattle, Wash.

SEPT. 17. Japs penetrate to within 20 miles of Port Moresby.

SEPT. 20. CATF shoots down 22 Jap planes over Canton without loss.

OCT. 17. ATC activates Alaskan Wing.

OCT. 25. CATF drops first Allied bombs on Hongkong.

OCT. 25-26. In naval battle of Santa Cruz, Jap land-sea attack on Guadalcanal is turned back.

OCT 26. Japs make first major raids on Assam bases of India-China air transport route destroying many transports and fighters on the ground.

NOV. 8. U. S. airborne troops land near Buna.

NOV. 12-15. In naval battle of Guadalcanal, Japs lose one battleship, five cruisers.

NOV. 22. Jap-held rail center at Mandalay, Burma, attacked by largest formation of U. S. bombers from India airbases to date.

NOV. 26. In round-trip of more than 2,700 miles—16½ hours—9 B-24s of 10th Air Force attack Bangkok, Thailand, in longest raid of war to date.

DEC. 1. ATC takes over aerial supply line from Assam to China. Allied Air Forces smash Jap convoy attempting to reinforce Buna.

DEC. 18. Japs occupy Alexishafen, Finschafen, Madang and Wewak.

DEC. 24. Twenty-six B-24s of 7th Air Force attack Wake Island in the longest offensive mission to date—4,300 nautical miles round-trip with Midway as the only stop.

DEC. 28. P-38s make New Guinea debut.

DEC. 30. Allies cut enemy position in two at Buna.

1943

JAN. 13. 13th Air Force activated in the Solomons.

FEB. 9. U.S. occupation of Guadalcanal completed.

MARCH 1-4. In Battle of Bismarck Sea, 137 planes of 5th Air Force and RAAF destroy Jap convoy carrying supplies and nearly a division of troops from Rabaul to Lae, shoot down 102 aircraft with loss of two P-38s and one B-17; minimum altitude attack used.

MARCH 10. 14th Air Force activated at Kunminb to supersede C Air Task Force.

APRIL 1-4. 5th Air Force shipping strike at Kavieng costs Japs two warships sunk, three warships damaged and three merchant vessels damaged; heavy cruiser hit by skip- bombing B-17 and beached.

APRIL 12. Port Moresby attacked by 100 Jap planes.

APRIL 13. Milne Bay attacked by 75 Jap planes in one of last major offensive strikes by air at his perimeter objectives.

APRIL 23. 7th Air Force B-24s staging from Funafuti in Ellice Islands, strike Tarawa for first time, scoring direct hits on fuel tanks and barracks area.

MAY 1. B-24s, B-25s, P-38s and P-40s of 11th Air Force attack Kiska and Attu. Forward echelon of 14th Air Force moves into east China along Hengyang-Kweilin line bringing American planes within range of all major Jap occupied bases from Hankow to French Indo-China and making China Sea shipping vulnerable to air attacks.

MAY 11. U. S. forces land on Attu.

MAY 12. 14th Air Force B-24s begin mining Yangtze River and harbors of Canton, Hongkong, Haiphong, Hankow, Shanghai and Takao on Formorsa.

JUNE 2. With aid of 14th Air Force, Chinese forces check Jap advance into Yangtze Valley and dislodge Japs from part of Hunan.

JUNE 14. Allied airplanes shoot down 94 of 120 Jap planes attempting attack on Guad-

alcanal. Allied losses: six planes.

JUNE 21. Japs raid Darwin, losing 22 of 48 planes to Allied fighters.

JUNE 22. Over Lae, Allied planes shoot down 23 of 36 Jap fighters.

JUNE 24. Macassar, Celebes, heavily bombed by Allied planes.

JULY 19. From bases on Attu, eight B-24s of the 11th Air Force bomb Paramushiro and Kuriles.

JULY 22. Longest non-stop bombing mission in Southwest Pacific to date flown by six B-24s of 5th Air Force—2400 miles round-trip to Soerabaja.

JULY 25-AUG. 1. 23rd Fighter Group of 14th Air Force beats off Jap day and night air blitz on east China fields, destroying 75 enemy planes.

AUG. 17-18. More than 200 enemy aircraft destroyed by 5th Air Force in heavy Allied air attacks on Wewak.

SEPT. 4. During Allied landing east of Lae, AAF shoots down 21 enemy planes.

SEPT. 5. Paratroopers land on Nadzab, later to become major 5th Air Force base for operations against Wewak, Hollandis and Rabaul.

SEPT. 11. 11th Air Force B-24s and B-25s from Aleutian bases attack Paramushiro and Shimushu. Calamaua captured by Allied forces.

SEPT. 16. Lae captured by Allies.

SEPT. 18-19. 7th Air Force and Navy bombers attack Tarawa, Makin, Apamama and Nauru islands.

SEPT. 25. 14th Air Force begins skip-bombing Japanese shipping in South China Sea and Formosa Straits.

OCT. 2. Allies capture Finschafen and close Vitiaz Straits.

OCT. 12. In a heavy 5th Air Force strike on Rabaul, 3 Jap destroyers, 46 cargo vessels, 70 harbor craft and 126 aircraft are destroyed by low-level strafe-bombing sweep and high-level B-24 strike.

OCT. 28. 14th Air Force B-24s operating as long range fighters on India China Hump patrol shoot down 8 Jap fighters.

NOV. 1. Allies land at Empress Augusta Bay. Chinese-American Composite Wing goes into action with 14th Air Force, bombing Amoy and Swatow on China coast.

NOV. 2. Seventy-five 5th Air Force B-25s attack enemy shipping in Simpson Harbor, Rabaul, sinking 3 destroyers and 8 merchant ships and destroying 85 enemy aircraft on the ground and in the air.

NOV. 5. 5th Air Force attack on Rabaul destroys 26 Jap aircraft, 6 heavy cruisers and 2 light cruisers.

NOV. 25. First American air attack on Formosa made by B-25s and P-38s of 14th Air Force. At Shinchiku airdrome, 42 enemy planes destroyed without loss.

NOV. 26. Allied forces land on Cape Gloucester.

NOV. 27. Black Friday on the Hump. Five China-bound transports shot down by Jap fighters.

NOV. 25-DEC. 6. Combined 14th, 10th and RAF B-24 attacks on Rangoon area aimed at neutralizing port and rail facilities as diversionary support for General Stilwell's Chinese-American task force invasion of North Burma from Ledo. Combination of 14th Air Force and Chinese armies defeat Japs in Battle of Changteh inflicting 20,000 casualties.

DEC. 17. 7th Air Force moves into Gilberts to aid in neutralizing Wotje, Mille, Maloelap and Jaluit.

DEC. 22-23. Last Jap attempts to raid China Hump terminals beaten off with heavy losses.

DEC. 31. 14th Air Force announces sinking of 125,000 tons of Jap shipping in low-level attacks since September campaign started.

1944

JAN. 2. Allied forces land at Saidor on the north coast of New Guinea.

JAN. 7-13. Bombers of 5th Air Force drop 665 tons of bombs on Madang, Alexishafen and Bogadjim area of New Guinea.

JAN. 31. U. S. forces land in Marshalls; Majuro Atoll occupied without opposition; this is the first prewar Jap territory to be taken by U. S. troops. ATC sets Hump record flying 20,000 tons of supplies to China in 30-day period.

FEB. 1. Allies land on Kwajalein. Reduction of Jap merchant shipping to date is estimated at 40 per cent.

FEB. 3-4. Allied air strikes on Wewak destroy more than 80 enemy planes in air and on ground.

FEB. 8. Organized resistance ceases on Kwajalein, opening way for assault on Marianas.

FEB. 15. Green Island occupied, strategically ending Solomons campaign.

FEB. 16-17. In a surprise blow at Truk, U. S. carrier and battleship forces destroy 129 enemy planes and 42 ships, forcing Jap planes to pull back from Rabaul for future defense of Truk.

FEB. 19-21. Eniwetok invaded by Allied forces.

FEB. 21-22. Carrier force bombs enemy installations on Saipan, Tinian, Rote and Guam in preparation for invasion to establish B-29 bases; 134 Jap planes destroyed.

FEB. 29. Admiralty Islands invaded, after pounding by 5th Air Force, to provide a base for flank protection of New Guinea landings.

MARCH 11. Wake Island attacked by 22 heavy bombers of 7th Air Force dropping approximately 50 tons of bombs.

MARCH 11-15. Wewak airdromes attacked by 300 heavy and medium bombers dropping 571 tons of bombs; 59 enemy aircraft de-

stroyed and 24 probably destroyed; Wewak airdromes are neutralized for any large-scale future use. B-24s made first land-based air attacks on Truk from New Guinea and Kwajalein.

MARCH 15. Japs invade India through Manipur Province penetrating to within 20 miles of Assam-Bengal railway and threatening to isolate General Stilwell's forces in North Burma.

MARCH 19. Jap Hollandia-Wewak convoy attacked by 5th Air Force with virtually all ships destroyed.

MARCH 29-30. U. S. carrier planes destroy 160 Jap planes, lose 25, in attack on Palau, Yap, Ulithi and Woleai. B-24s of 7th and 13th Air Forces hit Truk on alternate days until it is neutralized.

MARCH 29-APRIL 3. 5th Air Force heavy and medium bombers with strong fighter cover destroy approximately 300 enemy planes and airdrome facilities at Hollandia.

APRIL 2. First B-29 of 20th Bomber Command arrives in India.

APRIL 17. Japs open major offensive aimed at throwing 14th Air Force out of East China and opening land route from Manchuria to Singapore. First phase is crossing of Yellow River and drive toward Hankow to close Peking-Hankow railroad gap.

APRIL 18. Saipan, Tinian and Aguijan Islands in Marianas bombed in daylight by B-24s and PB4Ys of 7th Air Force and Navy, staging from Eniwetok to Admiralties and return—a 4,300-mile shuttle mission.

APRIL 22. Allies land on Aitape and Hollandia in first joint effort by Southwest Pacific forces under General MacArthur and Central Pacific forces under Admiral Nimitz.

APRIL 24. Hollandia captured.

APRIL 26. Allies enter Alexishafen.

APRIL 30- MAY 1. Carrier planes striking Truk destroy 125 enemy aircraft.

MAY 1. Specially equipped B-24s of the 14th Air Force begin radar night attacks in South China Sea. Chinese troops cross Salween River in drive to re-open Burma road.

MAY 12. B-24s of 14th Air Force sink 40,000 tons of Jap shipping, including an 18,000-ton floating whale oil factory off Cap St. Jacques near Saigon.

MAY 15. B-24s of 14th Air Force hit shipping and oil storage tanks in first Allied bombing of Saigon.

MAY 27. Landings on Biak Island with heavy air cover. Japs begin second phase of east China offensive jumping off from Yochow and driving south to capture 14th Air Force advance bases and close gap in Hankow-Canton railroad.

JUNE 2-5. In 13 attacks on Biak and Owi by Allied bombers, 59 enemy planes destroyed and 15 probably destroyed.

JUNE 5. B-29s hit Bangkok marshalling yards in first combat mission from India.

JUNE 8. AAF aircraft repulse Jap effort to reinforce Biak, sinking one Jap destroyer, leaving another in sinking conditions and firing two more.

JUNE 11. Carrier planes hit Saipan, Tinian, Rota, Pagan, and Guam, destroying 150 enemy aircraft.

JUNE 15. In first B-29 combat mission from China bases and first attack by land-based American planes on the main Jap Islands, 47 Superfortresses bomb Yawata, steel center on northern Kyushu, in night attack. Far East Air Forces activated, Lt. Gen. George C. Kenney commanding.

JUNE 16. 5th Air Force attack at Jefman-Samate, New Guinea, destroys 60 Jap planes.

JUNE 18. In attack on our sea forces covering Saipan operation, Jap carrier striking force loses 402 planes. Our losses: 17 planes and superficial damage to 2 carriers and a battleship. Action later known as First Battle of the Philippine Sea.

JUNE 19-20. Aircraft from Task Force 58 attack Jap carrier striking force; Jap losses: 5 ships sunk, 3 ships possibly sunk, 10 or 11 ships damaged, 26 Jap planes shot down. Our losses: 93 planes.

JUNE 23. A-26 makes operational debut in Southwest Pacific in shipping sweep at Manokwari.

JUNE 29. 14th Air Force field at Hengyang falls to Japs and siege of Hengyang city begins. 14th Air Force fighters and bombers fly round-the clock attacks on Jap bases, supply lines and advanced columns.

JULY 1. Noemfoor Island occupied by combined paratroop-amphibious operation. Japs begin third phase of East China offensive driving north from Canton toward junction with forces moving south along Canton-Hankow railroad. Total of 500,000 Jap troops involved in campaign from Yellow River to Indo-China border.

JULY 8. Organized resistance ends on Saipan.

JULY 13. Iwo Jima bombed for first time by land-based aircraft of 7th Air Force.

JULY 15. Reports show Jap operational aircraft strength in Philippines has increased from 50 to 350 in three months. Chinese credit 14th Air Force with killing 18,000 Jap troops and 3,000 cavalry and pack horses during first six weeks of east China campaign.

JULY 18. 14th Air Force planes in east China grounded for lack of gas.
Japs renew siege operations around Hengyang and rush supplies to front while American planes are grounded.

JULY 19-20. Tojo cabinet falls; General Kuniaki Koiso commissioned by Emperor to form new administration.

JULY 20. Guam invaded by Allies.

JULY 23. Landings on Tinian near Saipan, supported by 7th Air Force B-25s.

JULY 27. First heavy blow at Halmaher-

as struck by 62 B-24s and 48 B-25s of 5th Air Force with P-38 cover; 45 enemy planes destroyed on ground.

JULY 31. Organized resistance ceases on Tinian.

AUG. 3-4. Carrier and surface units hit Bonins-Volcanos, destroying at least 10 large Jap ships.

AUG. 8. Hengyang falls after 49-day siege and Japs sweep on toward next airbase at Lingling. Effective Chinese resistance ends with fall of Hengyang.

AUG. 9. Organized resistance on Guam ceases.

AUG. 10. 7th Air Force accelerates campaign against Iwo Jima and Bonins.

AUG. 16. Myitkyina falls to Chinese-American Task Force after 72-day siege.

AUG. 20. First B-29 daylight attack on Japan from China bases.

SEPT. 15. Allies seize Morotai, 300 miles from the Philippines.

SEPT. 30-OCT. 18. B-24s of 13th and 5th Air Forces make series of five heavy daylight attacks on Balikpapan, Borneo, oil center; fighters escort bombers on last three.

OCT. 10. First B-29 arrives on Saipan.

OCT. 11-15. Combined Navy carrier, B-29 and 14th Air Force attacks on Formosa and South China Sea ports complete air blockade of Jap sea lanes to its southern empire. Carrier planes destroy 416 enemy aircraft over Formosa while losing 66. B-29s wipe out aircraft factory at Okayama on Formosa. Bombers of 14th Air Force heavily damage remnants of Jap shipping seeking refuge from carrier attacks in Hong Kong Harbor.

NOV. 24. First B-29 attack on Japan from newly established base on Saipan; Tokyo bombed.

NOV. 30. After devastating attacks in Philippines by 5th and 13th Air Forces throughout the month, Jap air activity in Leyte area dwindles to "nuisance" level.

DEC. 7. Fighter-bombers of 5th Air Force and Marine Air Groups smash enemy convoy of 13 ships attempting to reinforce Leyte. Simultaneously, Allied convoy lands at Ormoc behind enemy forces.

DEC. 8. 14th Air Force guerilla fighter squadrons make strikes on Nanking and Hong Kong on Jap anniversary of Pearl Harbor. A destroyer, five transports and 24 planes destroyed.

DEC. 11. Another convoy heading for Leyte destroyed by land-based air-craft.

DEC. 14. Land-based strikes by 13th and 5th Air Forces on Negros Island in the Philippines destroy over 100 Jap planes.

DEC. 14-16. Carrier strikes on Luzon destroy 235 enemy aircraft.

DEC. 15. Mindoro Island invaded by Allied forces; fighter fields in operation on D plus 2.

DEC. 18. Combined B-29 and 14th Air Force daylight attack on Hankow neutralizes most important Jap base in China and marks beginning of end of Jap airpower in China.

DEC. 26-27. Jap naval task force repulsed off Mindoro by B-25s, P-40s, P-38s and P-47s.

1945

JAN. 1-31. American and RAAF planes hit enemy bases on 2,000-mile arc. Striking first from Palau and Morotai and later from the Philippines, bombers and fighters soften up Clark Field, Fort Stotsenburg, Cavite Naval Base, and Baguio, disrupting Jap communications, supplies, equipment and personnel.

JAN. 3-4. Heavy carrier task force attacks Formosa and Okinawa, destroying 111 enemy planes and damaging 228 sinking 27 ships and damaging 68.

JAN. 6-7. Carrier based planes and B-29s from China hit Formosa while A-20s, B-24s, B-25s and P-38s heavily bomb and strafe network of airstrips between Clark Field and Angeles airdrome. These attacks support convoy of Allied troops heading for Lingayen Gulf. Jap suicide planes attack our ships.

JAN. 9. Allies land at Lingayen Gulf, Luzon; only two Jap airplanes rise to challenge the landing and one of them, a suicide plane, is shot down.

JAN. 11. Four Snooper B-24s, in first attack from Pacific bases against Formosa, strike Heite airfield.

JAN. 12. Carrier planes strike Indo-China coast, destroying 92 Jap planes and 127,000 tons of shipping.

JAN. 17-20. 14th Air Force guerrilla fighters sweep Shanghai airfields destroying 120 enemy aircraft while losing two pilots.

JAN. 22. In the first daylight attack on Formosa by Philippine-based planes, one group of B-24s escorted by 53 P-38s strikes Heite airdrome, causing fires and destroying enemy aircraft on the ground.

JAN. 23. Corregidor heavily bombed preparatory to airborne landings.

JAN. 25. First convoy arrives in China over Ledo road from India marking end of three-year land blockade.

JAN. 28. Allied ground forces take Clark Field and Angeles airdrome; more than 500 destroyed or damaged enemy planes are found on the ground in Clark area.

JAN. 30. 14th Air Force fighters destroy 168 enemy aircraft in series of sweeps over Hankow. Last B-24 mission unescorted over target and unchallenged by Jap fighters. ATC sets new Hump record flying 44,000 tons of supplies to China.

FEB. 1. B-29s from India destroy world's largest drydock at Singapore in 3,873-mile round-trip.

FEB. 3. U. S. troops enter Grace Park on northern outskirts of Manila. Allied paratroopers land on Tagayutay Ridge northwest of Lake Taal and start drive north toward Manila.

FEB. 5-6. 13th Air Force heavy bombers

resume attacks on Borneo.

FEB. 12-13. Cavite Naval Base and Nichols Field taken.

FEB. 15. U. S. units land at Marivales, southern tip of Bataan.

FEB. 16-17. U. S. parachute troops and amphibious forces land on Corregidor following an aerial campaign which began Jan. 23. In two days, C-47s of the 317th Troop Carrier Group drop 1,999 paratroopers and 1,292 bundles of supplies on target area of little more than one square mile. First naval task force attack on Tokyo destroys 509 enemy planes and probably destroys or damages 150 others, as well as destroying several vessels and ground installations. Climaxing 68 consecutive days of bombing by Allied planes on Iwo Jima, naval task force starts bombarding the island.

FEB. 19. Marines land on Iwo Jima.

FEB. 21. Philippine-based B-25s begin flying China Sea shipping sweeps relieving 14th Air Force planes for attacks on central and East China Jap bases:

FEB. 25. In greatest attack on Tokyo to date, 200 B-29s bomb Jap capital. Organized resistance ceases in Manila.

FEB. 25-26. Tokyo raided by 600 carrier planes.

FEB. 27. Organized resistance ceases on Corregidor.

FEB. 28. A-20s and P-38s support unopposed landing near Puerto Princesa. Palawan; two days of heavy bombing preceded landing.

MARCH 1. Aerial blockade along French Indo-China coast cuts Jap shipping 50 per cent in six weeks.

MARCH 6. B-25s carry out major daylight strike against Hainan Island. Two groups covered by group of P-38s, hit Samah airdrome.

MARCH 9. Two hundred seventy-nine B-29s drop 1,655 tons of bombs on Tokyo, burning out 15.8 square miles of city in first of great incendiary roads, leaving fires visible 150 miles. Following long aerial campaign by the 13th Air Force, unopposed landing was made by Allied forces on Zamboanga Peninsula, Mindanao. Japs attack French Indio-China.

MARCH 11. Over two square miles of Nagoya ablaze from 1,790 tons of incendiaries dropped by 285 B-29s.

MARCH 13. Osaka, Japan's second largest city, hit by 274 Superfortresses. 8.1 square miles of city in flames.

MARCH 15. 14th Air Force fighters make 1,550-mile sweep to wipe out Jap air strength at Tourand, French Indo-China.

MARCH 16. Kobe hit by 2,328 tons of incendiaries dropped by 306 B-29s; 2.9 square miles of the city in ashes. Resistance ceases on Iwo Jima, nearly all of the original gasrison of 20,000 having been annihilated.

MARCH 18-21. Carrier planes attack Kyushu and raid Jap fleet units in the Inland Sea. First fire blitz ends with 290 B-29s striking Nagoya with 1,838 tons of incendiaries, burning out 3 square miles.

MARCH 22. British 14th Army captures Mandalay.

MARCH 27. B-29s lay first mines in Jap Inland Sea to bottle up Jap fleet during occupation of Okinawa, marking important new phase of aerial blockade.

APRIL 1. In Pacific war's greatest amphibious operation, 100,000 Americans land on Okinawa.

APRIL 1-2. Chinese-American Wing and 14th Air Force fighters hit Shanghai fields, crippling Jap bomber force concentrated for attacks on Okinawa invasion fleet.

APRIL 2. U. S. troops invade Bicol Peninsula, Luzon, supported by 45 B-24s, 28 A-20s and 46 fighters.

APRIL 3. Philippine-based B-24s and P-38s strike shore installations and shipping in Hong Kong area. Allied units land at Masbate Island, completing occupation or control of every major Sibyuan Sea Island.

APRIL 5. Premier Koiso and Cabinet resign.

APRIL 6. Allied operations in Okinawa resisted by 400 to 600 enemy planes; offensive of JAF in first few weeks of this campaign is the greatest in its history.

APRIL 7. For first time, B-29s have fighter escort; 80 P-51s based on Iwo Jima join 300 Superforts in attacks on aircraft factories at Tokyo and Nagoya; 21 Jap fighters shot down and two P-51s lost; Group leaves Musahino A/C plant severely damaged.

APRIL 12. In 3,800-miles round-trip, longest to date, B-29s bomb Koriyama 100 miles north of Tokyo. Complete control of the Visayas in the Philippines is assured with landing and occupation of Bohol Island.

APRIL 17-MAY 11. 497th begins series of strikes against Kyushu Kamikaze airfields in support of Allied operations at Okinawa, help cut Jap aerial strikes from 500 to 50 planes.

APRIL 27. 13th Air Force and RAAF heavy bombers strike Soerabaja, Java.

APRIL 29. Operating for first time in bombing and strafing mission over Japan, P-51s based on Iwo Jima attack Atsugi airfield in Tokyo area, destroying or damaging 84 Jap planes.

APRIL-MAY. Combination of Chinese-American Wing planes and Chinese armies defeats Japs in battle of Chihkiang. Jap attempt to take last American air base in east-central China fails with cost of 20,000 casualties.

MAY 1. Australian units land on southwest Tarakan after area is softened up by heavy and medium bombers and fighters.

MAY 3. Baguio captured. Allied forces enter Rangoon; Japs retreat toward Thailand.

MAY 5. Targets in Amoy area bombed in force by B-24s of 5th and 13th Air Forces which hit Kaochi airdrome and nearby oil storage tanks.

MAY 6. By-passed Wewak captured.

MAY 14. Second B-29 fire blitz launched —3.15 square miles of Nagoya burned out.

MAY 16-17. In one of the largest ground support strikes of Pacific war, approximately 200 P-47s, P-38s and P-51s hurl fire bombs on Jap troops encircled in Ipo Dam area; about 350 tons of Napalm bombs dropped in 410 sorties in two days; Ipo Dam captured three days ahead of schedule. Incendiaries from B-29s fire 3.81 square miles of Nagoya; half of Mitsubishi aircraft plant—largest in world—destroyed.

MAY 23. Tokyo area hit by 520 B-29s,

MAY 25. Tokyo again struck by 564 B-29s, dropping 3,700 tons of bombs.

MAY 25. Tokyo again struck by 564 B-29s; 22.1 square miles of city area destroyed in two attacks.

MAY 28. Jap casualties in Philippine campaign to date: 378,000. Japs evacuate former 14th Air Force base at Nanming breaking enemy land line of communication through China.

MAY 29. 450 B-29s destroy 6.9 square miles of Yokohama.

JUNE 1. Over three square miles of Osaka burned out by B-29s.

JUNE 2. Recapitulation discloses 2,117,000 tons of enemy shipping sunk during the first five months of 1945 by SWPA Allied Air Forces. Over four square miles of Kobe burned out by 3,000 tons of incendiaries.

JUNE 2-3. Hozan, largest Jap supply center of Formosa, bombed by 45 B-24s with 117 tons of demolition bombs.

June 3. For the first time, 13th Air Force B-24s strike Batavia, Java, bombing seaplane base; entire round-trip from Palawan takes more than 18 hours. Over two square miles of Osaka burned out as second B-29 fire blitz ends.

JUNE 15. 14th Air Force total of Jap shipping sunk and damaged reaches 2,250,000 tons.

JUNE 17. After heavy raids by B-24s, B-25s, Beaufighters and P-38s, landings are made at Labuan, Muara and Brunei Peninsula, Borneo. B-29s begin hitting secondary industrial cities with night incendiary attacks.

JUNE 21. Eighty-two-day battle for Okinawa ends with collapse of organized resistance; enemy dead exceed 100,000.

JUNE 30. Balikpapan bombed 18th concutive day by 5th and 13th Air Forces and RAAF preparatory to landing. Japs evacuate 14th Air Force base.

JULY 1. Jap air force in China no longer a military threat; total box score of 14th Air Force—2,300 Jap planes destroyed at a loss of 464 American planes. Supported by Liberators of 13th, 5th and RAAF, Australian forces land at Balikpapan.

JULY 3-4. More than 475 B-29s strike Tokushima, Takamatsu and Kochi on Shikoku and Himeji on Honshu Island. Airdromes in Tokyo Bay area rocketed and strafed by 132 Mustangs of 7th Fighter Command.

JULY 5-7. AAF and RAAF bombers lend heavy support to difficult Australian advance in Balikpapan and Brunei Bay sectors.

JULY 8-10. Sendai, Sakai, Wakamatsu and Gifu attacked by 497 B-29s; 63 stripped-down special radar B-29s hit Usube River oil refinery at Yokkaichi; 30 B-29s lay mines in Shimonoseko Strait, Niigati harbor and Nanao Bay; 100 Mustangs sweep airdromes in Osaka, Nagoya and Tokyo areas.

JULY 12-13. Fire and demolition bombs dropped by radar by 506 B-29s in raids on Kawasaki petroleum center and urban section of Utsunomiya, Ichinomiya, Tsuraga and Uwajima. B-24s, A-26s, and P-51s strike Formora.

JULY 14-15. In first bombardment of Jap home island in 80 years, naval surface vessels shell Kamaishi on Honshu and Muroran on Hokkaido. Radar B-29s destroy Nippon Oil Co. at Kudamatsu.

JULY 16-17. On night missions, 471 B-29s carry out incendiary attacks against Numazu, Kuwana and Hiratsuka on Honshu and Oita on Kyushu. More than 140 5th Air Force heavies and mediums hit Shanghai area.

JULY 18. 5th and 7th Air Forces heavies and mediums from Okinawa pound Shanghai area.

JULY 19-20. Visually and by radar, 547 Superfortresses drop record 4,000 tons of incendiary and demolition bombs on industrial sections on Fukui, Hitachi, Chosi and Okazaki on Honshu.

JULY 21-23. Numerous targets in Osaka area attacked by 105 Mustangs. Ube synthetic oil plant destroyed by 77 radar B-29s.

JULY 24. Large force of Okinawa-based bombers and fighters strikes Shanghai installations. Four large aircraft factories. Osaka arenal and textile mill in Osaka-Nagoya sector hit by 599 B-29s, bombing visually and by radar. Shipping sweeps between Japan and Korea begun by 5th and 7th Air Forces.

JULY 25. Oil center of Kawasaki hit by 76 radar B-29s.

JULY 26. U. S., Great Britain and China issue Potsdam unconditional surrender ultimatum to Japan. More than 350 B-29s drop fire bombs on Omuta, Matsuyama and Tokuyama. At Guam, Maj. Gen. Curtis LeMay names next 11 Jap cities to become victims of B-29s.

JULY 27-28. Tokyo area attacked by 146 Iwo-based P-51s. Okinawa-based planes carry out sidespread sweeps over Kyushu. Chinese troops enter Kweilin.

JULY 29. In unopposed night missions, 562 B-29s start general conflagrations in Uwajima, Ogaki, Usi-Yamada, Ichinomiya, Aomori, Tsu and in Shimotsu oil refinery at Wakayam.

JULY 30. Kobe district attacked by 130 P-51s.

JULY 31. Kyushu heavily hit by fighters and bombers.

AUG. 1. 10th Air Force Headquarters moves to China and takes over half of 14th Air Force tactical units.

AUG. 1-2. In largest Superfort attack to date, 766 B-29s drop incendiaries on Nagasaki, Toyama, Mito and Hachioji and high explosives on Kawasaki petroleum center. Southern Honshu hit by 129 P-51s.

AUG. 3. Eighty-five P-51s of 20th Air Force rocket and strafe airfields and industrial targets in greater Tokyo area.

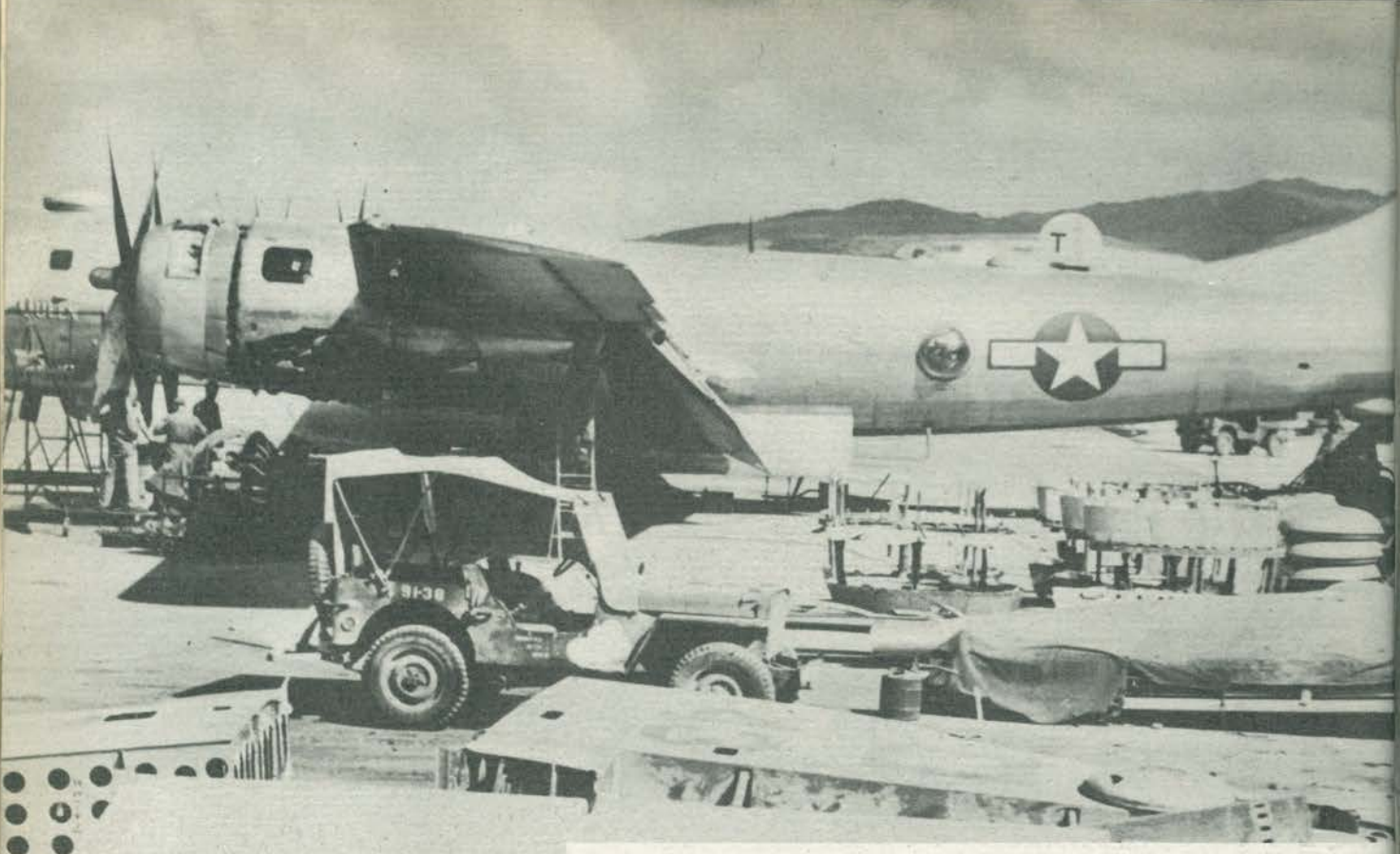
AUG. 4. Okinawa-based planes concentrate fire and demolition bombs on Tarumizu and Miuakomojo, Kyushu, while 20th Air Force Mustangs swarm over targets north of Kyushu.

AUG. 6. First Atom Bomb falls on Hiroshima.

AUG. 15. THE WAR IS OVER.

MT. FUJIYAMA

The Long Haul



Chapter 1

ACTIVATION THROUGH JANUARY, 1944

THIS is the beginning of a chronological account of the activities of the 497th Bombardment Group. In a sense it is an incomplete account because it is not possible to record in these few pages, all of the details connected with the organization and its personnel—the thoughts, hopes, fears, tribulations and efforts of over 2000 individuals who strove to make this group a potent force in the air war against Japan. What *has* been attempted is a record of events which will highlight the experience of the group as a whole.

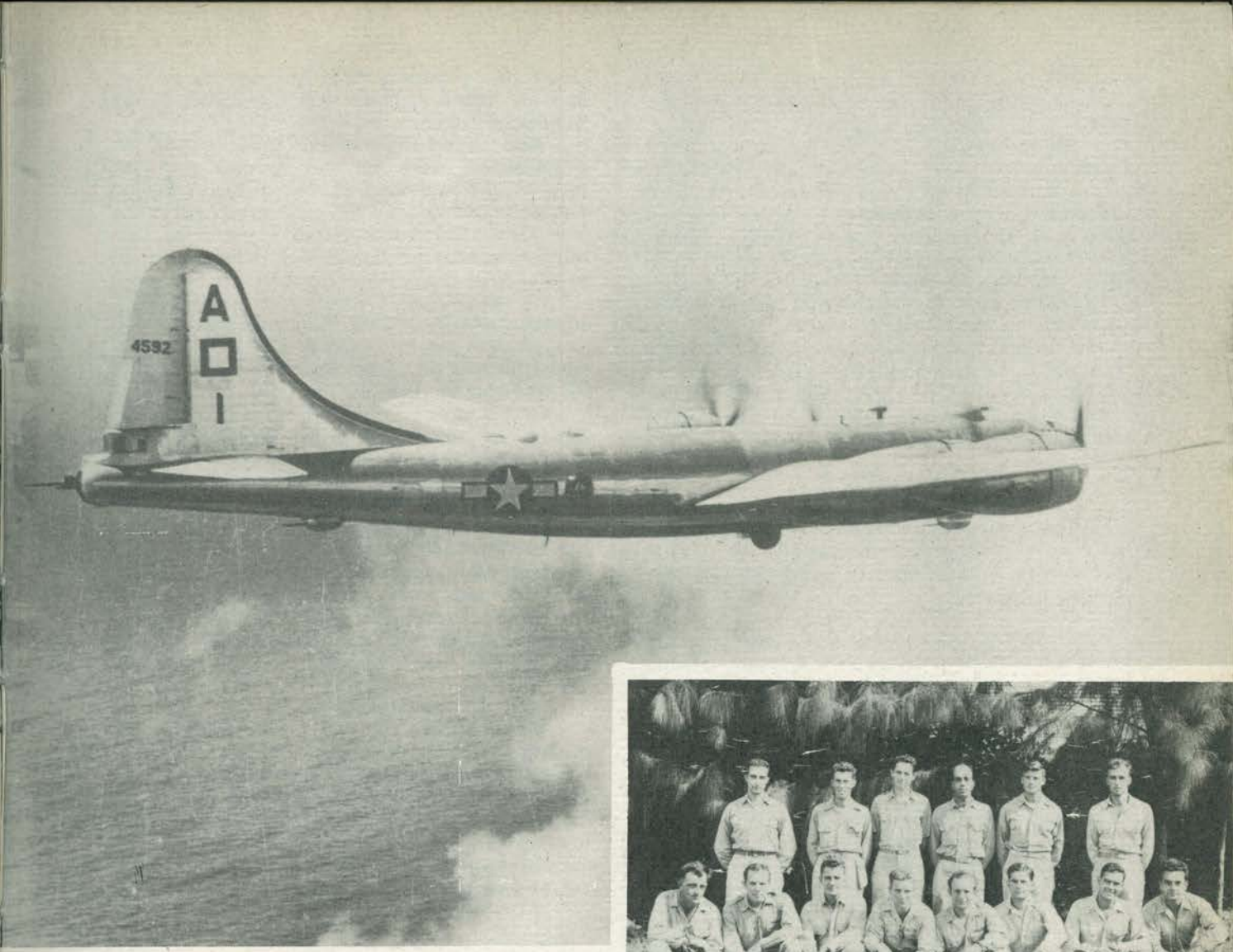
This initial chapter in the history of the group is one of uncertainty and change. It fairly resolves itself to a bare account of the most important of these changes.

As a part of the rapidly expanding Very Long Range Bombing Program, the 497th Bombardment Group (VH) was activated November 24, 1943 at El Paso, Texas. Activation date was effective as of November 20, 1943. The Group was assigned to the 73rd Bombardment Wing, a unit of the 20th Air Force.

This Group consisted of the following units—the 869th, 870th, 871st and 872nd Bombardment Squadrons (VH); the 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th Bombardment Maintenance Squadrons (VH) and the 15th Photo Laboratory Detachment.

Cadre for the Group was drawn from the 491st Bombardment Group. Initial assignment of personnel was received on December 1, 1943 consisting of 57 officers and 499 enlisted men.

On December 5, 1943 the Headquarters of Group was transferred to Clovis Army Air Base, Clovis, New Mexico but no physical move was made. On December 6, 1943, all personnel of the Group with the exception of one officer and three enlisted men were transferred to the 40th Bombardment Group (VH), stationed at Pratt, Kansas. Subsequently about 50 per cent of these personnel were reassigned to Maintenance Squadrons of the 497th Group. Only ground personnel were involved in these moves.



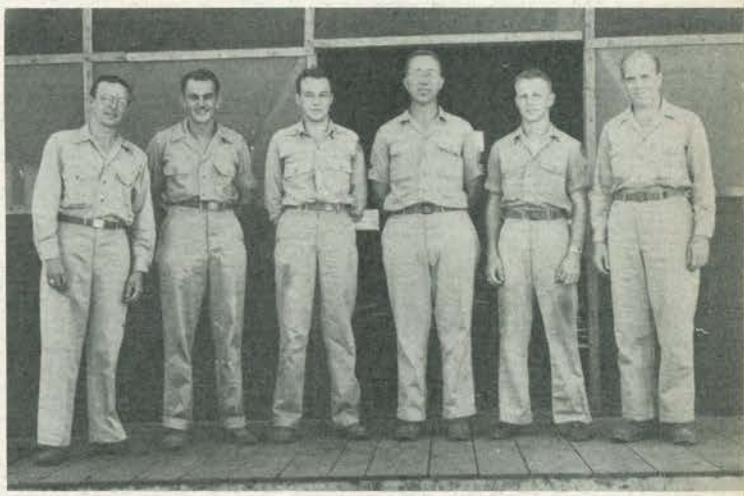
E.M. promoted to F.O.

On December 10, 1943, Lt. Col. John V. Veerling joined the Group at Clovis, New Mexica, and became its first Commanding Officer.

Until the end of the year, all emphasis was on the establishment of a Group Headquarters and on the many details incident thereto.

Shortly after January 1, 1944, officers and enlisted men began to report in from all parts of the States. This Group consisted mainly of officers and enlisted men from the 480th Anti-submarine Group who had returned to the States in November 1943, after 12 months overseas' service in England, Africa and Tunisia. Actual orders assigning about one-fourth of this Unit to the 497th Bombardment Group were issued by Headquarters Clovis Army Air Base on January 25, 1944.

On January 1, 1944, Lt. Col. Veerling was reassigned to the 487th Bombardment Group and Captain Cador O. Smith assumed command. Capt. Smith was transferred out and Lt. Glenn E. McClure assumed command on



Chaplain Haugse and Group Choir

January 16, 1944. On January 26, 1944, Major Alfred J. Hanlon, Jr. assumed command of the 497th.

As of January 31, 1944, the Group Headquarters and four Bombardment Squadrons were located at Army Air Base, Clovis, New Mexico. The four Maintenance Squadrons and Group Photo Detachment were at Pratt, Kansas.

The Bombardment Squadrons were actually assigned personnel during the latter part of January 1944, and Squadron Headquarters were set up and training begun. The Maintenance Squadrons were furnishing maintenance to units of the 58th Bombardment Wing located at Pratt, Kansas. The Group Photo Detachment, having no personnel, existed on paper only, with Headquarters at Pratt, Kansas.

CHAPTER II
February 1944

The group begins to shape up and function as a unit. Change and uncertainty are still the rub but in spite of that fact, the organization begins to progress.

PERSONNEL

A number of important Officer changes took place during the month. Captain George (NMI) Howie reported for duty and was assigned as Group S-4. Major Theodore Hussey was appointed Group Executive Officer. Major Swayne Lathum reported for duty and was assigned as Group S-2 on February 3rd. However, on February 9th he was called to 2nd Air Force Headquarters and Captain Walter B. Dossett, senior Intelligence Officer became the Acting Group S-2. The Group acquired its Flight Surgeon in the person of Captain Guy Denton on February 25th and the same day 2nd Lt. Arthur J. Loeb was appointed Group Statistical Officer.

The enlisted personnel assigned to the organization were for the greater part untrained. Several men of the ground echelon were transferred to Pratt and attached to the 40th Group for training and experience. During the month, the Group key personnel went to the AAF School for Applied Tactics.

Commanding Officers of the tactical squadrons were: 869th, Major Robert K. Morgan of Memphis Belle fame; 870th, Major Robert E. Mills; 871st, Major Frank L. Davis; 872nd, Major Robert E. Booth.

Commanding Officers of the Maintenance Squadrons were: 17th, Major Norman A. Leer; 18th, Captain James A. Woodworth; 19th, Captain John A. Martin; 20th, Captain Robert C. Howe.

A detailing of the classifications and number of men assigned during the month would serve no useful purpose. It can be safely stated that men were arriving constantly, and were either reassigned to a Squadron, sent to Pratt on temporary duty, or placed on temporary duty or detached service at some school.

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance at Pratt was greatly improved by the inauguration of three, eight and one-half hour shifts, each shift continuing into the succeeding one, one-half hour. Previously there had been two, twelve-hour shifts. These hours were felt to be too long, and often a maintenance man would have to work beyond the end of his shift, to complete a job, rather

B-29 Superfort taking-off for Tokyo in dim early morning light

than turn over a nearly-completed piece of work to the next shift. The new policy provided that the shift going off duty brief the on-coming shift on uncompleted work. Thus, long hours were done away with and men were able to quit their jobs when their shift was completed. Morale was greatly increased by the inauguration of this new policy.

FLYING

Flying was on a very limited basis. The aircraft available were mostly B-24s and B-25s. These however, belonged to an advance command post of the 73rd Wing. From time to time, they were made available to the squadrons for flying. Approximately 350 hours were flown. These hours were almost exclusively flown for the purpose of obtaining the monthly requirement of four hours. Some transition flying was accomplished, but generally speaking, flying was limited because of the increasing number of personnel in the four Groups at the Field,

GROUND TRAINING

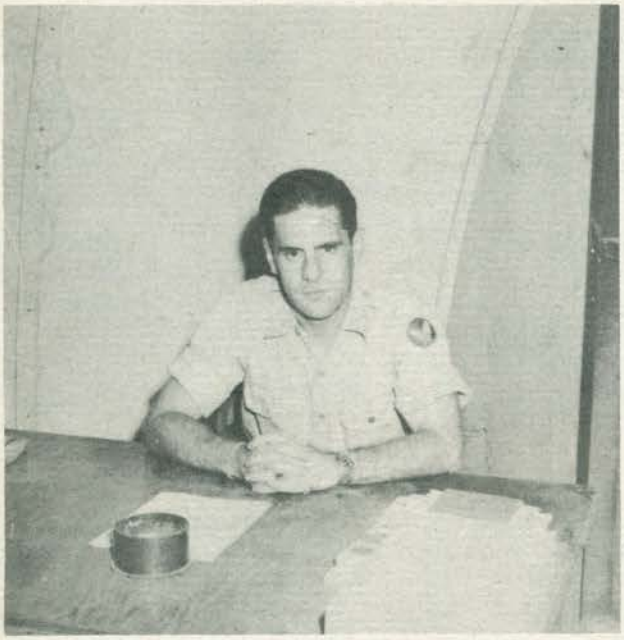
Ground school was started with classes being held for all crew members, and for crews as a whole. Clovis was set up as a Combat Crew Training School and the facilities for instruction were set up on that basis. But the four Groups that make up the 73rd Wing were also using those facilities. The classes were scheduled when they could be sandwiched in. This occurred about one or two hours a day. All of the ranges were made available for the organization's personnel, but the base was unable to furnish instructors except for the skeet range. Another difficulty

Lt. Col. A. L. Haley
Group Operations

Major W. B. Dossett
Group S-2

Lt. Col. Frank L. Davis
CO 871st Sq.

Lt. Col. R. K. Morgan
CO 869th Sq.



Lt. Col. Fred L. Trickey
CO 870th Sq.

Major Gilmour
Group Bombardier

was that everyone was aware of the fact that the lectures would doubtless be repeated because only a portion of the personnel was yet assigned. This, naturally affected the interest of the personnel and of the instructors. All in all, training progressed but was hampered by the lack of adequate space, and what space was available had to be used at times when the hour did not conflict with other schedules.

CHAPTER III
March 1944

Considerable progress was made by the organization during the month, despite many difficulties. Colonel Karl Truesdell assumed command on 6 March. He made appointments of Staff Officers and Squadron Commanders, and thus laid the foundation for the functioning of all sections and departments. Morale reached a high peak, because it was now apparent that the organization was rounding into shape and ready to commence its training.

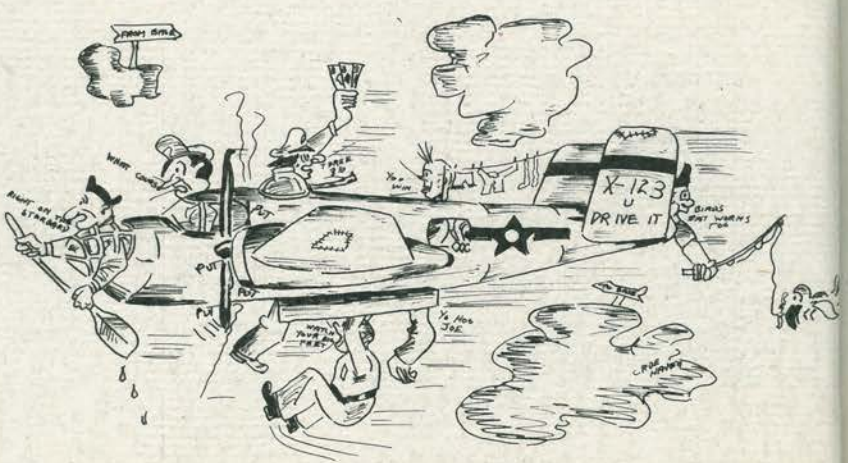
The Bombardment Squadrons were nearly up to full strength. They seemed to be well-balanced with men having combat experience and with eager men. The Maintenance Squadrons were all over-strength.

TRAINING

In spite of the shortage of airplanes, several cross-country flights and ferry missions were flown. Sixty pilots checked out in B-17s, and 396 training hours were flown.

Reasonably good progress had been made in the Ground Training Program previously set up. However, there were innumerable difficulties to the carrying out of a program. The first and foremost difficulty was lack of adequate facilities. The four Groups which comprise the 73rd Bombardment Wing were all at Clovis, using the facilities of the 472nd Combat Crew Training School.

The program generally consisted of one or two hours a day devoted to the usual ground subjects, such as Navigation, Bombing, Recognition (Aircraft and Naval), Engineering, Medical and Communications. Toward the end of the month, in order to avoid the difficulty



Didja get yer 4 hours yet?

in relying on Base instruction, each Squadron organized its own classes, especially in Engineering. This worked out in a more satisfactory manner.

MORALE

The end of the month found morale in the Bombardment Squadrons quite low occasioned by the fact that Colonel Truesdell was not to continue in Command and because of the delay in the move to our permanent Base. It was felt that the wind, the dust storms, the crowded facilities and the lack of definite activities at Clovis Army Air Field would be remembered long and unfavorably by the men of the 497th. Morale in the Bombardment Maintenance Squadrons at Pratt was much higher because the men were kept very busy, and also because a great many enlisted men were promoted during the month.

CHAPTER IV
APRIL, 1944

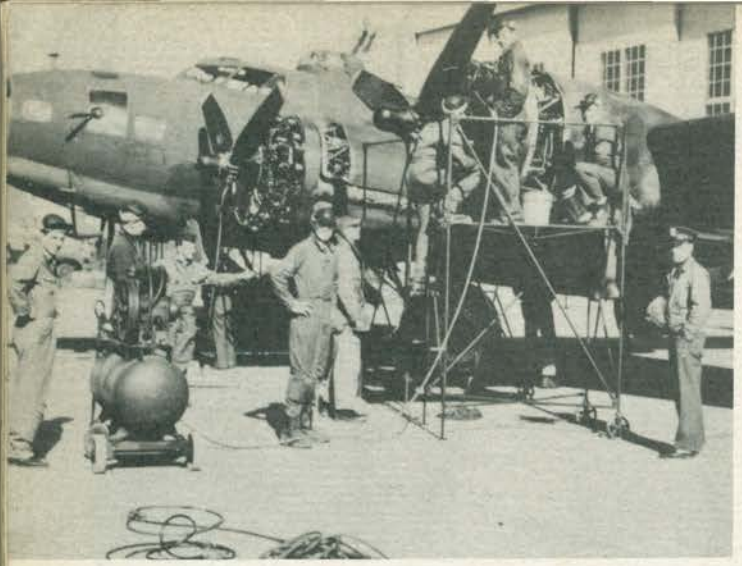
The month of April, 1944 was easily the most important month in the early life of the 497th Bombardment Group (VH). It changed its station; brought its scattered personnel together at one base; acquired for the first time adequate operating facilities; suffered a major operation on it's internal structure; acquired a new Group Commander and a Deputy Group Commander; nearly broke its back getting set in its new location, including for some sections, one or two additional moves after originally getting settled, and finally flew its first scheduled training missions. Truly, this was a momentous period for an organization which had spent most of its five months of existence partly on a scrap of paper, and after acquiring life in the form of personnel had accomplished little beyond ground school training and some transition flying.

A NEW GROUP COMMANDER

The true historians first inquiry should naturally be directed towards ascertaining the identity of the individual or group of individuals responsible for this growth. It is reported, with reluctance, that no person can be given the credit for the development. The child came of age because of the natural growth and expansion of the Army and particularly because its predecessor and likewise its guide and nursemaid, the 40th Bombardment Group (VH), had moved away from Pratt, Kansas, to greater fields.

The man who was in charge during the greater part of this period of sudden transition to manhood, Colonel Karl Truesdell, left under orders on April 22nd. This was quite a disappointment to the many friends he had made since March 6th, when he arrived at Clovis, New Mexico, and assumed command of the Group. His unfailing good humor, devotion to duty, and flying ability, had earned him the admiration of all Group and Base personnel, Officers and enlisted men alike. All were cheered however, to learn that the new Group

Baseball; A.A.F., Pratt, Kansas



Maintenance, Training Days at Pratt, Kansas

Commander would be Colonel Stuart P. Wright.

During the interval between April 22nd and April 26th, command was assumed by Colonel Arnold T. Johnson, the new Deputy Group Commander.

CHANGE OF STATION

The most important thing that made the Group a cohesive unit, was the move from Clovis, New Mexico, to Pratt, Kansas. Previous chapters have detailed the fact that Group Headquarters were at Clovis, New Mexico, as were the Headquarters of its four tactical squadrons. However, the four Maintenance Squadrons were at Pratt, servicing the planes of the 40th Bombardment Group (VH), then in the last stages of its training. Likewise, a number of the personnel of the 497th Group were attached to some of the tactical squadrons of the 40th Group. The departure of the 40th Group and the orders moving the personnel and Headquarters of the 497th Group, in-

870th Orderly Room Personnel

Pratt

Ordnance pre-overseas

Lt. Col. Robert E. Haynes

Bomb Loading Truck

cluding the 869th, 870th, 871st and 872nd Squadrons, to Pratt, did away with the weakness of the structure of the 497th Group. Now everyone was united; no one attached to a squadron at a distant base, or servicing the planes of another Group, while their own outfit was several hundred miles away. The elimination of these factors permitted the 497th Group to become a strong, cohesive, eager Group.

The improved facilities for training at Pratt were obvious that they hardly require more than a passing nod. At Pratt the whole Base was available for training. At Clovis, the Group had to fit in wherever it could. It was a step-child and was well aware of that fact. At Pratt, with the whole Field at its disposal—hangars, runways and all base facilities generally—the little waif began to feel its oats; and conscious of the help being given to it, plunged into its training with vim.

CONSOLIDATION OF SQUADRON

On April 12th, a bolt came from the blue. At a Staff Meeting, Colonel Truesdell revealed that there were to be only three Squadrons instead of the usual four. He also stated that the Maintenance Squadrons were to be abolished, and merged into the tactical squadrons. That really was a surprise and gloom was thick around the Base. What squadron was to be eliminated? What would become of the personnel of that squadron? Who would be declared an overage? What would the T/O's provide? The elation, felt by all, at being an independent organization, subsided. There was a mixture of depression and worry in the air. Many a familar and uncomplimentary remark was passed concerning the apparent inability of the Army to make up its mind.

Within a few days the changes that were anticipated, commenced to take place. The 17th, 18th and 19th Maintenance Squadrons' personnel were attached to the 869th, 870th and 871st Squadrons, respectively. The 872nd Squadron was selected for elimination. Its personnel was first distributed among and attached to the remaining squadrons. Later they were assigned directly. Its companion Squadron, the 20th Maintenance Squadron was also eliminated. At first its personnel was distributed and attached, and later assigned directly.

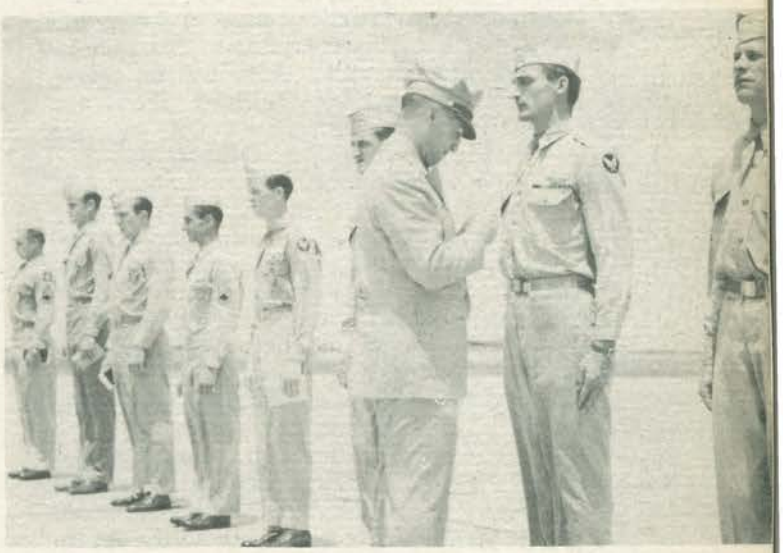
The big question facing the Group was the declaration of overages. At the end of the month this question was still under consideration. This unsettled question did not hamper the training program, but it was a source of concern to a large number of officers and enlisted men alike.

It should be noted that the new T/O called for ten planes for each squadron instead of seven. This change pleased most of the flying personnel.

TRAINING

Mention has been made of the increased attention given to training once the move to Pratt had been completed. The training that

870th Communications pre-overseas



Presentation; A.A.F., Pratt, Kansas

870th Orderly room personnel pre-overseas

had been accomplished, was completed only after overcoming a number of obstacles. For example, the first week after arrival at Pratt, was spent in getting set up in the new quarters. Then the new Table of Organization resulted in some lost time, due to personnel shifts. Finally, weather did its share in interrupting flying schedules. For the last fifteen days of the month, Kansas belied its reputation of being part of the dust bowl, because all existing rainfall records for the month were broken. The weather was invariably either cold, windy or rainy. More often it was a combination of all three. The climax was reached on the next to the last day of the month, when a tornado passed about a mile south of the Field. Colonel Wright, on being advised of the approaching storm, quickly alerted all available personnel and at first planned to fly all planes to Oklahoma City. Time was too short to accomplish this, so he then ordered the planes to be tied down. The storm came quickly, but by the time it arrived most of the planes had been securely fastened down. The remainder taxied into the wind. Actually the center of the storm missed the Field by about one mile; but the Colonel's quick action and the alertness of the Weather Officer on duty would have cut damage to a minimum had the center of the storm struck. The proximity of the danger, however, is indicated by the fact that approximately a mile away, a farmhouse and outbuildings were completely destroyed; an automobile blown a hundred yards, and a number of box-cars blown over on a nearby siding.

Ground training was beginning to get into high gear towards the end of the month. However, this program suffered a somewhat delayed start, because satisfactory facilities were not available when the Group reached Pratt. The program could not be satisfactorily set up until proper school facilities had been established. All efforts were made to get the program commenced as quickly as possible, and by the end of the month, it was in full swing.

PERSONNEL

On 14 April 1944, Lt. Col. Robert E. Haynes was appointed Squadron Commander of the 870th Squadron. Colonel Haynes brought with him a wealth of overseas combat experience, an easy disposition and a common sense approach to training which made a hit with all Squadron personnel. On April 28th, Captain Charles H. Davis replaced Major Carl R. Barnes as Squadron Operations Officer.

At the end of the month, the 17th, 18th, and 19th Maintenance Squadrons still existed in the sense that their inactivation had not been formally completed. The transfer of personnel had been accomplished, but each Squadron still kept one officer and one enlisted man as a token complement, pending the working out of the remaining details of deactivation.

The same situation prevailed in the cases of the 872nd Squadron and the 20th Maintenance Squadron, except that their personnel had been divided among the remaining squadron.

There was, of course, the serious questions of overages due to the consolidation. The solution of the problem was one of the most difficult facing the Group. It affected every squadron and in practically every MOS. Its prompt solution would eliminate some of the confusion and uncertainty which was inevitable under the circumstances.

ASSIGNMENT OF AIRCRAFT

At the close of the month, the Group had a total of thirty-five planes assigned.

The use and assignment of the planes was controlled by Group. If one squadron needed more than its allotted number of planes, or more than it had available for flying, then Group Operations simply transferred sufficient planes from the other squadrons on a temporary basis. This system eliminated problems of some other Groups which had one squadron falling behind on its training, simply because of a lack of planes in flying condition.

SUPPLY

The supply problem proved to be a very minor one during the current month. Naturally there was some confusion upon arrival at Pratt. Memorandum receipt property had to be obtained through the Base Custodial Officer, and there was some time element involved in locating the property.

CHAPTER V
MAY, 1944

It can be safely averred that despite the difficulties attending the movement from Clovis to Pratt, and the drop in efficiency and morale, due to the merger of the squadrons, nevertheless, the Group had made great progress in its training schedule. The emphasis on training was continued during May and progress was sustained.

Early in May a new Group Executive Officer was assigned to the group. Lt. Col. Norman J. Campbell who came to the group from Pueblo Army Air Base brought with him a wealth of army administration and organizational experience.

PERSONNEL

As of May 31st there was a total overage in the Group of 375. Among the Officers, the overages existed in almost all categories, and can mostly be traced to the elimination of the Maintenance Squadrons and the inactivation of the 872nd Bombardment Squadron. There were some disproportionate overages in some of the Enlisted Men's specialties, but none in any of the Officers' MOS.

Another considerable portion can be charged to a few unauthorized specialties, which the Group was making use of. It should be kept in mind, however, that much of this type of overage was due to the fact that the Group was in the middle of its training period. The planes were being used almost continuously, and needed a large maintenance force to keep them ready for flying.

MAINTENANCE

During May there was a change in maintenance procedure. A previous comment detailed the change made from two twelve-hour shifts, to three eight and one-half hour shifts. A change was made, abolishing these shifts, and inaugurating a system of specific assignments for each airplane. This has worked out very satisfactorily.

ABOLITION OF 872nd SQUADRON AND OF MAINTENANCE SQUADRONS

The transfer of personnel from the 872nd Squadron and from the 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th Maintenance Squadrons, pending final inactivation of the squadrons, has been detailed in Chapter IV. They received their final death-blow on May 13th. On that date the Second Air Force issued orders which officially disbanded the four above-mentioned Maintenance Squadrons, and inactivated the 872nd Squadron. Actually this order caused little or no excitement. The coup de grace had been administered over a month previously, and this order did little more than act as a coroner's finding of death. Each of the Squadrons, had only two men assigned to it during the period covered by this installment, one officer, its Commanding Officer, and one enlisted man. There remained nothing to do but to transfer these men and close out the morning report. Thus these units expired; the 872nd being completely dead, the others being disbanded. The interment was rather private, and considerably different from the consternation which ran through the Group when it was first learned that the Squadrons would be consolidated, and certain units done away with.

The same order which eliminated these Squadrons, reorganized those which remained to take care of the changes and increased personnel assigned to each Squadron, resulting from the consolidation. Again, this caused no confusion, having been more or less anticipated. In fact it settled, temporarily at least, a number of questions concerning authorized strength and Tables of Equipment and like matters.

TRAINING

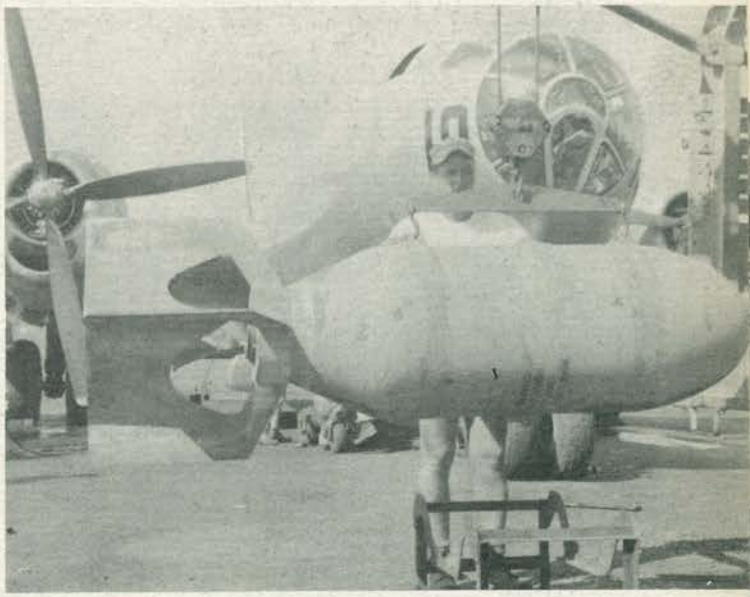
Both air and ground training proceeded at a very satisfactory pace during the month of May. Practically all B-17 missions had been completed and pilots were now being regularly checked out on B-29s. At the close of the month, 22 4-engine pilots had checked out on the Superfortress. Considering the large number of pilots in the Group, at first glance, this total seems small. However, since the Group had only ten B-29s assigned, the number was not disproportionate. The number increased daily.

Flying generally had proceeded at a rapid clip. The weather was ideal, and practically no time was lost due to adverse conditions.

The total number of flying hours, both B-17 and B-29, from the beginning of the organization, down to May 31st, is 6750 hours.

870th Mail room pre-overseas

Major E. W. Kimball



Loading 2,000-pound bomb

ACCIDENTS

The month was marred by two accidents, which occurred on successive days, and are the only ones suffered by the Group since its activation. One involved a B-29, and the other a B-17.

The B-29 accident occurred at about 0730 on May 25th. The plane belonged to the 870th Squadron, and was being piloted by Major Carl Barnes, with Lt. Craig Blood the co-pilot. The plane made a normal landing but while it was coasting down the runway, and before it had slowed down to normal taxiing speed, the landing gear is believed to have started to retract. Since the nose wheel did not retract, the belly of the plane struck the ground, and the fuselage broke just astern of the flight engineer's compartment. The plane looked like a giant wounded bird as it lay on the edge of the North-South runway, and attracted great attention from the Group personnel as they came to their jobs, and observed its broken back.

The Engineering Section quickly obtained pictures of salvage operations of a plane at Walker, which suffered a similar accident. With this help, the plane was removed from the runway in an intact condition, within a few days. No one was hurt.

The second accident, which occurred on the morning of May 26th, was more serious and the plane was a total loss. Due to fine handling of the plane (a B-17) by its pilot, Lieut. Abar of the 869th, no one was injured in this accident either. While only a short distance from its base, the No. 3 engine of the plane caught fire. The pilot tried to reach Pratt Airfield, but found he was unable to do so. He therefore effected a belly-landing in a wheat field near Preston, about 25 miles northeast of the Field. Just before he landed, the burning motor fell off. The plane, with the exception of part of the tail surfaces, was almost completely destroyed by fire. Credit should be given to the pilot for the successful landing, and avoidance of any injury to crew members.

GROUND TRAINING

Ground training had by no means been slighted, despite the heavy flying schedule. All flying personnel regularly attended ground school classes. Each crew member had classes in his specialty, and additional ones in allied subjects with which he should be conversant.

Towards the end of the month, each Squadron devoted time to training its ground personnel. Classes in bomb disposal, intelligence, first aid, and malaria were held.

GENERAL

The month of May, 1944, found the 497th Group making immense progress in flying and ground training. The only impediment to even greater progress being lack of B-29 aircraft. The month found the Group still over strength, but not as much so as the previous month. This is accounted for, by the revised Table of Organization, and by the transfer of a large number of overages. The month also found moral very high. Training for flying personnel had been pretty rugged, (so the crews felt), but with everyone interested, and development being notable, all were happy.

CHAPTER VI

JUNE, 1944

The Group continues its training and begins preparations for movement overseas.

PERSONNEL

There were two important personnel changes during the month. On June 9th, Captain Oscar S. Teigen replaced Captain Carr as Adjutant. Captain Teigen comes to the 497th from the 498th Group at Great Bend. The other change involved the position of Special Service Officer. On June 19th, 1st Lt. Thomas H. Stevenson replaced Lt. Glenn McClure. On the same day, 2nd Lt. James E. Kerr was appointed Assistant Group Special Service Officer.

FLYING TRAINING

The training of the combat crews proceeded in a highly satisfactory manner. Second phase training had been completed.

During the month the total flying time was increased to 7,902.55 hours flown with the B-17s; 2,178.64 hours with the B-29s.

GROUND TRAINING

As the end of the month approached, all became conscious of the fact that the day was drawing closer when the ground echelon would be leaving. Speculation was ripe as to departure date and destination. Major Walter B. Dossett, Group S-2, in a lecture, warned Group Headquarters personnel not to indulge in such speculations as they could lead only to a breach of security.

The most important step toward preparing everyone for overseas movement was preliminary processing. Everyone, without exception, in Group Headquarters, in the Squadrons, and in the 15th Photo Lab, was processed. So far as your Historian has been able to ascertain, no one came through unscathed. The result of the processing was that personnel spent many additional hours making certain that their records were up to date. The Medics gave shots to those who had been hoping to avoid such indignities; the dentists explored many unknown cavities; the Base Courts and Boards Officers attested powers of attorney; additional allotments were made; and nearly everyone found that he had to take a course in aircraft recognition, camouflage, bomb reconnaissance, chemical warfare, or medical subjects. Most had to take at least one-half of the courses. All personnel went out on the range to fire the caliber 45 pistol and the carbine for record, and for familiarization with the new tommy-gun.

SUPPLY

The most pressing supply problem facing the Group was that of packing for the coming overseas movement. Everyone was busy in this work, especially the S-4 Sections. Lt. Conners, Group Supply Officer, returned, towards the end of the month, from a leave. He felt

that he needed every bit of that leave to bolster him in coping with the many problems which arose.

The Post Engineers made the boxes to be used for packing. The Squadrons drew what Captain Broadhurst, Group S-4, glibly referred to as "TAT Property". Translated, this means, "To Accompany Troops". This refers to the minimum equipment required under Table of Allowances.

ACCIDENTS

Two accidents occurred this month, both resulting in the total destruction of the aircraft, and causing two fatalities.

The first accident took place on June 3rd. A B-17 from the 871st Squadron, on a cross-country flight to the East coast, ran into poor flying weather over Ohio. The pilot decided to land at Columbus (Ohio), Naval Air Station. He overshot the field. No one was injured; the plane was only salvageable.

The second accident had more serious consequences. A B-29 (AC 42-6387) on a night transition routine take off, veered from the runway while airborne, hit an AT-23 and a B-17 before coming to a stop against the sub-depot hangar. Explosion occurred, all planes were demolished, the pilot, Maj. Bernard Gaffney and the co-pilot, Lt. Herman Grub were fatally injured. Of the crew of twelve, seven received major burns and three came through without injury.

REVIEW AND PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

On June 15th, prior to the Wing-Ding, a review was held by the three Squadrons, with General O'Donnell as reviewing Officer. The review took place at the North end of the ramp after the issuing of 21 awards, mostly to men of the Group. The highest award, the Legion of Merit, was made to Sergeant Kenneth E. Atwell. It was awarded for exceptional maintenance work at Guadalcanal. Other personnel were awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal.

WING-DING

On June 15th, the 497th was host to a Wing-Ding. Possibly this title needs a bit of explanation. Seventy-third Wing Headquarters, and the four Groups which make up the Wing, instituted one day a month for a get-together of the higher-ranking officers. The purpose is two-fold. In the afternoon Wing business is attended to. In the waning hours of the day, good fellowship reigns and business is partly forgotten. This combined meeting is called, irreverently, a Wing-Ding. It seems that much more can be accomplished in a face to face meeting than over a telephone or through the medium of an impersonal letter.

The particular Wing-Ding in question was a great success. Personnel started to arrive about 1500. From Wing Headquarters, inter alia, came General O'Donnell, Colonel Sweeny, Colonel Brugge, Colonel Schaetzle, Major Love and Major Green. From the 498th, came Colonel Ganey, its C.O., Lt. Colonels Mueller, Shealy, Brandon and McCarthy, and Colonel Melanson, Base Commander at Salina.

870th S-2 Briefing Room

870th S-2 Personnel

"Pappy" Haynes' "Belly" Landing

Fire at Pratt and—

Then came the dawn

Gen. O'Donnell awarding Medals
at Pratt, Kansas

Finally, from the 500th came Colonel King, Lt. Colonel Daugherty, Majors Smith, Parsons, Reeve, Brannock and McDowell. Also present was Lt. Colonel Faulkner, representing the Base Commander at Walker.

The official business took place in the War Room. This meeting adjourned in time to view the Wing Mission, as it passed overhead. The first portion—the B-17 part—flew over in splendid formation, with all Operations Officers claiming the rear and low echelon, which was flying the tightest formation. Ten minutes later, the B-29 portion flew over the Field, and put all those same Operations Officers in a temporary bad humor, because the flight appeared to be in two entirely separate formations, which apparently had not previously encountered one another until they reached the Field.

All this was put aside, however, in a softball game, in which nearly all participated, followed later by a steak dinner. All acclaimed the affair as most successful.

CHAPTER VII

JULY, 1944 THROUGH SEPT., 1944

AIR ECHELON

GROUND AND FLYING TRAINING

By the end of the month fourth phase ground training, involving proficiency check in rated abilities and comprehensive testing in the ground school subjects, was under way. The third phase of the flying training was nearly half accomplished.

The problem Operations had to tackle was getting the minimum POM flying requirements out of the way. This was held up by the large number of B-29s requiring engine change, the root problem in all the training. The problem was partially solved by corrective action in maintenance, and by the increasing experience of those piloting the aircraft.

Training was further impeded by the late arrival of radar equipment. In planning radar missions from land-locked Pratt only a few land-and-water targets were available. Nevertheless, radar operators were checking out satisfactorily on one flight after intensive ground school training. Crews, after one mission, were coordinating well and, in some instances, achieving good results in radar bombing.

In the Communications Section most of the personnel received on-the-job training. Because of the shortage of men and the late filling up of the T/O, all the personnel were needed to keep up maintenance efficiency. Hence, the men were unable to attend school.

Gunnery training suffered during the month because of the engine difficulties with the B-29. An order grounded all aircraft for four days for engine checks. The personnel of the 29th Bombardment Group (VH), who replaced the ground echelon were not fully acquainted with the fire control system, and

Capt. Harry A. Stewart
Asst. S-2

Pre-overseas party, Pratt, Kansas

First "Wing Ding"

Capt. O. C. Teigen
Group Adjutant

Review, A.A.F.; Pratt, Kansas

maintenance was not up to the expected standard. Finally, there was a lack of gunnery ranges within short distances. To overcome this problem, gunnery missions were flown to the Trinidad range, over 200 miles away, and to the targets in the Galveston area.

During the month, the longest training flight, to date, a 3,350 mile non-stop mission from Pratt to Cayo Traviesa, off Cuba, was made in a B-29 flown by Lt. Col. Robert E. Haynes. This mission, averaging about 3,200 miles, was later flown by many crews in the squadrons as well.

The maintenance problem involved definitely restricted the amount of flying time and the prosecution of the training program. Total flying time to date is 13398.2.

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance was slowed down for two reasons; the number of engines needing change and the replacement of new personnel and the assumption of duties the ground personnel left.

PERSONNEL

At the end of the month the Group was up to T/O strength. There were no shortages and no significant overages.

Attesting the progress in flying training, 34 officers had their classification changed from 1024 (four-engine pilot) to 1093 (B-29 pilot); this brings the total of B-29 pilots to 92 out of 131 pilots.

SUPPLY

Supply had its difficulties this month in getting the ground echelon moved out, in getting equipment properly marked, crated and shipped. There was very little confusion and the ground echelon got off with only a very small shortage of TAT equipment.

The problems remaining in Supply are the shipping of excess personal baggage, sending off equipment that continues to dribble in late, and in arranging for staging aircraft and personnel.

ACCIDENTS

On July 26th at 1730 hour, just after take-off in B-29 #384, Lt. Col. Robert E. Haynes belly-landed the ship because an accidentally released life-raft had fouled the tail controls. The landing was without injuries, but the plane had the radar turret, under gun turret, propellers and skin damaged.

MISCELLANEOUS

On the 28th at 2100 hour, wind with a velocity of 82 miles per hour hit the field and four aircraft, three B-29s and one B-17, were damaged by flying debris. The damage to aircraft was slight; a nicked wing tip, a broken propeller. On some ships the control surfaces had to be re-aligned. The damage to the hutment area, however, was more extensive.

A notable change in morale came about with the granting of furloughs and leaves. All personnel, who had gone without leave in the past six months, were given 12 days. In order to keep the flying program at the usual training peak, one flight went on leave while the other two flights kept the planes in the air.

During August the Group completed its ground and flying training, gathered odds and ends together, so-to-speak, for a move from Pratt Army Air Field; a move hastened by the arrival of the 29th Bombardment Group. As in previous months, day-by-day problems were not insurmountable; the confusion and inconvenience occasioned by the arrival of the 29th Group and their eagerness to begin training, did not interfere with the preparation for movement and the concommitant flying of Wing Missions.

GROUND AND FLYING TRAINING

Fourth phase training, the administration of proficiency checks of a practical and theoretical nature, continued throughout the month. Individual qualification records were also brought up to date, especially in the firing of small arms.

Due to lack of flyable aircraft, especially in the 871st Bombardment Squadron, flying training had not reached the minimum set down in Second Air Force Training Directives. Aircraft were grounded because of the recurring engine problem and because of damage to the tails, in three instances, by runaway guns; one plane ran off the runway on landing, and time-consuming maintenance was necessary.

Gunnery training was completed except for eight missions which were momentarily held up by weather.

Navigators were introduced to the operation and theory of Loran (APN-4) during the month.

Engineering reported getting cruise control for the B-29 down, chiefly by the mounting experience of the pilots and engineers.

A grand total of 16, 066.77 hours on B-17s and B-29s were flown during the month.

WING MISSIONS

During the month the Group took part in four Wing Missions. On 5 August, Mission #2, a formation dog-leg flight to Hot Springs, Arkansas, and the Pratt Bombing Range took place.

Mission #3, a radar bombing flight incorporating the 90 degree turn, was flown to the Galveston Range on 11 August. Three aircraft got off and dropped 28 out of 30 bombs; the bombing was poor, the average error being 5,000 feet.

Another radar bombing mission to Galveston was flown on 18 August. This was Wing Mission #4, and again stressed the 90 degree turn. Seven aircraft from this Group participated and dropped 56 out of 70 bombs; the bombing was poor.

Mission #5, a visual bombing flight with radar bombing (weather necessitating) to Batista, Cuba, was scheduled to be run on 25 August. Staff personnel and crews reported to Salina, Kansas where a joint briefing by Wing took place. The mission was called off because of weather. This Group had sent nine planes. A second attempt was made on 29 August and twelve planes took off on the mission. Three aborted early on account of engine failures and returned to Pratt. Three planes landed in Florida because of engine failures, before reaching the target. The other six planes attacked the target and turned for home base. Only one of these landed at Pratt before the weather closed in. Four of the others were diverted to Wichita, Kansas and one to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

PERSONNEL

The Group was up to T/O strength. Four extra crews were dropped during the month.

MAINTENANCE AND SUPPLY

Maintenance was handicapped this month because it was necessary to send ground crews to Salina and Wichita to repair B-29 aircraft. Flying was impeded by these repair operations and the two B-29s that were grounded at the same time at Batista, Cuba. The usual engine changes also kept the aircraft on the ground. However, five engines joined the "400 Hour" Club by running over 400 hours before change was made. Four of the engines were on one aircraft: Major Richard B. Broadhurst, Group S-4, attributed the engine endurance to good maintenance and a bit of luck.

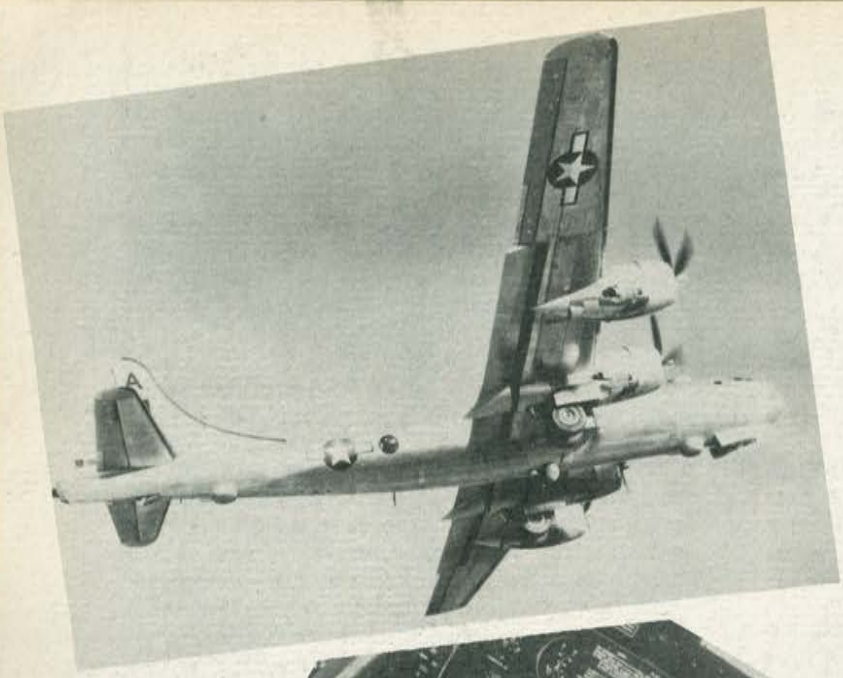
Because of housing facilities at Herington, Kansas and because the movement of the Group was speeded up by the arrival of the 29th Group, the proposed staging plans presented in the last installment were changed. All rated flying personnel going overseas by ATC will leave for Kearny, Nebraska on 1 September. All other personnel will move to Herington, Kansas; non-rated personnel will leave 30 August, flying personnel on 1 September.

During September the big problem was time—too much time. As the month passed and the original departure day lapsed, the problem solved itself, but not without elusive but attendant lowering of morale. Other problems involved in the processing and acceptance of aircraft and in adaptation to a new base were without incident; they were most harmoniously worked out by the base itself. But time for the Group seemed to reverse itself as news of the increasing Pacific advance came in. Personnel wanted to get to work, and it was with hopefulness and encouragement that Brigadier General Hansell, Commanding General of the 21st Bomber Command, on 25 September said: "The future aspirations of the Army Air Corps depends upon you."

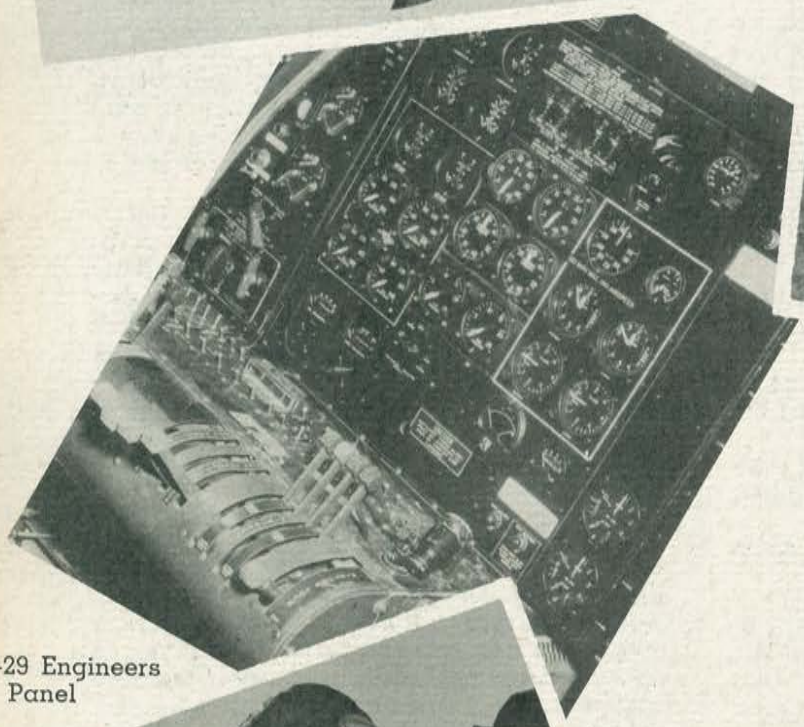
TROOP MOVEMENT TO HERINGTON AND KEARNEY

On 31 August 1944 the first train left for Herington at 0900. The journey was not without mishap; en route the locomotive hit a herd of cows and killed five; within one hundred feet of the station at Herington the locomotive jumped the track—a truck retainer had caught in the frog. Otherwise the trip was successful and on schedule. Another train followed at 1300 hours and a third at the same time on the following day.

On 1 September the rated flying person-

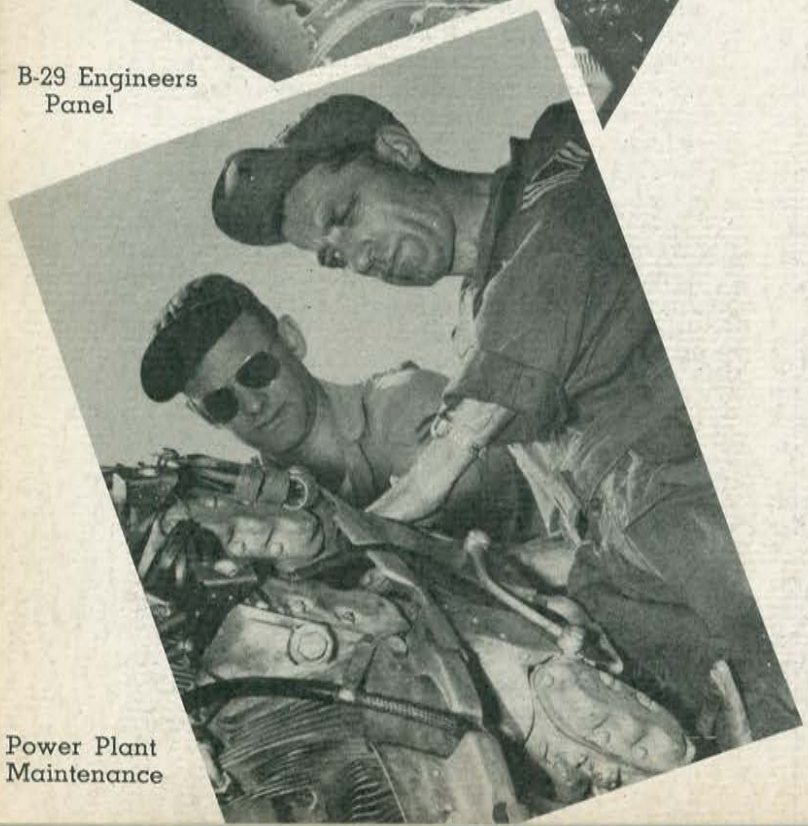


Pappy's Forced Landing



B-29 Engineers Panel

Remote control gun sighting station



Power Plant Maintenance

nel going ATC and the reserve crews of each squadron left for Kearney, Nebraska, and arrived without incident.

On arrival at Herington the personnel was immediately taken care of by the base. Roll calls were held daily at 0800 and 1250 hours. Crews were processed for clothing and materiel and attended lectures on censorship, malaria, hygiene and intelligence. There was considerable free time during which the admirable facilities of the base were used; officers' club, library, bowling alleys, swimming pool, and playing fields. Special entertainment was provided by Lt. Colonel Henry Dittman, Base Commanding Officer, for the officers, men and their guests. On one Saturday night Glen Gray and his Casa Loma orchestra played in the sub-depot hangar; on two Saturday nights, chicken dinner, drinks and shrimp were on the house.

At Kearney the Group personnel, under Lt. Colonel Neil Van Sickle and Captain Geyer, carried through a training program of hikes, calisthenics, rifle and small arms firing, and training films. To date, no processing had been accomplished; however, the personnel was awarded from nine to thirteen days leave.

On 7 September 1944, Lt. Colonel Van Sickle and the operations staff officers were transferred to Herington, leaving Captain Geyer in charge of personnel at Kearney.

MAINTENANCE AND SUPPLY

The actual material processing went exceptionally well. By 14 September the Group had accepted all of its aircraft, twenty-one Boeings and nine Bells. Except for radar all modifications had been made. In this category there were eighty-seven modifications.

The maintenance personnel of the base ran the acceptance checks on the aircraft. The Group maintenance crews helped with flight line maintenance. The excellent work of the base showed, as Major Broadhurst pointed out, in the fact that thirteen planes accomplished the mission to Cuba.

Towards the end of the month the Group designating numerals were being painted on the aircraft: "A" designating the Group, a square for the Wing, and numerals as follows:

869th Squadron	1-20 incl.
870th Squadron	21-40 incl.
871st Squadron	41-60 incl.

PERSONNEL

The only overages at present are the assistant group operations officer, the group flight engineer and the gunnery officers of the squadrons: they are awaiting authorization.

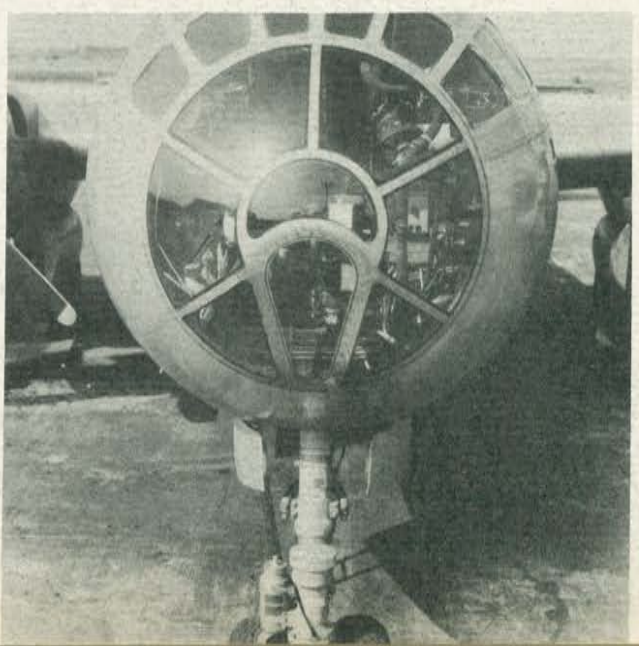
WING MISSIONS

The following is an extract from the narrative report of wing mission number seven as transmitted to the Wing:

"On 20 September 1944, 15 aircraft, 9 from the 869th Bombardment Squadron and six from the 870th Bombardment Squadron took off without escort from advance base, Walker Army Air Field, at 0718, to attack the bombing range on Cayo Traviesa. Of these, two aircraft returned early.

Collector Ring Trouble

First B-29 Eng. to fly 400 hours



A clean nose

There were no personnel casualties nor any aircraft lost, missing or damaged. There was slight 'enemy' opposition in the form of one attack from four P-47s and six P-51s.

Each aircraft except No. 423 carried four 500-pound practice bombs, a total bomb load of 4x14x500, 28,000 pounds. Of these 38 bombs (19,000 pounds) were dropped on target (Cayo Traviesa). An estimate of the success of this mission is impossible because the target was overcast from 7/10-10/10, obscuring visual and photographic bomb spotting. No unusual observations were noted. All aircraft landed safely at the home base, Herington Army Air Field, last aircraft at 22:50.'

A similar mission scheduled 26 September for the remaining fifteen aircraft in the Group was postponed due to resetting prop governors and later in the week because of bad weather.

CHAPTER VIII
JULY 1944 THROUGH SEPT. 1944

GROUND ECHELON

THE MOVE TO CAMP ANZA

The ground echelon remained at Pratt with the air echelon for the greater part of the month. The first separation took place on Sunday, 16 July, when eight officers left by plane for the P.O.E. This party consisted of four Supply Officers, one each from the squadrons, and Lt. Conners from Group Headquarters; and four Billeting Officers, again, one from each squadron, and Lt. Power from Group Headquarters. The Supply Officers remained at Wilmington, and worked on Supply matters. The Billeting Officers departed for Camp Anza, about fifty miles away, near Arlington, California. These officers acted as Liaison Officers, and had everything set for the housing of the main body, when it arrived.

The ground echelon left Pratt for the Port of Embarkation on 17 and 18 July under the command of Lt. Col. Campbell. The first train left at 2230 carrying personnel of Group Headquarters and the 869th Bomb Squadron. The next train with the 870th Squadron left at 0030 on the 18th. Colonels Wright and Johnson, the Squadron Commanders and various members of the Air Echelon, were present to bid farewell to the Ground Echelon.

The trip was hot and dirty and the three trains arrived at widely separated hours. However, all arrangements had been made in advance at Camp Anza and the men were quickly fed and quartered.

THE STAY AT CAMP ANZA

It was found that a regular program of processing had been planned in advance at Anza. It was thorough, complete and expeditiously handled. Gas masks of the new lightweight type were issued. They were fitted, where such was necessary; instructions in their use given, and a run through the Gas Chamber given to all personnel.

New equipment of many types was issued. This included various protective coverings, mosquito bars, gun cleaning fluids, and the like. The Enlisted Men were given clothing checks to see that they had all the required equipment, and that it was servicable. The same was done for Officers, on a voluntary basis. Later an inspection was made to make certain that no contraband was being carried. Finally one last required check was made for the sole purpose of ascertaining if everybody had the required equipment and that it was adequate and servicable.

While all this was going on, a set program of lectures and movies was being attended by officers and men alike. These consisted of various orientation films, lectures on Censorship, care and use of equipment and the like. The last of this series consisted of a lecture and picture on how to disembark from a sinking ship. The next day everyone was marched in full equipment and pack to a large structure covered with nets and chains, etc. It was about forty feet high. The top constituted the deck of a ship, and everyone had to climb up these swinging ladders, with full pack, and then climb down the other side. This constituted a bit of work for all concerned, although a bit of merriment occurred when some enlisted man dropped his carbine and barely missed Lt. Schick's helmet, many feet below.

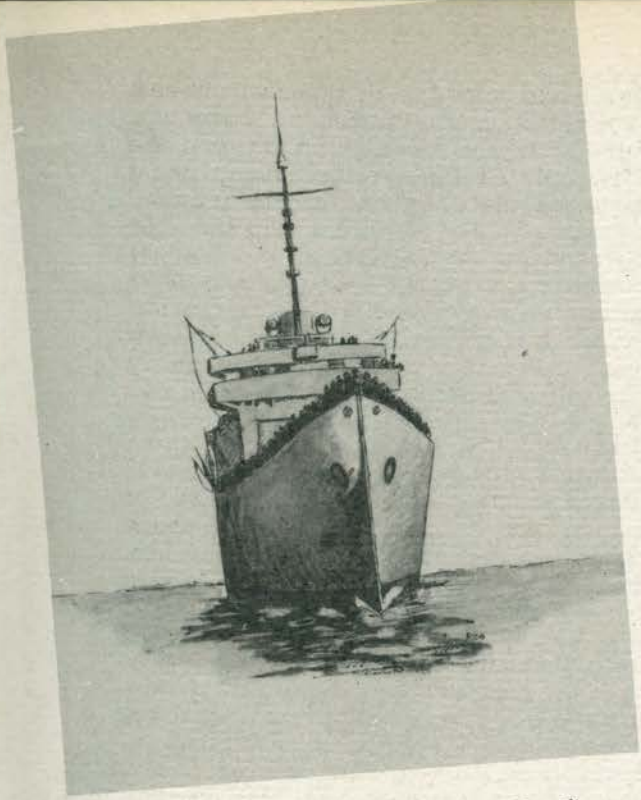
Immediately subsequent to this, a few officers were called into a meeting and told that such was the end of the training, and that within forty-eight hours the Group would sail. This surprised nearly all, who anticipated remaining much longer; in as much as the 499th and 500th Groups had just arrived. The 498th had likewise been at Anza for only three or four days.

All had been surprised at Anza to find that the Groups' identity had been changed—in fact its identity as parent to the Squadrons had been lost. Nobody on the base referred to the 497th Group, as such. It was just a number—a code number.

It was also quickly noted that the Group and Squadrons were not being processed by themselves. Several other units were being processed simultaneously. Seventy-third Wing Headquarters, ground echelon, was one of these, as was the 323 Signal Company.

These organizations—the Group Headquarters, the three Squadrons, the 15th Photo Lab, Wing Headquarters, the Signal Company and the 16th Photo Lab, then commenced preparations for the move to the P.O.E. Within eighteen hours of the notification, the first Group left by train for the Port, with Captain Wood of Wing Headquarters in charge. This advance party was to have everything on shipboard in readiness for the arrival of the main body.

The main body, consisting of about 1,120 persons, left Camp Anza by train, with Lt. Power in charge, at 1000 hours on 29 July, and reached the dock about three hours later without incident. The ship lay only twenty yards

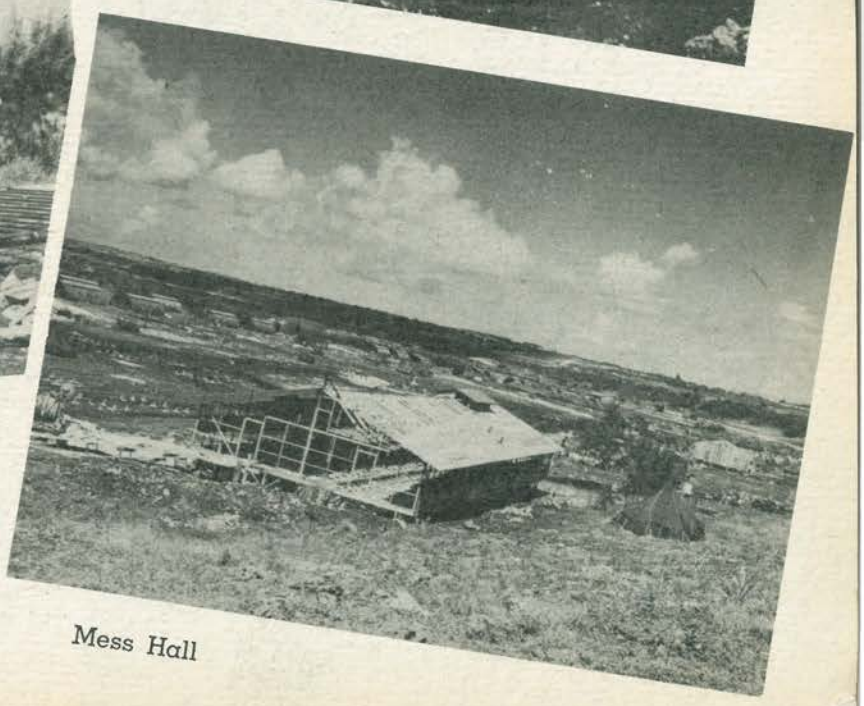


The Fairisle glided out into the Pacific

The ground echelon left Pratt on 17 July

Medical Center, Saipan

Construction begins on Saipan



Mess Hall

Blasting latrine hole

Operations Office

No time and a half for this

from where the personnel detrained. Loading of the ship started promptly.

Red Cross ladies fed the waiting personnel coffee, punch and doughnuts in abundance. However, the whole loading took only about an hour and a half, and was accomplished quickly.

THE TRIP

The ship did not sail until the next morning at 0740. This gave everyone the opportunity to look her over. She was the S.S. Fair Isle, a C-2 type of ship constructed in 1939 for Waterman Steamship Co. of Mobile. She was small, about 10,000 tons, but reputedly fast. There seemed to be considerable deck space. A question as to this promptly arose, however, when about 500 sailors embarked late in the afternoon. These men turned out to be naval aviation mechanics, so quick friendships sprang up.

On Sunday 30 July, at 0740, the boat began to move and the momentous trip began. Within a very short time, the ship was passing through the submarine nets guarding the river entrance, and gliding out into the Pacific.

Within five or six hours, a brisk wind blew up and a swell was kicked up. To most of the good sailors aboard, the sea was no worse than slightly rough. However, to many of the boys who had never been on the ocean before, and who were convinced that they were going to be sick, it was a near hurricane. Men got sick all over the place. It was worst in the hot, crowded enlisted men's quarters, but a number of the officers went under, too.

The next day the wind abated, and the swell lessoned somewhat. About half of the sick men revived to find out what was going on, but the more squeamish remained fast in their bunks, feeling, as one man described it, as though everything in their stomachs had firmly decided to get the hell out of there in a hurry.

The men who had revived, found that the following was the system used on shipboard: Both officers and men had two meals a day; breakfast, and an evening meal. At noon, the officers got coffee and fruit and the enlisted men a sandwich, coffee and cookies. There was a separate mess for the officers. The food was excellent for the officers, but not so good for the enlisted men, due mostly to inadequate cooking facilities, and unsavory and overcrowded conditions in their mess hall.

Colonel Campbell was appointed Troop Commander on board, and he organized a training schedule of classes and P.T. Conditions were far from ideal, but as the month closed, it appeared that some sort of a program could be successfully worked out.

PERSONNEL

While there were no serious personnel problems arising during the period, nevertheless, the organization left Port under strength. This was due to losses at Camp Anza from three causes: 1. AWOL, 2. Sickness, 3. Disqualification for Foreign Duty. There were no losses in officer strength.

Major Norman A. Leer Commanded the Ground Echelon of the 869th Bomb Squadron. The 497th Bomb Group Headquarters personnel were attached to this squadron for movement. First Lt. James A. Moore Commanded the Ground Echelon of the 870th Bomb Squadron. Captain Robert C. Howe Commanded the Ground Echelon of the 871st Bomb Squadron. The 15th Photo Lab Group was attached to the 871st Bomb Squadron for movements.

OVERSEAS MOVEMENT

The first day provided the only rough weather of the entire trip, and although a few men remained sick a day or so after that first day, the greater proportion of men never felt one more qualm throughout the rest of the trip. The weather was surprisingly mild. It appeared to all that Balboa appropriately named the Ocean on which we were sailing "Pacific"—or "Peaceful".

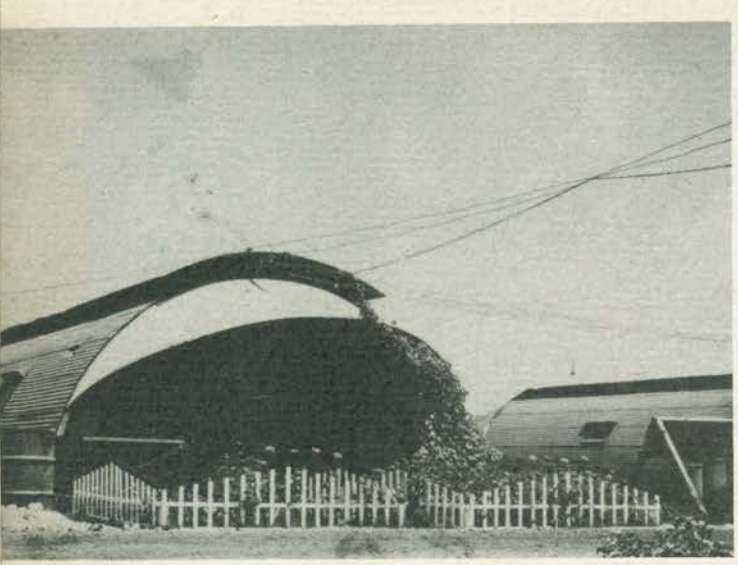
To the surprise of many, our good ship sailed alone, without convoy. All had felt that we would be part of a large convoy. But such was not the case. Our boat made about fifteen knots, and we were told by members of the ship's crew that we could go faster under forced draught.

This part of the trip was not without incident. A thrill was provided during the first twelve hours, when one (and part of the time, two) baby blimps sailed as escort above and ahead of our ship. Finally, the dirigible signalled that the weather was closing in on the West Coast, and requested permission to leave. Permission being granted, she turned away and quickly vanished in the darkening skies. A feeling of loneliness came over everyone, mixed with a considerable amount of trepidation. Here we were—a day's sailing distance from land—with no escort. Night came along, and we felt a little more alone. Finally, came an incident, which suddenly impressed everyone with the imminence of war, and that we were headed into the unknown. Through the ship's public address system boomed a resonant, authorative voice: "All gunners go to your battle stations. Blackout regulations are now in effect. There will be no smoking on the open deck, portholes and lightlocks will be secured. Blackout curtains will be closed." That call was to become so familiar before the trip was over that one-half the traveling personnel could join in that nightly admonition, using the same inflection as did the announcer. But that first night, all men who had not previously been overseas, felt their hearts beat just a little faster, and were just a wee bit tenser, as they aided in blacking out the ship. It was cold and damp, and few ventured out. Those who did go out after blackout, stayed just a short time. The blacked-out ship gave one the eerie feeling of being on a ghost-ship. The fact that an enemy submarine might be lurking in the murky darkness, was not conducive to standing on the open deck, and star-gazing. Everyone went to bed rather early. Lifebelts were carefully placed where they could be

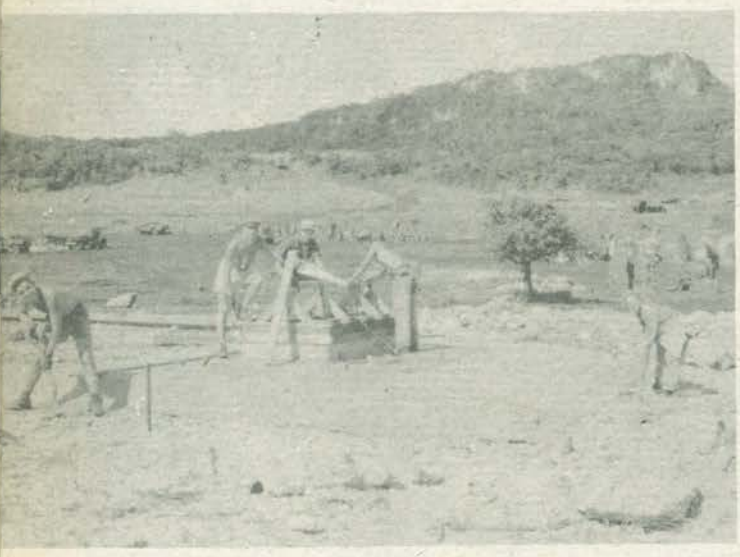
Dynamite!

Tent city

No sugar shortage here



870th Area



"Cement Mixer"

Group S-2

readily located, and the S. S. FAIRISLE sped on through the darkness, with most of its passengers in a fitful state of mind. A few were seasick, but many had other qualms, though none could be found who would admit it.

The next day dawned cloudy and cold, but not so rough. A rather normal cross-swell rocked the boat at intervals. During the day everyone felt better. Those who had been seasick now began to wonder if they were not too hasty in wishing they would die; those who had felt squeemish and somewhat afraid felt better when crew members confidently asserted that there had been no enemy submarine action reported east of Hawaii, for over two months.

The ship's administrative set-up, and quarters comes into review at this point. All officers of the grade of Captain and above, with two exceptions, were given rooms for two, usually with an individual toilet. First Lieutenants were put in rooms having six or nine bunks, depending on the size of the room. Second Lieutenants bunked in larger rooms on a lower deck.

If any officer thought his quarters were crowded, one look at the troops' living quarters convinced him otherwise. They were quartered in four compartments, holding from one hundred and twenty-five up to five hundred, depending on the compartment. Mostly, they slept in tiers of four or five, very close to the next man, and with a part of their gear in bed with them. It was decidedly crowded, but probably no worse than any other troop ship of the size and type of the S. S. FAIRISLE.

The difference between mess facilities was even more marked. The officers ate in near splendor in a separate dining room, with portholes overlooking the sea. They were served by mess personnel, and sat at tables covered with table cloths, and they used the ship's knives, forks, spoons, cups, and plates.

The troops' mess was a far cry from that. They had to use their mess-kits entirely and had to eat standing at crude ables. They could not all eat at one time, as did the officers, but ate over a period of about four hours, depending upon what time their particular compartment was scheduled to eat.

But two main difficulties were heat and inadequate cooking facilities. At this point, chronologically speaking, heat was not yet a factor. But later on, it became a bad problem, and men would quit the mess hall, soaking wet, from head to foot, with water actually squishing in their shoes. Even the most patient described it as "hotter than the hinges of hell!"

The poor food at the very beginning of the trip, provoked all the enlisted men. The only cooking facilities for their mess permitted the steaming of food, and this proved totally inadequate. In addition, the cooks were not used to that sort of equipment, hence at first, the food in the enlisted men's mess was unpalatable—being not of the choicest kind, and not well cooked at that. So an unfortunate situa-

tion quickly presented itself, with the enlisted men bitterly complaining about the princely way the officers ate—'steak every night', etc., while the enlisted men ate their own sweat, (and usually, some obscenity to describe the poor food they received.)

This condition was remedied by two actions. The first was an effort by the officers to convince the men that they were not living like princes—which was truly the case. The officers' mess was next to the mess-room of the ship's officers. The latter, members of the Merchant Marine, ate three, very square meals a day. The traveling officers ate only two. The choicest foods went to the ship's officers, and it was this food that the enlisted men thought their officers were getting.

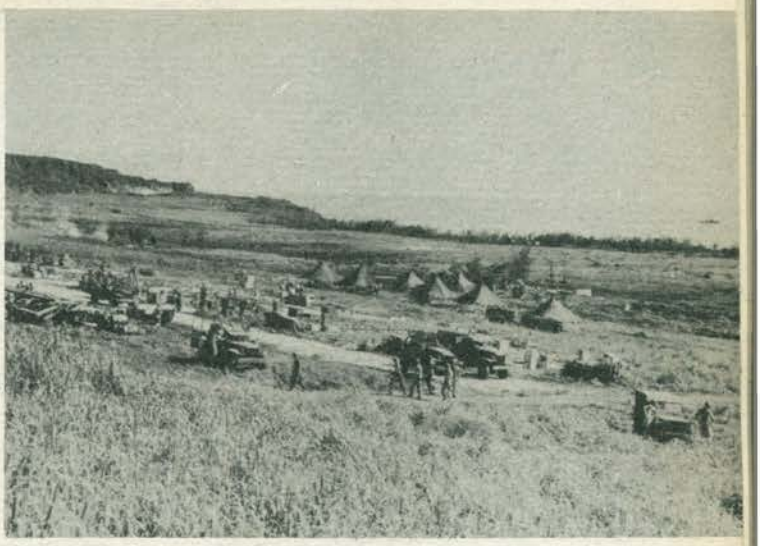
The other action was simply a concerted effort to improve the mess. Cooks who were accustomed to steaming food were assigned to the galley; one mess officer was put in complete charge, and a careful schedule of chow hours was worked out.

The general ship's administration required more than a passing nod. On board, was the Advance Echelon of the 73rd Bombardment Wing, the 323rd Signal Company, a large group (about 500) of Navy personnel, and last, but not least, the Advance Echelon of the Group, including the Squadrons and the 15th Photo Lab. The physical direction and handling and maneuvering of the ship was in the hands of the Merchant Marine, and Navy gun crews. They, theoretically, were to have no contact with the troops. That function was handled by the Transport Commander, who was an officer of the Army Transportation Corps. His duties were of a station commander, and an intermediary between the traveling personnel and the ship's officers and crew.

On the first day out, he called a meeting of all traveling officers, and appointed Lt. Colonel Campbell, Commanding Officer of the Group Advance Echelon, as Commander of the Troops on board. Colonel Campbell then appointed Commanders and Assistant Commanders for the four troop compartments. He appointed Mess, Sanitation, Provost Marshal, and other Staff Officers, and the administration of the traveling personnel aboard the ship was handled by these officers.

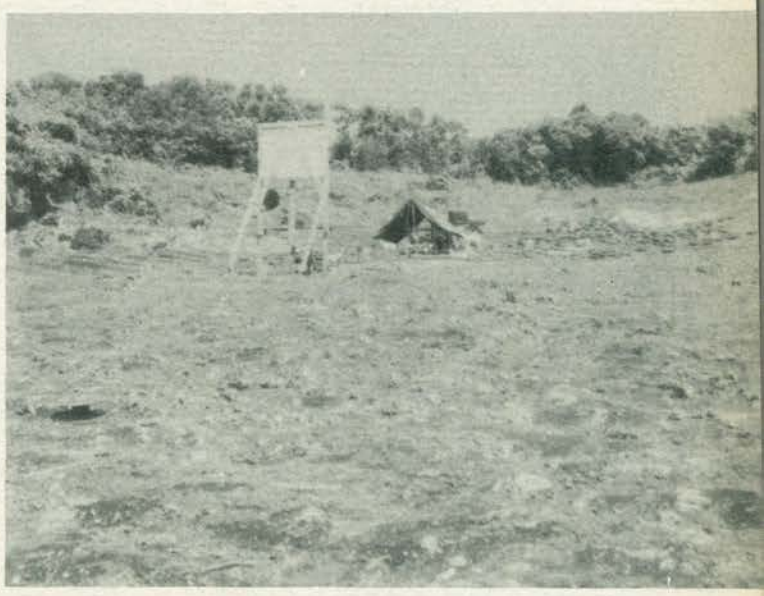
There was another incident during this portion of the trip which caused considerable concern at the time it occurred. This was the near break down of the ship's engines. This occurred almost exactly twenty-four hours after the escort blimps departed. Late one afternoon, traveling personnel discovered that the ship's speed had been cut in half. The blower on one of the engines had broken. Nobody relished a night on the ocean with the ship at half speed. In that condition, we could not outrun any submarine, nor even move fast enough to take effective evasive action. Even after a new blower was installed the engines refused to function properly.

The next morning the story was even worse. Not only was the blower still not work-

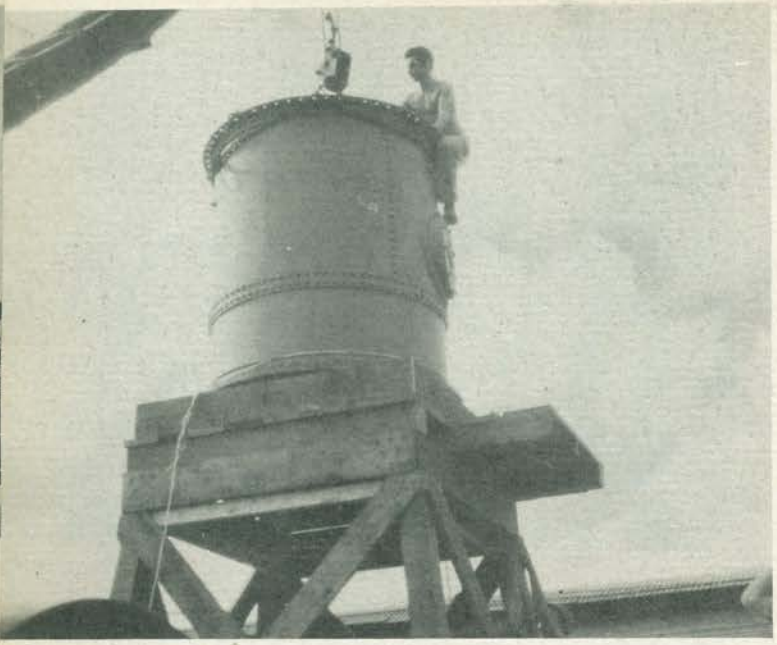


The last frontier

Ground echelon digs in

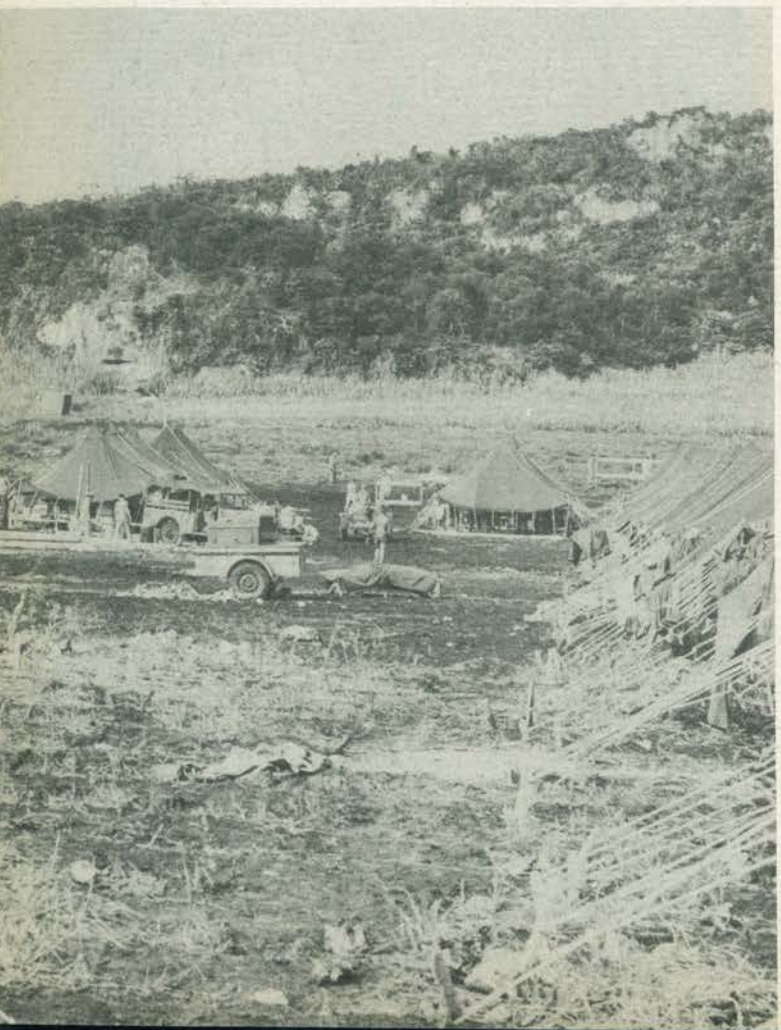


Goat Gulch, Saipan



Fancy plumbing

Beyond that cliff, still 7,000 live Japs



ing, but the ship had lost all headway. Rumor was to the effect that the crew had been unable to install the new one, and that the ship would probably return to port. Concern over safety gave way to fear that we would have to return to the States, and thus not be the first Group of the Wing to be on its way overseas. To everyone's great relief, about noon of the third day, after a breakdown of about twenty-four hours, the ship very unexpectedly picked up speed. Smoke again came from the funnel, and the trip to Hawaii was resumed.

Then came Sunday, August 6th, and with it came renowned Hawaii. Most personnel were on deck, and the Chaplain was holding services, as we passed Diamond Head. Several planes made passes at the ship, and one almost grazed the mast. All began to wonder whether we would land at Honolulu or at Pearl Harbor. The question was quickly answered, when we passed by Waikiki Beach, and turned slightly so as to head for Pearl Harbor. Soon, we slowed down as we neared a reef, around which the water was bluer than most of the traveling personnel had believed possible. The pilot came aboard, and we were soon tied up to a temporary dock just inside the submarine nets. The first part of the trip had thus been safely accomplished.

THE STOP AT HAWAII

Shortly before dusk, word came from the Bridge that we were not sailing that night, so with great commotion, practically all the traveling personnel debarked. No one was allowed to leave the area—which, to everyone's great delight, was Hickam Field. The officers went to the Officers' Club, while the enlisted men were taken on a long walk around the field.

The next day, most of the officers visited the XXI Bomber Command offices, of the specialties in which they worked. For many, it was the first time that they definitely learned that destination "A" was Saipan. Intelligence officers of all the units aboard visited the A-2 office of the XXI Bomber Command and most of the officers found time to make a hurried visit to Honolulu and Waikiki. To the intense disgust of one of the Wing officers on board who lived on Oahu, all agreed that the district was greatly over-publicized.

The enlisted men were permitted to visit the PX and buy and guzzle soft drinks to their heart's content. But they surely would have stocked up far more, had they realized what the remainder of the voyage held in store for them.

On the morning of the 8th, word came through that we were to sail that afternoon, and Colonel Campbell had an announcement made to the effect that all shore leaves were cancelled, with few exceptions, and these would have to be back on shipboard by noon. At approximately 1535, the ship cast off from the dock, to start on the next leg of its trip.

THE TRIP FROM HAWAII TO ENIWETOK

This leg of the journey could have been eventful—actually, it was not. The S. S. FAIR-ISLE became part of a convoy composed of

Saipan—taken from over Marpi Point

View on Saipan

seven ships and three PE, or escort vessels. The convoy traveled in two lines of three ships, abreast, with one ship in the rear. The FAIRISLE was in the most protected place in the convoy—the middle ship in the second line. One escort ship cruised directly ahead of the convoy, while the other two sailed along the flanks.

During the first day of the run to Eniwetok, some of the most squeamish personnel, of whom there were very few, wondered if the run was dangerous, because the convoy zigzaged, sometime in a regular, and sometimes in a haphazard manner, about every ten or twelve minutes. Crew members explained, however, that such was the usual maneuver to prevent a sighting by any lurking submarine. At night, a straight course was taken.

As a practical matter there was no need for anyone to have any fears whatever. There was only one incident during the entire run, and that took place about 1500 one afternoon, about half way to destination. At the time in question, there was some tenseness on the FAIRISLE, because it was playing Tail-End-Charlie, and we were near some Jap-occupied Islands. The convoy was supposed to be traveling at the highest cruising speed of the slowest ship, which happened to be the FAIRISLE. The Commodore of the convoy had tried to speed it up slightly, but the FAIRISLE had been unable to make the grade and at one time had fallen so far behind the other ships, that one of the PE boats had to fall back to act as escort.

On the day of the incident being related, the FAIRISLE had caught up a bit, but was still about two miles behind the rest of the convoy. At about 1500 the PE boat cruising along the left of the convoy was seen to drop back and hurriedly turn off to one side. When about three or four miles from the portside of the FAIRISLE, and somewhat astern, she suddenly dropped three depth charges overboard, and large geysers of water were seen from the FAIRISLE'S decks. Over the ship's speaker system came the voice of the senior Naval Gunnery Officer aboard, calling all gunners to their battle stations.

But the excitment ended right there. For over an hour the PE boat circled the area where the charges had been dropped and was soon out of sight. About dusk, she was calmly returning to her post, and nobody was ever able to find out just what happened. In any event, many a lifebelt was consciously tightened, and for about half an hour, the port side of the decks were lined with people straining their eyes to see what was up. It is to the general credit of all on board that very few, if any indicated fear or anxiety. Curiosity and excitement were the reactions mostly recorded. This incident was the first (apart from the engines breaking down) and only one which disturbed the routine and monotony of the trip.

Mention has been made before, of the difficulties of the enlisted men; crowded holes, poor food, and hot mess halls. Nothing could be done to relieve the first condition. It is a common one aboard all troopships. The large body of naval personnel which debarked at Hawaii, had been replaced by an even larger group of soldiers—including a sizeable group of colored personnel, who, incidentally, were an excellent group of men, and got along well with the white troops aboard. Fortunately no sickness or epidemic occurred, but there was an epidemic of thieving. A large number of small articles and several wallets were stolen. One man was arrested by the Provost Marshal, who found a number of stolen articles in the man's possession. This did not stop the widespread thieving, and even on the last day, one Corporal lost a wallet containing about $90.00. The problem was nearly insoluble, because the lost wallet was subsequently found empty, the cause thereof, over-crowding, could not be remedied.

The problem of making the mess hall bearable, was well-nigh impossible. It was situated one deck below the main deck, and had no outside ventilation, apparently the only thought given towards its ventilation by those who redesigned the ship as a troopship, was the installation of one blower—and that at a point where it could benefit only a fractional portion of the room. While the ship was moving, some small amount of fresh air eventually found its way down to the room, but for the most part, it was a stifling, hot room, entirely unsuited to the partaking of nourishment.

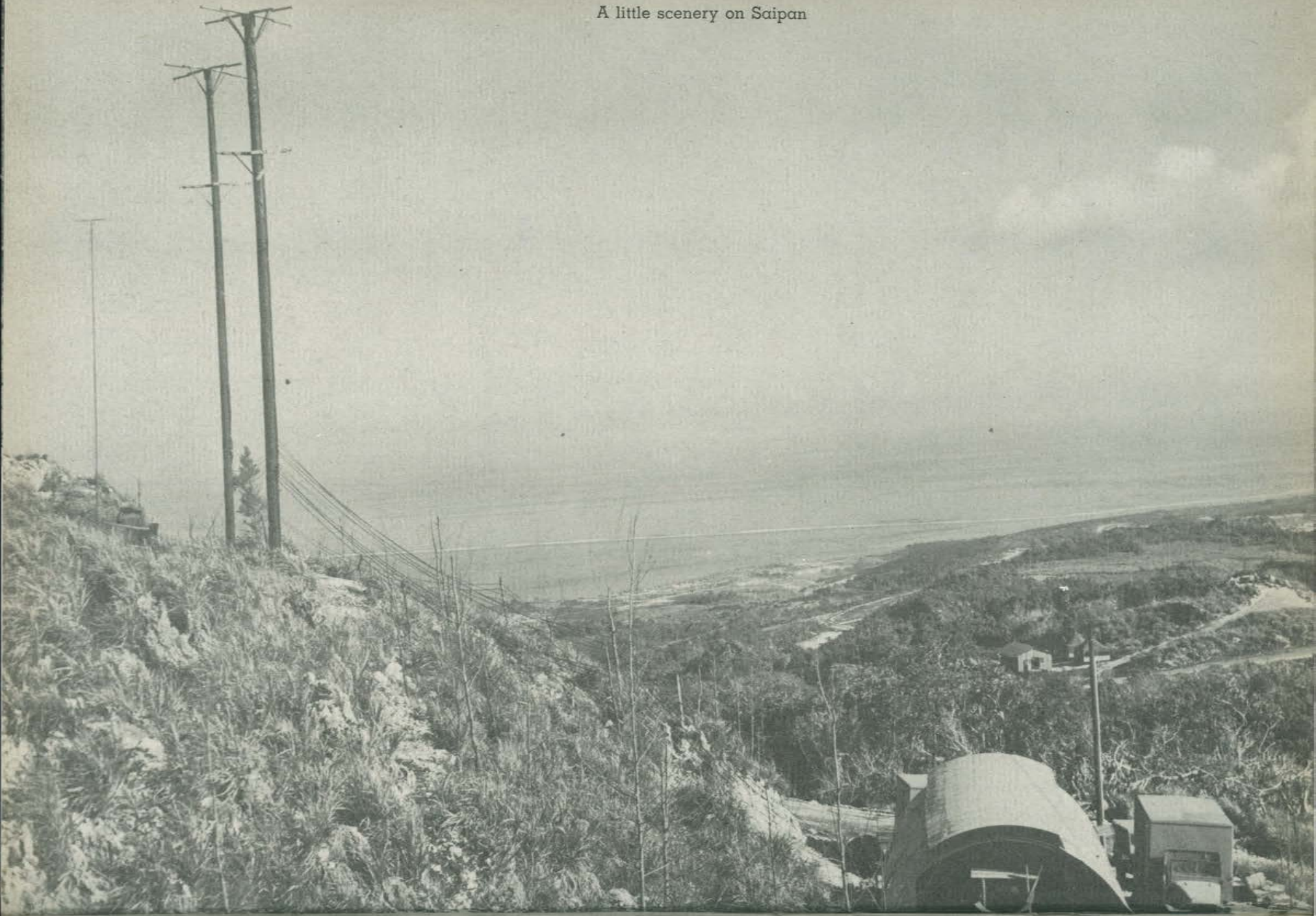
On the pleasant side of the leg of the voyage under discussion, was the weather. The tropical water proved to be a delightful place to sail. The days were warm (the sun was hot), the evenings pleasant, depending upon which side of the boat one slept on. Those on the port side were favored by the fresh and constant trade winds. Those on the starboard side got very little air, and were able to sleep, but fitfully. The poor enlisted men down in the holds, cared little which way the wind blew. For them it was hot—trade winds or no trade winds.

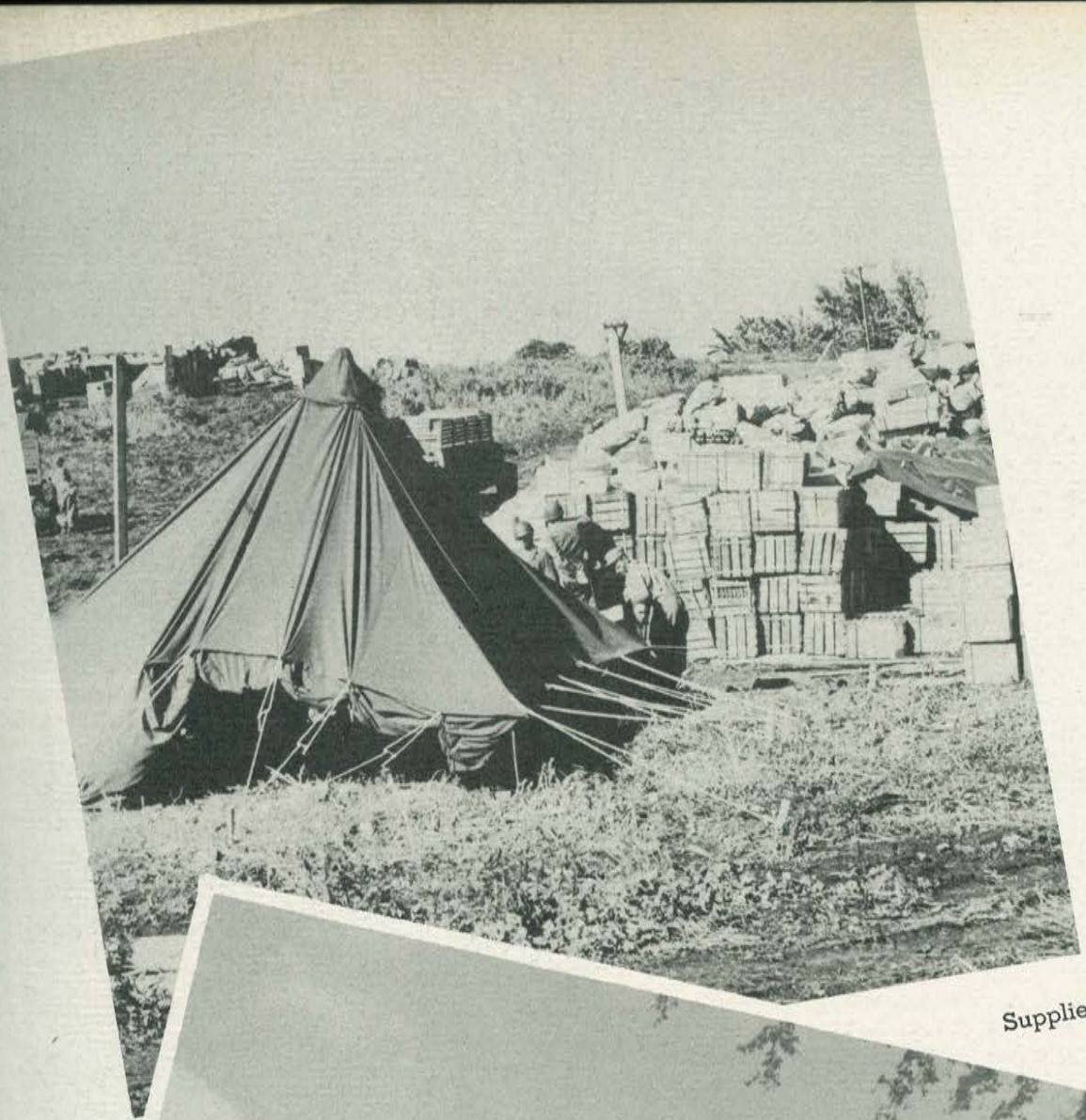
This particular leg of the voyage held the additional element of suspense. The officers had been officially informed by Colonel Campbell of their destination, and the S-2 Section had provided some orientation. The enlisted men had not, as yet, been advised where they were going. But no one, officer or enlisted man, knew precisely where the ship was headed after it left Hawaii. One group felt the boat was headed for Saipan. Another group, after talking with crew members, who were particularly close-mouthed on this leg of the journey, decided that we were heading for some intermediate stopping point in the Marshall Islands.

After several days, the Ship's Master consented to furnish the ship's position each noon, for the officers' daily news presentation. By checking this position carefully, it became apparent that the stop would probably be Eniwetok.

Consequently on the afternoon of 16 Aug-

A little scenery on Saipan





Supplies

Sugar Mill in Charon Kanoa

ust (one full day being gained by crossing the international date line), shortly after noon, the more eagle-eyed watchers spotted a dot on the horizon off the starboard bow. This dot turned out to be a large number of ships and soon the harbor of Eniwetok appeared. Reputed to be one of the largest anchorages in the world, it fully lived up to its name, and the FAIRISLE soon dropped anchor and was lost amidst a mass of shipping of all conceivable types, which, taken as a whole, was itself lost in the tremendous expanse of water which is enclosed by the series of low atolls, called Eniwetok.

THE DELAY AT ENIWETOK

All the difficulties which beset the organization at that atoll, which will be remembered forever by all aboard the FAIRISLE, arose from one fact. The S. S. FAIRISLE once it dropped anchor, remained firmly anchored a long, dreary twenty-seven days.

For the first two or three days, few realized how long the delay might be. It was unofficially ascertained that the FAIRISLE was to sail in a sixth echelon convoy to Saipan, and that on that basis, it might not sail for ten days. That unpleasant information was immediately dismissed as being pure rubbish and all kept awaiting a momentary departure. But as the days rolled by, and the FAIRISLE remained firmly anchored, each new report placed the departure day further in the future. A sort of dull lethargy, mixed with resentment and restlessness, came over the personnel. This condition grew worse as each additional day passed.

To appreciate the situation, the reader would have to visit Eniwetok. It is one of the largest anchorages in the world. One tremendous body of water, surrounded by at least fifteen or sixteen small islands, ranging in size from twenty yards wide, to a mile and a half long. None are more than one hundred or one hundred-fifty yards wide, and the highest point on any is probably ten feet above sea level. From the main deck of a ship anchored in the middle of the anchorage, it is impossible to see all the low lying islands in the group. The whole atoll is surrounded by a coral reef, which prohibited entrance into the anchorage except through one shallow passage. Add to that, the fact that the atoll lies only ten degrees north of the equator, and that the extended visit of the FAIRISLE took place in midsummer, one can now begin to see the situation which confronted the unhappy Group personnel. There they sat, most anxious to get started on their job in this war, yet forced to remain for twenty-seven days, on a motionless boat, under extremely crowded conditions, suffering under a broiling sun, with food and water running out, and with tempers getting frayed. Yet there was nothing to do but sit, and sit, and sit!

Later, but only after much discussion, the officers were permitted to make a couple of trips ashore on the ship's boat, and each enlisted man was able to get two trips ashore

Building in Garapan

Running cold water

by LMSs, for a swim, a beer, and a change of scenery. However, these trips occurred over a period of about five days, and after the ship had been at anchor about a week. The rest of the time, the traveling personnel sat on board and tried in some fashion to entertain themselves to keep from falling into a state of complete dullness and mental decay.

After the first three dreary weeks, the men just didn't care what happened. The mess halls by night were so hot due to the radiation of the sun on the steel decks of the motionless ship, that the officers often left their dinners unfinished, and headed for the trade-wind breeze on deck. The enlisted men left their mess absolutely soaked in perspiration—in some instances with water actually oozing from their shoes. Morale hit absolute bottom during the last few days, when fresh water was rationed to only ten minutes a day, with drinking water being turned on for only a few short intervals. Finally, the food ran out, and "C" rations were served. So the soldiers enjoyed "C" rations twice a day, while the ship's crew were still able to get three very square meals a day. The least they could have done, so the army personnel thought, was to prorate the fresh food remaining.

Finally, on the afternoon of 12 September, just twenty-seven days after arrival, and with very little ado, the S. S. FAIRISLE upped anchor, and headed for the anchorage exit. The disgusted group of soldiers on board, were almost too listless to get up from their impro-

Native Chief, Saipan

These were buildings in Garapan

vised hammocks or crap games to watch the departure. Four weeks of their lives had just been utterly wasted.

THE TRIP FROM ENIWETOK TO SAIPAN

This part of the trip should have been by far the most exciting and interesting; actually, it was just the opposite. All were so sick of the boat and all the trouble it represented to them, that they simply existed until Saipan was reached. There were a few stories of sinkings in the previous convoy, but most of the soldiers would have welcomed a sub scare to shake them out of their lethargy.

Actually there were no incidents. The convoy consisted of nine ships escorted by a destroyer and two PE boats. It moved rather slowly, but very surely, and kept much better and closer formation than did the convoy from Hawaii.

The trip passed quickly. On the night of 16 September, a dull glow was seen on the horizon, showing that Saipan was not blacked out. The next day our home appeared in the morning sun. It looked very much as we expected. It was green, as most expected it to be. It had a rather high hill in the center, that could properly be called a mountain. It seemed rather long. It was quite near Tinian, which was greener and flatter. It appeared not unlike the usual rotogravure shots of many a tropic island, although it did not appear like New Guinea with its mass of tangled jungle. Saipan looked liveable, and all thanked their lucky stars.

Interest now quickened. The lethargy had been dismissed. There was one bad moment, when it was discovered that the FAIRISLE, would be the last ship through the submarine nets, despite the fact that it had been in the front rank of the convoy. Did that augur another long delay before unloading? We had been told that the reason for the delay at Eniwetok was that Saipan was not ready for us. However, it was noticed that the ship was being directed straight towards the unloading platform at Tanapag Harbor, and was very soon moored there, beside another ship which carried most of the Group equipment.

For about five hours, all on board waited while the cargo ship's deck equipment was being unloaded. Eventually, at about 1430, the information came through that troops would now be unloaded across the deck of the cargo ship.

In the midst of a driving rainstorm, the Group, Squadron and Photo Lab Personnel disembarked. They now set foot on earth; the earth of an island that was to be their home for some time. What would it be like? How long would they be there? These were two questions which all thought about, as they slipped and stumbled their way down the wooden planking that served as a gang plank, with full pack, and in the face of the driving rain.

THE FIRST BIVOUAC

After setting foot on land, personnel making up the 497th Group, were loaded onto trucks and whisked off to the area assigned to them. The route lay through the broken town of Garapan. This town was reputed to have a pre-war population of nearly 10,000 persons, and was easily the largest town on Saipan. It now was a mere mess of rubble, and everyone got a close-up view of the destruction resulting from our invasion.

The remainder of the ride, seemed to be through green fields, and exhibited little evidence of the bitter fighting that had taken place only a few months previously. The ride left a confused impression, of a sultry, damp climate, surprisingly good roads near the harbor; atrociously bad ones in outlying districts; nearly obliterated buildings in the towns but little other evidence of damage elsewhere; lots of activity; a general impression of hustle and a tremendous amount of construction activity.

After a ride of nearly an hour, which took that length of time, mainly because of the muddy paths the trucks had to follow, the convoy halted beside a sugar-cane field. The scene was very attractive. A vast expanse of sea lay below, with a number of cumulus clouds floating over a mass of white caps kicked up by a strong breeze. It was a very enjoyable sight.

Everyone was rudely interrupted from their staring by a voice telling them to climb down because this was their destination. The sense of pleasure being experienced by all quickly vanished. Destination? Why this was only a partly cleared, muddy sugar-cane field. It must mean that tents will have to be pitched, and quickly too, because it was already late afternoon.

Everyone had been so anxious to get off the hated FAIRISLE, that they had assumed that everything on shore would be far better. Naturally, then, they were somewhat startled to find that those rosy dreams were not true. They were going to live in pup-tents and like it. All now realized the import of Colonel Wright's statement before they departed from Pratt; namely, that a B-29 man was no different than anybody else, and that each officer and enlisted man in the advance echelon could consider himself as a 590. So each man sighed as he jumped down from his truck. It looked like things were going to be tough for a while.

And tough they were, as every man started in to pitch shelter-halves on the damp, uneven ground. To many, the art of bivouac had been just another chore to complete as part of a training program. Some of it had been fun, and part of it an annoyance. They would never really have to do anything like that. Yet here they were, and it was quite serious. There was no play or fun involved.

The next chronological event in these men's lives, was a slight hiatus in tent pitching, while evening chow was consumed. But it wasn't the usual chow to which all were accustomed. It consisted exclusively of K rations. It can be officially recorded that K rations were found perfectly adequate and satisfying.

Cold C rations however, were later found to be unpallatible.

Probably considerable space could be readily devoted to the events of the first night! It can safely be averred that green troops placed in the vicinity of the unknown, can be very nervous indeed. While on shipboard, many tales had been told concerning the large number of Japs who roam around at night, slitting throats and holding pitched battles with American patrols. Were the reports true? Nobody knew for certain, but some observant souls, had noticed that a number of soldiers on the Island carrying carbines. So maybe the stories were true. It will suffice to say that the first night found the 497th a tired, somewhat stunned, and uneasy organization. The guards, hurriedly summoned and posted just as the early darkness blanketed the Island, really had the most difficult times. They were in inky blackness, on a strange post, surrounded by high bushes, and they knew not what else. The remainder went to sleep, but slumbered fitfully. The hard ground was worse than the oft-cursed bunks of the FAIRISLE.

The morning dawned clear, and it was soon ascertained that morale had survived the first night in good shape. Many a call was heard, as a man stuck his head out of a pup-tent, to the effect that "Blackout is now over. You may now smoke on the open deck." This echoed the familiar call that boomed over the speaker system of the FAIRISLE every morning and awakened all personnel. It was cheery greeting to the new day, and showed that everyone had come through the first trying night in good shape.

The next day was spent in getting acquainted with surroundings, and putting the camp in order. The 870th and 871st Squadrons had not reached their bivouac area until well after dark, and had pitched their tents under difficult conditions. Such problems as food, water, sanitation, details of all sorts were of first importance, and reliance had to be placed on the 65th Service Group, which had been assigned to work with the 497th Group. Unloading the equipment on the boat was also of high priority, and a dump was soon established, which, however, included property of all the units that came over on the boat. These general matters occupied everyone's attention the first day.

During the next night, the organization discovered one of the principal features of the Island of Saipan—rain. About midnight, a torrential rain fell. This was really nothing new because there had been showers off and on during the preceding 36 hours. However, the one in question seemed to be a shower to end all showers. It poured; the wind blew, and everybody suffered, more or less silently, while the water seeped in on those unwary souls who had not ditched their tents very

Invasion Beach, Saipan

carefully. It was a bad night for all. Yet at daybreak, the same cries as to blackout being over again resounded through the area, indicating that morale was good.

Another difficulty encountered was that of locating TAT and QM equipment unloaded from the boat. The Island Command put a time limit on the period for unloading. At the end of that period, the ship would have to leave the dock area, and proceed to a point away from shore, and could be unloaded there only by means of small lighters. Thus speed in unloading became very important. There was no time to sort property as it was unloaded. Everything belonging to all of the various units who came out on the boat, was unloaded as quickly as possible, and placed in one common dump, located at a place centrally located to all the units. Thus it soon became a near-impossible job to locate equipment as the pile increased, and much needed equipment could not be found until after a search of several days.

Colonel Campbell, after disposing of a multitude of preliminary matters turned his attention towards the main objective—the creation of the permanent camp. Island engineers had prepared a blue-print showing the location and general set-up.

The proposed site lay along the edge of a Strait that was between Saipan and Tinian, about a mile from the bivouac area. That, of course, was unobjectionable. It provided a pretty setting, with sheer cliffs to the rear, and the blue sea in front. It was, however, the condition of the site and the access thereto, which were discouraging. Taking the latter first, it must be pointed out that the only access was by means of a narrow dirt and rock, one-width cartway which ran along the top of the afore-mentioned cliffs and then abruptly descended to the fields which were to be the site of the permanent bivouac area. It was not a street. It wasn't even a road. It can be best described as a cartway, probably used for horse-drawn vehicles.

But it was the site itself that gave the most concern. It was for the most part, an immense field of sugar-cane. Of course that in itself was not so cataclysmic but the fact that the Group personnel themselves, and themselves alone, would have to cut it down was the most startling factor.

PREPARATION OF THE PERMANENT AREA

The first problems encountered here, was how to cut down the cane, underbrush and other growths which were on the site to be used. The equipment belonging to the Group was totally unsuited for that sort of work. There was no bulldozer for clearing and leveling. There were no scythes for cutting. There was no suitable heavy equipment at all.

The natural thing then to do, was to call upon the Service Group. This was to no avail. The 65th Service Group which had arrived on the Island, some 10 days prior to the Group, and which had likewise settled in a temporary bivouac area, was at the same time engaged in preparing its permanent area. All the heavy equipment it possessed was being used to clear this area. Hence there was no choice but for the Group to attempt to clear the area with whatever hand tools it had.

Before the clearing work commenced, an additional problem arose. Was the area safe? The Island G-2 Section had informed the Group S-2 Section that there probably were no Japs in that section though there might be a few odd civilians hiding in caves who would offer no violence. Considerable shelling had taken place at Nafutan Point, near the Group area. One land-mine had been found on the edge of the temporary bivouac area. There might well be a number of casualties if a large group of men were put to clearing the permanent area, should there prove to be a number of live shells, or mines or duds hidden by the sugar cane and brush.

Since no assistance was available from other sources on the Island, it obviously was to be the responsibility of Group personnel to handle this job too. Fortunately all ordnance personnel were in the Ground Echelon, so they were organized into a Bomb Reconnaissance Squad. To save time the following procedure was established. The reconnaissance squad started at one end of the area, and thoroughly covered a strip of land. If anything was found, that area in which it lay was marked off, and the Island Bomb Disposal unit notified. The men who were to clear the area followed the reconnaissance group along, and cleared the area which had been searched and found safe. Then in due course, when the Island Bomb Disposal unit removed the unexploded shell that section was also cleared by the Group personnel.

This all proved to be a slow process. The miserable cartway leading to the permanent area, made it difficult to transport personnel to and from the area. Most of the men had to walk the mile to and from the area. This was rather hard on them, because the sun was very hot, and the work back breaking.

During all this time, personnel was still living in pup-tents and eating cold K and C rations. Incessant rains poured down constantly, with the result that a number of the men were catching cold. So the Commanding Officer was faced with the problem of moving into the half-cleared area, and establishing living quarters in pyramidal tents, or waiting until the whole area was ready and then move, but in the meantime keeping the men living on the muddy ground. A move at this point, meant an additional move later on when the various Squadron Areas were cleared.

Colonel Campbell decided that the best thing to do was to move down to the site as soon as possible. But there was still one problem to be faced—sanitation. In the temporary area, slit trenches of various sorts had been built. In the permanent area, permanent latrines were planned. These, however, had to be blasted, because the soil of Saipan was merely a slight cover over a base of jagged

coral rock. The progress along these lines was slow, because there was no equipment in the Group T/E, which was suitable for blasting. There were no jack hammers; no dynamite and no apparatus for removing rock from the blasted holes—some of which were to go to a depth of 15 feet. Finally, a jack hammer was borrowed from one of Engineer units on the Island. However it was obtainable only for night use, since the Engineers needed it during the day. Thus work progressed slowly.

Colonel Campbell ordered that the work of blasting latrines, be concentrated in one location, so that there would be proper sanitation, when the troops moved into that location. This was done, and a portion of the area assigned to the 869th Squadron was soon ready. The order to move was then given.

Very little space has been given to the blasting of the latrines. Too much credit cannot be given to the personnel who worked nightly on that detail for a seemingly endless time. The blasting continued for several weeks. The cry "Fire in the hole", became a by-word throughout the area. Many a tent saw a rock go through it, and several personnel were hit by flying fragments. Bomb-trucks were used to hoist the debris from the hole, and lack of tools required that the men pile broken coral, by hand, into empty oil drums, and it was then hoisted to the surface by the bomb truck. It was effective, but very primitive and wasteful.

THE MOVE TO THE PERMANENT AREA

This was accomplished without incident. As soon as Colonel Campbell determined that latrines were sufficiently blasted within the area where it was intended to establish a permanent camp, and that the area was sufficiently cleared, and was safe, he gave the order to move. All available trucks were pressed into action, the whole move accomplished in one day. The old gypsy camp was struck. The men hurriedly packed their equipment, and were loaded into trucks which bounced down the miserable road towards the permanent area. For a time it looked as though everybody might not be able to move during the daylight hours. As darkness came, Group Headquarters personnel were still awaiting their turn, and it did not appear that they would be able to move before complete darkness. Colonel Campbell decided that for security reasons, he strongly desired all personnel at one location. Hence efforts were redoubled, and just as darkness settled completely, Headquarters reached the new location. This took place on September 23, seven days after arrival at Saipan.

The area into which the organization moved, composed bout 3/4 of that allocated to the 869th Squadron. Pyramidal tents had been erected for all personnel, and the move meant the end of pup tents, and enabled all to use cots. It meant that everyone was now located in the permanent bivouac area, and that the daily problem of transporting personnel from one area to the other need no longer be reckoned with.

CONSTRUCTION PROBLEMS IN THE PERMANENT AREA

It can be safely averred that considerable portion of the training of the Ground Echelon had been misdirected. Each man had been given some training in the specialty in which he worked. Actually, considerable training should have been given in carpentry, blasting, bivouac problems, surveying, quonset hut construction, and allied matters. Because it was in those fields that the main work of the Ground Echelon was directed for the first 30 to 45 days after landing. Several courses in the use of the various standard tools would have been helpful.

There was no one main problem at this point. Rather there were a number of problems and the difficult job was to tie them all in. Among such problems were: the blasting of the latrines; the lack of lumber for tent floors; the heavy rains which made the access road all but impassable; the lack of nails; the lack of heavy equipment and the concentration of personnel and traffic in a small area, with the resultant churning up of that area.

The whole problem was fundamentally an engineering and construction job. Colonel Campbell approached it from that standpoint. He decided that pending final completion of the job, that the Squadrons would have to lose their identities, and the job tackled on a Group basis. The Colonel appointed Major Leer in charge of construction, with full authority to work on any particular Squadron area, and on any particular part thereof depending upon what materials were ready.

All officers and enlisted men were told that they would not be working in their specialties; that they were all 590's, and that their main job was to get the area complete and the housing built. In line with this decision, was the appointment of various Officers to be in charge of some of the various important phases of the work. Procurement of lumber,

Hq. 497th Bomb Group Personnel

Cliff, pot marked by shell fire

and direction of all transportation was placed on the shoulders of Lt. Conners of Group Hq. Lt. Peterson of the 869th, was put in charge of tent-flooring, and erection. Latrine construction became the job of Capt. Brown of Group Hq., and so on. Every night an officers' call was held, at which all the day's problems were discussed, and the plans for the next day laid out.

Thus, day by day, construction progressed, at a surprisingly rapid clip. At one point, the Group was congratulated by Colonel Brugge, Commanding Officer of the Wing Advance Echelon, as being far ahead of the other Groups.

A detailing of the day by day progress of the work, or of any part of the work would serve no useful purpose. It need only be noted that at first it seemed to go very slowly. This, of course, was due to the fact that most of the work consisted of ground work—laying foundations—tent floors—completing latrines—laying wires, etc. However, when the girders of the quonset huts started to appear above the ground, then morale was heightened, and all could see what was being accomplished from day to day.

The whole period was characterized as a battle for equipment. Many a scavenging party was set out to find almost any article ranging from nails to water-tanks, and nearly everyone returned with booty of some sort. A bit of Group rivalry sprang up, and at one point Colonel Brugge was forced to issue an order that any individual borrowing or appropriating property or equipment from one of the other units in the Wing, would be court-martialled.

The work progressed, however, without it being necessary to evoke that rule. The 871st Squadron put up 14 quonset huts in 14 days. They and the 869th Squadron used teams of specialists, who did just a certain bit of work, and moved from building to building. The 870th used one team to construct each quonset, but this system proved to be just a bit slower.

CHAPTER IX
OCTOBER 1944

Air and Ground Echelon rejoin and first practice missions are flown.

MOVEMENT OF FLIGHT ECHELON

The first B-29 aircraft left Herington AAF for its overseas destination on 6 October 1944. Unfortunately this aircraft, A-30, piloted by Captain C. H. Davis and Lt. Wheatley, developed a violent vibration and tail flutter about 70 miles west of Wichita. After being aloft an hour and a half an emergency landing was made at Wichita. The landing was downwind and the aircraft ran off the end of the runway. There was slight damage to the aircraft, and all of the crew returned safely to Herington AAF.

Following a route from Herington to Mather Field, California; to John Rogers Field, Oahu, T. H.; to Kwajalein; to Isely Field, Saipan; a flight of over 6500 nautical miles and an average duration of 32 flying hours, the remaining aircraft departed and arrived in the following chronology:

A/C No.	Sqdn.	Aircraft Comdr.	Dept'd October	Arr'd October
A-23	870th	Capt. R. O. Dauth	6	21
A-28	870th	Capt. E. G. Hahn	7	19
A-26	870th	Lt. S. P. Wagner	8	19
A-1	869th	Maj. Morgan, Col. Wright	10	20
A-2	869th	Major J. P. Baird (General E. O'Donnell)	10	20
A-3	869th	Capt. L. L. Cox	10	23
A-4	869th	Capt. O. J. T. Archer	11	21
A-5	869th	Capt. W. R. Young	11	21
A-6	869th	Capt. J. H. Brewster	11	20
A-7	869th	Lt. J. D. Bartlett	11	21
A-8	869th	Capt. P. L. Yon	11	21
A-9	869th	Lt. J. T. Garvin	11	24
A-10	869th	Lt. W. L. Sutton	11	22
A-22	870th	Major A. L. Haley	16	23
A-27	870th	Capt. J. C. Arnold	16	29
A-21	870th	Lt. Col. R. E. Haynes	16	23
A-24	870th	Capt. P. Beard	16	24
A-25	870th	Lt. Hamilton	16	24
A-44	871st	Major F. L. Trickey	18	25
A-46	871st	Lt. J. G. Crowder	18	25
A-29	870th	Lt. E. R. Campbell	18	25
A-45	871st	Capt. J. B. Lampley	18	29
A-47	871st	Capt. H. E. Walker	18	25
A-42	871st	Major C. C. Fowler	20	27
A-50	871st	Capt. C. A. Horner Col. Johnson	20	27
A-41	871st	Lt. Col. F. L. Davis	21	28
A-49	871st	Capt. D. W. Peterson	21	28
A-48	871st	Major J. W. Humphrey	22	27
A-43	871st	Capt. T. H. Morgan	23	30

All aircraft and crews arrived safely, and were very pleased to find Saipan such an attractive place. Letters from some members of the Ground Echelon had painted a rather grim picture. Each crew expressed the thought that conditions on Saipan were far better than they had expected.

MOVEMENT OF AIR ECHELON

Group Headquarters and the 869th Squadron entrained at Herington for their ATC terminal, Hamilton Field, California, on 11 October and arrived, without incident, on 14 October. Subsequent squadrons left on 15 October and 21 October and arrived on 18 October and 24 October respectively. The procedures in these movements were identical. The units were processed and alerted for shipment, meantime enjoying evenings in nearby San Francisco. Flying in C-54s the first group of men, twenty in number, left on 18 October, and arrived at Saipan on 21 October. Each Subsequent group consisted of about twenty (20) to twenty-two (22) men. Apparently the first few shipments proceeded directly, accomplishing the 32-hour flight with minimum stop-over time. The personnel that followed later taking the same ATC route to Hickam

869th Sq. Area in immediate foreground

Field, Oahu, T. H.; to Johnson Island; to Kwajalein Atoll; to Saipan; were often delayed considerably en route. Some spent several days in Honolulu and others were held at Kwajalein. By the end of the month, however, only a few officers and men had not yet arrived.

Before leaving for the Coast, the Group had to complete the Batista Field shake-down mission. Some difficulty was experienced in this, as the weather was bad, up to 7 October. On that date, however, ten (10) B-29s and crews flew to Walker Army Air Field, the advance base for the Wing mission. Finally, on the fourth attempt to complete the mission, six (6) aircraft started and five (5) completed it.

In order to shakedown the remaining planes a seven-hour mission was later planned and executed satisfactorily by the 871st Bomb Squadron.

During the month personnel had considerable free time and an opportunity to go on pass. Later on, en route, at Hamilton Field and Honolulu, T. H. personnel had time for sight-seeing, etc. This plus the excitement of the actual movement and some promotions improved morale very much, and all left for their overseas assignments, in fine spirits and high anticipation.

ARRIVAL OF FLIGHT AND AIR ECHELONS

On Saipan the ground echelon continued its labors and anxiously awaited the arrival of the remainder of the group. After a minor disappointment on Oct. 12 when the first B-29 to arrive at Saipan turned out to be a plane of the 498th, and not the 497th, all personnel kept an eye skyward, watching for the first plane belonging to the 497th. They had to wait until the 19th. On that date the first plane came in piloted by Lt. Wagner of the 870th Squadron. A few minutes later Capt. Hahn of the same Squadron landed.

From that day on, two or three planes arrived each day. Colonel Wright and Major Morgan arrived on the 20th. Lt. Col. Haynes landed on the 23rd, and Lt. Col. Davis came in on the 28th.

During this time, the members of the Air echelon began to arrive. The first contingent arrived by A.T.C. on 21 October. Among the arrivals were Major Dossett, Major Broadhurst, Major Gilmore, Captain Teigen and several other Officers and Enlisted men. The remaining members of Group Headquarters came in shortly thereafter, to be followed in turn by the Air echelons of the three squadrons.

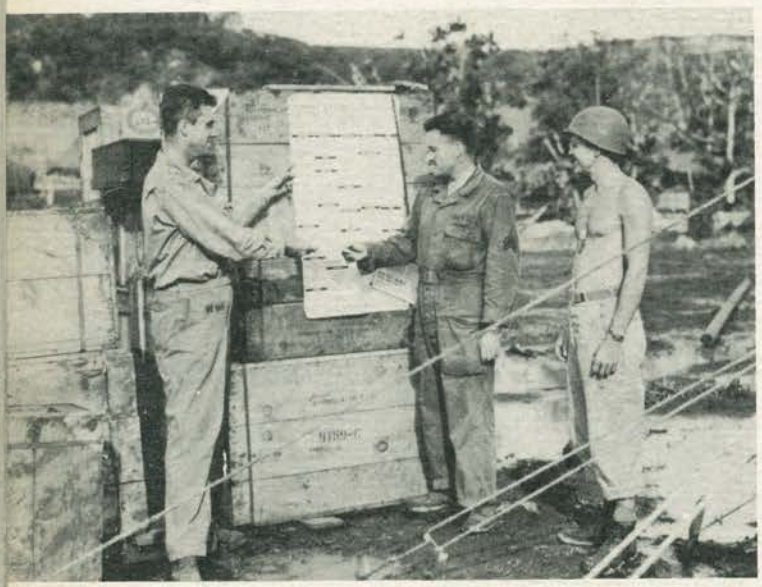
The Ground Echelon was quite proud, that on the day Col. Wright arrived, and he was the first to come in after the planes of Captain Hahn and Lt. Wagner, that the whole area was ready. There were a few odds and ends not quite finished, but the Mess-hall, quonsets and tents were all up. The latrines were all blasted. It had been hard work, but it was done,

Lt. Wagner and crew

Lt. Col. Morgan — Col. Wright

Capt. "Doc" Johnson and his musicians

Father and son meet on Saipan



Lt. Powers — Chaplain Haugse

Sgts. Stovall and Beecroft

and a healthy feeling of satisfaction felt by all concerned.

THE FIRST PRACTICE MISSION

The 28th was a big day for the Group. It was on that day that the first practice combat mission was flown. It was deemed undesirable to make the Tokyo run on the first mission, so Headquarters had decided that a mission should be planned against some Jap island or territory, where some combat experience could be gained under not too rugged conditions.

In due course, the Group was notified that Truk Atoll was to be the target, with the submarine pens on Dublon Island, as the aiming point. Nine B-29s from the 869th Squadron formed the first element to go over the target, with nine (9) planes from the various Squadrons of the 498th Group, making up the second element.

Each of the 869th planes carried twelve (12), 500-pound G. P. bombs. The fuel load was 5440 gallons. The distance flown was 1480 nautical miles. Take-off for the first plane was at 2030z, 27 Oct. 44. The first plane returned at 0242z of the next day and the last at 0311z. Two planes were airborne, but did not reach the target. One of these returned because of a blown-out cylinder, and the other because of a runaway propeller. The target was attacked from an altitude of 25,000 feet, with General O'Donnell and Major Morgan in the lead ship.

The opposition was very light. Anti-aircraft fire from the oft-bombed Island, while of heavy caliber (probably 75 mm), was quite inaccurate, with bursts from 1500 to 5000 feet low, and there were only a few scant bursts. The air opposition was practically nil. Only one fighter, probably a Zeke, came up to meet the formation. He stayed well away from the formation, though twice he came in to about 900 yards—possibly to try to identify the type of attacking aircraft. His main function probably was to transmit the height of the formation for the benefit of the ground gunners.

For a first combat mission, the bombing was excellent. The photographs showed 40 bomb bursts within the target area. It really was a great thrill because those who had no combat experience, could now say that they had been under fire. Also, they had seen a real Jap plane at rather close range. However, all realized that it had just been a practice run, and that in the very near future, the big and important job of tackling Tokyo would be scheduled. Most personnel were quietly satisfied, but reserved any celebrating until the Tokyo mission was safely under their belts.

CAPTIVES TAKEN

The importance of taking two prisoners on Saipan is not great, when compared with other accomplishments of the Advance Echelon. However, it is a very rare instance when ground echelons in the Air Corps take prisoners and it is believed that this was the first instance of any B-29 unit engaging in such activity.

We get some Japs

The first captive was taken on October 4th. On that day, three enlisted men from the 870th Squadron, to-wit: S/Sgt. Frank Veselovaky, Cpl. Per A. Edholm and Pfc. Regis J. Cully were out on a scavenger hunt for some machine parts. Their quest took them to the northern portion of the Island. At this point it should be made clear, that the northern half of the Island was "off limits". A surprisingly large number of Japs remained on the Island at this period. They had mostly been herded into sections in the north part, where they had organized into small groups. A number of Island personnel had been killed or wounded souvenir-hunting in areas near where these Japs were holed up in various caves.

The three men had wandered up a road which was in the off-limit sector, and which, it was later ascertained, was unusually dangerous. While on foot, they came around a large rock, and lo and behold they came upon a Jap, literally with his pants down. (He explained later that he had dysentery). As soon as the Jap recovered from his surprise, he started to reach inside his coveralls for a grenade which he was carrying. But realizing that he was covered by three guns, he quickly desisted, and glumly surrendered. The scavenger hunt had ended and the three men hurried back to the bivouac area, with their unexpected prize.

The wildest excitement raged through the camp area, and the camera fiends tried to snap many pictures of the captive. The presence of the prisoner was reported to the Island Provost Marshall, who requested that he be brought to the Stockade immediately. This was done, and an interpreter questioned the prisoner. He turned out to be one Toshio Tagawa, age 19. He was a first class seaman who had been on shore-duty on the Island for about two months before D-day. He answered questions willingly, and seemed to have no conception of security. He was clearly not well, weak, sickly, undersized, and had a bullet wound in his back.

The second prisoner provided an even more interesting story. He, strictly speaking, was not taken captive. He voluntarily surrendered. At about 2030 of the night of Oct. 5, Sgt. Clyde Nichols of the 871st Squadron was sitting in the Squadron Armament tent writing a letter. This tent happened to be the last tent in one corner of their bivouac area. He heard a noise behind him, and something that sounded like double-talk; he was interested in composing the letter, so paid no particular attention to the interruption. After a few moments, the muttering was repeated, and the Sergeant turned to see what the trouble was. To his great consternation, there stood a Jap. Nichols' first problem was to get a gun. The Jap was between him and the gun rack. So Nichols started a circling movement, which brought him closer to his gun. He grabbed it, covered the intruder, and yelled for help. While waiting for nearby friends to appear, he suddenly realized that at no time had the Jap showed any aggression. As a matter of fact he acted very meek, and seemed somewhat astounded at the commotion. Also he had kept his hands folded on the top of his head, if not actually straight up in the approved surrender fashion.

This prisoner was brought to Group Headquarters, questioned briefly by Cpl. Wong, an enlisted man of Chinese origin, who spoke Japanese. But it appeared that Wong and the prisoner did not speak similar dialects, because after a short talk, followed by an exchange of notes, the status of the prisoner was still uncertain. All that was clear, was that he had been wounded by a bomb burst, that he was hungry, that he was surrendering and that he wanted to stay and work with a shovel. He was very insistent on this latter point, when the time came to bring him to the stockade. He refused at first to join Lts. Power and Black and get into a nearby jeep. No, no, his gestures, when they tried to induce him to quit the tent, showed, I want to stay here and dig.

This particular idiosyncrasy was explained at the interrogation at the Stockade. His name was Takaski Olomo. He was a member of a conscript civilian labor battalion, which, approximately 2000 strong, landed on the Island about 40 days before D-day. During the early days of the invasion, he reported that all but four of his organization were killed or wounded. The four took to the hills, but were soon found by a marine patrol and scattered. He had been living in caves in the hills high above the camp, and living on sugar cane and rain-water. But he had been gradually getting hungrier. He had watched the American Soldiers dig and work all day, so figuring that such was the reason he had been brought to Saipan, he decided to come down and help the American work, and maybe get some food in exchange. At least, such was his story.

There were some interesting sidelights to this chapter. Both prisoners had been wounded, and were sickly-looking, and very thin. Both talked freely. Both seemed highly appreciative of proffered medical aid, and the courtesies extended them.

The attitude of the average G.I. was interesting too. Seeing his first Jap prisoner, he reacted just about as might have been expected. At first, he was inclined to hoot and stare. But this quickly gave way to sympathy for the puny, beaten Son-of-Heaven before him, and he gave him cigarettes, candy and food in profusion. It should also be stated that all such favors were gratefully and politely accepted—even with a ceremonial bow by the civilian.

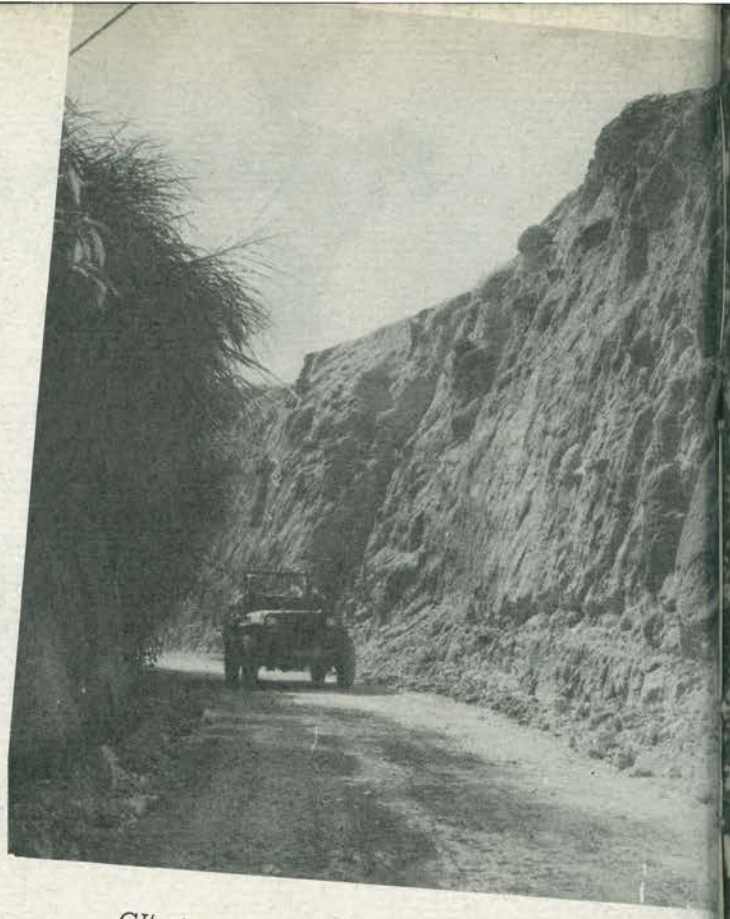
Out of all this, there was one item which was completely baffling. The gift which the laborer prized most, in fact one which was requested by gestures, was a number of dry crackers from a box of K rations. Indeed, there is a big gap between the Jap and American way of thinking.

Native Chamorro Dancers

Asphalt topping is half done on the first giant B-29 strip at Saipan Island. Bluff in the distance at the end of runway is being blasted down with five-ton dynamite charges. A second parallel strip is being graded down at right with pans, bulldozers and dynamite. "Tokyo Rose" said it couldn't be done.

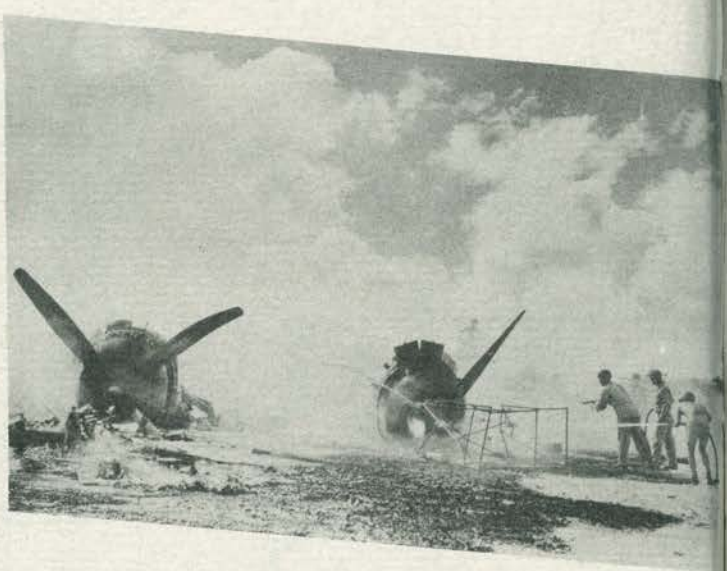
A□-23 stuck on shoulder of taxi strip blocking B-29s in background

Brig. Gen. Emmett O'Donnell has a final word with his pilot, Lt. Col. Robert K. Morgan, former pilot of the famous Memphis Belle and a veteran of twenty-five missions over Germany, prior to the take-off on the first Superfortress strike over the Japanese capital. Gen. O'Donnell led the successful mass strike on the Jap war production centers at Tokyo.

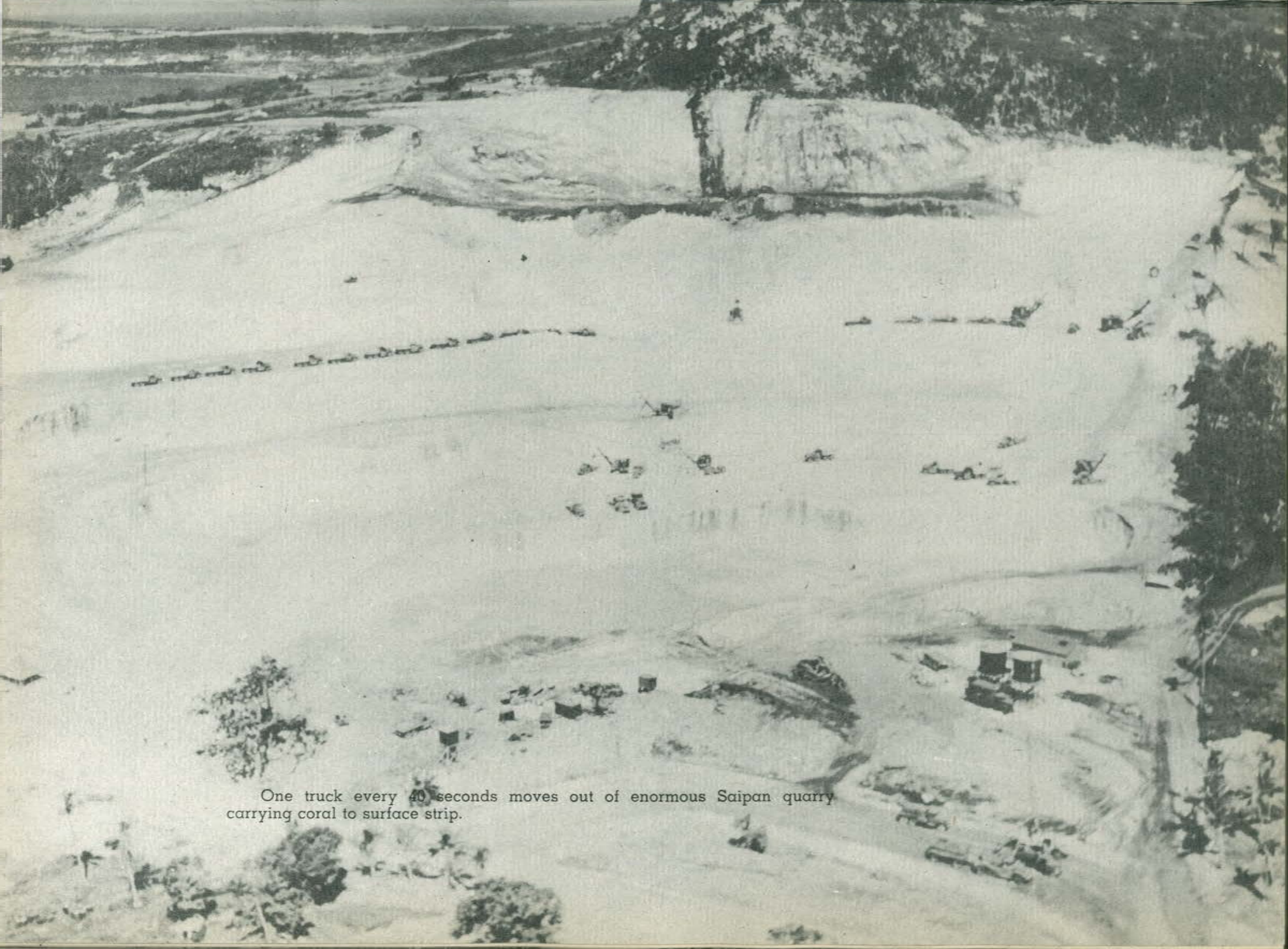


GI's in a jeep on a sightseeing trip on Saipan Island.

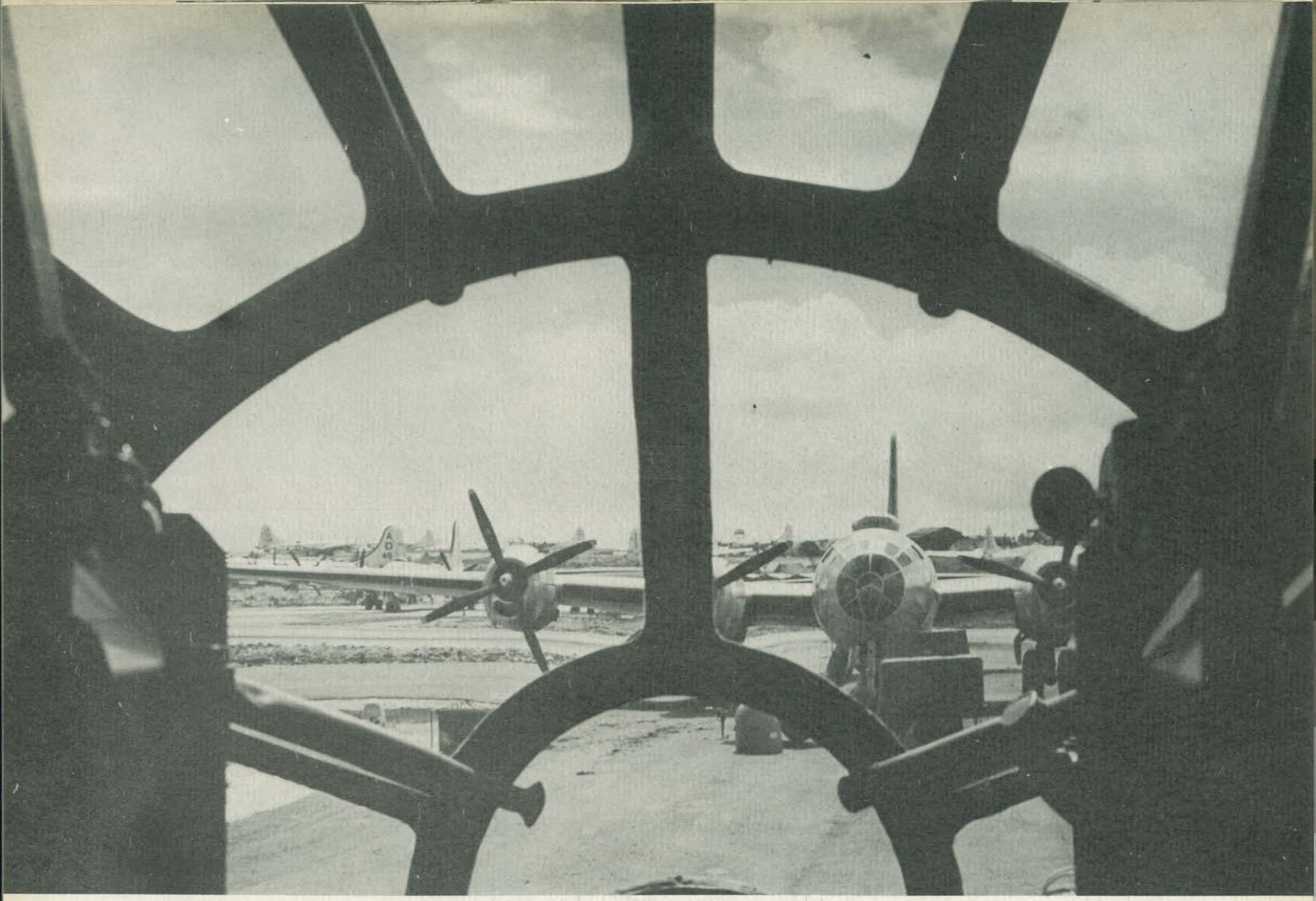
Garapan



The Jap strikes back



One truck every 40 seconds moves out of enormous Saipan quarry carrying coral to surface strip.



A B-29 dispersal area at a Saipan base as seen through the plexiglass nose of a giant Superfortress.

CHAPTER X
NOVEMBER 1944

High-lighting this period were the first raid on Tokyo, which took place 24 November, and the surprise strafing raid made on the island of Saipan on 27 November by the Japanese.

PRELIMINARY MISSIONS

The first practice or preliminary mission flown by planes of the 869th Squadron, against Truk has been set forth in some detail. This was in turn to be followed by identical missions by the 870th and 871st Squadrons.

Thus all three squadrons, or at least the first thirty crews that had arrived in this theatre, had their first practice combat mission in a B-29. A few bugs had been noted, and steps taken to remedy them, and everyone was now set for the first mission against the Jap homeland.

This was not to take place immediately, however. Higher echelon felt and probably correctly too, that a little more B-29 combat experience was desirable, before the Wing attempted the hazardous Tokyo trip. Consequently, Field Order No. 16 provided for a mission against Iwo Jima on November 5. This island was expected to provide a tougher target, with more fighter interception, and more intense AA fire. The mission was also planned so that it would provide daylight visual bombing and a test of night-landing facilities involving a large number of aircraft.

Hence 18 aircraft from the Group took off with planes from the other Groups, to bomb Airfield No. 1 on Iwo Jima. Anti-aircraft fire was again quite inaccurate; and the fighters not eager. The crews did believe that they saw one phosphorus bomb, which did not explode near any aircraft.

The return landings were very successful, and thus one of the main purposes of the mission was successfully concluded. Aircraft found no difficulty in locating the field at night, and there was not much confusion, despite the number of ships landing within a short space of time. So the mission can be classed as very successful.

There is one exception to the above statement. One plane did have trouble locating the field, though there was very little confusion when it landed, because it reached Isely Field about four hours after the rest of the formation had come in. Thus the Group had its first actual experience of "sweating out", a lost, returning plane.

Personnel again thought that the next mission would find them on the road to Tokyo. But again they were wrong. Field Order No. 17, called for another mission to Iwo Jima, to take place on November 8th.

That raid did result in more fighter opposition than had yet been experienced. Eight interceptors arose to attack the formation, and a few attacks were pressed to as close as 300 yards. No damage was incurred by any of the Group planes, although one had burn marks. Several Zekes threw phosphorus bombs, but no streamer seemed to be closer than 200 feet from any of the planes.

During this preliminary mission stage, non-flying personnel were having their troubles. The arrival of the Air Echelon did not mean that instantaneously, all Group activities shifted from the building stage to the operational stage. When the Air Echelon arrived, the Ground Echelon was in the last stages of its building program. That programme however was concentrated on living quarters rather than on administrative buildings. These, in some cases, had been completed, others were only partly complete, while still others had not been started.

Hence, non-flying personnel, during this period, were working pretty much on a day basis. Lack of a suitable briefing room hampered the S-2 Section. Mess halls were used, but found unsatisfactory because briefing or interrogation sometimes coincided with regular mess hours. The 869th Mess Hall was closest to the Group Headquarters, and was used most, during the early part of this period. However this was an added burden to the Mess personnel of that Squadron, so that a policy of rotating the use of mess-halls was set up.

S-4 was handicapped at first. It used a small Jap shop for a headquarters, but Squadron Engineering sections were forced to operate from tents, pending erection of suitable quonsets on the line.

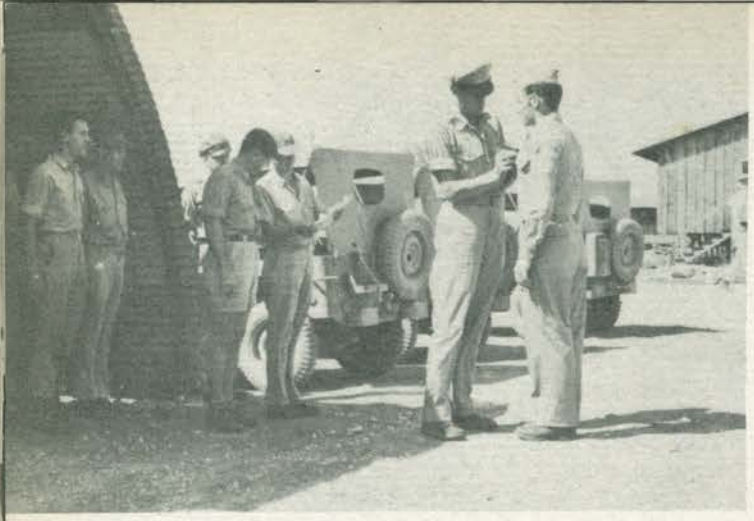
Those sections, which were so fortunate as to move into completed buildings found that all their spare time was devoted to building desks, file cabinets and chairs. It can be safely stated, that while the flying personnel were experimenting and practicing before they attempted the first Japanese mainland raid, so were non-flying personnel experimenting, so that they could find the best set-up, which would enable them to best serve the crews when the more important missions commenced.

FIRST TOKYO MISSION

The second mission to Iwo Jima having been completed, all personnel looked forward confindently to the Tokyo trip. No Field Order was forth coming, but it was obvious to all that they would soon be on one of the greatest adventures of their lives. Many did not realize that there was still considerable detail work to be done before the mission could be finally planned. Japan being the closed country that it was, had never been studied from the air by outsiders, and if successful bombing was to be expected, some idea would have to be given the crews of how the country and chosen targets appeared from the air.

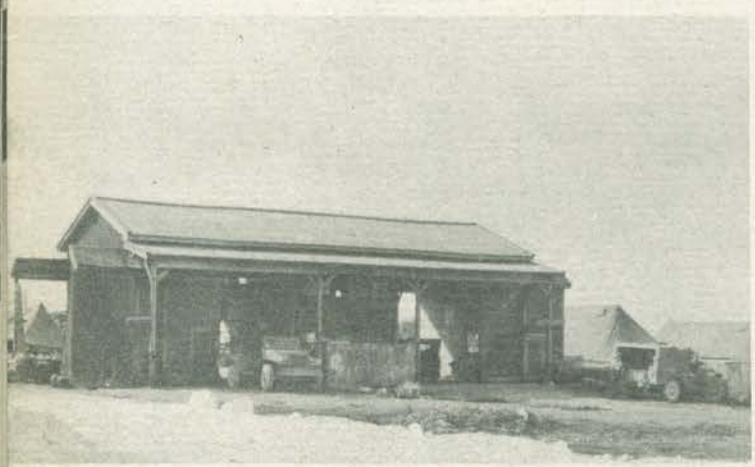
Consequently a series of highly secret missions were run by planes of the 3rd Photo Reconnaissance Squadron, for purpose of obtaining such pictures, and also to obtain weather information.

Another preliminary matter was to determine extent of Japanese employment of radar. There was no definite information on the use of their early warning radar, or of their gun-controlled equipment. A special mission was



Col. Wright presenting Medal to a member of the 497th on Saipan.

General Emmett O'Donnell, leader of the first Tokyo mission from Saipan, Marianas Islands briefs his men prior to the take-off on 24 November 1944.



A Jap building on Saipan. Few are still standing.

planned, and Major Morgan and his crew made a solo flight to the Tokyo area, for the sole purpose of using RCM equipment to obtain this information.

Major Morgan took off on 10 November. His mission was greatly hampered by foul weather, but he did return with considerable information and with only 200 gallons of gasoline in his tanks. He obtained at least 30 indications of early-warning radar on several frequencies. Actually, due to the weather, the plane did not approach closer to its objective than about 50 miles, so that frequencies above 155 MC, thought to be used for fire-control, could not be detected. The plane's equipment operated satisfactory.

During the next five days an influx of newspaper men took place, indicating clearly the imminence of the raid on Japan proper. Finally on 15 November, a Field Order came out. Yes—it called for the first raid to take place in the Tokyo area, on the Mushashino Plant of the Mitsubishi Aircraft Engine Co. The date and time of take-off did not appear in the original order, but that made very little difference. Everyone commenced work in preparing for the raid. Then came the word. Take-off at 0730 on the morning of November 17.

Came the early morning of that day, and a tense air of expectancy lay over the whole Group area. The great day was at hand, and crews filed into the Group operations office for the final weather briefing. But an air of uneasiness was over the whole scene. Captain Ward, Weather Officer, was quite concerned—not with the weather of Tokyo, but about conditions at Saipan. For the first time since the Group had been on the Island, the Wind had shifted from its usual easterly direction to a south-westerly one.

This meant a partially uphill take-off, and this would be hazardous because of the heavy bomb and gas loads that the planes were carrying. This fact apparently not considered too serious as instructions for such a take-off were issued. The Crews left the briefing room and headed for the line.

Just before dawn, a stream of all sorts of jeeps wended their way up to Isely Field. High ranking officers, ordinary GIs, some Naval and Marine personnel, and a host of civilian-technicians and newspaper men, lined the runways as take-off time approached. Motion-picture cameramen posted themselves where good shots could be obtained. Flashlights went off in the parking area, as other camermen shot General O'Donnell as he climbed into his plane.

Everything was ready except one element —the weather. That unruly element refused to cooperate. The clouds hung low, dripped copiously, and showed no sign of clearing. Would the uphill take-off be made in wet weather? No, apparently it would not, as a Wing operations jeep notified all airplane commanders that take-off was delayed one hour. Came that time, and the weather had not improved one bit. Low clouds were every-

where, and would make take-off and assembly most difficult. To everyone's bitter disappointment, it was decided to postpone the mission 24 hours. Everyone felt let-down, yet all realized that it was necessary.

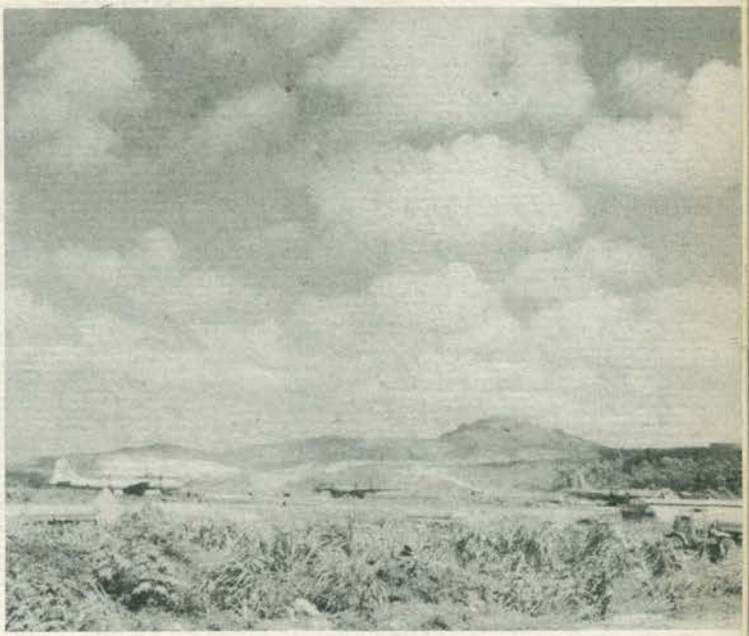
However, morale did drop considerably as that exact same situation prevailed for the next few days. Each morning there was an early briefing—everybody hustled up to the line to watch the take-off the crews went to their planes—the wind came from the wrong quadrant, right at take-off time, heavy clouds appeared, and hard rains fell—and after a delay, it was necessary to call off the mission. Some other units, slightly annoyed, because they felt the B-29 outfits were attracting too much attenion, soon began to say that the Superforts were easily the best plane made that never left the ground.

Fortunately for all—that is all except the Japanese—tropical storms do not hang around one place forever. Eventually they must pick up speed and move off. So weather around Saipan finally cleared; the wind changed; and came a morning, November 24th, when everyone realized that the picture was just right.

Along the runways, that same optimism was evident. Large crowds were evident. The camera men were out in force. Even the men who endlessly ran the bull-dozers, and who were working on runway B, stopped work and joined the crowd, as the engines on the big ships were turned over. The planes commenced to taxi to the end of the runway. The sky was clear. It was the dawn of the Big Day.

A near-accident almost delayed the take-off. About ten minutes before the scheduled take-off time of the first ship, a B-29 came thundering down the runway. All necks were craned to see whether or not it was the first ship off. It turned out to be a photo ship of the 3rd Photo Reconnaissance Squadron. Everyone relaxed momentarily, and watched as it came down the runway. But the relaxation was only a very brief moment, because across the runway lay a line of dump trucks hauling coral, which an unwary guard had permitted to start across about four-fifths of the way down. Several trucks, practically bumper to bumper, were creeping across the very middle of the runway, completely blocking it. The pilot of the Photo ship evidently saw the line of trucks in the half-dawn, because he began to pull the ship up when covering only two-thirds of the runway. He managed to get about 10 feet in the air, but no further. That, however, was sufficient, and he roared above the very startled truck drivers with a scant three or four feet to spare. Thus an accident, that could have been fatal to a number of people, and tied up the runway for some time, was narrowly averted.

Approximately ten minutes later, and at exactly 2015z (23 November), the first Wing ship to take off came rolling down the runway. It was A-1, belonging to the Groups 869th Squadron, and it was being flown by General O'Donnell, with Major Morgan, Commanding



Hill 500 and Mt. Tapotchau

First Mission to Tokyo

Crowds of engineers and ground crewmen watch B-29 begin first Tokyo mission.

Officer of the Squadron, as co-pilot. Watchers feared the plane would never get off. It took every bit of the black-topped runway, and a small portion of the coral near the end, before it took off. Even when it did take-off it disappeared from sight almost immediately as it dropped down to just skim the water beyond. The crowd looked at one another. Nobody cheered or slapped his neighbor's back. Rather, everyone heaved a sigh; they had finally sweated the first plane off the ground. Even as additional planes took off, there was still no great exultation. There was more a feeling of awe at the sight of the great might of America about to make its first strike against the Japanese homeland. All onlookers were genuinely glad that they were on Saipan, and not anywhere near the designated target.

All personnel were justly proud that the 497th Group was the first over the target, with General O'Donnell and Major Morgan in the lead plane.

The historic raid, on the other hand, had tragic consequences for the Group. Plane A-26 of the 870th Squadron, of which Lt. Sam P. Wagner was airplane commander, was lost over the target area, due to enemy action. This was a severe blow to the Group, because this was the only plane lost to enemy action by the entire Wing. Lt. Wagner was a quiet, personable West Point graduate, well liked by all, and the loss of his crew put a damper on the Group's pride in being the first to bomb the Japanese Homeland.

In fact the way in which his plane was lost, added to the sadness felt by all who knew him. He was flying an outside position, and shortly after leaving the target, an enemy fighter, probably a Tony, came in on his tail, from about 5 o'clock. This plane was fired upon by at least three other ships in the formation, and it failed to return the fire. It wobbled through the air, crashed into the tail plane of A-26, and both went into a slow spiral as though the pilot had temporarily gained control, then dived again. No parachutes were seen, and it is universally felt that the entire crew was lost.

Personnel on the other planes state that this was not a case of Jap ramming. They believe that the approaching Jap pilot had been killed by gunfire, and that he just happened to collide with A-26. These same witnesses state that A-26 did not fire at the Tony, probably due to the fact that a few moments previous to the crash, another Japanese plane had raked A-26 with gunfire, probably incapacitating the gunners who ordinarily would have fired at the approaching plane.

A number of lessons were learned from the mission, not the least of which was that communications and navigation are of prime importance in this theatre. The usual radio fixes cannot be obtained between Saipan and Tokyo, as Colonel Wright pointed out a number of times, and the navigator has to be able to aid his pilot home by straight navigation. Secondly, it was found that excessive demands on the ground station, by returning planes for bearings, weather and similar matters, worked a real hardship on those few planes who were in distress, and could not get messages through, because of excessive radio traffic.

Results of the mission were not all that was hoped for, because of erratic bombing. Higher headquarters apparently decided to remedy this situation as quickly as possible, and on 27 November, only three days after the

first mission, a second raid was ordered, using the same target. Unfortunately the planes ran into a front just south of the Japanese coast, and 10/10 cloud cover extended to the target area. Bombs were dropped by radar, on the primary target but due to thick undercast, the results were unobserved. None of the Group planes were lost, no personnel were injured, and only one plane, A-46, sustained battle-damage by enemy action.

Right on the heels of that mission, another was scheduled for 29 November. This mission was a night mission for the purpose of dropping 17 incendiary clusters and three fragmentation clusters per plane on the light industrial section of Tokyo. Again the weather played false. Nine of the Group planes were scheduled to make the mission. Eight bombed the primary target by radar, but due to the thick undercast, the results were unobserved.

Plane A-11 commanded by Captain Mulloy ran into a lot of difficulty and for a time it was feared that it would not return safely. Due to continued overcast, the navigator could no get a fix. Then the propeller on No. 1 engine ran away, while near the target. On the route home, engine No. 3 indicated a deficiency of power. Still later No. 3 began to cut out periodically. Thus the aircraft flew back to base at an average speed of 150 m.p.h. Fuel began to run low, and articles were jettisoned. Finally Captain Mulloy eased in to Isely No. 2, since he had insufficient fuel to go the slight extra distance to No. 1 field. It was a close squeeze.

JAPANESE AIR RAIDS ON SAIPAN

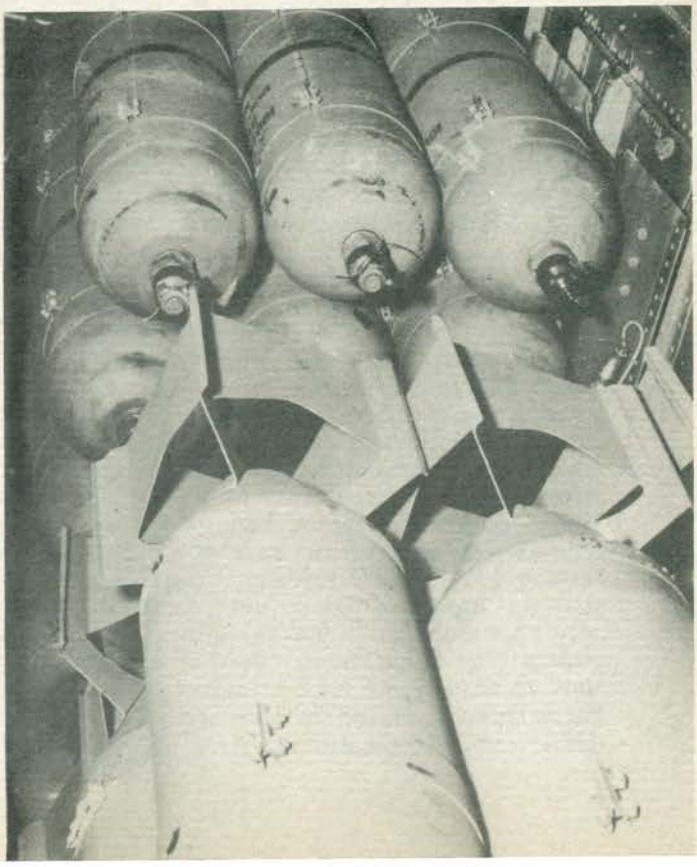
It should not be thought that the Japanese were taking all these raids without some retaliation. Only a day before the first raid on Tokyo took place, a snooper plane came around during the night to have a look-see. Instead he got a burst from a night-fighter, and went into the ocean, north of the Island.

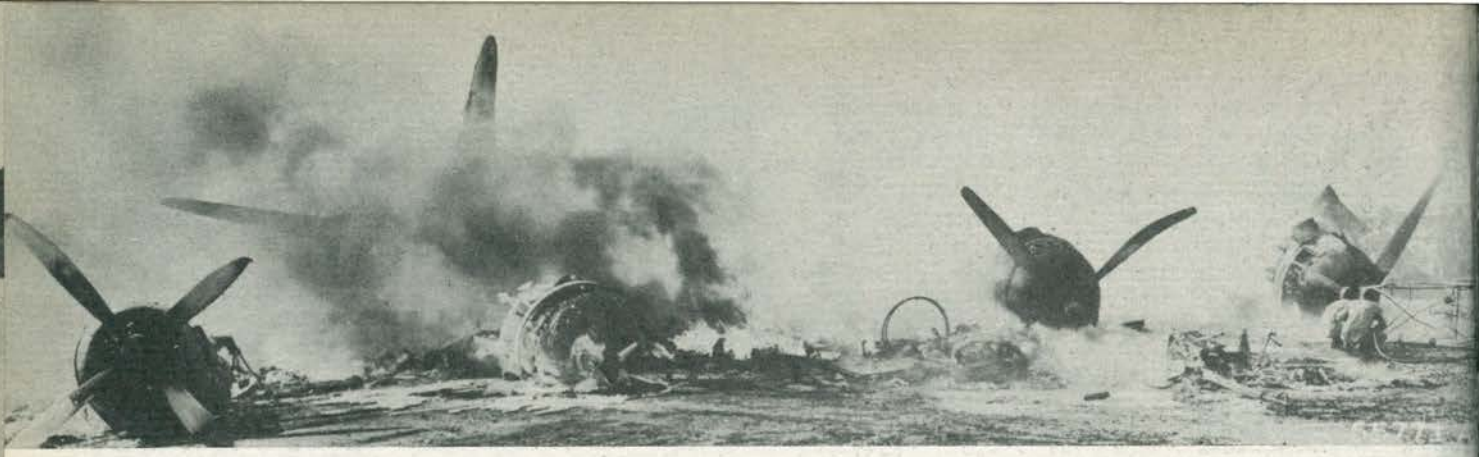
However, the first Tokyo raid, galvanized the Japs into retaliatory action. The first reaction came very early on the morning of 27 November. Two planes, one a Betty, and the other possibly an escorting fighter, came in low over Magacienne Bay, dropped six bombs, strafed a portion of the hard-stand area of the 499th Group, and departed without one shot being fired at them. This raid resulted in the complete destruction of one B-29 and serious damage to a large number of others by the explosions. Personnel were quite startled as the sound of the six bombs exploding, and of the strafing, wakened them from their slumber. There was general exodus towards air-raid shelters, but the whole incident was completed before many had even left their tents.

Apparently emboldened by their success, the Japs put on a real show shortly after noontime on the same day. Without any warning whatever, as was the case of the previous raid, about 17 Zekes came in over Magacienne Bay and strafed Isely Field, very thoroughly. Some of the planes then turned back and

Maj. Robert K. Morgan (fourth from left) in front of his B-29 "Dauntless Dotty", after first Tokyo raid.

20,000 pounds of these per B-29





Japs hit Saipan again

strafed runs on various bivouac areas, including that of the Group.

It was at this point that Group personnel got their first taste of war. Many were in their tents, or returning to their offices after dinner. The strafing came so suddenly, that only those standing near a shelter were able to reach it. The remainder had to hit the dirt where they were or try to crawl under some tent or some other fancied shelter.

The attacking planes made three passes over the Group area, while personnel huddled in shelters and tried to dig in just a little deeper. During all of the runs they were subjected to the heaviest kind of automatic weapons' fire. Thirteen of the raiders were shot down while over the island. Four finally took off northward. These were followed by P-47s, who shot down one near Pagan Island, and destroyed another on the ground just after it landed on Pagan. What happened to the other two fighers is not known. Probably they never reached land safely.

This suicide raid availed the enemy very little. He made his raid at a time when the greater part of the Wing's planes were out on their second Tokyo mission. They did set fire to several planes and damaged a few others. The 497th Group had one plane completely destroyed, and two others so seriously damaged that they were transferred to the Service Group for repairs. They scared the living daylights out of a number of green personnel, newly arrived from the States. They killed one person on the island. He was Cpl. Aldo J. Bindi, one of the Group's medics who was undergoing treatment in one of the Island hospitals. Whatever damage was accomplished was done on the first strafing run. By staying around, and making it a suicide mission, the Japanese did no extra damage, and only succeeded in losing 15, and probably 17 planes. The main things they accomplished were to destroy the faith of most personnel in the efficiency of the Island's early warning radar, and to instill in everyone a deep desire to get revenge for the unexpected scare they received.

Another night raid was made two nights later (29 November), by the twin-engine bombers. Only slight damage was done in this raid. However, these three raids made within a space of three days, showed that the enemy did not intend to take the bombing of his homeland lying down. With the exception of the daylight strafing attack, however, it was rather obvious that the Japs attacks were small and were of the face-saving type, rather than anything to make Saipan useless as a Superfort base. Comparisons of their raids with the tremendous assaults made against Japan gave one ample confidence in the eventual outcome of the Pacific war.

MAINTENANCE PROBLEMS

Maintenance has proved to be a serious problem. The greatest difficulty was an acute shortage of equipment and tools.

After arrival at Saipan, it was soon found that contrary to the practice of the XX Bomber Command, the planes of the XXI Bomber Command would fly missions frequently. These were always daylight missions, which meant that much maintenance work had to be done at night. But lighting equipment for night maintenance work, was not available at first, and until it was provided, repair work was greatly delayed.

Crew Chief stands were an item in which the Group was short. There were only two per plane available, and since, for an engine change at least three are necessary, the shortage slowed up work.

Another difficulty was water in the gasoline. The gas was pumped from tankers to shore, and somewhere along the line, water leaked in. All efforts were made to solve this difficulty.

Coral dust was another plague, which became even worse as the dryer season approached. This dust blew across the island from the hard-worked coral pits, and from some of the nearby roads, and got into all

Japs

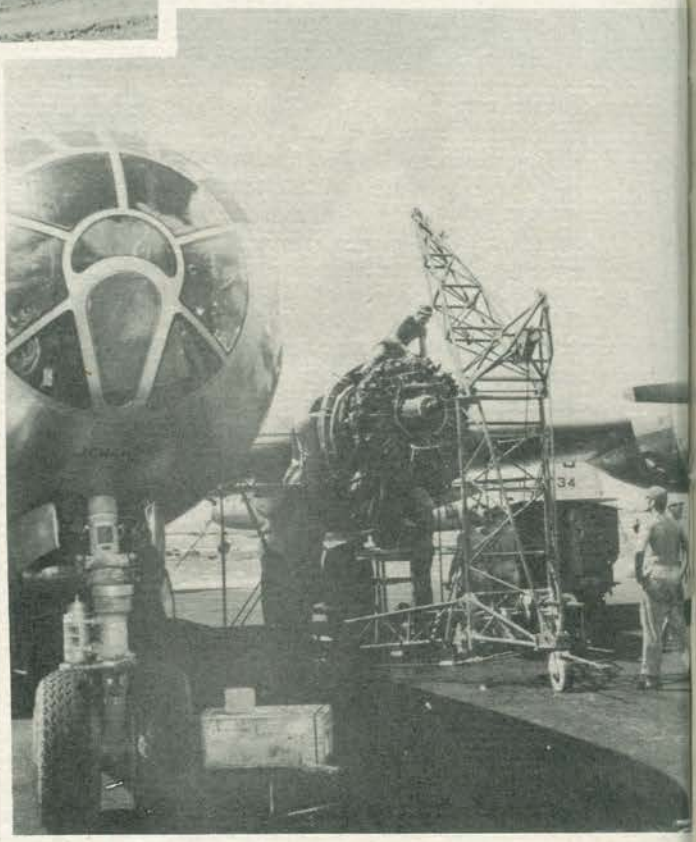
Jolt

Saipan

Saipan, Coral Quarry

parts of the planes. Water of course would easily remove this, but water itself was scarce. So coral dust lay on the planes during many hours of the day and night.

While struggling to do a good job, despite the lack of proper equipment, maintenance personnel also had a lot of personal problems. Transportation was barely sufficient, and the sections really had to scramble to catch a scheduled trip to work, or back to the bivouac area, which, if missed, would mean that considerable "thumbing" for a ride would be necessary. Every effort was made to work out satisfactory schedules, but it was not possible to suit everyone. Before the air and flight echelons arrived, transportation had been no problem. But as many department heads arrived, and sections started to operate at full time, a redistribution of transportation had to be worked out. An attempt was made to continue the existing Group Motor Pool, and to parcel out trucks, weapons-carriers and jeeps to the Squadrons on an equitable basis.



Engine change

870th Mess Hall

869th and 870th Camp Areas

Finally, transportation was turned over to the squadrons and each squadron set-up its own motor-pool. Group did retain a measure of control, and in fact each squadron was required to supply a certain amount of equipment for Group purposes, on a permanent basis.

AWARD OF DECORATIONS

Reference has hitherto been made of preliminary photographic missions over the Japanese Empire. The first of these missions, which took place on 1 November, brought distinction to Major Hugh Gilmour, Group Bombardier.

The flight in question was for the express purpose of photographing one of the juiciest of the Tokyo targets. Since the target in question had been tentatively chosen as the one to be attacked on the first strike mission, Major Gilmour, as Group Bombardier of the anticipated lead Group, was taken on the trip. Thus he had the privilege of being in the first flight over Tokyo, made by an enemy combat plane, in a long time.

The "unknown" was successfully conquered. Accurate anti-aircraft fire was encountered, as well as some fighter opposition. But the precious pictures were obtained, and the mission eminently successful. For his part, Major Gilmour was awarded the Air Medal by Colonel Wright on 13 November at a Group staff meeting.

CHAPTER XI
DECEMBER 1944

Strike missions against the Japanese mainland are continued. Weather strike missions are initiated during the month.

MISSIONS FLOWN

During the month, the Group flew seven missions. Five of these were over the Japanese mainland, while two were to Iwo Jima. One of the Iwo missions was merely a three-plane navigation escort mission, accompanying a group of P-38s on a strafing mission The missions to the Japanese mainland took place on 3, 13, 18, 22 and 27 December. The Iwo missions took off on 8 and 24 December.

Of the three planes lost, none were lost to enemy action. All three ditched on the way to or back from the target. Six men were rescued from Lt. Hamiltons plane which ditched on 22 December. He had to leave the formation while on the way to the target. The formation circled, while he ditched, and having reported his position and dropped life rafts, etc., continued on their way to the target. Later six survivors were picked up by a destroyer. No survivors were found from the other two planes, one of which had ditched an estimated 22 miles from Saipan while returning from the mission of 3 December. This was Lt. D. C. Campbell's plane. The third plane was that of Lt. Walling which turned back while on the mission of 18 December, and was never heard of again.

The most outstanding flying accomplishment during the month, was the feat of Major Trickey, in coming home from a mission on two engines—both on the same side. After he had lost his second engine, Major Fowler in a nearby plane, called Major Trickey and told him that he would accompany him back to Saipan. At the same time, Major Fowler, suggesting that he could not get home on two engines, advised him to ditch while it was still daylight. The planes at that time were not far from Iwo Jima. Major Trickey called back that Major Fowler was about to see a plane get back in that condition, and to everybody's surprise and gratification accomplished it.

WEATHER STRIKE MISSIONS

Early in December, orders came down to the Group, that Weather Strike Missions were to be flown nightly against the Empire. The purposes of these missions were to be two-fold, as the name implied. First, the crews were to collect valuable weather information, and second, they were to drop bombs, usually incendiary, on some vital section of Japan. The probable effect on Japanese morale, in having planes coming over the homeland, every night, dropping incendiary bombs, was doubtlessly not overlooked, when it was decided to fly these missions.

The privilege to fly the first mission fell to this Group, and planes of the 869th Squadron were assigned to the task. The first mission was flown on 6 December, and the first of the three planes scheduled that night, was piloted by Lt. Col. Morgan.

During December, the Group sent out three planes nightly, from 6 December to 19 December inclusive, except for a few instances where weather did not permit a flight. A total of 35 such missions were flown during that time.

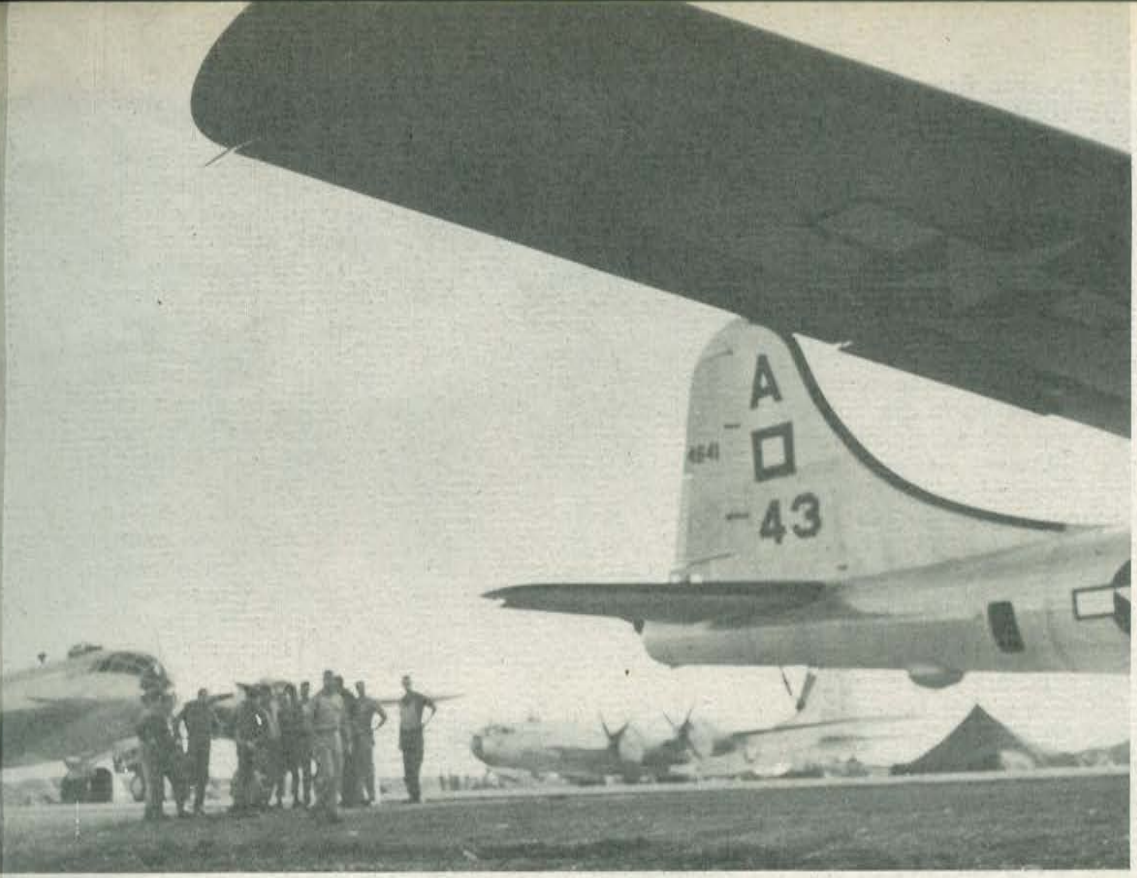
The results were quite interesting. Naturally, the weather information was obtained, and the bombs dropped on various Japanese installations. But what seems to be equally important, the missions revealed deficiencies in Japanese radar. Not one ship received a hit from any Japanese night-fighters. In fact, only on one mission were the crews certain that night-fighters were about. On that mission, several times, streams of tracers were seen, but they seemed aimlessly fired. Sometimes there was not even any flak, although that was usually on nights when there was a heavy undercast. Even on the nights when flak was sent up, it was generally inaccurate. Several times, searchlights went into action, usually in large numbers but they rarely picked up the plane, and seemed to merely wave through the air.

Results of our bombing were hard to ascertain. Hits could be seen and the fact that fires were started, confirmed. However, lack of subsequent photographic coverage made it difficult to estimate the amount of damage. Usually the immediate area was blacked out, though on the earlier missions, Tokyo, quite often, did not attempt to black out, or merely cut off the lights in some sections. Often, the coastal area, did not blackout, giving the crews considerable navigational help as they neared the mainland.

AIR RAIDS ON SAIPAN

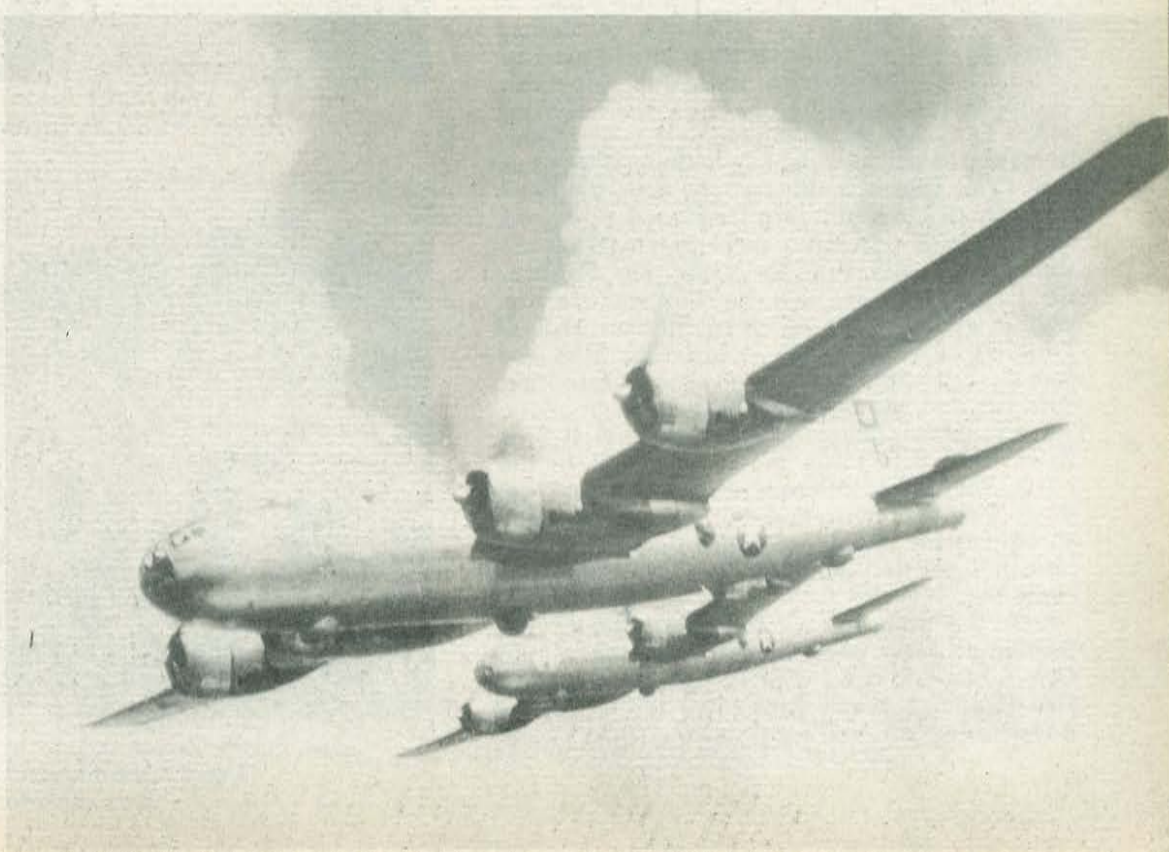
The enemy was not taking his beatings from B-29s without striking back. On 5 December, the Japs sent an observation plane down during the morning to size up the situation. The plane, identified as a Myrt, was intercepted about ten miles off Saipan, and shot down by a P-38.

On 7 December, Group personnel suffered another unpleasant experience. The raid of 7 December was another strafing raid with very little warning. This particular raid gave the personnel about 20 seconds to get out of bed, and into their shelters. Consequently, most personnel were caught still in their tents, as the several planes strafed Isely Field and bivouac areas. These planes soon departed, but Condition Red continued as about 13 more planes were plotted by radar. These were high altitude bombers, and about ten came over the Island over an hour later. Three pilots, for some unknown reason, retired northward. The enemy made extensive use of window, and dropped a number of bombs. Three B-29s were destroyed, three suffered extensive damage, and about 20 minor damage. Six of the raiders were believed to have been shot down by anti-aircraft fire. One was definitely identified



Crew ready for a mission

Flying Beauties



as a Peggy, new fast Japanese Army bomber. Luckily, personnel casualties were light, one man on the Island was killed and two wounded. But a good number received bad cuts and sprains as they had to hit the ground as tracers went by overhead before they could reach shelters.

There was then a lull in enemy air activity until Christmas night, although one observation plane neared the Island on 20 December, and departed when interception threatened. On Christmas night, as had been more or less anticipated, the enemy came back. He came back in considerable force. About 25 planes were charted at high altitudes. Actually the number of bombs they dropped and the damage they did was extremely small for the size of their force. One 1760 pound G.P. Glide bomb was released in one attack which completely destroyed a B-29. Three more B-29s were damaged beyond repair, and 11 others suffered varying degrees of damage.

The next night, two separate single-engine planes approached the Island, but both were shot down by night fighters before they reached the Island. All in all, December had been a somewhat costly month.

CAPTURE OF JAPANESE FAMILY

The Group was quite overwhelmed when, on 17 December, it took seven captives at one fell swoop. Granted they were all non-combatants—but nevertheless the total was quite amazing.

The captors were five enlisted men from the 871st Squadron: Cpl. Herbert Loveless, Pfc. Henry Pahnke, Pfc. Vernon Hicks, Pfc. C. B. Hyatt, Jr., and Pfc. F. F. Kessler.

These men, on a Sunday afternoon, were engaged in that popular Saipan pastime of souvenir hunting. They were some slight distance inland, on the northern portion of the Island, not far from Tsukimi Island, when they saw two young children run into what appeared to be the entrance to a cave. They cautiously approached the entrance, but hesitated to go in. They reconnoitered a bit and unexpectedly found an opening looking down into the cave. There they saw several Japanese, who, when they saw that they were observed, held their hands over their heads. The soldiers signalled them to come out. Obvious preparations for leaving the cave were made, and then the men received the surprise of their lives, as out walked a whole Japanese family, consisting of Mom, Pop, and five kids, with Mom obviously pregnant.

By means of the sign language, it was discovered that three more were still in the cave. The father offered to go back and get them. This was permitted, but soon he returned shrugging his shoulders, indicating either that he could not find them, or that they refused to come out.

At this point the whole group climbed into the single jeep present, and returned to the Group bivouac area with 12 people in a jeep, five GIs and seven Japs. The scene should have been preserved for posterity. Upon reach-

Home again

Ready to taxi

Group Communications Section
Captain Martin

Jap family

Jap children

ing the Group area, the family was brought to the S-2 section, where Corporal Wong interrogated them briefly before Colonel Wright and S-2 personnel. The family turned out to be Okinawan's who were brought to the Islands about four years before D-day. They had been farming at the time the Americans landed. The three who remained in the cave, however, were military personnel, who would not give themselves up. Their condition was quite surprising. The children were very clean, and seemed to have fresh haircuts. The father and mother seemed quite pleased at the soldiers actions in giving the children gum, candy, and some K rations. They very definitely did not look as though they had been living in a cave for nearly seven months, and they retained complete composure at all times. It is suspected that they were glad they had been found, and were surprised at the decent treatment they were receiving.

AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

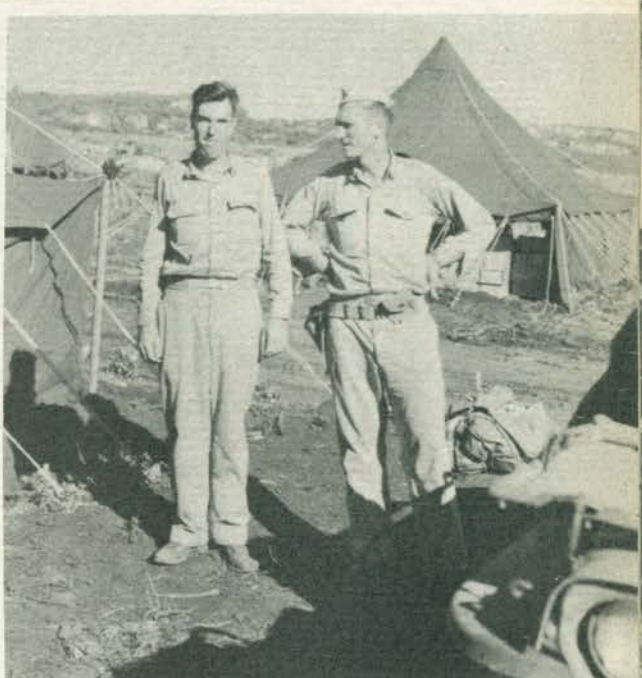
Three men of the Group were awarded Purple Hearts during the month. The injuries received by each were incurred during missions over the Japanese mainland.

MAINTENANCE

There were no new maintenance problems which arose during the month. The lack of a sufficient number of crew-chief stands was the main difficulty. This slowed up engine changes, particularly.

Another difficulty experienced by Engineering was the keeping of planes in repair to meet a rather close schedule of missions. Missions were scheduled for about every fourth or fifth day, which barely gave the maintenance crews time to give the necessary inspections, let alone repair battle damage received by some of the planes.

Great credit is being given to M/Sgt. Gorden Swain for his conduct during one of the Jap bombing raids. A Jap bomb struck near



Lt. Powers and Capt. Brown

one of his Squadron's (870th) planes, and set its nose on fire. The plane was not carrying bombs, but was loaded with gasoline. Sgt. Swain hooked a cleatrac on to the plane, and towed it to an area where it would do no harm if it exploded. He was entirely successful in this maneuver and deserves a lot of credit for his bravery and resourcefulness.

Major Broadhurst, Group S-4, worked tirelessly on the job of maintenance, throughout all this period. It is felt that maintenance personnel deserved considerable credit for their work during the period. There was some criticism of their work, because on some missions a number of planes were not ready. However, the work on the line was hampered by lack of good engineering facilities, though by the end of the period, conditions had improved greatly.

Sgt. Donald Wilson

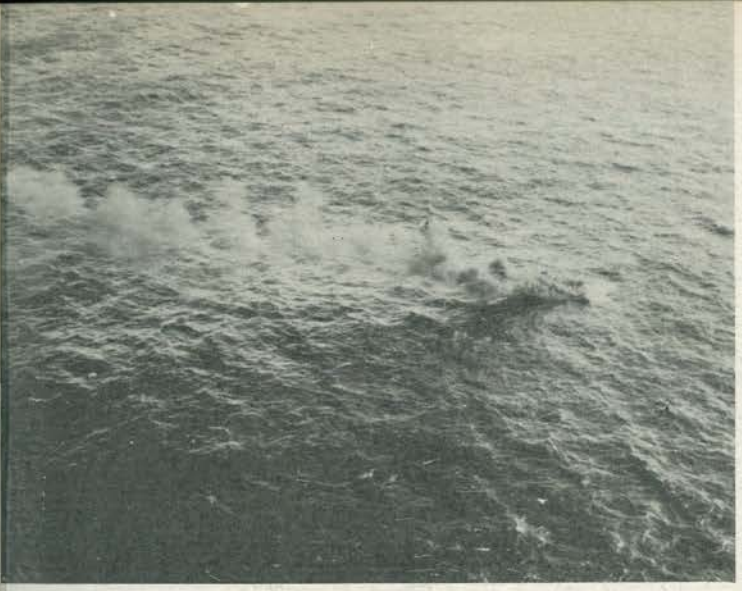
Air Medal Award, Saipan

CHAPTER XII
JANUARY

More raids against the Empire — More raids against Saipan.

STRIKE MISSIONS

The mission of 3 January was notable because of the experience of the crew of Lt. Bartlett of the 869th Squadron. This plane was heavily attacked, over the target, but suffered injuries to only two of its personnel. The tail-gunner, Sgt. Donald Wilson, had a finger shot cleanly away. This knowledge came to the other crewmen, over the intercom system, when they heard him make a remark to that effect, and complain that the darn thing wasn't even bleeding. Sgt. James Krantz, one of the plane's blister gunners, had a most remarkable experience. His blister blew out while the plane was at 29,000 feet. He hung out of the plane for nearly 15 minutes held by a home-made harness which he had made himself. After great effort four of the other crew-members dragged him back to safety. He suffered severe frostbite. His story has already been told in the public press. There is little to comment upon in missions 18 and 19. The former was generally unsuccessful, because of bad weather, which prevented satisfactory assembly of the formation. Mission 20 turned out to be one of the most successful missions flown by the Group. The target was the Kawasaki Aircraft Engine Works at Akashi. The plant



Results of mid-air collision between two 871st crews

had already been badly damaged by earlier formations by the time the Group bombed it. The Group's bombs landed squarely within the target area, helping in the destruction of the target.

While there is little to comment by earlier Mission 21, there is considerable which can be reported about the succeeding Mission.

It was a black picture as far as the Group was concerned. Five of the Group's Planes were lost. Three were shot down before they reached the target; one ditched while returning from the mission, and one was demolished when it crash-landed upon its return. Eight others received battle damage. In addition to the missing crews, two men were seriously injured and nine slightly injured.

WEATHER-STRIKE MISSIONS

This type of mission, which had commenced the month previous, and considered very successful, was carried over to the recent month. The task was distributed among the Groups, and this Group had 18 aircraft airborne on such missions. In a few instances a plane did not reach its primary target, due to varying reasons—such as weather-wind etc. In all but four, instances however, the weather plane dropped incendiaries on the Japanese mainland.

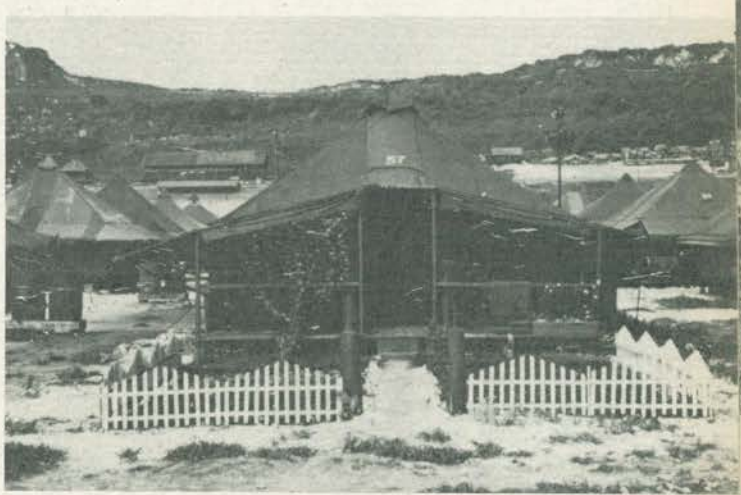
The results of these missions were very similar to those of the previous month. Weather information was obtained on each flight, and fires started in various sections of the Japanese homeland. In addition the same deficiences in Jap night defense were noticeable. One plane was forced to ditch on the return trip, quite near Saipan, because of fuel shortage. However, ten members of the crew were rescued, within a short time, although two were never found.

SUPER-DUMBO

The use of Super-Dumbo's which began in connection with the mission on 27 January, was a splendid morale factor. A number of crews had been lost even though they had sent out their positions before ditching, because the search ship or plane could not locate them at that point. This was undoubtedly due to the fact that the plane's position changes constantly and since it may take ten minutes to ditch from the point where the last position was calculated, the searching craft is at a disadvantage in that it does not have the actual ditching position. This, of course, was partly alleviated by having the radio operator hold down the key until the plane actually ditches but there was still room for error.

Hence a plan was conceived that would provide a patrol plane, to circle at a given point preferably near the Japanese coast. When a plane was in distress the patrol plane either homed on it, or visa versa. Thus the patrol plane could give the exact coordinates of the ditching. Since the chosen spot for this patrol was to be near the Empire, B-29s were chosen for the work. They were very appropriately given the name of Super-Dumbo.

Dental Clinic, Saipan



A little fixin' did this

Navy Dumbo

Sgt. James B. Krantz

JAPANESE AIR RAIDS AGAINST SAIPAN

During the early part of the month, there was considerable Japanese air activity directed against Isely Field No. 1. All the raids were in single plane strength, indicating more of a nuisance raid type, than anything designed to do considerable damage. On January 2nd, three separate enemy planes came to Saipan. The first came over the field at about 0350 and dropped an 800 Kg. G. P. bomb. One B-29 was badly damaged and four sustained minor damage. One enlisted man was wounded. Just before dawn another plane made a nuisance approach, orbiting North of the Island for some time, and then withdrawing. Shortly after noon, the third came down, but was shot down just North of the Island. It was identified as a Myrt.

The next night, 3 January, two more planes annoyed the Island's defenses. The first, a Betty, was shot down, at 21,000 feet only 10 miles North of Saipan. It had been coming in behind a PBJ, and was fortunately picked up just in time for interception. A few moments after the Flash White was ordered, another bogie appeared. This Nick or Irving, possibly coming in for a solo strafing run was shot down by a night-fighter, 35 miles North of Saipan.

The next nuisance raid came during the early morning hours of 5 January. After causing an alert, the plane turned North, and was pursued 80 miles fruitlessly by a night-fighter.

On 15 January, the next Japanese plane was picked up. This plane, a Myrt, could get no closer than 10 miles West of Tinian, where it was shot down shortly after noon, by a P-47.

Thus seven planes were over or close to the Island during the month, yet only one bomb was dropped. Alert fighter-pilots shot down four. The other two were merely nuisance raiders who declined to come within the Island defense zone, yet which did come close enough to cause an air alert.

PERSONNEL CHANGES

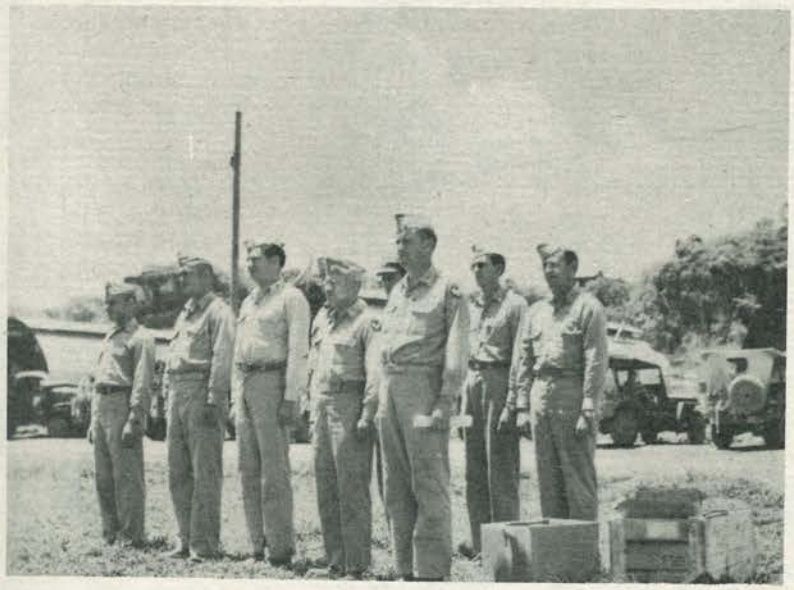
The most important change during the month, took place in the Group Headquarters S-3 Section. Lt. Col. Neil D. Van Sickle, Group S-3, was transferred to the 73rd Wing, with duty assignment as Asst. A-3.

He was replaced as Group S-3, by Maj. Albert L. Haley. Maj. Haley was formerly an airplane commander in the 870th Squadron.

Capt. Cardone's crew was rammed over 357 on 7 April

Capt. Bartlett crew over Tokoy

Sgt. James B. Krantz hanging through blister



Presentation of Awards

Cooks, 870th Sq.

497th Bomb Group Staff Officers, Saipan

CHAPTER XIII
FEBRUARY 1945

Continued strikes against Japan. A new Group Commander and Deputy Group Commander.

STRIKE MISSIONS

There were five missions against the Japanese Empire flown during the current month, and one practice mission to Truk was accomplished.

The missions, as compared with those of previous months show a marked decrease both in number of Group planes lost, and in the number of enemy planes destroyed or damaged.

Mission 23, was an incendiary raid on Kobe—the second of such raids in which the Group has participated. Due to bad weather, bombing was done by radar. Thirty-two planes of the 313th Wing participated. During the raid, the new Jap tactic of lowering landing gear, possibly to help in ramming attacks, was noticed in several instances.

Mission No. 24, to Ota, resulted in nothing unusual so far as the Groups participation was concerned. Three of the planes staged a diversionary raid on Hamamatsu, and they dispersed rope to confuse the defending enemy fighters. Results of the diversion are uncertain. There did seem to be some fifteen planes, which followed the diversionary force, yet did not attack. But Lt. Bartlett reports that well before landfall a Tojo, much lower, trailed the formation to the target, and spent considerable time dodging the window as it was being dispersed. Hence the surprise element, was probably lessened.

The mission of 15 February (Mission No. 25) was marred by a severe cold front which was encountered just before the climb, and persisted until just before the coast-line, when the cover unexpectedly cleared away. However, the damage had been done, and the Group's planes, as well as the plane's from other Groups, broke out of the cloud cover widely separated, and beyond hope of regaining some semblence of formation. However, Capt. Hanley, who was leading the first Squadron and one of his wingmen, Capt. Thomas, together with another plane from that formation piloted by Capt. J. M. Campbell, came through the front and maintained sufficient contact, so that they were able to go over the target in formation. Other planes joined with other Group's planes and some, unable to find a formation to join, were forced to bomb targets of last resort. Lt. Abar deserves special mention. He came out of the overcast alone; could not find another formation to join, but decided to go over the target alone. He climbed to 34,000 feet and went over the target alone; bombed visually and believes he obtained excellent results.

Enemy air opposition was much lighter than usual. This may have been due to the fact that his early warning radar did not penetrate the front successfully, or that the great number of small groups of B-29's bombing various separate targets confused Japanese defenses. This raid was carried out in conjunction with the Carrier Strike against the Empire.

The mission of 19 February was uneventful with the exception of the loss of one plane which had to ditch, due to loss of fuel which was traceable to flak damage sustained over the target. This was Lt. Austin's plane, and it was his first mission. Ditching was accomplished 10 miles west of Agrihan. A destroyer was at the scene within a couple of hours, and five men were rescued.

A plane, piloted by Lt. Dietzel, crash-landed at Kobler Field, because of inability to lower landing-gear. The landing was successful, and although everyone was shaken up, no one was seriously injured.

The mission was uneventful and results of the bombing were unobserved, due to the usual thick undercast.

Mission No. 27, 25 February, was likewise flown in conjunction with the Carrier Strike against Japan. Again weather blanketed the target, and bombing was accomplished by radar. Results, however, turned out to be excellent, as reconnaissance pictures later revealed. The Group's participation was marred by the loss of two planes, with their entire crews. The planes of Lts. Keith and Barnes, in perfectly clear weather, crashed into one another, while they were maneuvering into position. They both crashed into the sea and exploded. Another plane circled the area for one hour and forty minutes, but saw no survivors.

It can be seen that each mission during the month, was marred by weather, which explains the low losses of the Group, and also the low claims of enemy aircraft destroyed or damaged.

The training mission occurred on 17 February. A number of new crews had their first combat experience, as they flew through light flak over Truk. The mission was uneventful, though surprisingly enough, one ship did receive flak damage.

During the month, the Group set up two planes per Squadron to act as photo-ships, to supplement the work of the 3rd Photo Recon Squadron. Although the crews were somewhat unfamiliar with the type of work, excellent results were achieved.

WEATHER — STRIKE MISSIONS

During the month, the Group ran thirty-three weather-strike missions, and these were unusually successful. One plane ditched however, although only two crew members were lost.

This ditching occurred during the mission of 26 February. Lt. Buckheit, of the 870th Squadron, was pilot of the plane. After a long flight, the plane was forced to ditch about sixty miles north of Saipan, when engines #3 and #4 ran out of fuel. The plane had made a run on Tokyo, after having reached the Island of Sado, in the China Sea.

Generally speaking, the missions ran into

Toyama as seen by Radar

Mt. Fuji, below

the very same slight and erratic type of opposition that has been previously encountered. Usually no opposition at all was encountered. Occasicnally one stray fighter was airborne, and flew about, blindly, firing a few shots, hoping to draw return fire. Once, six fighters were observed on the scope but they did not fire even one burst. Only occasionally was a searchlight observed, usually inaccurately pointed. Flak was encountered on about one-half of the missions, but it usually consisted of a few inaccurate bursts. Japanese night defenses were entirely inefficient throughout the whole period.

PERSONNEL

There were a number of important personnel changes which took place during the month. The most important of these affected the change of command. Colonel Wright was called back to the States, and Colonel Johnson became Group Commander. Lt. Col. John W. Griffith was then appointed Deputy Group Commander.

The news that Colonel Stuart P. Wright, Group Commander, was to return to the States, came very unexpectedly. It was announced by him at a special staff meeting on 24 February. He stated that he would be transferred as of 26 February, and that Colonel Arnald T. Johnson, Deputy Group Commander, would succeed him. This was a real shock to many, who had become very fond of Colonel Wright both as a man and a leader. As Colonel Johnson so aptly expressed it later, Colonel Wright had seen the Group through its hardest days. He had taken command at about the beginning of the Group's training at Pratt; had seen the organization through that period; had brought it overseas and through its first and most difficult missions. It probably was a great disappointment to him, to leave his Group just when things were beginning to run smoothly and the Group was over its worst hurdles.

Everyone, however, was glad to know that his successor would be Colonel Arnald T. Johnson, who assumed command on 26 February. Colonel Johnson, as Deputy Group Commander, had been popular with all members of the Group Staff, and Squadrons who knew him, and his appointment was very pleasing to all.

There were some other changes, which affected the 870th Squadron. On February 1st, Lt. Col. Robert E. Haynes was transferred to 73rd Wing Headquarters. This sorely distressed all Group personnel, because Pappy, the very popular pilot of Thumper, was genuinely liked by all. Some of his exhibits have almost made him a legendary figure. It was later ascertained that he had become Deputy Group Commander of the 499th Group.

It was hard to find a man to fill his shoes, but Colonel Wright made an excellent choice when he appointed Major Fred L. Trickey of the 871st Squadron. He assumed command of the 870th Squadron on February 8.

The 870th Squadron received a new Executive Officer, as Major Theodore Hussey was

appointed to that position. Major Hussey at one time had been a member of the Group but while still at Pratt, had been transferred, so his appointment from Wing was in the nature of a return home.

Capt. James A. Moore, former Executive Officer of the 870th Squadron was transferred to Group Headquarters, and became Group Utilities Officer.

The Group was especially favored during the month, in that a large number of its members received citations. Eleven men received the DFC, while Lt. Col. Haynes received an Oak Leaf Cluster to his DFC. Six men received the Soldiers Medal. Ten men were awarded the Air Medal, and T/Sgt. Anthony F. Migliaccio, received an Oak Leaf Cluster to his Air Medal. A large number of the ground personnel were awarded the Good Conduct Ribbon.

MAINTENANCE

The most important development under this heading, was the change to production line maintenance. This idea had been advanced a number of times, but it was the change from 10 to 15 planes per squadron, which finally brought about its adoption.

When it became evident that the Group would have 15 planes per Squadron to maintain, with only 10 ground crews per Squadron to handle the job, the need for a change in maintenance procedure became more pressing. It was decided that the distinctions between Squadrons on the line was untenable. Administrative distinctions could exist, but any other inter-squadron relationship which would retard servicing of planes should be abolished. So, a type of so-called production-line maintenance was adopted. A number of specialists were grouped into teams, such as engine change crews. If a particular plane needed an engine-change, then a crew that was created for that work was assigned to the job, regardless of the plane's unit, or to what Squadrons the various members of that particular ground-crew belonged.

The system was adopted early in the month, and despite fears to the contrary, worked out exceptionally well. The ground personnel realized that the overall Group activity was more important than Squadron rivalry and existing friendships, and pitched in willingly, so that the change was readily and easily carried out.

CHAPTER XIV
MARCH 1945

March was a sensational month from the standpoint of combat successes. Most other events poled insignificance in comparison with the success of the famous "blitz" against Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka and Kobe.

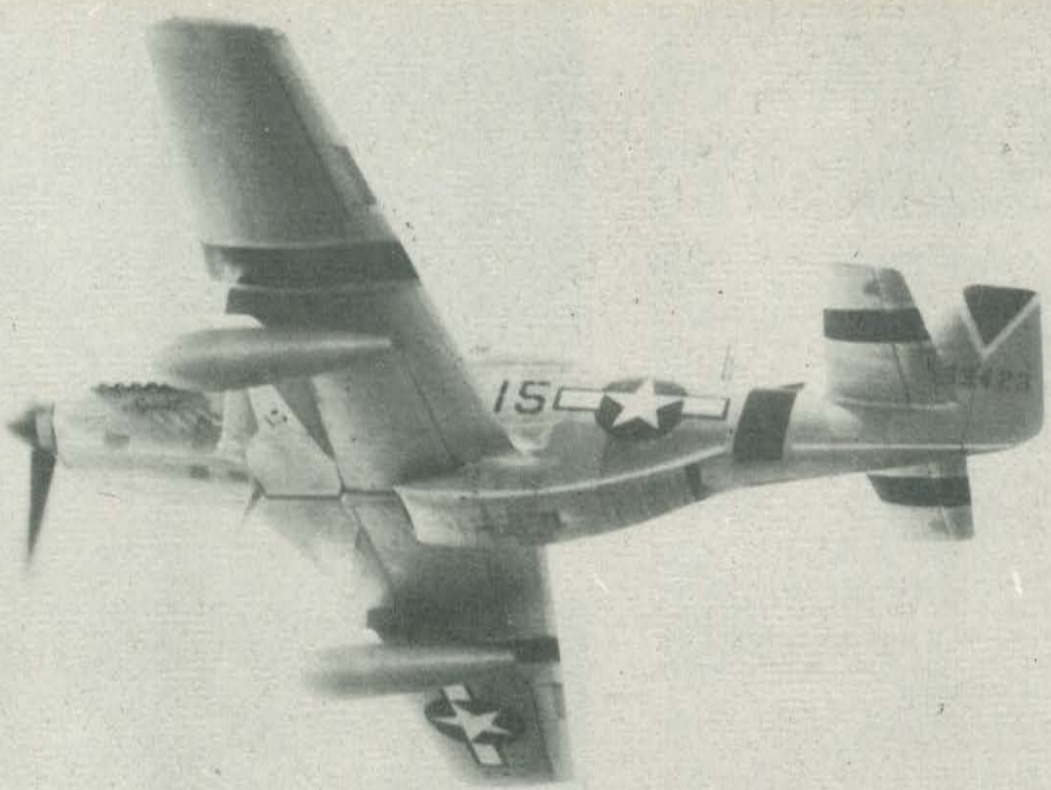
STRIKE MISSIONS

This was easily the most active month the Group had, since its formation, and Colonel Johnson was justly proud of the work of his men—flyers and ground personnel alike. The five raid "blitz" commencing with Mission No.

Haley and Johnson

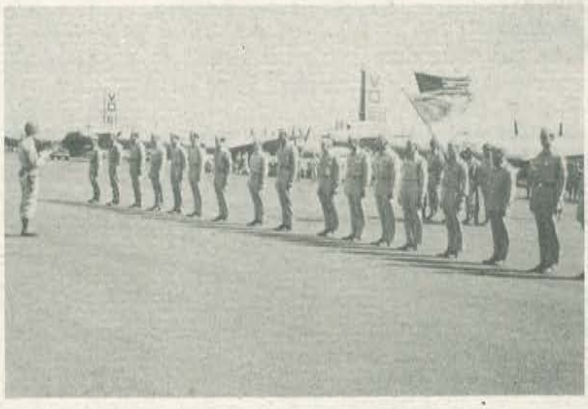
Japs hit Saipan

Rugged Coral shoreline, Saipan

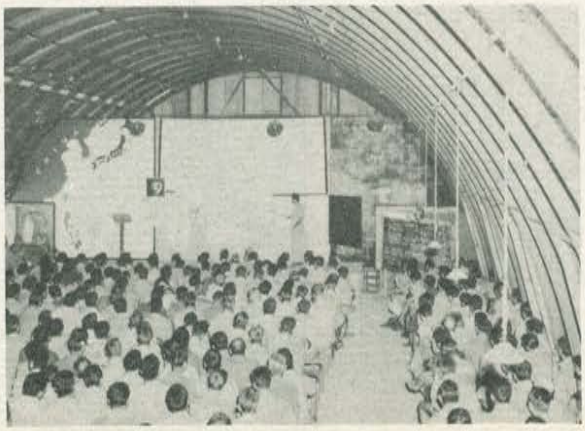


P-51 Escort from Iwo

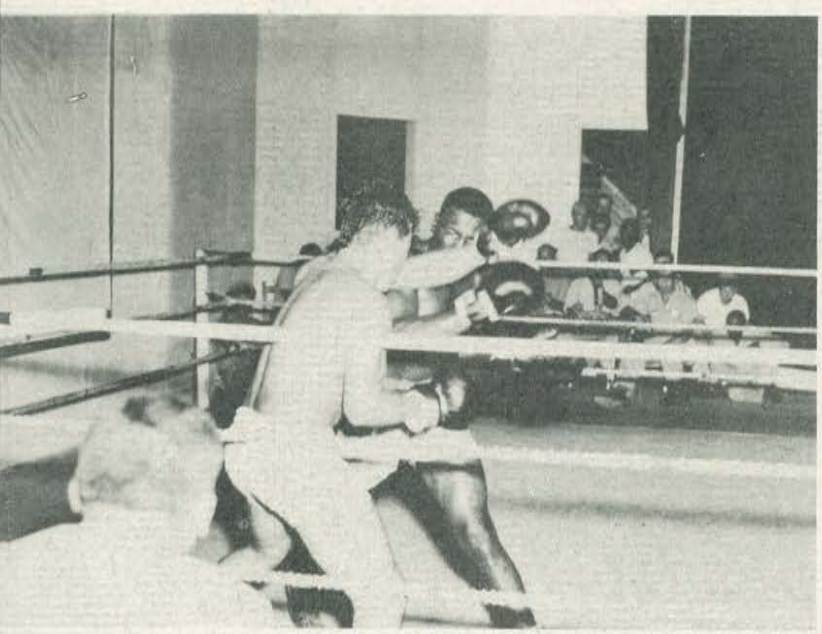
Pappy's Thumper



Awards on Saipan



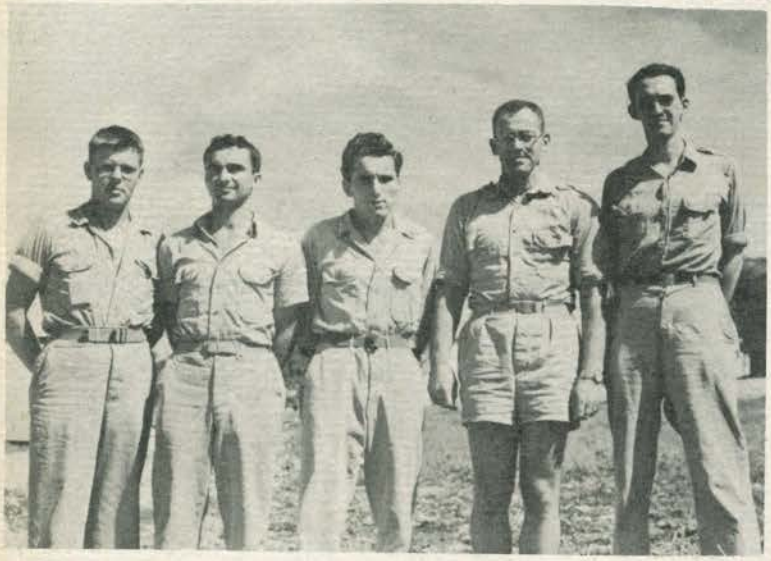
Group Briefing



Officers' Club, Saipan

29, and running through No. 33, left large portions of Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka and Kobe, in smouldering ruins. Many new techniques were attempted for the first time, and all proved successful.

The month started out in slow fashion, with daylight mission against the familiar Target 357. Due to complete undercast, the planes had to bomb the secondary Target—Urban Tokyo, with unknown results. One of the

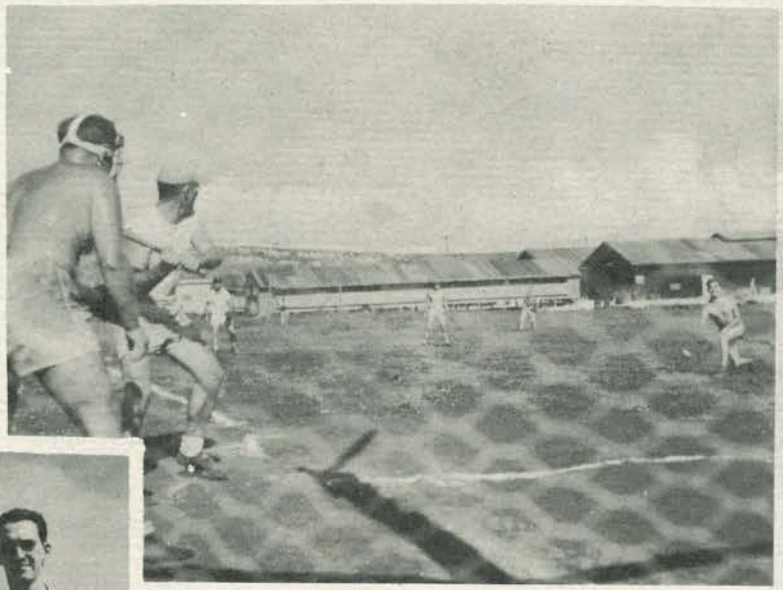


Group's planes ditched returning from the mission, and the Airplane Commander and the Bombardier, Lt. Westervelt, and Lt. Nedderson, respectively, were lost.

On the night of 9 March, however, the real blitz against Japan began. The Mission scheduled for that night, was a low level night incendiary raid against the industrial section of Tokyo. The bombing altitude was 6,000 to 6,800 feet. No formation was involved, and the target was to be attacked, by single aircraft. Crews at briefing shook their heads in amazement. Most felt that at such a low altitude, the big B-29s would be easy marks for the numerous flak installations.

However, the raid turned out to be the most successful in which the Group ever participated. Planes from the 313th and 314th Wings participated, and traffic over the city was pretty heavy. But when it was all over, 16.2 square miles of Tokyo had been completely burned down, and other additional areas damaged. It was the greatest blow ever laid right on the Emperor's doorstep. Not one of the Group's planes were lost.

The blitz was on and the effect upon everybody was electric. The crews, having seen the tremendous flames, were anxious for more of that sort of raid—especially since Jap resistance was unexpectedly light. Night fight-



497th vs. 498th

Statistical Section

Loading ammunition

Mail Call!

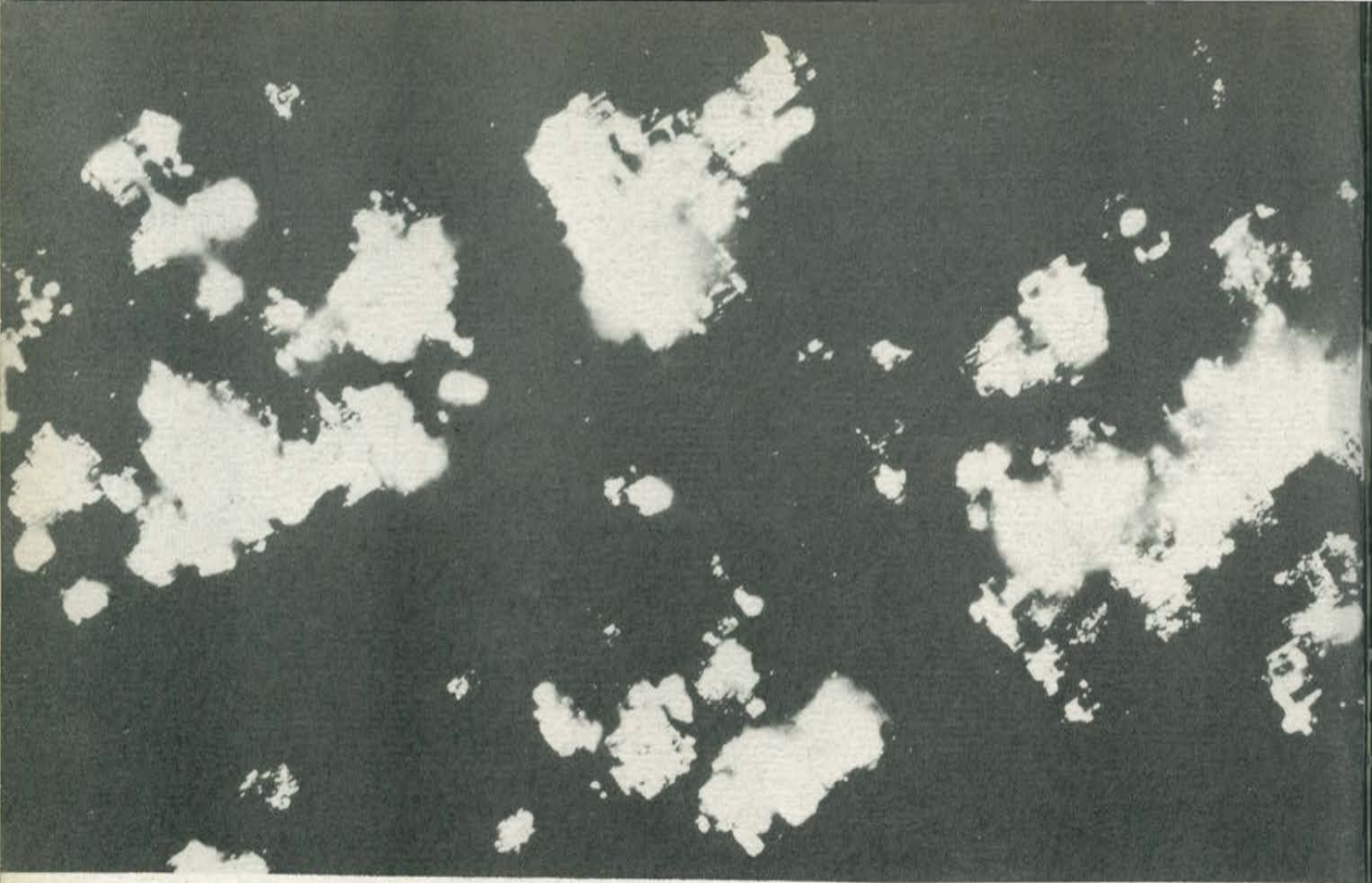
ers had flown around aimlessly, while searchlights waved wildly around, and failed to pick up most of the bombers. The news that the next mission was to start less than twenty-four hours failed to daunt the tired crews. Ground personnel worked around the clock so that the planes would be refueled, loaded with new incendiaries, and ready to go.

And go they did; this time to Nagoya. Again it was the same story—tremendous fires were seen—night fighters could not find the bombers—searchlights were ineffective—flak was intense, but inaccurate.

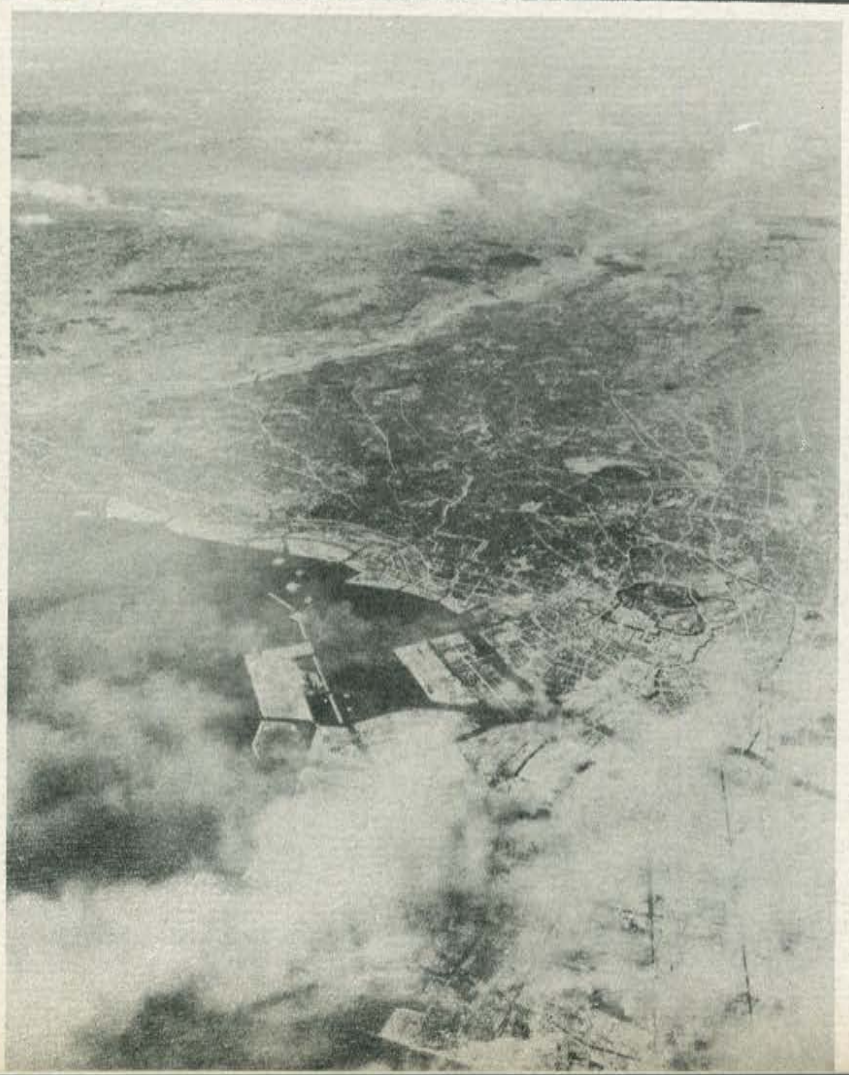
As before, there was enthusiasm, rather than disappointment, when it was announced that the planes would bomb Osaka next, without rest. This mission was also highly successful, as had been its predecessors, but the Nagoya strike pictures did not equal the damage that had been originally anticipated.

Then came a one-day intermission. Everyone realized that it was just a lull, and that the blitz was not yet over. On the 16th of March, a field order called for a raid on Kobe. For the fourth time in a row, fire bombs rained on one of the most important cities in Japan. This raid was another great triumph, and tired crews reported great fires left burning in the city. By this time, crews and ground personnel were

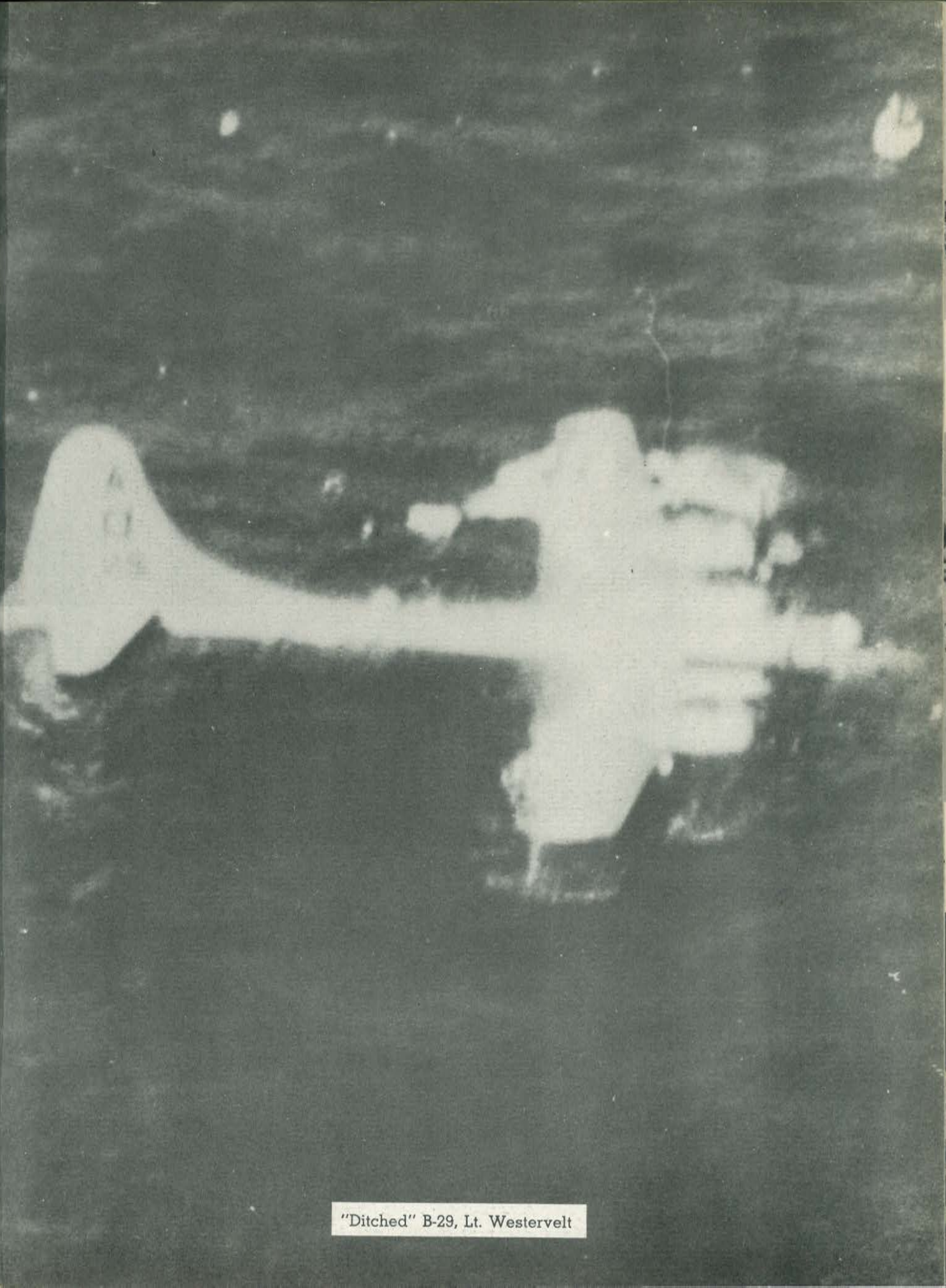
869th Operations Staff



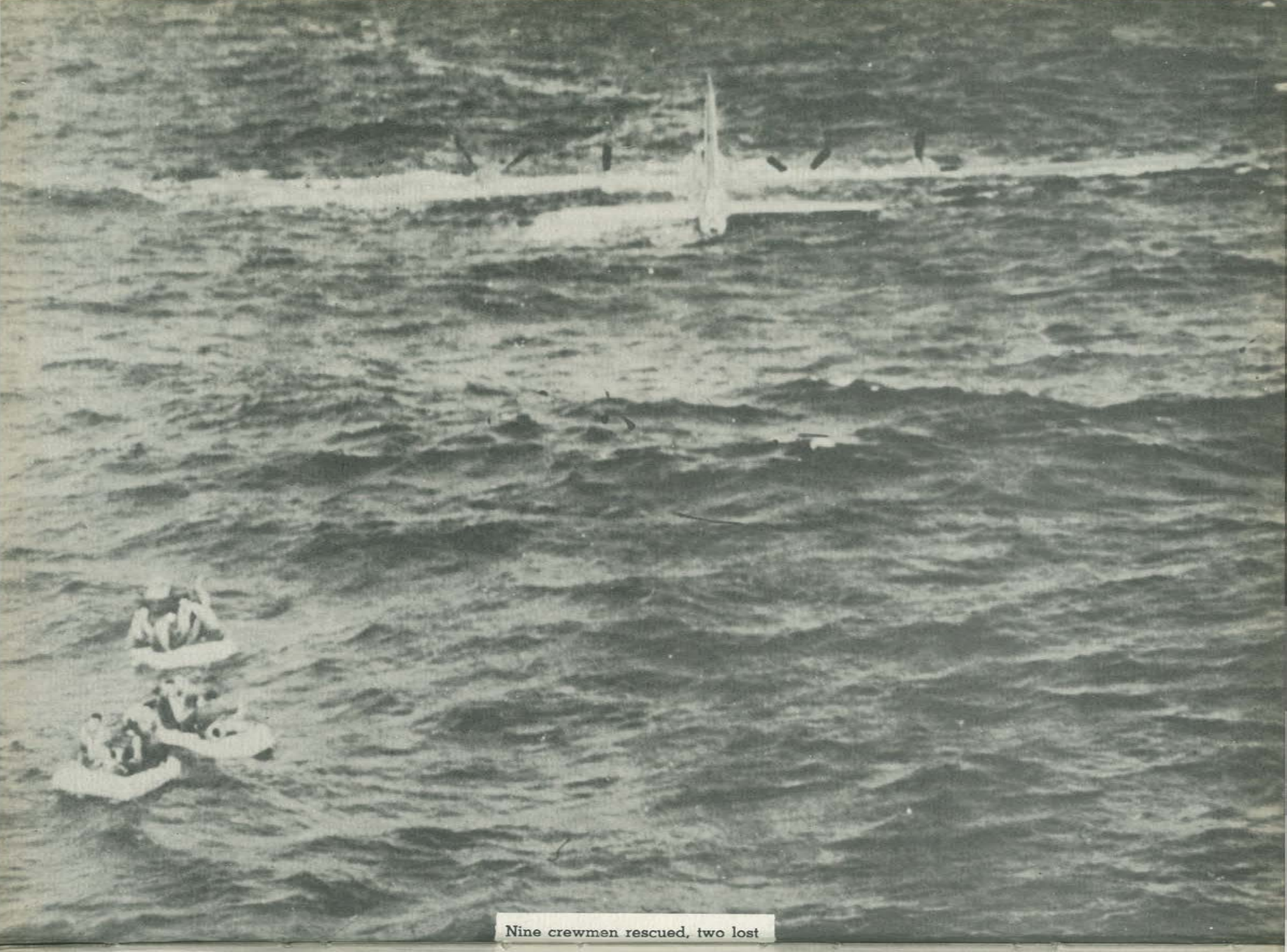
Tokyo is burning



Tokyo — 16.7 square miles of the city were destroyed.



"Ditched" B-29, Lt. Westervelt



Nine crewmen rescued, two lost

extremely tired, and one or two crews were grounded by the Medics. But the blitz continued in high gear. The next fire mission was scheduled for the very next night. This turned out to be a return trip to Nagoya, where the original was found to have done less damage than had originally been believed. The crews took off on the night of 18 March, and the results of that raid brought the damage done to Nagoya in line with that inflicted on Tokyo, Osaka, and Kobe.

All personnel were given a rest before the next mission against the familiar target No. 193 at Nagoya. The raid was a night, single-plane type of mission. The raid was not particularly successful, and one plane failed to return.

The next two missions, which rounded out the most intensive and effective combat period that the Group had yet experienced, were of an entirely different type, and were most welcome. They were daylight missions, to a new target, on a different Island, and practically no fighters or flak were encountered.

Both of these missions were a bombardier's delight, and the unusually successful bombing attested to that fact. With clear weather and a medium attacking altitude, and no fighters to distract attention, the bombardiers had a wonderful opportunity.

The first of these two raids took place on 27 March. The target was Tachiarai Airfield on Kyushu. (Subsequent events indicated that this and the next mission were made in conjunction with the landings on Okinawa.) Practically all the bombs landed close to the aiming point, and eight hangars and a number of parked airplanes were destroyed.

The second of these missions, took place on 31 March, and ended the very busy month. This was another daylight mission to Tachiarai, but the target was clear—the altitude, medium (16,000 feet), so the bombardiers had another field day, and the target suffered accordingly. The excellent bombing was a fitting climax to a month of hard combat work.

A brief note of credit is due, as was said by Colonel Johnson at a staff meeting, to all the Group personnel. Credit is due to the crews for tremendous damage done to four of Japan's largest cities, in a type of raid that many of them feared would not work. Credit is also due to the ground personnel for the long hours spent in servicing the planes between the missions.

In many ways the 497th Group led all Groups in the Wing. During the current month, which included the blitz period, this Group had less aircraft which failed to bomb a given primary target, than did any other Group, and had a greater percentage of its assigned planes in commission throughout the month, than any other Group. The Group Commander has just reason to be proud of his men's performance during the month of March.

WEATHER—STRIKE MISSIONS

The Group flew an unusually low number of Weather-Strike missions during March. It is believed that another Wing was bearing the brunt of flying this type of mission. In any event this Group was assigned only nine of his type mission during the month.

All nine missions were completed, although Colonel Morgan was forced to stop at Iwo Jima on his return on 23 March, due to engine trouble. In only two cases, were bombs carried, but in both cases the primary target was bombed, though in one case due to undercast, the results were unobserved.

In not one instance was there any opposition, and in only one case was there any flak. That was encountered on Colonel Morgan's mission referred to above, and it was meager and inaccurate.

The March Weather-Strike Missions can be summed up by saying that they were as successful as those of previous months. Enemy opposition was so negligible, that it was practically non-existent.

PERSONNEL

There were a number of changes in duty assignments during the month of March, most of which were in the form of additions to the Group Staff of Officers who had been working in the Squadrons.

Major Clarence C. Fowler, was appointed Group Air Inspector, and Captains Aubrey J. Bouch and Frank L. Thomas, appointed as his assistants. Captain James P. Mahoney was relieved as Armament Officer, and 1st Lt. William L. Nichols, formerly of the 869th Squadron was appointed to that position. Captain Mahoney remained as Group Gunnery Officer. 1st Lt. Frederick L. Monson, who had been Captain Mahoney's assistant in both positions, became the Assistant Armament Officer. Finally 1st Lt. Fillmore Avedich was appointed Assistant Group S-3, with duty in connection with radar.

Quite a large number of group personnel received awards during the month, including the DFC, Air Medal, Purple Heart and Good Conduct Medal.

MAINTENANCE

There were innumerable maintenance problems during the month, but they were relatively unimportant beside the main problem of keeping the planes in commission ready for the next mission during the intense blitz.

The percentages quoted in another section of his history show how well the maintenance section performed its work. Crew Chiefs vied with one another in having their planes ready for the next mission. Crews worked around the dock to make sure that *their* ship was ready for the next mission. There is one story about a Crew Chief, who, being unable to get hold of a specialized engine change crew, took his own ground crew and changed the engine in near record time.

There is also a story of the crew chief in charge of A-38, Master Sergeant Noel St. C. Givens. He was sweating out his plane's return on one mission, and spotted it coming into the traffic pattern with one engine feathered. It was then about 0800, and the Sergeant knew

that plane would be taking off in about 24 or 36 hours, so he had an engine change crew waiting at the hardstand when the plane taxied in. Needless to say, the engine was changed, a successful test-hop flown, and the plane ready for bombing and gassing for the next mission.

MISCELLANEOUS

There were several stories of a miscellaneous nature that occurred during the month, which warrant a note.

One of these is morale. During the early part of the blitz, morale leaped up tremendously. February had not been an outstanding month insofar as bombing results go. A sort of cold fear gripped the crews at the briefing for the first Tokyo fire raid. Many frankly did not expect to return from a raid over that city, at an altitude of less than 10,000 feet. However, when they realized the tremendous damage done, and the insignificant losses, morale took a tremendous upward curve, and increased with each mission, as the reports of widespread destruction poured in. Even after the fire raids had slackened, all Group personnel remained in a high state of morale.

Personnel were also very pleased at the fact that twice General O'Donnell, at Wing critiques, congratulated Colonel Johnson for excellent performance by the Group. This pleased the new Commanding Officer very much, and was a compliment to him on the efficient way he was handling his new command.

A third incident involves Lt. Rembert A. Ebert, of the 871st Squadron, a Bombardier on Captain Lampley's crew. On the famous Tokyo fire raid on 9-10 March, for some unknown reason, the bombs in the front bomb bay did not drop, despite all precautionary measures, including pressing of the salvo button. Lt. Ebert discovered that the bombs were piled in a log jam, and some had broken through the doors, and were arming, due to the rush of air. Lt. Ebert was forced to pick up eight bombs in his arms and drop them out through the now open bay doors, one by one, while maintaining a precarious foothold.

The final story refers to the same mission, and concerns the experiences of the crew of Captain Thomas Hanley, of the 869th Squadron, while en route to the target. This crew was listening to Radio Tokyo while they passed away the long hours on the way to the target. Seemingly for their benefit, the Japs were playing a number of well-known American records. After a few moments the melody of Smoke Gets in Your Eyes came through the receiver, and the crew members smiled to one another, thinking that smoke would be in the eyes of quite a few people within an hour or two. But it didn't stop there. Among other tunes which the announcer played for their amazed ears, were "My Old Flame," and "I Don't Want to Set the World on Fire." A little later on, "When Strangers Meet" was heard. The crew felt a little hurt at this, because they had considered themselves veterans on the run, and by no means "strangers". Finally they turned off the radio, because if the station had played, "There'll Be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight," next, then they would have feared that they were the victims of a hoax, or that the Japs had been tipped off to what was coming and had a peculiar sense of humor about it.

CHAPTER XV
APRIL 1945
STRIKE MISSIONS

During the month of April, 1945, the Group flew by far, the largest number of Strike Missions, that it had flown during any previous month.

The Group flew fifteen Strike Missions during the month, ran an average of one mission every other day. These missions kept all personnel very much on the jump. The crews were kept busy and ground personnel and staff personnel were even busier. A number of crews were on rest leave, and this added to the number of flying hours that the remainder of the crews participated in. On some missions only ten planes were scheduled, but the planning work was almost as great for a small number of planes, as it was for a large formation, so in many ways, ground personnel were even more active than flying personnel.

The B-29 was now being recognized as a very tough ship, and with enemy opposition getting weaker, lower altitude missions predominated. Greatly improved bombing by this Group was noticeable also. There was also a shift from the bombing of strategic targets, to tactical attacks on airfields on Kyushu Island. These were made to reduce Japanese pressure against our naval units operating off Okinawa.

A detailed account of each mission is deemed unnecessary. Mention will be made, of those missions which involved something of unusual importance or interest.

Mission No. 37, on the night of 1 April, opened the month in a rather inauspicious manner. It was a moonlight low-lever (6,800 feet) raid against the Mushashino Aircraft Engine Plant near Tokyo (Target 357). Results were difficult to observe because of many of the bombs were delayed action type, and at night it was hard to determine where they fell. Lt. Dietzel's plane (869th Squadron) failed to return from the mission. It was never heard of, nor seen, after take-off.

Before the next mission, Lt. Pickerel of the 869th Squadron, had an interesting mission. He was directed to fly a Blue Network announcer to Okinawa on D plus 1 so that the latter could report on the actual invasion of that island. This was an interesting assignment, and something out of the ordinary run of routine dangerous combat missions.

There was nothing unusual from the Group standpoint, in mission No. 38, against the Tachikawa Engine Plant. It was a night mission, and results were mostly unobserved.

Mission No. 39 was against the Musashino Aircraft Engine plant near Tokyo. The Eastern

half of the target was destroyed during this mission, which was very eventful from the Group standpoint. This mission was the first medium altitude raid against the Tokyo area. But what was more important to the Group, was the presence of a large number of P-51s. The long awaited, and hoped for fighter-escort had materialized, and the Group morale went up to new heights. The presence of the fighters made it easier for the bombardiers, who now did not have the inclination to keep one eye peeled for fighters, when they should have both eyes on the bomb sight. The crews returned with many tales of how he P-51s almost chased the surprised Japs from the skies, and they were high in their praise of the fine work of the fighter pilots. Crews felt much more secure now that they knew that on most of their tough missions over the Empire they would have fighter cover.

Mission No. 40, was against the Wing's most annoying target, the afore mentioned Musashino Plant near Tokyo. This mission was flown on 12 April, and P-51s again provided fighter cover, and this was joyfully received by the participating crews.

The next mission, which took place on 13 April, was a return to fire bombing. The raid was another great success, and an additional 10 square miles of Tokyo was burned out. Unfortunately Lt. Abar's plane failed to return from reasons unknown, and this put a damper on the enthusiasm over the success of the raid, because Lt. Abar was personally very popular, and he and his crew made a particularly effective team.

Two nights later, another fire raid was staged on the South Tokyo area, and again this type of raid proved highly successful. 8.1 square miles of this area was burned out, and despite the low altitude of the flight, 6,000 feet to 6,800 feet, no Group planes were lost.

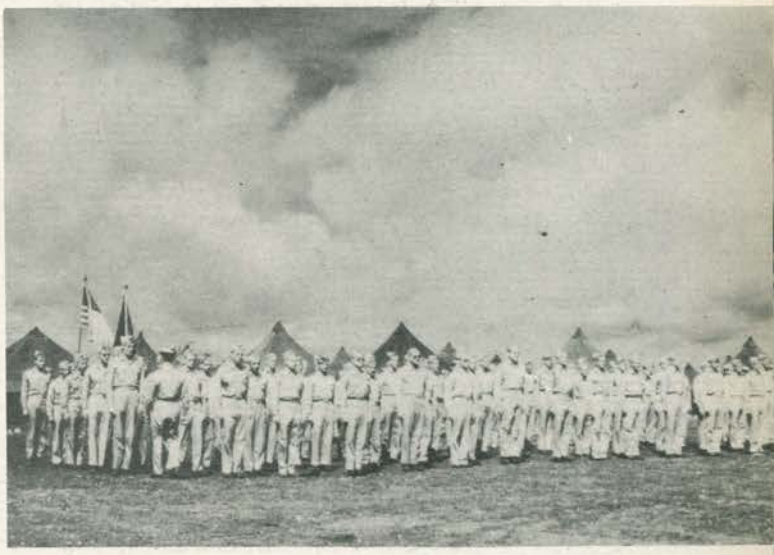
At this point the Bomber Command apparently changed its plan of attack, and a series of raids were run against various airfields on Kyushu. Group personnel assumed that the raids were designed to neutralize the airfields from which the Japs were sending their suicide missions against Naval units assisting at Okinawa. Generally speaking these raids were far easier than the types of missions that had hitherto been undertaken. Very few fighters were encountered, and often no flak whatever. Many crew-members, however, felt that the raids were uninteresting. They would fly to Kyushu, drop bombs on an airfield, on which they usually could not tell whether there were planes or not, and then return to base. But whether or not the crews felt that they were accomplishing much, their bombing results were nigh perfect in every raid.

The first of these raids took place on 17 April, against the Tachiarai Airfield. The planes had not yet returned from this mission before a briefing had taken place for the succeeding strike. The return was at 2130, and the succeeding mission was briefed at 2000.

871st Orderly Room

869th Intelligence

Capt. J. Boring Lt. E. Colvin



Decoration Parade

That mission, however, turned out to be a real disaster for the Group. The target was the same, but the one Squadron of 10 planes which went over the target, found its fire power was insufficient to stave off a series of sharp attacks by a few enemy fighters. The bombing was excellent, but two planes were lost. Lt. Anderson's plane was deliberately rammed before the target and it went down. Lt. Bussell's plane was badly damaged. He tried to make Iwo Jima, but had to ditch about 35 miles from that wounded airmen's haven. Only three men were rescued.

After a two-day intermission, the Kyushu raids were resumed on 21 April, with a raid to Usa airfield. This was followed on the very next day by a raid on Tomitaka Field. Both raids were highly successful. Enemy defenses were pitiable. In neither raid was there one burst of flak thrown up or was there any fighter opposition whatsoever.

For the next mission, a temporary change in type of target took place. An aircraft plant at Tachikawa was chosen. This mission resulted in nothing unusual from the Group's standpoint.

The pendulum swung back for the next three missions, and Kyushu airfields were the targets again. Mission 43 on 26 April, found Usa airfield as the target again. There was 10/10 undercast, and bombing results were unobserved. The next two raids were against the Miyazaki airfield, a new target for the Group. The first of these raids was on 27 April, and the second time on 29 April. Excellent bombing results were obtained on both missions, and, amazingly enough, no fighter opposition was encountered. In fact there was only very meager flak.

The fifteenth strike mission of the month, took place on 30 April. The target was Tachikawa, but due to thick undercast a radar run was necessary on the radar target; the industrial center of Hamamatsu. Bombs were dropped, accurately, and a number of fires were seen. Thus ended the most active month that the Group had even experienced.

WEATHER-STRIKE MISSIONS

The Group flew 28 weather-strike missions during the current month. These missions had the usual good success. The returning crews brought back good weather information, and dropped a large number of bombs on assorted targets, with excellent results, against amazing inapt opposition. Only on four of these flights were enemy fighters known to be airborne. On twenty-two of the missions there was no flak. When one realizes that these missions were flown over the very heart of the Japanese Empire, the inability of the Japanese to make any sort of a defense against these nightly missions is very surprising.

PERSONNEL

The month found flying personnel receiving recognition for the splendid work they had done, in the form of many decorations. A very large percentage received Air Medals, or clusters thereto. The airplane commanders who piloted their crafts in four of the five fire-missions over the mainland during March, received the Distinguished Flying Cross, which in a number of cases meant the addition of an oak-leaf cluster to an already earned DFC.

The Purple Heart was awarded by the Group to 18 personnel who had been wounded. Good Conduct medals were given to 67 men of the 869th Squadron.

Quite a large number of personnel received promotions.

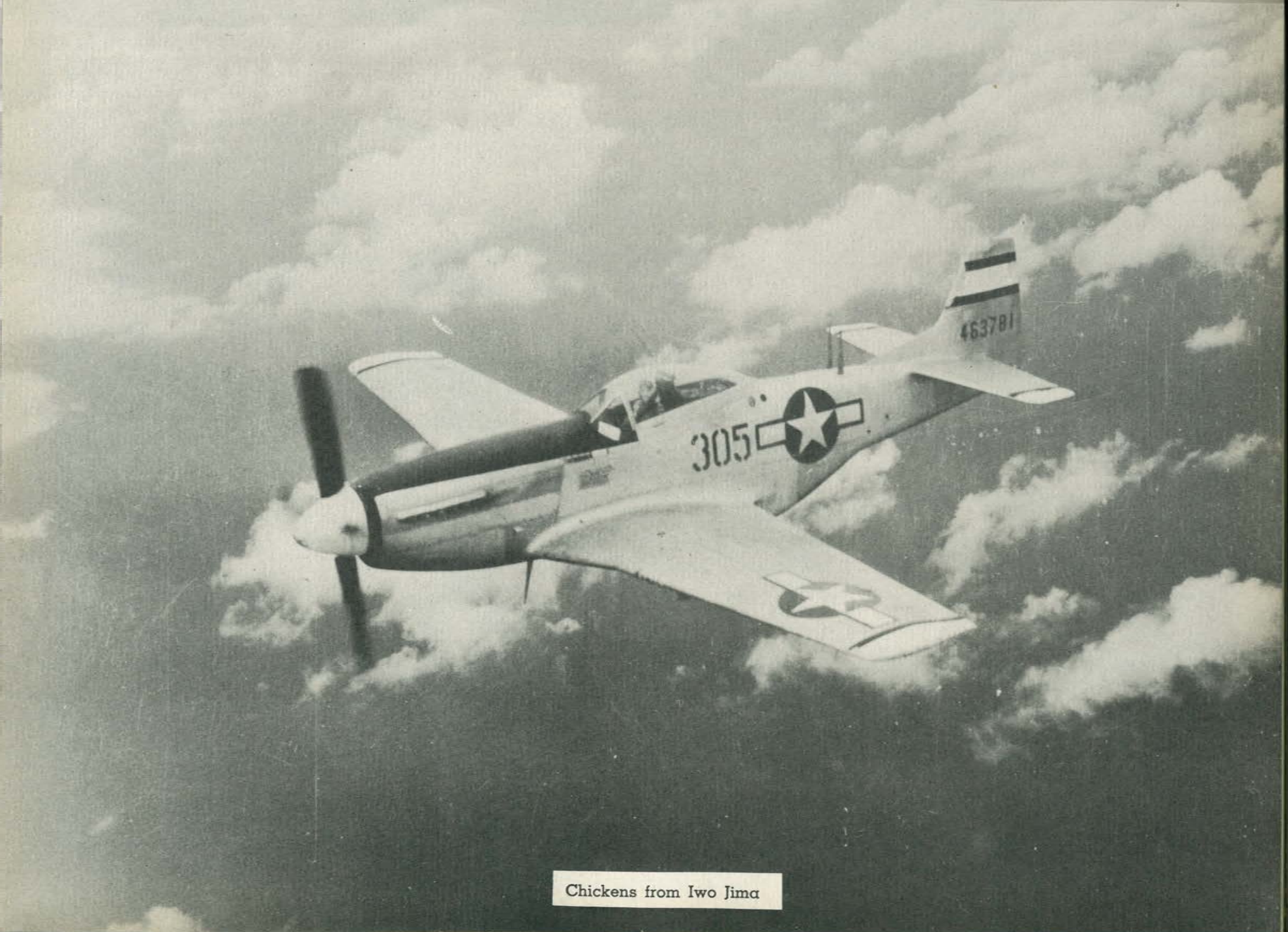
During the month Major Hugh Gilmour, Group Bombardier, was transferred to Headquarters XXI Bomber Command on Temporary Duty. On April 24, Lt. Charles F. Bohling, of the 869th Squadron, was placed on Special Duty as Acting Group Bombardier.

The most important change during the month was the appointment of Major Earl S. Kimbell, as Commanding Officer of the 869th Squadron. Lt. Col. Robert K. Morgan, received orders returning him to the United States, and Colonel Johnson chose Major Kimbell to succeed him. Major Kimbell, was Operations Officer of the 871st Squadron, and a most efficient and popular officer. Major Kimbell was transferred on 27 April, and assumed command 29 April.

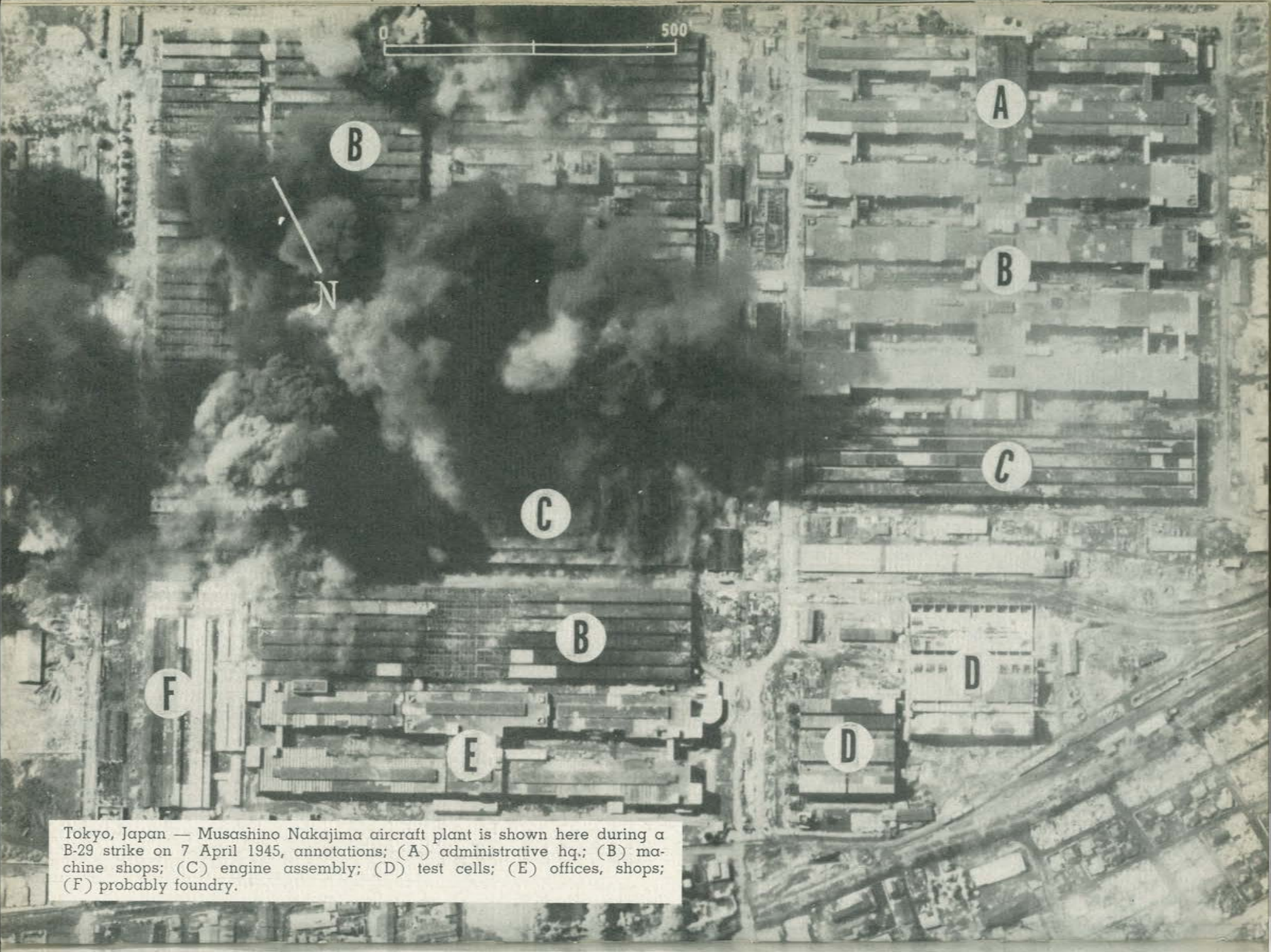
MAINTENANCE

The main problem experienced in maintenance work, during April, was the difficulty in keeping fifty airplanes in condition and good repair, with personnel originally intended to maintain only thirty. The first item was to increase the number of crew chiefs, to meet the number of planes.

Later, in order to spread personnel, Major Broadhurst decided to lower the maintenance crews from five to four. This put an added strain on that section.



Chickens from Iwo Jima



Tokyo, Japan — Musashino Nakajima aircraft plant is shown here during a B-29 strike on 7 April 1945, annotations; (A) administrative hq.; (B) machine shops; (C) engine assembly; (D) test cells; (E) offices, shops; (F) probably foundry.

Front yard—Yes mud

CHAPTER XVI
MAY

The Group flew nine Strike Missions during the month of May as contrasted with fifteen flown the previous month. However, with the exception of four missions, all were maximum effort incendiary types, and thus are not comparable with those of the preceding month, when many missions consisted of just two squadrons, engaged in striking some of Kyushu's Airfields.

The month began with a highly successful pin-point raid (No. 52) and ended with one of the most successful missions ever flown (No. 60), which destroyed about 80 per cent of the built-up area of Yokohama. In fact the whole month consisted of a series of highly successful missions. In only one case (Mission No. 54) was the bombing unsatisfactory.

There was one change in tactics which requires mention. VE day came during the current month, and shortly thereafter, the Group heard that an intensive blitz, in the form of fire raids, would take place in an effort to make the Japs capitulate quickly. Actually, the blitz, as such, did not materialize, nor was there any Jap surrender. However, a series of highly effective fire raids, evenly spaced against the largest Japanese cities took place beginning with the mission of May 14th, against Nagoya (No. 55). Reference will now be made to each individual mission, from the Group standpoint.

The first mission of the month was flown on 5 May, against the Hiro Naval Aircraft Factory at Kure (No. 55). The raid was highly successful, and was a fine example of pin-point bombing, in that 86 per cent of the target was completely destroyed. Flak was intense and one Group plane (Lt. McSpadden) was shot down close to the target by a Togo. Some parachutes were seen, but the number was uncertain. They were seen falling towards a mountainous section of the Japanese Mainland.

One interesting experience during the mission fell to the lot of Maj. Merrill's crew. He, along with quite a few others, had to land at Iwo Jima for refueling. As he landed, a 2000-pound bomb, which had hung up, broke loose and fell on the runway. Consternation reigned at Iwo, as personnel dove into the nearest foxhole. Maj. Merrill's crew was plenty worried too, but there was nothing that they could do about it. Actually nothing happened. The bomb bounced on the runway a couple of times, and rolled to a stop without exploding. It was a close call for all.

The next mission occurred just after VE day on 10 May. It was another splendid bombing job. The target was Tokuyama Naval Refueling Station. This Group went over the target last, and when they flew over the target, it was already completely obscured by smoke, which was rising to 18,000 feet—and this from G.P. bombs, not incendiaries. The target was obliterated.

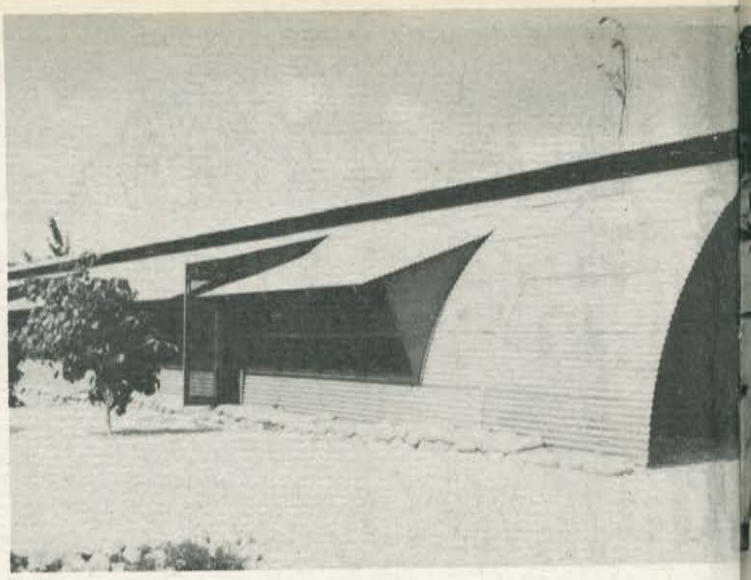
Mission No. 54 took place the very next day, with one Squadron of the Group joining other Wing Squadrons in attacking the Kawanishi Aircraft Co. at Kobe. The mission was a failure from all standpoints. The rate-motor on the bombsight blew a fuse during the run, and the bombardier on the Group's lead ship missed the target, because he had to hurriedly release manually. Bombing, photography showed, was almost equally poor by some of the other Wings, so that very little damage was done, although the 58th Wing did get bombs in the target.

On 14 May, the series of incendiary raids, referred to above began with a daylight raid on Nagoya. It was very successful, with many columns of smoke up to 16,500 feet. The Group's planes were over the target last, and had difficulty in finding a place to drop their bombs, because the greater part of the city, and all of the Group's aiming point, was obscured by smoke.

On the return trip, Lt. Lamback had to ditch when about 90 miles North of Saipan. Within a short time, his whole crew was rescued by a surface vessel, indicating the efficiency with which Air-Sea Rescue was operating.

The second of the incendiary raids (Mission No. 56) took place on the night of 16-17 May. It was a night incendiary mission against the Southern and Dock Areas of Nagoya. The Group had thirty-eight airplanes airborne, and suffered three aborts. There was nothing unusual, from the Group standpoint, in the mission. There was considerable undercast, and the extent of the fires could not be seen very well.

Army Red Cross activities

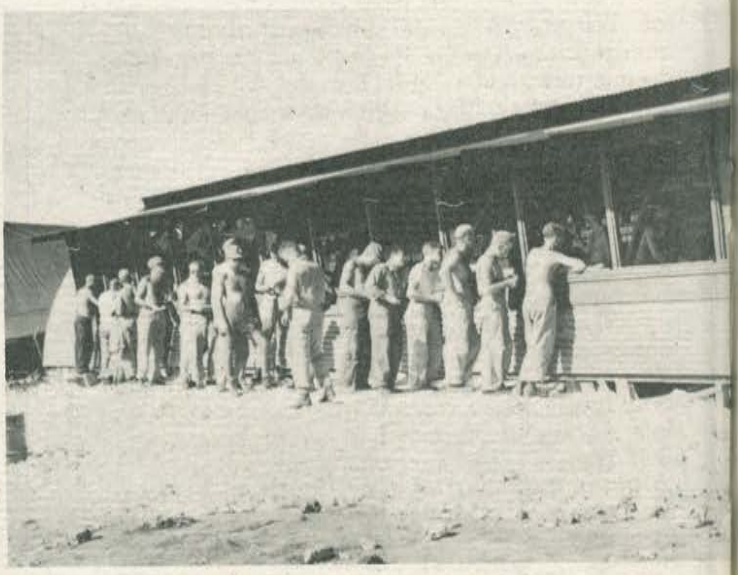


Officers' Club

Portable shower bath

PX

Hospital ward



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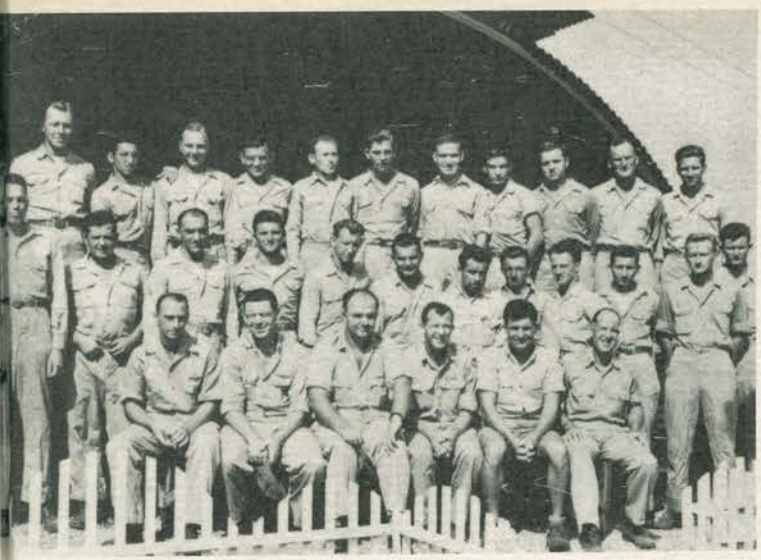


Medical Section—497th

At this point, a temporary change in policy was made, and a numbered target was chosen for the next mission—the Tachikawa Army Air Arsenal. The raid cannot be classed as a failure, but was a disappointment. The target could not be seen because of a thick undercast, so all planes eventually bombed the primary radar target—Hamamatsu. It was unfortunate that the weather was bad, because there was a helpful group of escorting P-51s on hand, who had nothing at all to do, because only one fighter arose through the undercast, and he remained at a very respectful distance.

Then followed three of the most successful raids that the Bomber Command has ever staged.

The first of the Tokyo raids took place on the night of 23-24 May, just six months after the first B-29 raid on Tokyo, led by this Group, on 24. November. The actual damage done in this raid is not certain. Dense smoke over the target had not cleared before the next raid, and prevented the taking of pictures. But all crews reported tremendous fires in the City of Tokyo, and later these numerous fires merged into one conflagaration. There was extreme turbulence over the target, tossing the planes around like cork in water, as they passed over the smoke areas. Opposition was weak, as it generally was on night raids, except for planes caught in searchlights. Only five fighter attacks were made. Flak was intense however, and six planes of the Group received battle damage, while eight crew members were wounded.

The second night incendiary raid on Tokyo came on the night of 25-26 May. The various Wings had different aiming points, most just Southwest of the Palace area. One plane was lost during the mission. It was piloted by Lt. Swenson. The plane was damaged over the target and ditched about 90 miles off the coast. Lt. Swenson, Lt. Hudson, S/Sgt. Shaw, S/Sgt. Simon were dead when picked up by a submarine. Lt. Stevens and Sgt. Frorillo are missing. Lt. Calbridge, Lt. Grossman, T/Sgt. Linke, S/Sgt. Riherd and Sgt. Knight were rescued.

When pictures were later obtained of the combined damage it was found that about 46 per cent of the built-up area of the City was completely burned out. Premier Suzuki himself said that it was beyond repair, and could not be restored, but will have to be rebuilt. Later, Radio Tokyo was heard to say that displaced residents would build underground dugout type homes, indicating the degree of damage, and the Japs' fear of future raids.

The last raid of the month took place on 29 May and was a 20,000 feet daylight fire raid against Yokohama. From the Bomber Command standpoint it was a complete, yes almost total success. 80 to 90 per cent of the City was burned down.

Thus a post VE-Day blitz was thrown against Japan, which rose to the highest peaks yet achieved, at the end of the month. It was a month of consistent good bombardment, which accomplished untold damage.

WEATHER STRIKES

A total of eighteen weather-strike missions were flown during the month. Enemy opposition, insofar as these missions were concerned, followed the same pattern. There was scant opposition, and the enemy followed its custom of pretending that the plane wasn't there, and declining to shoot at it, or send up interceptors.

On just one of these missions was there an enemy interceptor present. In that particular case one enemy plane was airborne, but was totally unable to locate our planes. In only two cases was flak encountered, and on one of these the firing consisted of a few inaccurate bursts of the heavy type.

On these missions, the usual weather observations were made and occasional bombs dropped. On 9 May, for the first time, propaganda bombs were dropped by the Group. They were dropped in connection with an in-

Improvised baking oven

869th Operations

Moss Hart and His Show "The Man Who Came To Dinner"

Gertrude Lawrence

creased attempt to induce Japan to surrender since her ally, Germany, had collapsed.

The missions can be summarized by stating that they were uniformly successful, and that enemy opposition was astonishingly weak and ineffectual. One cannot help but compare opposition over the Japanese Mainland, with what would be encountered, by a Jap plane over the United States, under similar circumstances.

PERSONNEL

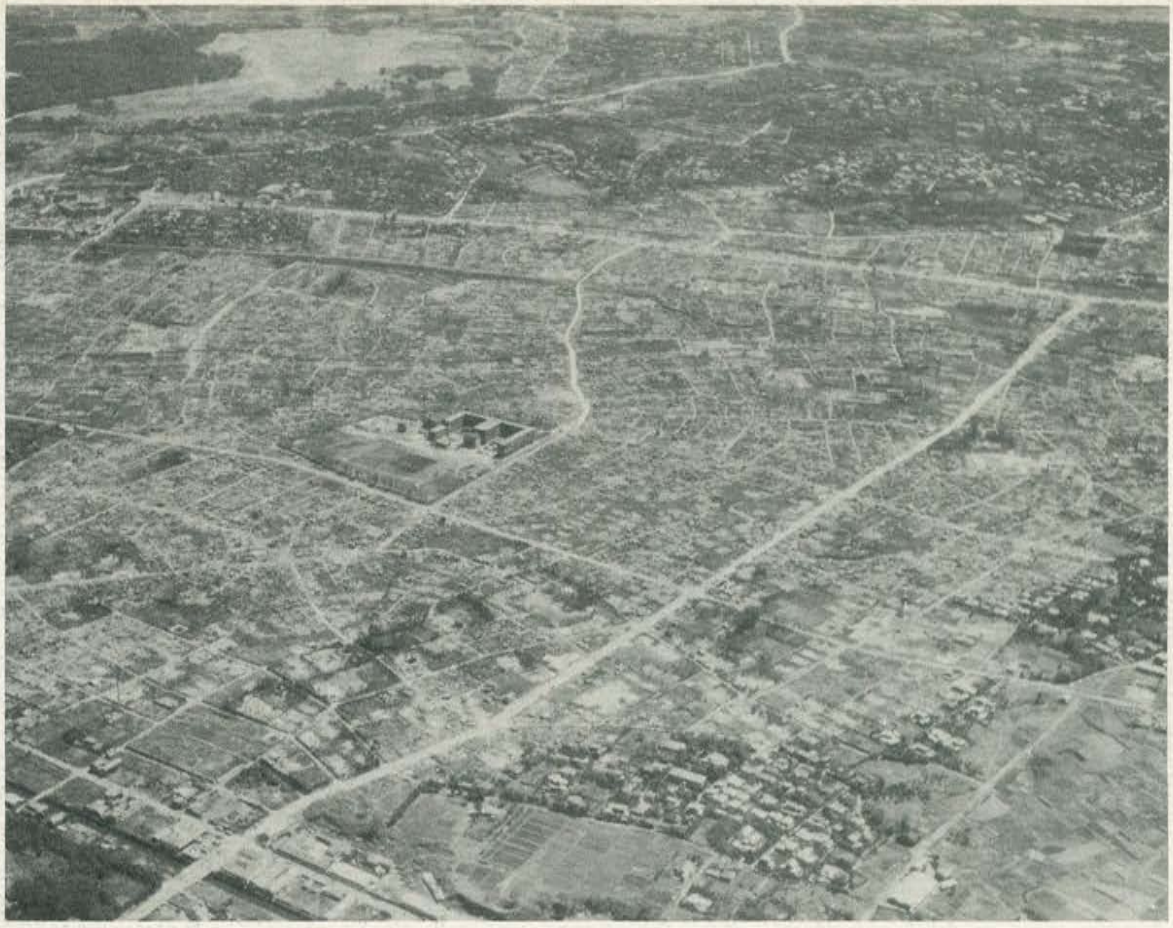
There were not many important changes in duty assignments, during the month. Major John Carroll, Operations Officer of the 869th Squadron was transferred to Group, and became Major Haley's assistant in the S-3 Section.

During the month, the Unit Personnel System was set up, and Captain Robert Clowes, Adjutant of the 871st Squadron, was put on Special Duty with Group Headquarters also, and appointed Assistant Personnel Officer. He was also appointed Provost Marshall.

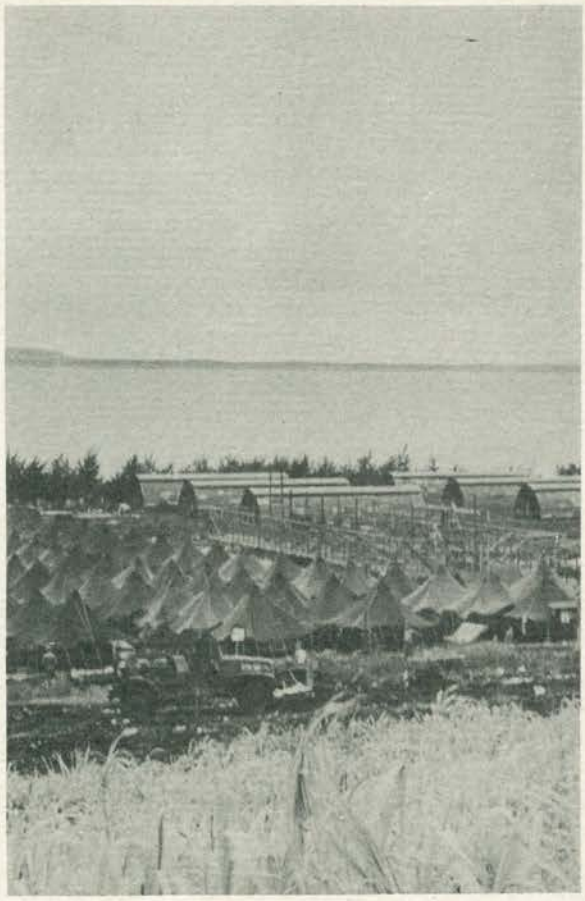
Well over 100 enlisted men were promoted on 1 May. These were almost all in the Squadrons, and promotions were pretty equally divided among the three Squadrons.

The Group was most fortunate in having a large number of its personnel receive various decorations, such as DFC's and Air Medals.

The Group itself made a large number of awards, in the form of Good Conduct Medals, to members of the 869th, 870th and 871st Squadrons. First Sergeant Henry K. Ellis, Jr.,



Tokyo after the fires



Tent city

of the 869th Squadron, was awarded a clasp to his Good Conduct Medal.

Thirty gunners had their MOS changed from 611 to 612, and thus became armorer-gunners.

A number of Purple Hearts were awarded, but it is pleasing to note that the number was small. Three men, however, received oak-leaf clusters.

Mention should be made at this point of the establishment of a so-called Unit Personnel System. Some difficulty had been experienced in having separate Squadron personnel sections. Naturally, there was apt to be a difference in the way records were kept. For example, the multitude of recommendations finally forced higher headquarters to require virtually a set form. Hence three separate organizations had to study and change their respective recommendation forms. This was only one example of many, where the lack of uniformity existed.

Consequently at Wing's suggestion, a new system was inaugurated. Practically all personnel engaged in S-1 work, whether in Group Headquarters, or in the Squadrons, were put in a new special section in Group called Unit Personnel. That section handled all personnel matters. The new section was still subject to general supervision of the Group Adjutant (S-1), but the department was put under the special direction of a Unit Personnel Officer. This was Captain Clowes, assisted by Captain Peterson. Squadron S-1 personnel were put on Special Duty with Group Headquarters. The move practically denuded the Squadron orderly rooms. The 870th, and 871st Squadrons were left with only the First Sergeant and one clerk. The 869th was left with one additional clerk.

The Group Adjutant expressed considerable satisfaction over the way the system worked. It conserved personnel; produced a uniform system of handling records; and provided a strong central control over S-1 matters. From the Group standpoint, it was a great success, and the Squadrons suffered little, if any, from the change.

A long hoped for increase in T/O ratings for Airplane Commanders was authorized during the month. It authorized the grade of Major for all Flight Leaders and the grade of Captain for all First Pilots.

During the month, nine combat crew officer personnel received promotions. The great majority of these were promotions from 2nd Lt. to 1st Lt., and included mostly pilots, navigators, bombardiers, and flight engineers, who had been in grade for quite some time, and whose excellent work on B-29s had well earned them the promotions received.

TRANSFER OF PHOTO LAB TO WING

On 7 May, in accordance with Wing Orders, all personnel of the 15th Photo Lab were put on Special Duty with the 73rd Wing. The reason for the change was that the Wing had decided to combine all the Photo Labs under its jurisdiction into one combined Wing Photo Lab, and a new Lab had been constructed at Wing for such a combined unit.

This Group was flattered by having Lt. Gunther placed in charge of the new Lab, subject to Wing direction. The change incidentally had added an additional bit of hardship on transportation. All the Lab personnel had to be transported up to the Wing area and back twice a day. Also the Group Photo Interpreter had to make additional trips to the Wing area in order to properly carry on his work.

TOUR OF DUTY

During the month, the first personnel completed their tour of duty, and they have departed for the States, with the congratulations and good wishes of all the remaining personnel. The mission flown on 16 May, found two crew members completing their thirty missions.

The question as to how long the tour of duty would be, had been one of the greatest interest to crews. They had been on pins and needles for some time waiting for higher headquarters to issue its ruling. Finally, on 2 May came Regulation 35-2 of the XXI Bomber Command, setting the tour of duty at 35 missions. This was a great disappointment to the combat Personnel.

The blow was softened however, by a letter of 19 May, directed to the Commanding

General of the 73rd Wing stating that consideration would be given to personnel who participated in missions during the pioneering days, and that some of those personnel would be considered for rotation after they had flown their thirtieth mission. Each case was to be considered on its own merits.

As stated above, on 16 May, two men reached the 30 mark. These were S/Sgt. Sherwood Fritzshall, a gunner, one time a member of Lt. Col. Morgan's crew, of the 869th Squadron, and S/Sgt. Lawrence R. Davidson, of Lt. Conway's crew, of the 871st Squadron. Since that time, and up to 31 May inclusive, twenty-eight other combat crew members reached that figure. This figure includes 11 men of Lt. Wirth's crew; nine men of Lt. Kelly's crew, and eight other men of Lt. Conway's crew.

MAINTENANCE

The Bomber Command required that a regular test crew be provided to fly test hops.

This worked out in a highly satisfactory manner. Regular crews, of course, normally made perfectly satisfactory test-crews, but there were differences in personality traits involved. It has been found that since crews, inclined to be more careless than others, would approve certain performance characteristics which the regular test-crew would find unthinkable. At the other extreme, other crews, overly-cautious, would hold that a given plane was not "right", while a standard test-crew would unhesitatingly approve the plane's performance.

The Group chose Captain Thomas, an experienced and able pilot, with considerable combat experience, to act as Chief Test Pilot, and to be assisted by Lt. Classick.

COMMENDATION

On 30 May (Memorial Day) General O'Donnell, ordered a Memorial Day Service to be held on the line, in memory of 73rd Wing Personnel who had been lost since operations began. At that time he read to the assembled troops a letter of commendation from General LeMay, commending 73rd Wing elements for their operations against the Japanese Mainland, during the first six months of operations. A copy of the letter follows:

HEADQUARTERS XXI BOMBER COMMAND
Office of the Commanding General
APO 234, c/o Postmaster
San Francisco, California
25 May 1945

SUBJECT: Commendation.
TO : Commanding General, 73rd Bombardment Wing, APO 237, c/o Postmaster, San Francisco, California

1. It is gratifying to observe the steady progress which your organization has made since its initial strike against the Japanese Mainland on 24 November 1944.

2. I am aware of the many difficult conditions which existed at the time of your arrival in the Marianas, and which persisted through the early months of your operations. The losses

Awards on Saipan

Gen. Arnold, Gen. O'Donnell and Col. Shellmire

No air raid tonight, I hope

sustained by your combat units during the period prior to the capture of Iwo Jima, and before our Air-Sea Rescue program was fully organized, constituted a real challenge to the leadership, courage, and stamina of you and the officers and men of your Wing. On your arrival in the theater, you were faced with many unique problems incident to the organization and operation of an entire VLR Wing on the airbase. You have made substantial progress toward solving these problems, and in doing so, your Wing has become the prototype for other Wings in this area. While facing and overcoming many organizational problems, you have been able to increase the size and frequency of your strikes against the enemy.

3. *I desire to commend you and the officers and men of your Wing for your performance of duty. In my opinion, a performance of this nature is possible only when the enthusiastic cooperation of administrative, service, and combat personnel is equal to the determination of the commander to succeed.*

CURTIS E. LEMAY
Major General, U.S.A.
Commanding.

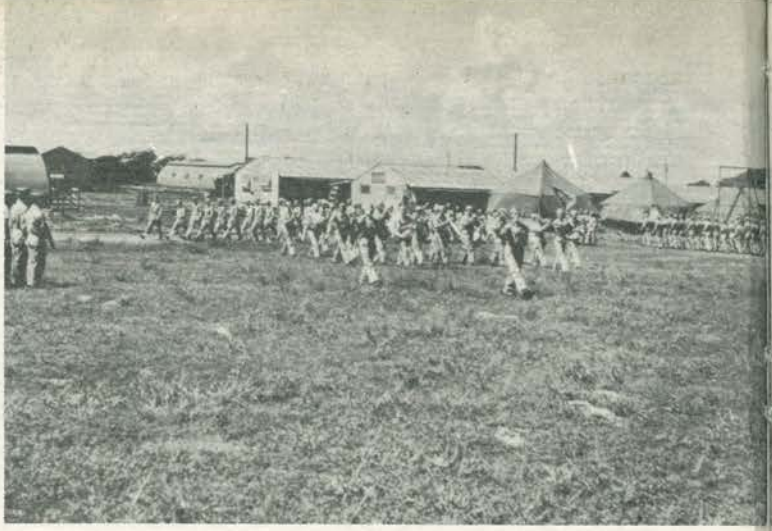
CHAPTER XVII
JUNE 1945
STRIKE MISSIONS

Ten Strike Missions were flown during June. With three exceptions, all were incendiary raids against Japanese cities. The first four incendiary raids were daylight missions against either the Osaka or Kobe areas. On 15 June, policy changed, due possibly to bad weather conditions over the Empire, and the incendiary missions were flown at night, against smaller Japanese cities. The change of policy was officially announced by the XXI Bomber command, giving as the reason—that the larger Jap Cities no longer served as suitable targets, due to the tremendous damage they had suffered.

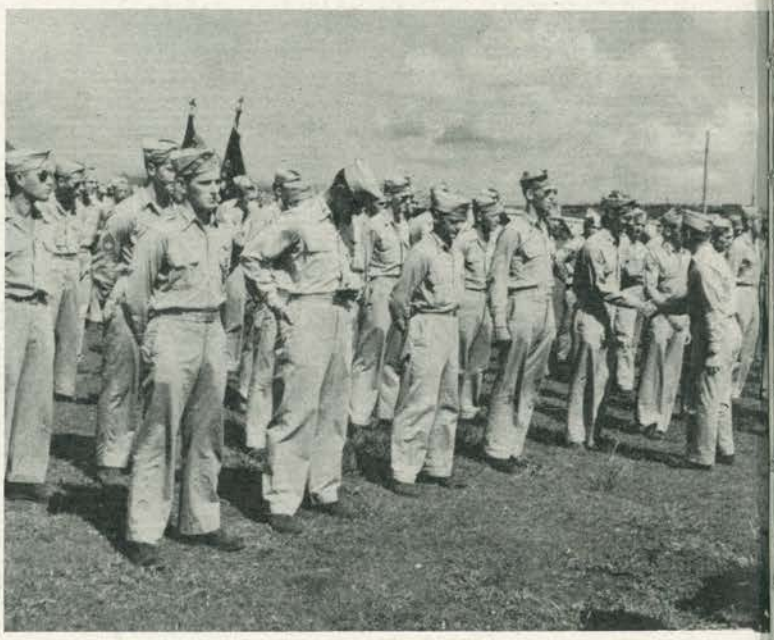
The month started out with a daylight incendiary raid against Osaka. Weather at the assembly point prevented the various Groups and Squadrons from forming, and the few that were able to get together encountered a stiff front on the way to the target, which resulted in breaking up the formations. All planes found their noses iced over, when they reached the target, so they bombed by radar.

On this mission the Group lost two planes —all that it was to lose during the entire month. 1st Lt. Crowe, in A-16 was hit by flak, and later was heard by a Dumbo, giving a ditching position about 90 miles off the coast of Japan. No trace of his plane, nor of any crew member was ever found.

Shortly after take-off, Lt. W. C. Campbell, in A-11, lost two engines while only 60 miles north of Saipan. The ship lost altitude rapidly, and he gave the order to bail out. Out into the darkness everybody went, out to a nearly miraculous rescue. Below was a small convoy plowing its way toward Iwo Jima. The watch

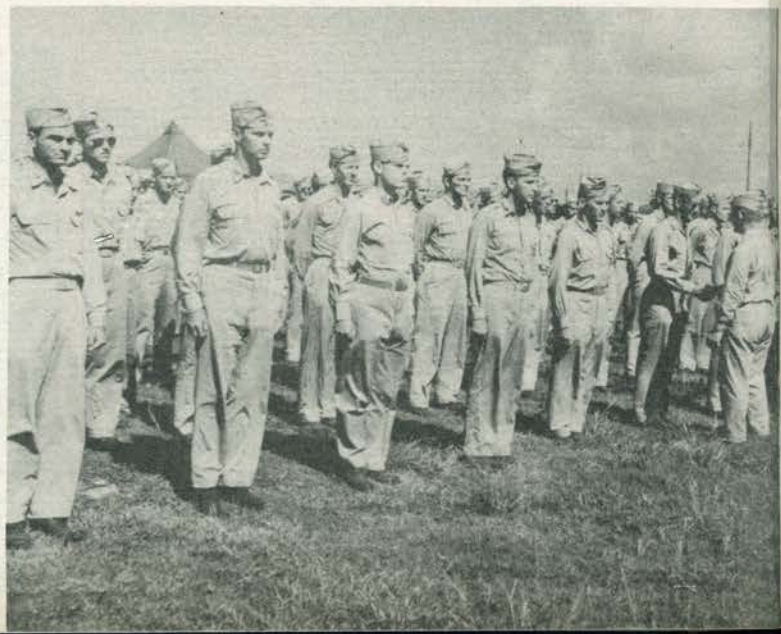


73rd Wing at formal Presentation of . . .



. . . Air Medals and . . .

D.F.C.s



spotted the burning aircraft as it plunged into the sea, and headed for that spot. Within a short time, ten men had been picked up, including Major Hugh Gilmour. One man was picked up dead, and another was never found. The men were in the water two to three hours at the most. Lt. Fesq, Flight Engineer, was actually side-swiped by one ship as it searched in the darkness for him.

On June 5th, the target was Kobe. The target was the unburned portion of the city. There were a few clouds, but the target was open. It was a daylight raid, the flak was moderate to intense. Enemy air attacks were also moderate. It was the last mission of the month on which there was any enemy air opposition.

June 7th found Osaka Urban Area the target for a daylight incendiary mission. There was 10/10 undercast, but all crews believed that excellent results had been achieved.

The target for the next mission was the familiar Musashino plant at Tokyo (Mission 64, on 10 June). The Weather was clear, except over the target, so all planes bombed the secondary, the Hitachi Engineering Works. The bombing was excellent. 65% of all bombs were plotted to be within 1000 feet of the aiming point, and 100% of the bombs were within 2000 feet. Strike photo's alone showed 85% of the target destroyed.

June 15, found the Wing hitting Osaka for the last time, an incendiary raid. The aiming point lay in Amagaseki area, which had not been hit previously. The weather was quite unfavorable, but probably because it was the anniversary of the first B-29 raid against Yawata by the XXI Bomber Command, it was decided to stage the mission. The weather was again 10/10 undercast, as had been the case for a number of days. The clouds were solid up to 24,000 feet. Most planes bombed at 19,500 feet. Results could not be seen by the crews.

Beginning with the next mission, the policy of the Bomber Command changed, as was subsequently announced. News releases quoted General Le May as saying that Japans largest cities no longer offered profitable targets, because they were practically destroyed. Targets henceforth, would be smaller, or medium-sized Jap cities.

The amazement, of crew-members of this Group was complete when it was discovered that the target was Hamamatsu. This secondary City had been a punching bag for some time. It did make one feel that a big phase of the air war had been completed. Elements of the 73rd Wing only were to attack Hamamatsu. The other Wings each had a different City as their Target. This again represented a change in policy, because hitherto, night incendiary raids had been carried out by a complete Bomber Command force. Now, since the area to be burned was smaller, apparently it was to be the policy to use only smaller forces. This, of course would likewise increase the rate of attrition of the Jap cities.

Local talent entertains the Troops

G.I. Showcase

After Mission Interrogation

The Group power plant.
Captured Japanese equipment

Betty the Red Cross Do-nut girl

A scene on the island

The crews treated the Hamamatsu raid almost in the nature of a lark. Opposition there would not be anything at all like that encountered at Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka or Kobe—and they were right. To make matters even easier for the crews, there was a 10/10 undercast over the target and consequently Jap flak and searchlights were useless. Opposition was practically nil. The Wing did not lose a plane. The Group had thirty-six aircraft airborne, and only one plane which did not bomb. This was the second straight mission that this Group had been high, among all the Groups in the Wing, both in the number of aircraft over the target, and low in the number of aborts.

The next of the secondary cities scheduled for elements of the 73rd Wing, was Fukuoka, on Kyushu. The mission, which was flown on the night of 19-20 June, produced nothing unusual. Enemy opposition was light—good fires were started, and there were no losses.

For the next two missions, there was a return to normal effort, daylight demolition raids against the industrial targets. The first of these was the Kure Naval Arsenal, which was hit on 22 June. Results were excellent. This Group was last off in the Wing, and the target was practically totally obscured by smoke as we bombed. Excellent bombing results are believed to have been achieved. There were no enemy fighters, but flak was intense. As usual in that area, it came from both shore and naval batteries, with the latter presenting a brilliant array of colors. Sixteen aircraft received battle damage but all returned to their base.

The next was also a pin-point target raid. The target was the Osaka Army Arsenal, which was to be attacked during daylight hours on 26 June. This raid turned out to be the only unsuccessful mission of the month. Weather prevented assembly, and all aircraft went to the target individually. There was a thick undercast, and bombing was done entirely by radar. The pin-point target, did not lend itself to radar bombing very well. Results were unobserved, but subsequent reconnaissance pictures indicated little, if any damage done to the target. Capt. Garvin actually bombed two targets on this mission. He dropped three 2000-pound bombs on the primary, and later dropped four more on Oji-Yamada.

The month ended with a return to the maximum-effort night incendiary type of raid against secondary Japanese cities. This time the target was Sasebo, and the mission took place on the night of 28-29 June.

MISCELLANEOUS MISSIONS

During the month of June, nineteen miscellaneous types of missions were flown. They ranged from Search and Escort missions to Weather-Reconnaissance missions. The greatest number of these missions consisted of a plane collecting weather information, and dropping leaflets on some city area, although there were many variations on this type of mission.

These missions were uniformly successful.

In only one case was an enemy plane airborne. In that instance it was observed several thousand feet low, searching rather aimlessly. If anything, enemy opposition was weaker than it had been at any time previously. The missions generally were quite successful though uneventful.

PERSONNEL

There were very few important changes in personnel or duties during the month. The most significant was the placing of Lt. Col. Frank L. Davis, Commanding Officer of the 871st Squadron, on Special Duty with Group Headquarters for duty as Supervisor of Supply and Maintenance. Major John Carroll, Assistant Group S-3, was transferred to the 871st Squadron, on the same day, and became its Commanding Officer, although Col. Davis has not been relieved of that position and responsibility.

For the greater part of the month, Capt. Charles Bohling of the 869th Squadron, acted as Group Bombardier. Major Hugh Gilmour, Group Bombardier having bailed out and rescued was given rest leave.

At the beginning of the month, a large number of promotions were made among enlisted personnel. The promotions were pretty evenly divided among the Squadrons (only two men in Group Headquarters received promotions), and about 130 men were affected. The promotions ranged from boosts up to Master Sergeant, and down through all grades, to PFC inclusive.

Flying personnel received a number of richly deserved promotions during the month. Promotions for flying personnel had been extremely slow, until last month.

Several Airplane Commanders in the 870th and 871st Squadrons, who had been Lead Crews, on a number of highly successful missions, received a promotion to Major. They were Major James M. Campbell, Major Walter L. Geyer and Major Ted H. Morgan. A number of other Airplane Commanders were promoted to Captain. They were E. R. Campbell, E. R. Cutler, Wilfred Lind, Robert J. Conway, Charles H. Lambark, Keith A. Whitaker, John H. Buck, John G. Crowder, and John T. Garvin.

ROTATION

Combat Crews received a severe shock during the middle of the month when it was announced that combat crews, with the exception of eleven crews per Group, would not be rotated at the end of thirty missions, but would have to fly thirty-five.

During the month of June a total of twelve crews were rotated—six in the 869th Squadron, and three each from the 870th and 871st Squadrons. Eight new crews were assigned to the Group during the month.

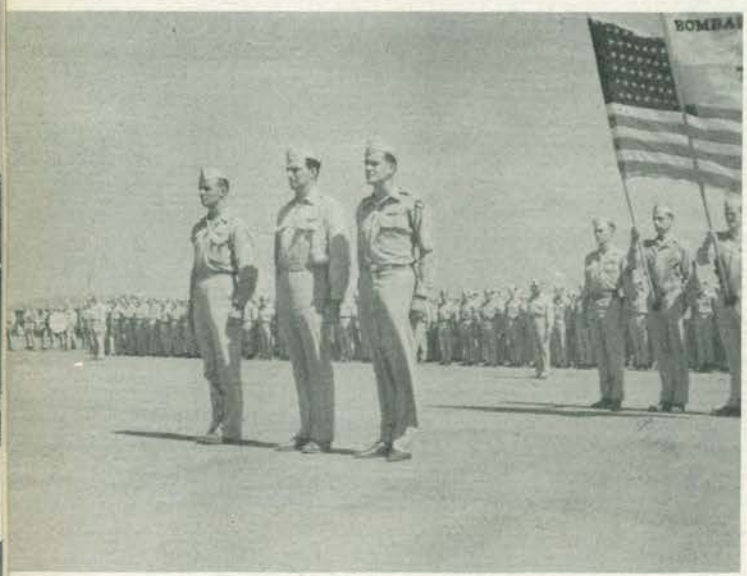
RED CROSS ACTIVITIES

During the month, the Red Cross continued to furnish lemonade and coffee and doughnuts at Interrogation after each Strike Mission.

Red Cross refreshments

Interrogating Bartlett's crew

Lt. Colvin Interrogating crew



Decorated by Gen. Arnold

A Red Cross girl was always present to make the lemonade, and to serve the coffee and doughnuts.

We lost the young lady originally assigned, Miss Betty Sullivan, she married and is believed to have returned to the States.

Miss Charlotte Fagin was appointed to replace her. She was a resident of South Bend, Indiana, and the Group considered itself fortunate to have another pleasant, attractive and efficient young lady to serve refreshments at the Interrogations. Miss Fagin was a very hard worker. She ran a NATS canteen from 2300 to 0600 each night. Most B-29 missions returned at about 0700 during the latter part of June, thus giving her a busy time.

But what the Group was most proud of, Miss Fagin's continuance of the Group's most prized tradition unique in the Wing's experience, that of capturing Japs. The Group captured a grand total of nine Japs.

One early morning she was driving from her Quarters to the Group War Room, in the new ARC Doughnut Wagon—a converted weapons carrier. As she and her GI driver came around a bend in the road, lo and behold, right on the side of the road, stood a group of four Jap military personnel, who quite obviously wanted to surrender. Not having any weapons, and fearing a Japanese trick or possible ambush, Miss Fagin and the driver motioned the Japs to remain where they were, and drove quickly to the nearest Infantry unit. The latter quickly rounded up the patiently waiting Japs.

Miss Fagin denies any personal credit for the capture, and claims that all credit goes to the Doughnut Wagon. She later heard that one of the POW's asked his interrogator whether or not the strange looking wagon, with the Group and Squadron's insignia painted on it, was some new, secret American Weapon.

MISCELLANEOUS

Under this heading comes the probable sinking of a Jap picket-boat by one of the Group's Superdumbos piloted by Lt. Laracy of of 870th Squadron. He was close to the Japanese mainland, when he noticed some wreckage on the sea. He could not see any survivors, but noticed a life-raft, thought it best to have a submarine search the area.

He could not get in touch with the sub, directly, so transmitted his request through Iwo ground station. Shortly thereafter he noticed two Jap picket boats headed in the direction of the wreckage. He immediately made a bomb run on the boats, and dropped several 100-pounders but missed. He then made three low-level strafing runs, and the larger boats began to smoke and settle low in the water. The smaller boat came close to pick up personnel abandoning the larger one. Lt. Laracy also strafed the smaller boat but soon had to leave so as to return to the wreckage and guide the submarine. He believes that the larger boat actually sank, and that the smaller one, though damaged, probably was able to return to shore.

Flak—Heavy, Meager, Inaccurate

A problem which occasionally arose was the fact that some planes of the Group are much better mechanically and are much faster (or slower), than others. On four successive missions, and while flown by three different crews, plane A-38 had to be landed at Iwo, because it was low on gas. Two of these times it was being flown by Lt. Laracy, and the other time by Capt. Whitaker. On its next mission, it was flown by Major Ragland, and again it had to stop at Iwo, this time because the pilot could not force it to go better than 180 m.p.h., no matter what power settings were used.

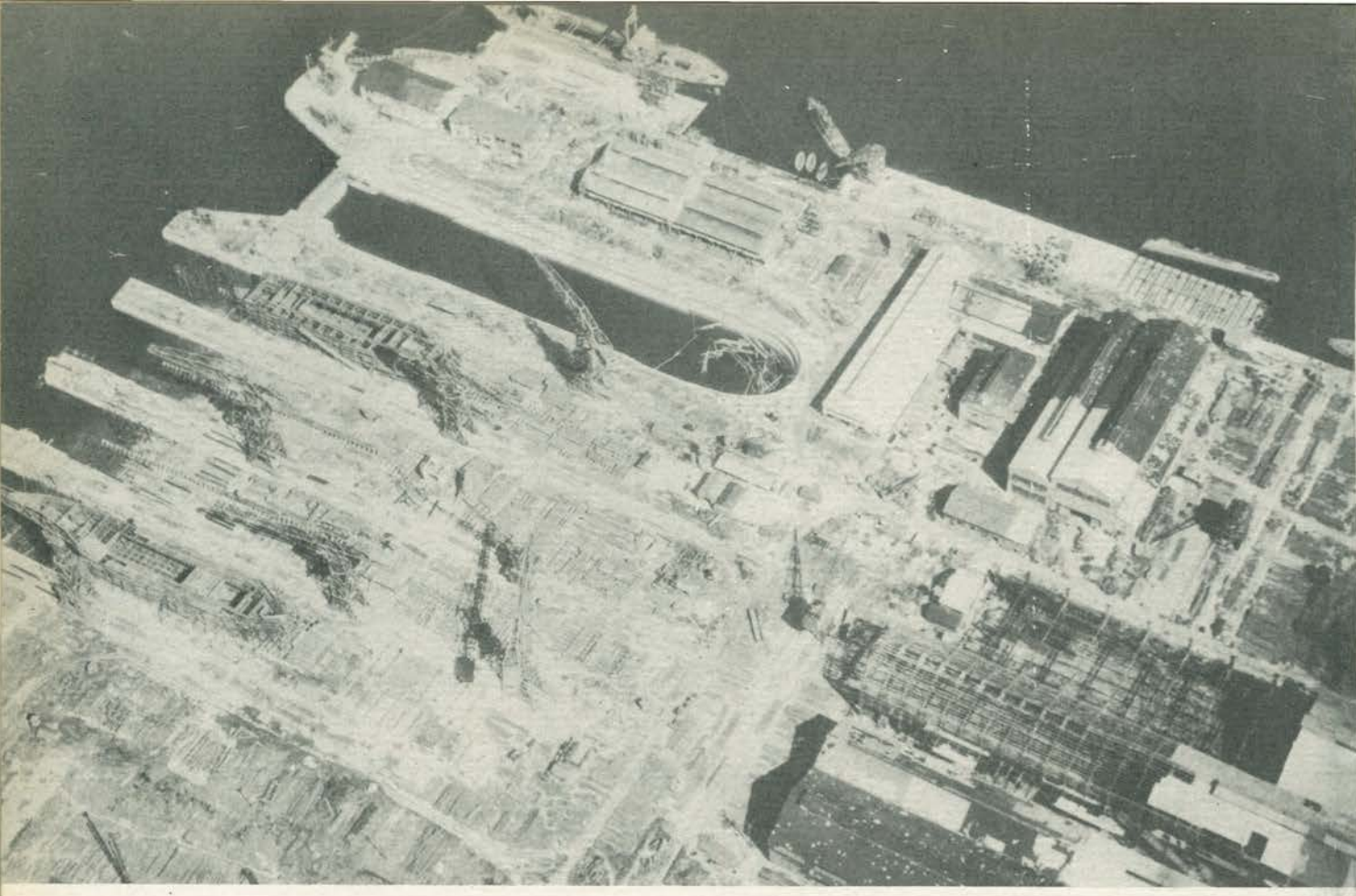
Some passengers have been heard to say that it must be a great temptation for an airplane commander to bail out over a convoy and let A-38 go on to a watery grave.

CHAPTER XVIII
JULY, 1945
STRIKE MISSIONS

The emphasis during the entire month of July was on night incendiary missions. There was only one scheduled mission against a pinpoint target—the Osaka Arsenal. On that mission (23 July), the target was obscured by clouds and a run was eventually made on the secondary target, the city of Kuwana.

Tired

The last time this Group even so much as damaged an enemy fighter was on 5 June. This is not because of inaccurate gunnery, but because there was a scarcity of target material available.



Kure

So far as is known, none of the three losses during the month was due to enemy action. Two losses were unquestionable operational. The third plane was never heard from after take-off, and the cause of its loss is unknown.

The raid of 1-2 July was against Kunamoto, on Kyushu. Forty planes were airborne, setting a new Group record. The raid was hampered by 10/10 undercast, and results were no better than good. Lt. Voigt ditched on return, but everyone was rescued including two crew members who parachuted out.

Two nights later Kochi was the target. For the first time in quite a while, the Group found good weather over the target. Excellent results were achieved. Thermal currents tossed some aircraft one thousand feet. Lt. Col. Davis who was riding as a passenger was cut and bruised, and he received severe neck injuries necessitating ten days hospitalization due to the sudden updraft. Four other men received lesser injuries from the same cause.

One aircraft was lost on this mission. Major Merrill and his crew, flying their 33rd mission as a replacement crew, took off, and were never heard from again, One passenger on board was Lt. Col. John H. Griffith, Deputy Group Commander. Also aboard as a passenger was 1st Lt. Joseph Lamoglio, Group RCM Officer. On Major Merrill's crew, as Tail Gunner was T/Sgt. Kurt Hermann II. The latter had received considerable publicity in the States because he had flown over both Rome and Berlin, had completed a tour of duty in the European Theatre and had volunteered for B-29 duty in the Pacific. He had ridden his luck and gunnery skill just a trifle too hard, and with three missions to go, he and the rest of the crew disappeared.

The raid on the night of 6-7 July was against Akashi. There was nothing unusual in the raid, which destroyed 24 per cent of the built-up area of the city.

The fourth mission of the month was the usual night incendiary type, this time against Sakai. The weather was clear, and excellent results were achieved. Forty-two per cent of the built-up area of the city was destroyed. Capt. Moore of the 870th Squadron had a difficult time. He piloted a special weather and radar jamming ship. He flew over the target for 40 minutes and thus drew the attention of many searchlights and flak guns. His plane was badly shot up, but he and his crew returned uninjured.

The next mission was the one really unsuccessful mission of the month. The target

Loading the guns

was Ichinomiya, just northwest of Nagoya. The target did not lend itself to accurate radar bombing, and results later showed that only eight-tenths of one per cent of the city was burned, indicating, as General O'Donnell later said at a Group briefing, that only two or three planes in the whole Wing dropped on the target.

The next city to be attacked, was that of Oita, which was hit on the night of 16-17 July. The weather was clear and excellent results were achieved. Smoke columns rose to 10,000 feet, and the glow could be seen as far as 120 miles from the target. The mission produced nothing of an unusual nature, unless it was the ineptitude of the enemy defenses. Despite clear weather, and despite the fact that the flight plan took the Superforts directly over the Oita Airfield, no fighters were observed, and only four planes were subjected to meager, inaccurate anti-aircraft fire.

The seventh incendiary mission of the month was against the boom city of Hitachi, on the coast, northeast of Tokyo. This raid took place on the night of 19-20 July. The raid seemed unnecessary in that news dispatches had indicated that the Navy had shelled the area only two days previously. There was 10/10 undercast, and smoke columns pushed their way up through the clouds at 8,000 feet.

Lt. Rodge ditched about seven miles north of Saipan shortly after take-off. Only five men survived. About thirty minutes after take-off, the electrical system and No. 1 engine failed. Soon thereafter, No. 2 engine quit, and an enforced rough ditching occurred.

The next mission, while not a failure, was a distinct disappointment. An involved Field Order called for an attack on the Osaka Arsenal, in daylight on 24 July, with 2,000-pound bombs. A secondary visual target was provided for in the city of Kuwana. The radar target was the city of Kuwana itself. Unfortunately, despite the well laid plans, the Arsenal was blanketed by clouds when this Group arrived. Another Group had bombed visually, but there was too much cloud cover when the 497th arrived, so a run was made to Kuwana. The secondary visual target was completely closed in, so the 2,000 pounders were dropped on the unfortunate city of Kuwana.

The next unfortunate town to die was Matsuyama, remaining large unburned city on Shikoku. It was hit on the night of 26-27 July. It was a "bombers' moon" night, and aided by excellent Pathfinder work, (this Group led the Wing), the target burned fiercely. Seventy-three per cent of the build-up area of the city was burned down.

The final raid of the month was easily the most sensational of all. The target was Ichinomiya, previously missed on the night of 12-13 July. Results were much more favorable, on this raid, but that was only incidental. The night previous, B-29s flew over Japan, dropping leaflets warning that four cities, out of twelve, listed on the leaflet, were marked for destruction, and warned the inhabitants to flee.

SPECIAL MISSIONS

The Group flew the usual number of weather missions and radar reconnaissance missions. There was nothing of interest to report in any of them. Enemy defenses continued amazingly weak.

There is, however, one mission which requires special mention. That was a practice mission flown by the 869th Squadron against Marcus Island, on 27 July.

The mission was designed to test crawfish equipment, and in that respect proved eminently successful. On the first run over the target, there was no Jap re-action whatever. It was entirely different on the second run, which unfortunately was made at the same altitude. A sudden, accurate intense fire, with excellent tracking, was encountered. Of the ten aircraft in the formation, nine received battle damage. F/O Baggaley, co-pilot on one ship was wounded. Apparently it was nearly miraculous that no plane was shot down. An RCM observer on board, reported a clearly

Isely Field, Saipan

defined gun-laying radar signal during this second run.

The composition of the crews who flew this mission was predominently veteran. Crews which were very near the end of their tour of duty participated, and it was not a shake-down mission for newly assigned personnel.

PERSONNEL

There were numerous changes in Group and Squadron personnel during the month of July. The most important of these was the appointment of a new Deputy Group Commander.

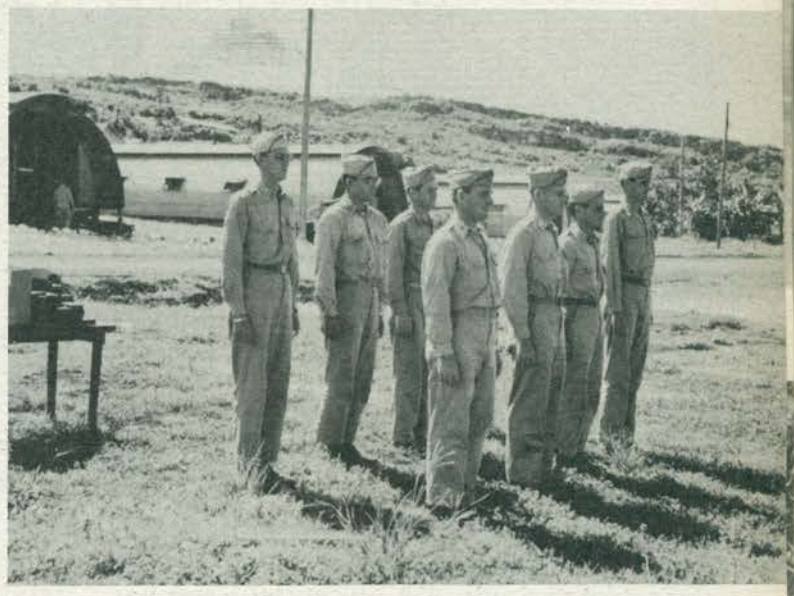
The unfortunate, and probably tragic disappearance of Lt. Colonel John H. Griffith, Deputy Group Commander, who was flying as a command pilot on Major Merrill's plane when it disappeared on the mission of 3-4 July necessitated the appointment of a replacement. The Group was most fortunate in having Lt. Colonel Neil D. Van Sickle, the Group's former S-3, returned from Headquarters 73rd Wing, and assume the duty of Deputy Group Commander.

Another important change involved the positions of Group S-4, and the Commanding Officer of the 871st Squadron. Lt. Colonel Frank L. Davis, Commanding Officer of the 871st

General Arnold presenting decorations

E. M. Service Club

Sgt. Monaster and friends



Col. Johnson and staff

Squadron, had been on Special Duty with Group Headquarters in connection with Maintenance and Supply. Maj. Richard Broadhurst, Group S-4, received orders returning him to the States, to attend Mechanics School at Chanute Field, near his beloved Terre Haute. His unfailing good humor had earned him many friends who were loathe to see him go. To fill this gap, Colonel Johnson appointed Lt. Colonel Davis, who had earned the confidence of all the men on the line. Verbal orders transferred him to Group Headquarters on 5 July.

Major John W. Carroll, who had been Group Assistant Operations Officer, had been transferred to the 871st Squadron, when Colonel Davis began his duties with Group Headquarters. Major Carroll assumed command of the 871st Squadron.

The position of Group S-2, became vacant, when Major Walter B. Dossett returned to the States to be discharged. Colonel Johnson appointed Captain Harry A. Stewart, as S-2. Captain Stewart, had been Assistant Group S-2.

Another position on the Group Staff became vacant, when Major Clarence Winters, Navigator, was transferred to the 315th Wing. This vacancy was filled by transferring Major James C. Bones, of the 870th Squadron, to fill this Staff position. Major Bones, had been Navigator of a combat crew, until this transfer. He was the ranking Navigator in the Group.

Still another Group Staff position which fell vacant during the month was that of Radar Counter Measures. Lt. Joseph V. Lamoglia, who held that position, was a passenger on Major Merrill's plane. Colonel Johnson appointed 1st Lt. James H. Rose, of the 869th Squadron, to the post.

Three other appointments during the month require attention. The return to the States of Major Dossett, Group S-2, left a

"This is the Army"

"This is the Army"

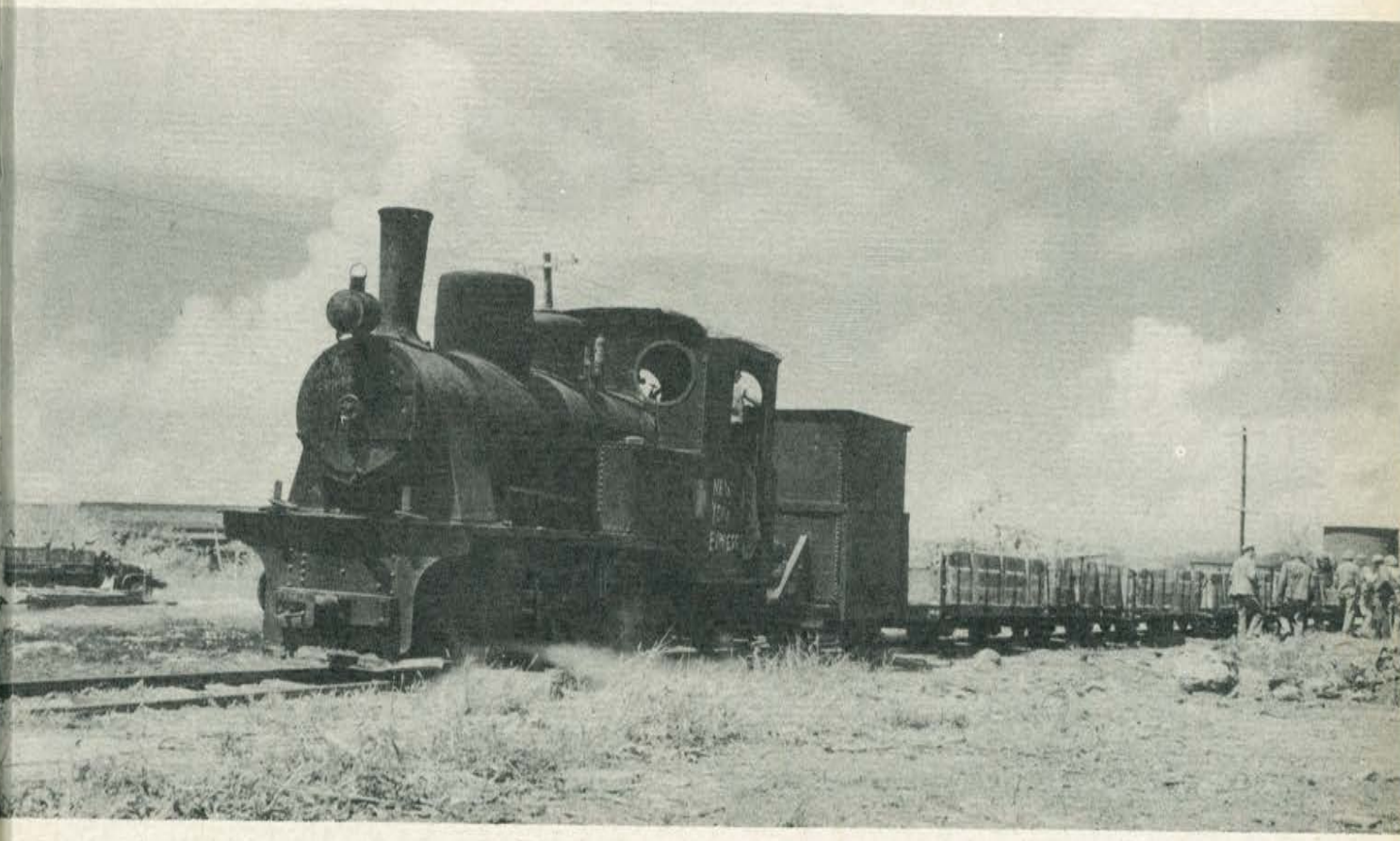
vacancy in the S-2 Section. This was solved by moving 1st Lt. Herman S. Jones up from his position as Assistant S-2 of the 870th Squadron to Group Headquarters, and placing him on duty in the S-2 Section.

Major Thomas J. Hanley III, became Assistant S-3 for the Group. He was transferred from the 869th Squadron, where he had been Operations Officer, and assigned to duty, as Assistant S-3, in Group.

The last appointment to be noted is the filling of the position of Group Cryptograhpic Security Officer. A new arrival, fresh from the States, 2nd Lt. Leonard E. Shapland, was appointed to this post on 30 July.

An average of thirty men in each Squadron received promotions ranging from PFC to Master Sergeant.

Mt. Fuji



Sugar Mill Train

Goat Gulch Theater

Reading Citations

Purple Heart Award, Saipan

CHAPTER XIX
AUGUST, 1945
STRIKE MISSIONS

The Group participated in five combat Strike Missions up to 15 August—Peace Day—which was just about par for the course, in that it corresponds nearly exactly with the number of raids made during a similar period —during previous months.

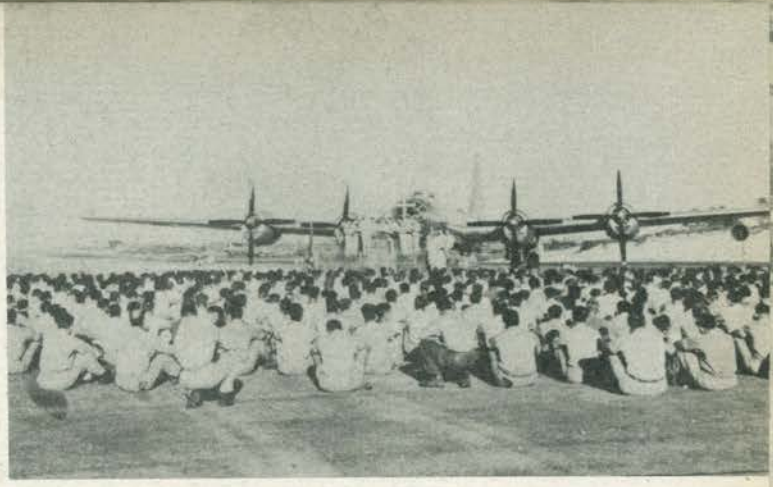
On 1 August this Group participated in a maximum effort, night incendiary raid against Toyama. The entire 73rd Wing took part, and the result was the most destructive fire raid ever staged. 95.5% of the built-up area of the City was destroyed. Reconnaissance pictures confirmed the story of returning crewmen that one mass of flames seemed to envelope the whole city. An interesting sidelight of the raid was the taking of 10 pictures of the fires by the K-22 camera of A-24. The shutter is normally activated by a photo-flash bomb. The craft did carry one such bomb, but it is presumed that the remaining pictures were taken because of the brightness of the fires below.

The next mission took place on the night of 5-6 August, and was a normal effort incendiary raid against Nishinomiya. There were good fires started, but the raid produced nothing unusual. Colonel Johnson was very well pleased with the Group's part in the mission. Thirty-three aircraft were scheduled; 33 were airborne and 33 bombed the primary target. In fact, 32 returned directly to Saipan. Only one aircraft, A-5, stopped at Iwo Jima. That plane needed refueling, and quickly returned to its base.

This mission was followed by a normal-effort day, incendiary raid against Yawata. The results were only fair, with 20% of the built-up area of the City being burned out. The mission was rough from the flak standpoint, but not so bad as was anticipated. Twelve aircraft landed at Iwo Jima, but most of this was due to the fuel shortage-particularly because the 871st Squadron made two runs on the target.

The mission put an unnecessary amount of pressure on the 870th Squadron. Their crews had returned on the morning of 6 August from the previous mission. On 7 August, that Squadron was assigned to a so-called Practice Mission to Truk. Then on 8 August, pretty much the same crews were out again on the dangerous day mission to Yawata. However, some of the crews did want to fly the mission, for the extra mission credit. These neutralizing raids on Marcus and Truk, to which the Group had been assigned, did undoubtedly interfere with main Strike Missions.

The next scheduled mission was to be a daylight precision raid on 10 August, against a large factory in Nagoya. Briefing preparations were well under way, until about midnight, when it was cancelled, due to the Domei News broadcast implying that the Japs would surrender if the integrity of the Emperor was guaranteed.



Protestant Thanksgiving

Maintenance Champions

Cardinal Spellman of N. Y. C.

DFC Award, Saipan

Then followed anxious period of waiting to see if Peace actually was at hand. Ears were kept glued to radios, but the Japs seemed to be stalling. Missions were scheduled, prepared, briefed, cancelled, re-scheduled, prepared again, and cancelled again, while the Japs kept imperturbable silence.

Possibly to stir them up, a daylight precision, maximum-effort mission was scheduled against the Osaka Army Arsenal. The Arsenal's luck, this time, failed as the weather was clear. Squadron after Squadron of the 73rd Wing dropped on the target. It was not entirely destroyed, but practically so.

The mission showed the extent to which rotation had changed the combat crew personnel. Eight crews flew their first mission. Among the scheduled Airplane Commanders, there were only four "old crews", Major Beard, Major Thomas, Capt. Walker and Capt. Wheatley.

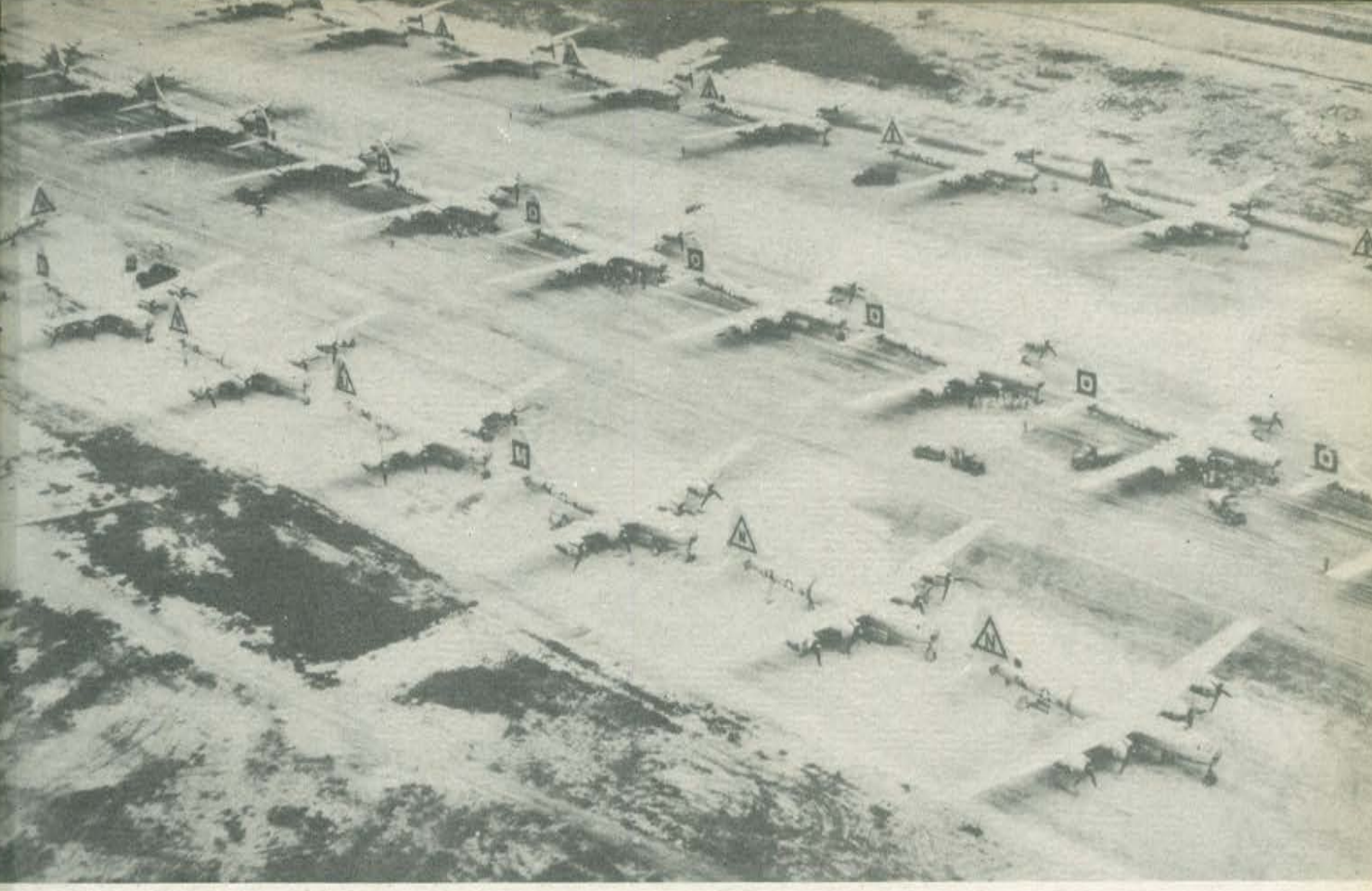
The next mission proved to be the last, although this was not known at the time it was briefed. In order to keep up the pressure against Japan, all planes in the Wing which were not able to get off in the day strike against the Osaka Arsenal, or which had aborted, were scheduled for a night strike, incendiary, against Isezaki. Thirteen aircraft were scheduled; ten were airborne, and only nine reached their target. However, the raid was carried out in conjunction with residuary forces of two other Wings, so that reasonably good fires were started in the small (40,000 Pop.) Nakajima one-industry town.

The mission was of considerable interest, because as the last plane was returning for interrogation, the final peace news came in on the radio. Due to the small number of planes involved, and the haste with which it was scheduled, the Wing ordered the entire mission to be briefed and interrogated by the 497th Staff. This Staff was complimented at being chosen to handle that part of the mission on behalf of the Wing.

A small mission involving only six of the Group's planes, terminated B-29 combat missions against Japan—not only by planes of the Group, but of the entire Wing.

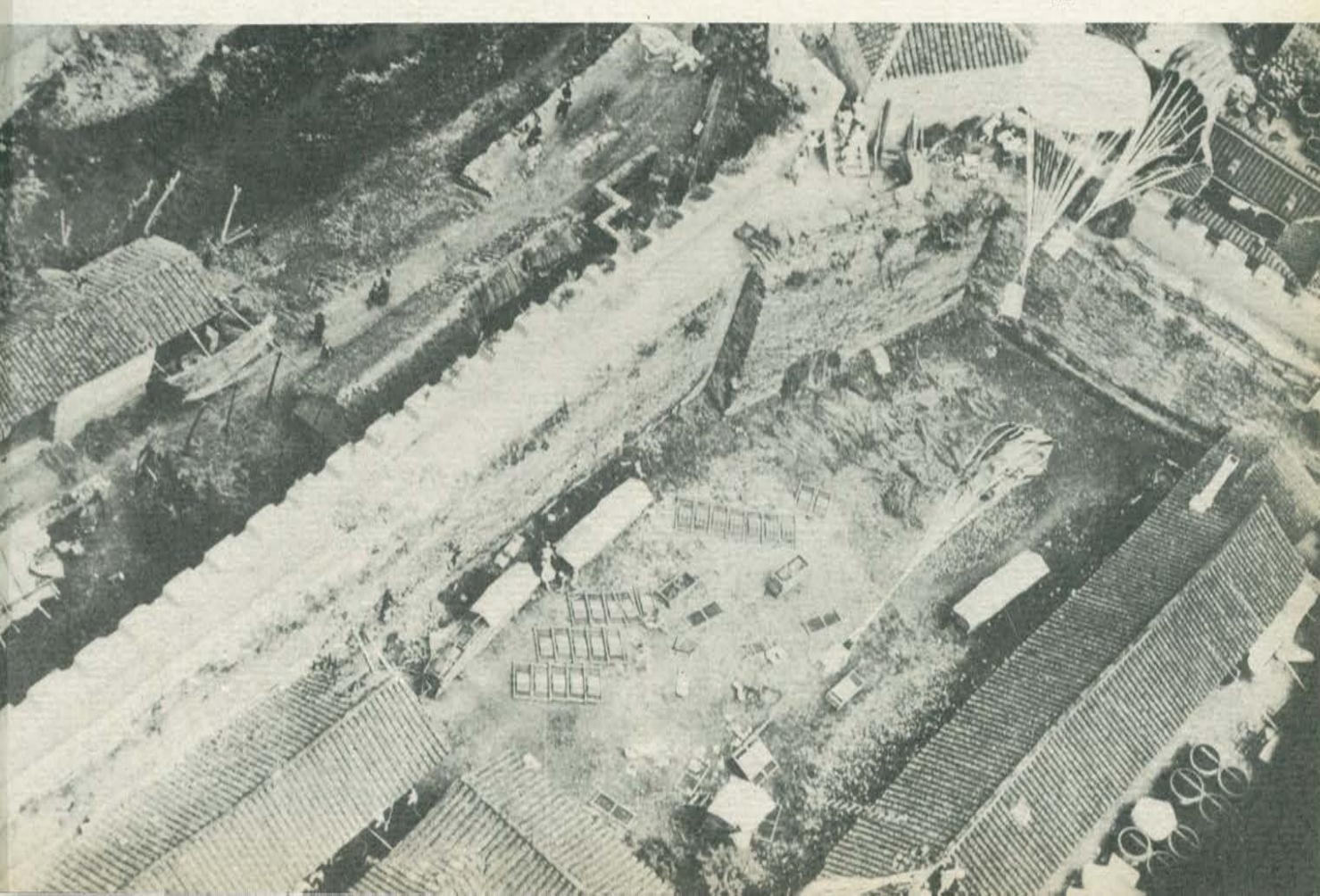
PRISONER OF WAR MISSIONS

After an eight-day period of uncertainty, orders came through to commence flying again. However, these would not be combat missions, but mercy missions; the dropping of clothing, food and medical supplies on Prisoner of War Camps. The first of these missions took off on 26 August, to stage at Iwo Jima, and then to proceed to a Camp at Weihsien, Shantung Province, China. Ten planes took-off, and dropped the next day in a field, next to the compound, marked by a single smudge pot, and a white cross. The compound itself seemed to seethe with excitement, as the planes dropped their loads from 500 feet. They had been preceeded by a leaflet plane, which dropped leaflets letting the prisoners and inhabitants know exactly what was going to happen. To paraphrase the words of Lt. Colonel Neil Van Sickle who flew on the mission,



Planes crowded on field for P.W. Mission

Supplies for POW



A POW Camp, Tokyo-Yokohama Area

Capt. John E. Power—Announcing last mission

what a wonderful feeling there must have been among the men and women in the Camp, after so many years, to find themselves remembered, in such a startling fashion, by planes larger than they ever dreamed of.

On 28 August, 35 aircraft were airborne on a second such mission. They went to 10 different camps in Japan. One camp could not be found, but planes dropped on all the others. Reports multiplied as to the excitement of the prisoners. All of the Camps were found, adequately marked, with PW, or POW. Some flew U.S., British, French and Dutch flags. Some had signs painted on the roofs, or laid out in whitewashed stones, spelling out, signs —thanks—and in some instances giving the name of a unit, or a ship, or the number of prisoners in the Camp. All crews reported that the prisoners seemed frantic with joy; waved, cheered, and ran around. Two instances were reported where Jap civilians picked up the supplies and carted them to the Camp.

Tragedy stalked the mission in two separate instances. Lt. Cripps and crew failed to return from the mission. No word from him

A POW Camp

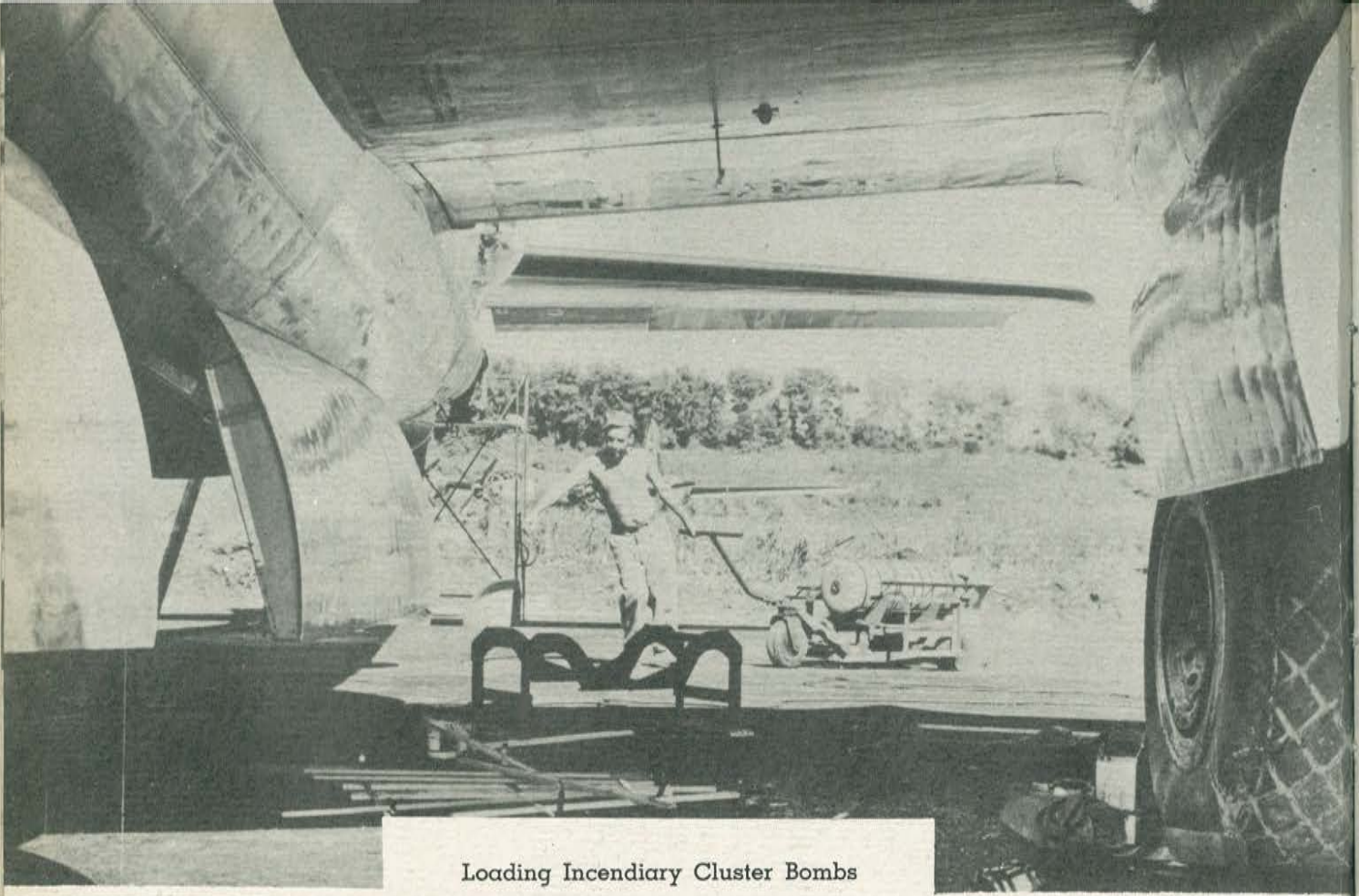
was received after take-off, and crewmen reported that he was not at Iwo Jima, where all planes were grounded on their return. Two days later, the anticipated announcement came in. The Japanese Government reported to Manila, that a B-29 had crashed into a mountain in Northern Honshu, where his target lay. Ten men were reported killed, and one slightly injured. This left one man unaccounted for.

The other tragedy lay in the probable killing of two prisoners by the supply barrel's falling free from their parachutes and crashing through a roof. Planes from this Group reached a Honshu target and found spelled out on the ground: "Do not drop in here. Two men killed." This Group's report indicated 47% chute failures, indicating a real possible danger if the drop was made inside a prison compound.

The next day, 29 August, six more planes were airborne to Honshu and Kyushu targets. These also had nearly 50% chute failures, spattering the contents of the barrels over the ground.

Another maximum effort mission went out on 31 August. The planes dropped on 14 different Camps, and reported the same wild enthusiasm. Planes, however, could not find one Tokyo target. Results of drop were much better this time. There were only 10% chute failures. This was attributed by Lt. Shick, Ordnance Officer of the 869th Squadron, to two factors. First, the chutes had not been wet during loading, and second, only one barrel was attached to each chute. This mission was more successful in that respect, than any of the previous ones. However, several crewmen expressed the view that Jap civilians got the food dropped on Tokyo Camps, which appeared vacated. The prisoners may have been moved to the coast, and put aboard hospital ships.

From this mission came the first authentic identification of a B-29 crew member being alive in a Camp. At a Camp, near Odate, Capt. Stuart, Airplane Commander of a plane of the 870th Squadron, noticed a sign "Ross—498". A report to the 498th Group elicited the information that one of their crew members of that name was missing. Hopes immediately soared in this Group, that many of its per-



Loading Incendiary Cluster Bombs

497th on its deadly way

sonnel would be found, and liberated from other camps. Many crews could well be Jap prisoners—Capt Waddy Young's—Major Joe Baird's—Lt. McDonnell's—Lt. McSpadden's and others.

PEACE

The fact that President Truman announced Japan's acceptance of the unconditional surrender terms, came shortly after 0900 on 15 August (Saipan or K time). A returning mission was being interrogated in the War Room, when suddenly an S-2 Officer, who had been listening to the radio, rushed into the War Room, calling "It's all over. They've surrendered." Almost before the full significance of his remarks were understood, the air raid siren started to wail. Since that had been the prearranged signal for the announcement of peace, the answer was clear. It *was* over! It really must be over—and a general yell went up. The cheering lasted only five minutes and gradually died down, and evenyone gradually returned to their tasks.

The Group and Squadron personnel were joyful that night. After many false rumors and after a five day "sweat job", wondering and worrying if the enemy really would accept the President's answer, it really was true. The lid was off; the strain and worry was over. Celebrations were pretty general, but it was all within bounds. In fact, most of the personnel seemed to experience a feeling of great relief. There was no great overwhelming urge to celebrate. There was merely a general feeling of relief—just plain relief.

MISCELLANEOUS

The problem of what to do with the Group construction program now that the war had ended, was one of the difficult problems to face. The activation of a new Squadron had been anticipated, and a Naval C.B. detachment was busy building a new "prefab" area, when the peace confirmation was heard. It had built the Mess Hall, and about two-fifths of the barracks. The new Squadron was supposed to have sailed from the States the day prior to the Jap announcement.

It was decided, however, to promptly abandon this new area. In fact, all now useless building was stopped immediately. The Sea Bees were to complete their drainage project, but that was all. The only Group construction ordered continued was the new Chapel; the Squadron and Group headquarters day rooms and the Library.

The latter half of the month was a trying one. With the war over, personnel became restless. Naturally, everyone wanted to get started going home. The delays in landing on Japan—the Army's apparent unwillingness to release any personnel, regardless of points, until after it was certain that there would be no opposition to the landings on the Japanese Islands, did not help this problem.

Then the tentative discharge system created more discord: Enlisted Personnel could not understand why they needed 85 points for discharge, while Air Corps Officers needed far less—some as low as 42. Officers themselves could not see why Captains and above needed 70 points, while 1st Lieutenants needed only 58 (or a year's less service in the States) and 2nd Lieutenants, and Flight Officers, far less. Still others thought that they should be reconsulted on their desires to stay in the Army, stating they had indicated a desire to stay in until the war was over, and not until the emergency was terminated, as they now discovered they had indicated that they wanted to do.

Some of these problems were eased, beginning 28 August when, unexpectedly, men with 85 points or more, received notice that they were to leave for home, and that glorious discharge. At the same time, Officers in B and A categories were alerted for possible return. It did seem that the parade had started, and although there were unquestionably inequities in the system perhaps everything would clear up after V-J Day. So, at the end of the month, all eyes were being directed toward Tokyo Bay and the battleship Missouri. Many a quick prayer was directed to Heaven that the Japanese would sign the final surrender terms, without any further delay or difficulty.

CHAPTER XX
SEPTEMBER, 1945

This month, for the first month since November, 1944, no combat missions were flown. For fourteen days, POW missions were flown. One mission went out nearly every night, and put a strain on the S-2 and S-3 sections. The Field Orders invariably came in no earlier than 2000 each night, and the briefings were necessarily held late at night. Other subjects of note were rotation, points, discharge and the proposed Air Show.

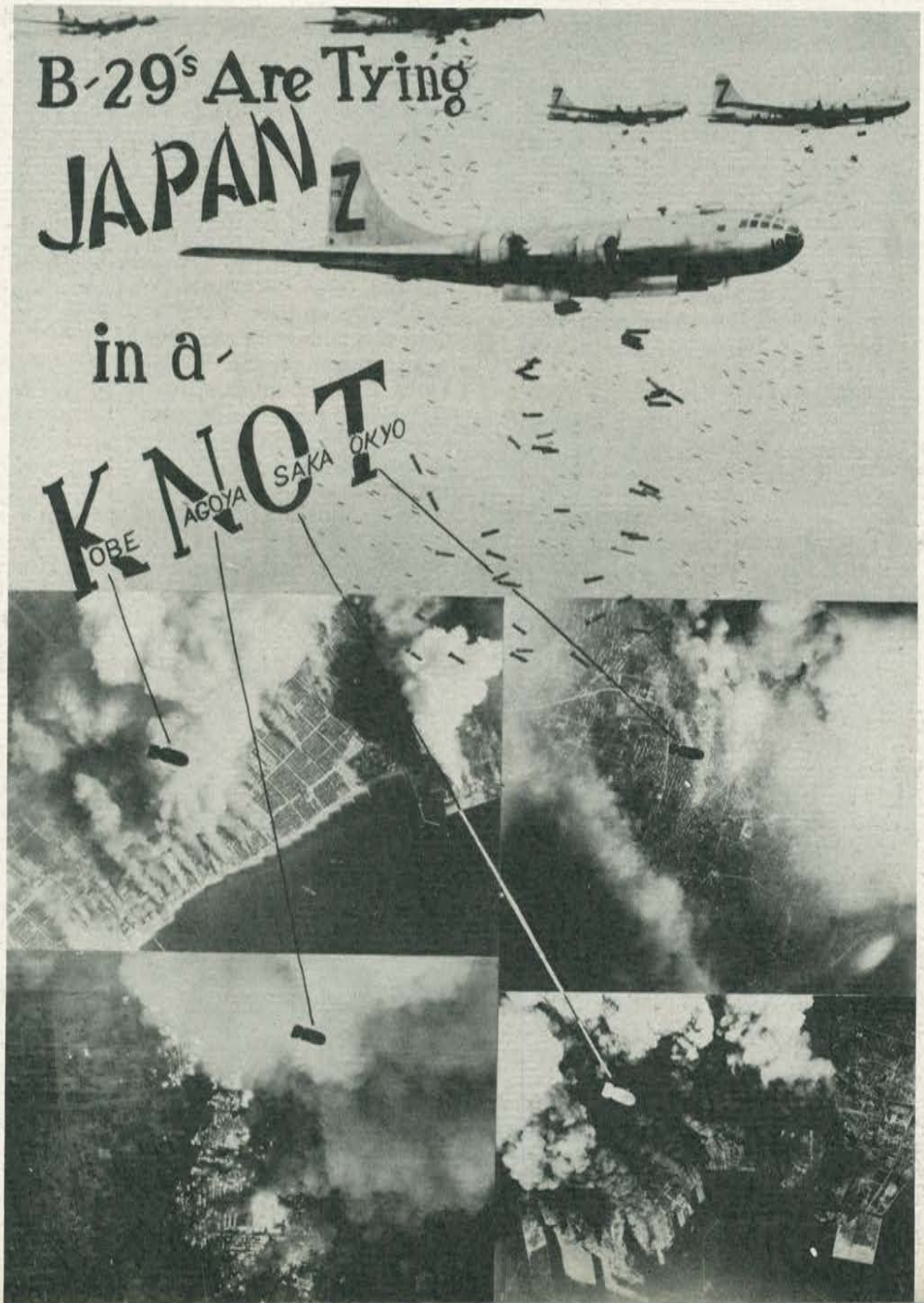
During the first fourteen days of the month, this Group flew a total of ten POW Missions for the purpose of dropping food, medical supplies and clothing to the prisoners. Some of the camps were in China, at Shanghai, Peotung and Yungchow. Most, however, were on Honshu or Kyushu. The number of planes on each varied from 15 to 2, decreasing with each mission.

All these missions followed the same general pattern. Often the camp assigned was vacant, so the plane dropped on another camp. Weather prevented some drops and in such cases the supplies were jettisoned. In all cases, the prisoners seemed cheerful, waved and rushed for the supplies.

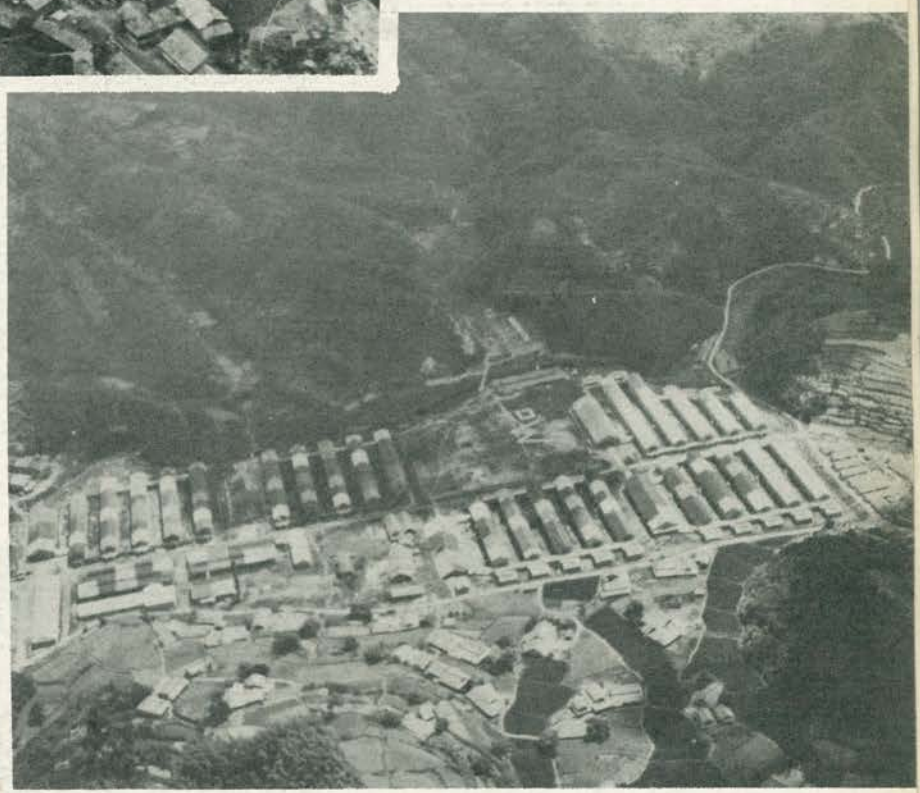
One incident which deserves particular mention is the experience of F/O Robert W. Schuessler, Pilot on Lt. Wallingford's plane of the 869th Squadron. This plane was scheduled to drop on a camp at Yungchow, China. Schuessler was in the front bomb bay taking pictures with a K-20 camera. After the drop, he assisted in pulling the shroud lines out of the way so that the doors would close. As he cut the very first line, he lost his balance and fell through the open bomb bay. Fortunately

Living in Pup-tents immediately after arrival on Saipan

Relaxing after war was over

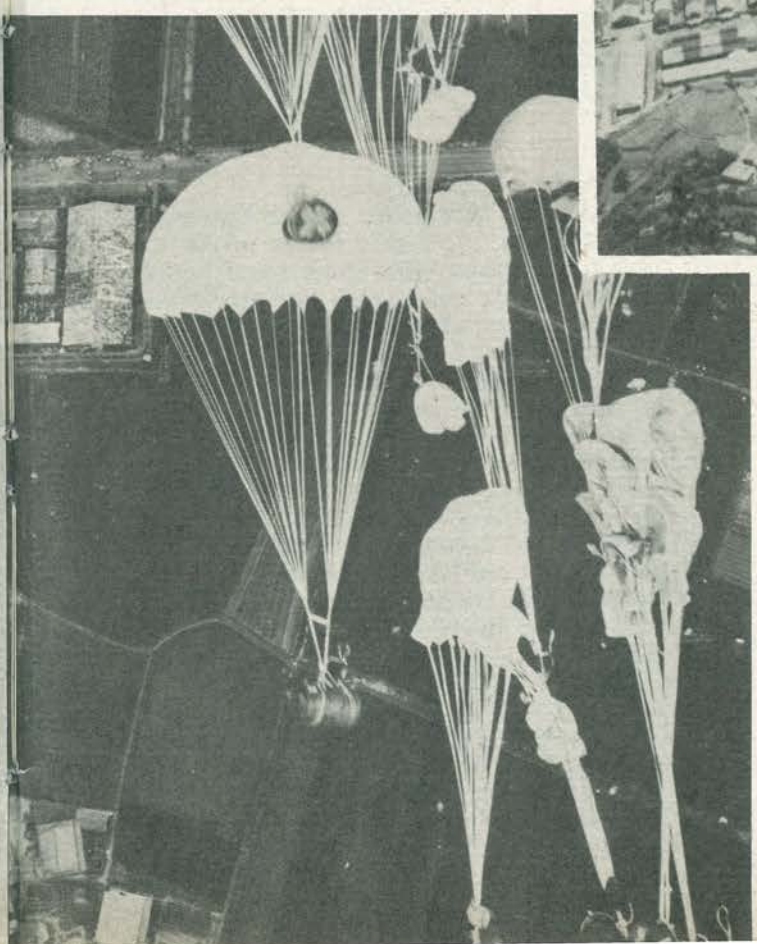


A POW Camp



Prisoner of War Camp in Nagasaki, Japan

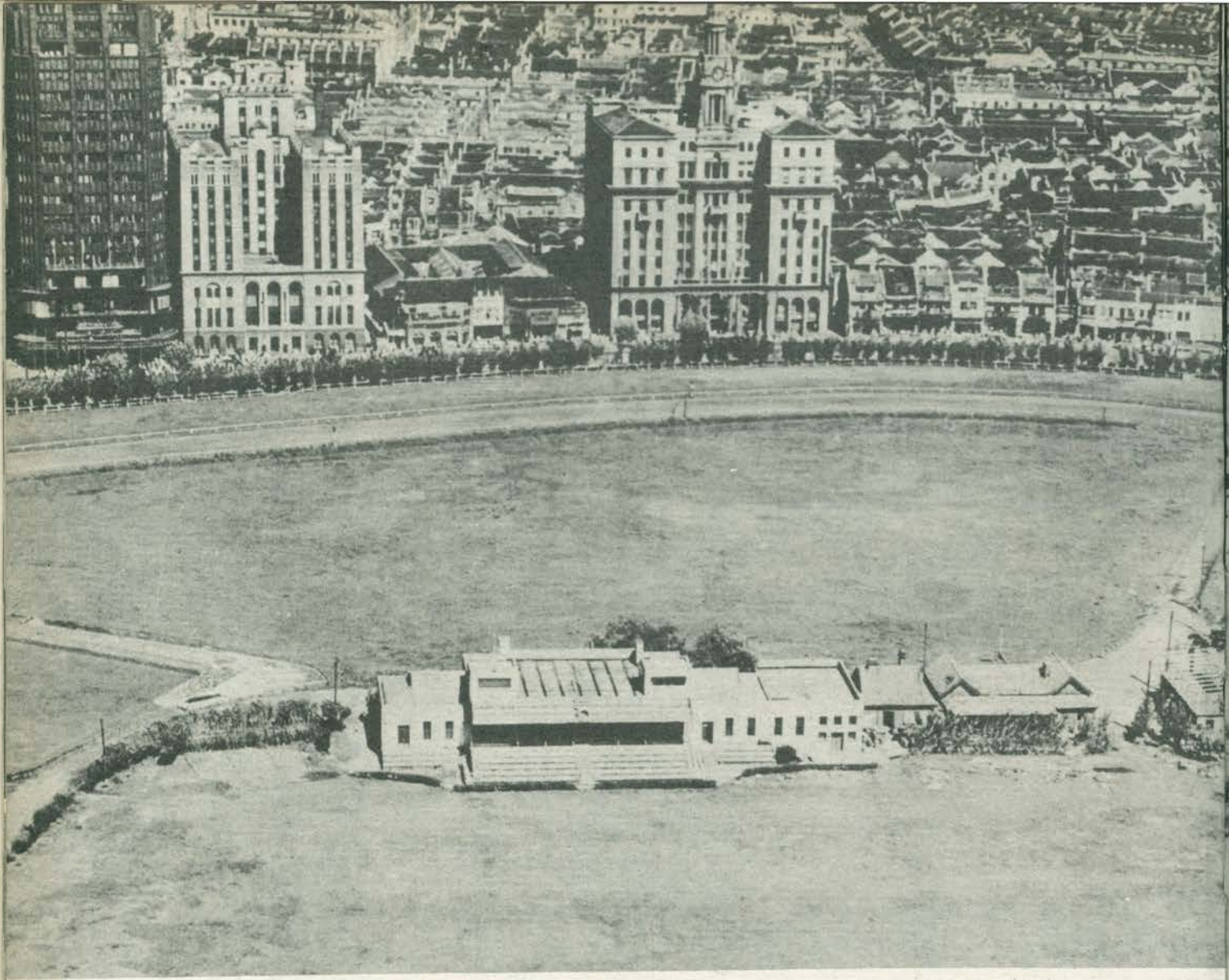
POW supplies



he was wearing his Mae West and parachute. He opened the chute and floated safely into the Yangtse River. After some difficulty in freeing himself from the chute, he was picked up by a chinese "Junk" and later transferred to a Japanese patrol boat.

Schuessler was taken to Headquarters where, at first, his interviewers were a trifle cold. However, they soon relaxed and he received generous and proper treatment. He was taken by various stages to Shanghai. At one camp, a Japanese Officer attached himself to the party and carefully looked after Schuessler from that point on. He offered a Geisha party without reservations, which Schuessler carefully refused.

After three and one-half days, he reached Shanghai where a curious international transaction took place. The Japanese Headquarters



Shanghai

was on the 7th floor of the Cathay Hotel. There the Japs carefully released him to a Chinese Colonel who just as carefully, took him to American Headquarters for final release—a trip of exactly one floor in the hotel.

The last POW Mission was flown on 14 September. The last plane to drop was piloted by Lt. Warren of the 869th Squadron. The target was Fukuoka Camp No. 27. The attention of the Group after that time, was entirely directed toward rotation discharge, or a flight to the beloved States.

RETURN TO THE STATES

At the staff meeting of 14 September, the first details of movement were revealed. All crews with 10 or more combat missions, maintenance men and administrative personnel were to return to the States and participate in a hugh air show. Ground personnel were cheered to learn that they would return as a unit in the near future.

The high state of moral which prevailed throughout the Group was dampened on 18 September by a change in plans. The only ground personnel allowed to return in the air echelon were officers with 85 or more points and EM with 80 or more. Also included were EM over 35 years of age with at least two years of service.

On 19 September, warning orders for the Air Movement were issued and Group personnel immediately began preparations. All names were placed on a master list at Wing and given a priority according to points. Bombardiers and gunners were eliminated from the combat crew list, however two men were retained as "scanners". The administrative staff was restricted to Regular Army men, volunteers for further duty and those not eligible for discharge. Finally personnel eligible for discharge on 1 October were added.

Thus, through a series of changes, the relatively simple problem of returning to the States, became a thoroughly complex problem fraught with distinctions, changes, delays and uncertainties.

Shanghai

ROTATION

Personnel who had not particularly thought about the possibilities of returning home, suddenly became intensely interested in the subject of points.

The general impression throughout the Group was that the Point System was a perfectly fair and equitable method of discharge. There were some minor differences of opinion as to the relative values of the points. A number thought that the value for overseas service should have been at least one point higher, pointing out that serving overseas is a far more rugged proposition than is state-side service. Others felt that too much credit was given for dependent children, and that some credit should be given for marriage, itself, regardless of parenthood. But all in all, the system was universally accepted as fair and reasonably just.

Points announced for Captains and all Field Grade Officers was 70. For 1st Lieutenants, 58, and for 2nd Lieutenants, 42. For Flight Officers it was even lower. Re-action among the Officers themselves was unfavorable. The great differences in point requirements between the various ranks of officers caused resentment. Every man was to be discharged according to an equal point system, so stated the press releases, yet it was perfectly obvious that they were not.

The category system also came under fire from the Officers. The fact that some had been recommended to remain in the Army, and that it might result in their being retained further, seemed contrary to the whole spirit of discharge policy.

Finally, the fact that some could still be called "Essential", despite their having the required number of points, caused resentment.

The subsequent announcement of an overall War Department plan for discharging Officers which set 100 points for Field Grades and 80 for Company Grades, met with a much more favorable reaction.

Actually the problem was a theoretical one because only two officers were able to start on the way to the States, due to congestion at the Western Pacific Base Command staging center. By the end of the month, a

grand total of one hundred and thirty members of the Group had been returned for discharge. Of these only two were Officers.

MISCELLANEOUS

Of genuine importance to members of the unit, was the receipt of a battle star for the Easern Mandated Islands Campaign. The Group had often been called upon to carry out neutralizing raids against Truk and Marcus. In fact several of those raids had been costly. Out of ten planes raiding Marcus, on one particular mission, nine returned with battle damage. That was, by far, a higher percentage of damage than was received on even the most hazardous missions flown over Japan at that time. This was the third battle star received by the original members of the Group.

A story of particular interest is that of Cpl. Norman H. Martien, Jr. of the 870th Squadron. The plane, on which he was Tail Gunner, was endeavoring to locate a POW Camp on Northern Honshu. The weather was bad, and the plane crashed into a mountain shortly after making landfall. The impact came without any warning and Martien found himself about 15 yards from the tail section of the plane, which itself, was another 15 yards from the fiercely burning plane. The remaining members of the crew, Capt. Horace R. Falk, 1st Lieut. John W. Cripps, Jr., 2nd Lieut. Saul Kolodner, 2nd Lieut. Hugh D. Prestley, 2nd Lt. Hiram G. Backman, S/Sgt. Virgel G. Lanning, S/Sgt. Carl A. Wildner, Sgt. J. A. Clouser, Sgt. William A. Blair, Sgt. Earl E. Heddens, Pfc. Charles F. Glynn, were killed in the crash. Martien has no knowledge as to how he escaped. He was virtually unhurt except for a twisted ankle. Subsequently, he was rescued by a search party of Japanese. For the next eight days, he was given the most courteous attention by any Japanese he encounered. He was invited to attend an Episcopalian burial service and given the urns which contained the ashes of the other crew members. A Japanese Episcopalian Minister presided. Later, while awaiting a DC-3 to return him to Tokyo, he was invited to spend the night in the quarters of a Japanese General when he expressed concern over the attitude of Japanese soldiers. Just before he departed, the local police gave a Geisha party in his honor. At all times, the treatment was excellent, even an interpreter was provided and three policemen were always with him—not as watch-dogs, but as companions.

There was only one important change in personnel during the month. Lt. Colonel Fred M. Trickey, CO of the 870th, was ordered to Command and Staff School and on 19 September, Major Richard W. Ragland assumed command.

On 29 September, Colonel Johnson held, what he called the last Group Staff meeting. There was a general discussion on plans for the movement of the Air Echelon. Also discussed was the Warning Order for movement of the Ground Echelon. Colonel Johnson announced that Major Leer would become Group Executive because of the imminent departure of Lt. Colonel Campbell. He congratulated Major Leer for volunteering for the duty even though he was eligible for discharge. Finally, colonel Johnson thanked each and every member of his staff for helping to make the Group so outstanding. He spoke very emotionally at this last meeting of men, who having planned and fought a war together, were now going to break up and return separately to resume their chosen peace-time pursuits.

Even though the last POW Mission was the end of the Group's primary mission, a great deal remained to be done toward return of personnel to the U. S. and this work continued for a period of many weeks.

Finally on 2 October, Colonel Johnson took off from Saipan leading a flight of the Group's planes on the first leg of their stateside trip. It was with moist eyes and a high state of emotion that the land-bound members of the Group watched the planes fade into the distance. The departure of these great planes and their gallant crews was a fitting end to the record which was begun in the dust of Clovis and forged in the flame and thunder over Japan.

The deeds of the men and planes of the Group are now history. Let the world never forget the "Long Haul" of the 497th Bombardment Group.

Rammed twice over Japan this giant of battle returned to crash land on Saipan. All crew members survived though some were critically injured.

Saipan was never like this, says Col. Johnson, Maj. Arnold, Lt. Col. Carroll, Maj. Gilmour, Lt. Col. Haley, Lt. Col. Davis shortly after landing in the States. Rose Room, Palace Hotel, San Francisco.

After double rammings over Japan, the damage prevented a "good" landing on Saipan

Flak Alley

AT THE END . . . TOKYO

PART I

This is the story of the 497th's final lone-wolf bombing strike against Tokyo on January 27th, 1945 when B-29 missions were still in "short pants"; when Superfort fliers were giving their minds, their hearts, their lives to the task of putting the Superfortress in full dress, preparing Japan for a shroud; when there was no friendly Iwo to set down on in emergency; when there were no Mustangs to ward off the waves of murderous enemy fighters.

It's the story of how 497th crewmen—guys like Avery, who barely made it back; McDonnell, Peterson, Dauth, and Hahn and their crews who didn't—met and fought off the bulk of the greatest aerial attack the Japanese have even been able to mount against Superfort Task Forces; how they went on to bomb their

target and how those who returned to base sincerely hoped, but did not realize, that what they went through that day, other fliers would be spared. They had met the measure of Japan's homeland air force. Never again were the Japanese able to put up a defense as severe as that which battered at the tiny force on January 27th.

Crewman who flew on that mission will be spinning this combat yarn alongside fireplaces, over bars and in shops and offices as long as any of them are alive. Tokyo, January 27th is to men of the 497th what the Iwo Jima battle is to Marines; what the "Battle of the Bulge" is to men of the European campaign; what "Schweinfurt" is to American men who bombed Germany.

Today, in talking to crewmen who flew on that mission, one has only to ask "which was your most difficult mission?" or, casually, in an ice-breaking manner, mention the January 27th strike and crewmen either begin gesturing wildly with their hands to describe the fighter attacks which their bomber had to withstand or they stare off into space blankly, remembering with squinted eyes and clenched Jaws—but saying nothing.

Major Walter L. Geyer (Mena, Arkansas) summed up the average crewman's opinion of the mission: "Over the target I clearly remember saying to myself as we ploughed through fighters and flak, 'If I ever get out of this one I'm through flying'—and at that moment I really meant it."

The heroism, the gallantry, the sacrifices, the fear and the elation, and finally the results achieved, are all blended to make one of the most courageous tales of the Pacific War. On this day the back of Japanese opposition was broken. For later, as fleets of 700 and more Superforts pounded Japan from the Marianas, Nip anti-aircraft fire was comparatively light; Jap fighter opposition practcally negligible and Superfort forces smashed at dozens of cities with extremely light losses. This air warrior's dream was never realized until the minions of the empire who protected "Flak Alley" were met and vanquished in the fiercest battle ever to take place over Japan.

January 27th was the last day that the 497th and the remaining units of the 73rd Wing struck at Japan alone. On the very next mission, the 313th Wing, based on Tinian, joined with the 73rd to bomb Kobe. Though Group after Group was added to the growing air war against Japan, none has a battle story to equal the one which the 497th wrote on January 27th.

The 497th and its companion Groups of the 73rd Wing had bombed Japan from Saipan. Its crewmen flew through all kinds of weather, tested all types of air battle and bombing tactics, stored up all kinds of experiences and information to be passed on to newcomers in this newest of wars: the Air War against Japan proper. Mission after mission as the Wing flew on alone, the intensity of Japanese fighter plane and anti-aircraft gunfire increased. December 4, Wing crewmen fought off 75 attacks at Tokyo and bombed their target. December 27th they blasted their way through 508 attacks, shot down nine fighters and dropped their bombs on another Jap war plant at Nagoya. January 23 they again hit Nagoya after smashing aside 626 attacks and shooting down 32 fighters to get to the target.

In its first two months of operation from Saipan, between November 24th and January 23rd, the Wing fought off more than 3,500 fighter attacks. There was an average of four attacks against each plane bombing during this period; Wing gunners shot down 106 fighters.

On January 27th the peak in Jap fighter attacks against B-29's was reached. To bomb the dock area of Tokyo through a heavy undercast, sixty-two Superforts of the Wing ploughed through 984 Jap fighter plane attacks—554 of which were against the 497th. Of the more than 350 Jap planes which attacked, 60 were shot down (34 by the 497th) and 56 were probably shot down (32 by the 497th). Nearly one-tenth of all the fighters shot down by Marianas-based B-29's in approximately 300 missions were destroyed that day.

Nine B-29's were lost during the mission; the greatest number of planes the Wing ever lost on any mission; the greatest number any Wing lost to enemy aircraft on a single strike —and five of these great ships and four of their gallant crews were stricken from the rolls of the 497th.

Destroyed Superforts were spread from Honshu to Saipan. The 497th, leading the Wing, was first over the target and therefore bore the brunt of Jap fighter and A/A opposition. Seventeen of our planes crossed the Japanese coast and turned to make their bomb run. Two were sent down by Jap fighter bullets; a third just disappeared over the target; a fourth plunged into the ocean 250 miles off the coast of Honshu on the return flight and a fifth crashed at base and was destroyed. Thirteen of the 17 crews returned safely and of the twelve planes landing safely, eight suffered extensive battle damage. This pitifully small force had to fight off 554 separate attacks for an hour and a half along a 150-mile route. Of the more than 260 planes which made these attacks on the Group, 34 were shot down and 21 were probably shot down by the eagle-eyed gunners who fired upwards of 70,000 rounds of ammunition.

The Japs were waiting for the force. They knew it was coming even before Superfortress crewmen spotted the towering heights of snow-capped Mount Fuji. About 300 miles from the coast of Honshu the tight formations of low-flying Suprefortresses were detected by two Jap patrol boats.

"When the boys saw the boats they knew

they were going to get a different type of show at Tokyo that day," said Major Pershing L. Yon (Tallahassee, Florida) who piloted a B-29 on the mission.

The patrol boats which had been cruising on the exact course to Honshu, were able to radio an hour's warning that B-29's were speeding in to smash at the homeland once again.

That was word enough for Jap fighter pilots. With a whole hour in which to check ammunition, gas-up, warm up their planes and climb to the five-mile altitude of the incoming Superforts, planes from all over the Tokyo-Nagoya area were alerted in time to speed down Nip runways well before the 497th even sighted land.

Hundreds of Jap fighters of all types and with all manner of markings were thrown into battle that day. Fighters from the new, slick, jet-black Irvings, down to single-engine, obsolete craft, boiled skyward to smash into the fast-arriving Superforts. The Japs even tossed in a medium bomber for good measure.

As Jap pilots jabbered last-minute instructions to their ground crewmen for readying their planes, two B-29's, flying an hour ahead of the main force, were already scouting Nagoya and Tokyo to determine which city had the best bombing weather. As the 497th crossed the coast-line, two separate "clouds" were seen in the distance—one was caused by hundreds of bursts of heavy Jap anti-aircraft shells; the other by the Jap fighters, which were already at B-29 altitude, waiting for the force to move down toward the target area.

"Heavy guns were spotted all along the very path we had to travel to the target," said Major Thomas J. Hanley III (Mansfield, Ohio), one of the commanders of the first formation. "That was the day this course into the target got a name which has stuck with it ever since: 'Flak Alley'."

However, not all of the Jap fighters waited for the Superforts to reach the target, for just as the first formation broke into sight of the coast-line, five Jap planes pounced and fired a few shots as if in formal opening of the two-hour aerial battle which was to follow. Then they drew off and radioed vital information concerning the B-29 force to the waiting fighters and flak batteries. Speed, altitude, number of planes in the formations, all this was neatly set in the mind of each Jap pilot and lanyard-yanker before they even saw a Superfort.

The bell clanged and the 497th formation stepped out of its "corner" in a fist-cocked, determined manner as it wheeled around Hammamatsu and plunged for the city of Kofu, the last turn before the target.

Fighters and bombers met head-on. In ones, twos and threes they came, some whining in from below to spray the bellies of the bombers; others driving vertically from high above the formation to cut off and strafe the Superforts from wing-tip to wing-tip. As many as eight or nine fighters dove in at once to attack a single B-29, spinning, turning, gliding, firing, some skimming within inches of the wings and fuselages of the giant plane.

A Jap "Tony" fighter attacked Major Hanley's plane from high on the right side. All guns were on him and blasting away when a Zeke roared in from below the bomber on the same side and strafed the entire right side of the fuselage. Inches lower and his bullets would have dug into everyone on that side of the plane.

Lieutenant Alvin Garver, Flight Engineer in Hanley's formation from Hartford, Connecticut, decided to sit only on his life-raft that day—instead of a heavy pillow AND the life-raft. Jap fighter bullets crashed into the plane two inches above his head.

Flames leaped from the loaded bomb bay of a B-29 which had sustained fighter and flak hits. It shuddered, slowed down. Then its pilot, Lieutenant Walter S. McDonnel (Duluth, Minnesota), tried to speed it forward to gain the protection of the formation. It dropped back once more and was last seen veering to the north toward the protection of cloud banks, its bomb bay fiercely on fire and hopelessly in trouble. After the war was over and American prisoners in Japan were returned to the U. S. the only two airmen from the 497th, shot down in battle, even to be returned, were from this airplane. They were Sgt. Clinto F. Lodovici, tail gunner and Staff Sgt. Vere D. Carpenter, radar operator.

The fighters pounced on a second plane in the formation, flown by Captain Elmer G. Hahn (Idaho Falls, Idaho), which was straggling. Flames found the bombs and the giant bomber exploded and broke in two. The front half of the plane, completely engulfed in flames, plunged quickly to earth while the rear half seemed to float in the air. Then it too, exploded.

Thousands of rounds of ammunition from many Superfort guns ate into the attackers and as the 15 remaining planes of the Group moved deliberately forward to their target, the air was filled with earthward-bound pieces of broken planes—Jap and American alike. Some Jap pilots, in typical suicide fashion, ignored the sledgehammer-like fire directed at their planes and flew straight down the streams of smashing Superfort bullets to explode within a few yards of the target-bound bombers. In rapid succession, five fighters were shot down by the guns of a single B-29. Jap flak got another and guns from three different airplanes blasted a seventh Jap from the sky in seconds.

The Japs were good but the B-29 gunners were better and the intricate and new central fire control systems of the huge planes were living up to their pre-battle praise.

A gunner would no sooner finish off one Nip plane than another would speed in to take its place in the attack. As a juggler keeps his

eye on a dozen plates in the air at one time, so did B-29 gunners on January 27th have to follow the determined Jap fighter planes—only plates don't spit ugly 20 millimeter explosive shells, belch hundreds of rounds of smashing, high-caliber bullets, and you have to smash Jap fighters to drop them. An official Wing report formally understated, "When considering the confusion that must have resulted from the frequency of attack, it is believed that gunners displayed excellent control."

Gun barrels were red-hot and some of them were burned into uselessness even before the planes got to the target, so intense were the Jap fighter attacks. In some cases, too, guns ran dry of ammunition in a vital turret and airplane commanders had to flip their mammouth planes from side-to-side to allow guns which still had full ammo belts to be brought into the battle.

With two of its planes already gone, the small formation, still under fierce attack, flew steadily forward. The formation rounded Kofu, a small town west of Tokyo, and bore down on the capital, 100 miles away. Then a third bomber, piloted by Captain Raymond C. Dauth (Paso Robles, California), was hit. It lurched, tried to swing back into formation but instead, plunged slowly out of its place in the attack group, its crew trying desperately to control the fire which had burst from the bomb bay. It continued to fly away from the formation and was never seen nor heard from again. Again the hole was plugged by another reshuffling. And still the fighters came.

In lightning fashion two Jap fighters rammed another Superfort in the dwindling formation. One dove straight down on the bomber and sliced off eight feet of its aileron; another ploughed into the tail and sheared off the entire left stabilizer. The B-29, flown by Captain Lloyd Avery (Long Beach, California), dropped 8,000 feet out of control, was finally pulled out of its dive and it scooted for the coast-line and out to sea, fighters attacking all the way.

Only with the skill and courage of their gallant crews did the formation fight through and reach the target. Finally, with bombs away, the group swung to the right and in precision formation followed the prescribed course out over the coast-line and headed back for Saipan. About 250 miles from Japan on the homeward run, the courageous little group lost another of its planes. Jap bullets had caused a leak in one of the giant plane's gas tanks and because of lack of fuel, Captain Dale W. Peterson of Portland, Oregon, "landed at sea."

At dawn the next morning B-29's were already scouring the waters off Honshu for the missing crew. The plane was seen to have made a successful "ditching." Squadron mates who followed them to give assistance, saw crewman standing on the wings as the bomber rocked in the water; saw men crawling into life-rafts. Then, for five days, a storm ripped along Japan's eastern coast. The crew was never seen again. For a week after the ditching, planes from the Group flew from Saipan to the locality where the crew was last seen and patrolled from 15 to 18 hours a day. They flew at altitudes of 500 to 1,000 feet, between and around thousands of Jap-held islands in the area, all eyes scanning the waters for some trace of the missing crew. Had there been an Iwo Jima at this point in the B-29 campaign, the men might have been saved; might have been spurred on, as have many crews since, to wring a few more impossible miles out of their heavily damaged craft and sputter into airfield-packed Iwo.

PART II
"IRISH LASSIE", IS RAMMED TWICE—COMES HOME

The superb skill and fighting spirit of American soldiers was never so ably demonstrated as by the crew of "Irish Lassie" which, on January 27th, performed the unparalled feat of returning 1200 miles to base with their plane damaged almost beyond belief.

The Superfortress, flown by Lieutenant Lloyd Avery (later Captain, Long Beach, California), had crossed the coast-line at Hammamatsu with the first formation to bomb. Its gunners were as busy as any that day, blasting away at Jap fighters all along the approach to the target. Planes were charging in from every direction and the babble on the interphone of gunners calling out fighters was like that of an auctioneer.

The crew and its gunners were holding their own against the attacking enemy planes and had already sent three spinning to earth, when out of the sky high above them roared a Jap "Zeke." It was coming straight down, firing, as control gunner Technical Sergeant James F. McHugh (New York City), with his head jammed into the glassed in top of his sighting compartment, spun and swung six guns on the determined attacker.

American and Japanese were linked by an intangible thread as round upon round poured into the Jap plane, but still the diving Zeke came, faster and faster, straight for the Superfort. It was too late. The Jap fighter couldn't pull out; the Superfort couldn't get out of the way.

The "Zeke" smashed like a free-falling elevator into the bomber's left wing just behind its number one engine, taking with it as it continued straight down to earth, eight feet of the bomber's aileron and one-third of its huge landing flap. The number one engine's gas tank was so badly mangled that precious fuel poured out of the fuel cell and dropped away into the air.

Miraculously enough the number one engine was undamaged and continued to function. "There was surprisingly little jolt when the Jap hit us," Flight Engineer Lieutenant Robert Watson (Pomeroy, Washington), declared "and our Navigator (First Lieutenant John J. Faubion, Austin Texas) didn't even know we'd been rammed. But everyone, in-

cluding myself, thought we'd lost an engine for sure. However, I glanced at my instruments and found that it was still in good running order. To keep it in operation, I immediately transferred enough fuel from the damaged gas tank into another tank so that the level of the fuel in the cell was below the point of the leak. Then I fed it back to keep the engine going."

The crew, shaken but victorious with four fighters to its credit, continued along the bomb run, hugging its companion closely, firing round after round into swarms of fighters as Tail Gunner Staff Sergeant Charles Mulligan (Henderson, Kentucky), called in from his tight position in the extreme end of the plane: "B-29 going down in flames at 7 o'clock . . . fighter down at 6 . . . four fighters attacking from four o'clock, low . . . "Jack" coming in directly at 6 o'clock . . .".

More bullets ripped into the plane, some of which tore into the back of the Radio Operator, Sergeant Walter Klimczak (Plymouth, Pennsylvania) and he dropped to the floor calling for help. But help had to wait. The plane was on its bomb run and every man was needed at his battle station.

Bombardier, First Lieutenant Corral Gage (Wausatosa, Wisconsin), was preparing to release the bombs when Tail Gunner Mulligan called in another fighter: "Jack at 6 o'clock again . . . this baby's really coming in!", he literally shouted over the interphone; "he's low. Coming in fast."

Mulligan poured out the lead. Fifty, sixty, a hundred rounds were sent into the hard-flying Jack as it bore in, straight for the tail with all guns blazing. Mulligan kept firing, firing, firing and still the Jack came. Pieces were chipped, sliced, blasted from the enemy plane as the tail gunner's trigger fingers, white from gripping his gun buttons, bore even harder into the metal. A bullet tore into his right hand. Still he fired.

Mulligan continued to fire until the very last second then, when the snarling prop of the Jap plane was but inches from his glass-bound compartment, the determined tail gunner snatched his hands from his gun-sight and flung his arms over his face as the thunderbolting fighter crashed into his compartment.

The whole plane shuddered as the fighter sliced into the rear of the huge bomber, tearing out the entire left side of the tail gunner's comparment, ripping the left stabilizer completely off and snapping all of the control cables on the pilot's side of the plane. The bombardier, in the second the plane was hit, had nevertheless, released the bombs on schedule.

Then the near-dead bomber quickly went out of control and in a slow, upright spiral, dropped 8,000 feet below and behind the protection of its formation. A hungry pack of Jap fighters quickly pounced upon it.

The gunners opened up on the pack and the plane continued to drop, one thousand, two-thousand, five-thousand feet. She was losing precious altitude fast and the gunners, trying frantically to keep to their gun positions in the twisting, turning plane, pumped sheets of metal into the attacking Japs.

"I've got it! I've got it, Pop. I believe I can hold it!" Co-pilot Leonard Fox (Downey, Pennsylvania) had in desperation, tested the control mechanism on his side of the plane and found that he could pull the plane out of its spin. Slowly, surely the huge plane came out of the spiral, barely held in control by the cables on Fox's side of the plane which had not snapped when the "Jack" rammed them.

During the 8,000 foot drop, Avery had ordered the crew to prepare to bail out. The bomb bay doors had been opened in preparation for the escape—"escape" to the Japs below! But during the short time while Fox was pulling the plane out of its spin, Avery had learned of the injured radio operator and tail gunner. The bay doors were snapped shut.

Fighters attacked even more aggressively now, realizing the bomber was severely crippled and could not count on the protective guns of other B-29's. Fighters attacking the main formation high and ahead of the crippled plane, continued their dives and strafed the wounded Superfortress.

Twenty fighters, split into two groups of ten, hung high above on either side of the wounded plane and made coordinated attacks. Top gunner McHugh alone had to battle off this determined group. "After making a pass, they were coming back for seconds" McHugh said. "For them, firing at us was like reaching for a brass ring on the merry-go-round."

"First, one would attack from high on the left and before I could finish firing at him, another would start down from directly behind and above me and I'd have to swing around in a 180 degree turn. Soon, I could time them just right. Without looking, I could tell when the next guy was going to start in and after letting his pal have a few bursts on the one side, I swung around just in time to catch another one coming in from behind."

Grinning and remembering, McHugh said, "from the way things looked at that point, I figured we were going to be under attack all the way back to Saipan. So I kept urging the gunners to save ammo, but it didn't do any good. They had to fire and keep firing."

The left Gunner, Sergeant Clarence O. Leach (Martins Ferry, Ohio), without fire power when his partner, Right Gunner, Sergeant Marvin E. Meyer (Boone, Iowa), took over both turrets, shouted: "Meyer, Meyer, PLEASE give me a turret—I've got FIVE of them over here." "Go to hell, Leach," Meyer shouted, his eyes jammed to his sight, "I've got EIGHT of them over here!"

Just a few moments elapsed while the bomber was rammed, dropped its bombs and plunged out of formation. Radar Operator, Staff Sergeant Lewis E. Nellums (Pensacola, Florida), now turned to injured Radio Oper-

ator Klimczak. As he dropped to his knees to aid the wounded man, Jap bullets ripped through the side of the bomber, dug into the back of the seat where Nellums, seconds before, had been sitting.

As the giant bomber slowly worked its way out over the Japanese coast, the attackers followed for what seemed like an eternity. But at long last the Japs were forced to drop off, one by one, from the attack and when the crippled plane was sixty miles out to sea, only one fighter was left. The Zeke tried in desperation to give the bomber a third ramming but failed, gave up the chase and headed for Honshu.

The crippled bomber had been under constant attack for more than an hour and when the plane was finally clear of the fighters, McHugh went back to see what had happened to Mulligan and found him on the compartment floor, unconscious. He had managed to plunge his face into his oxygen mask before blacking out.

"The hole in the side of the plane was big enough for him to fall through," McHugh reported. "The only thing that prevented him from falling out when we went into the spiral was the fact that shredded metal from the comparment was caught in his clothing and was holding him inside the plane."

Although the jagged pieces of metal saved the unconscious gunner from falling free, those same pieces of metal held him so securely that almost an hour elapsed before he was liberated from his freezing prison and brought to a more comfortable section where first aid was administered. Singlely, crewman after crewman had wormed his way back into the freezing compartment to work at the tangle of metal which held the gunner. They carried a "walk-around" oxygen bottle because the oxygen supply to the tail had been sliced away by the ramming fighter. A single crewman would cut away at the tangled mass until his supply of oxygen diminished and he had become groggy. Then he would stagger to the forward part of the plane and send in a new worker.

McHugh, Leach, Meyers, Nellums, Gage, all in turn, worked to get the boy out of the smashed compartment. They knew they were working against time. When a man spends too much time exposed to the elements at high altitudes, anything can happen.

"His clothes were as stiff as a board when we finally got him loose," Nellums declared. "We practically had to undress him in order to get him free of the metal." Carefully they lifted him out, lest he be dropped through the gaping hole and plunge thousands of feet into the Pacific.

The gunner was bedded down in the Radar compartment and covered with flying clothes donated by other crewmen in spite of the icy winds which ripped through the plane. By this time the 40 degrees below zero temperature had so affected the gunner's hands that they later had to be amputated. His face was purple, he began to groan and complain of the intense cold, in spite of the mountain of clothing which had been heaped upon him. But his crewmates had done all they could. Now there was nothing—except hope and pray that they could make Saipan before it was too late.

The bomber staggered endlessly on with its crew members fighting to keep the plane airborne, fighting against time and fighting to keep down the rising tide of turmoil and anxiety which threatened to break the souls of each man.

At last, Nellums, back in his bullet-riddled seat, scanned his instruments and joyfully called over the interphone that Saipan was near.

"Down we went, through the clouds and popped out on the approach to the field," Navigator Faubion remembered. "We were home at last—there just below us was more than just an air base. It was home and safety."

Although relief was in sight, Mulligan barely escaped death for warm air in the lower levels opened the wounds which had congealed in the frigid upper altitudes. He was saved by the prompt and efficient work of his crewmates who administered sulfa powder, morphine, and plasma.

"Down and down we went," Faubion stated, "and at 1,200 feet we had to make a turn. That's when we began to do some real sweating."

Fox was at the flying control; Gage was giving visual direction from the nose and Avery was at the throttles as the huge plane staggered toward the runway.

The co-pilot, still bedecked in his heavy flak suit, life vest and other combat equipment which he wasn't able to remove because he couldn't once leave the controls, squeezed the control column, edged the bomber in.

Then it slipped out of control.

The crippled plane dropped below the level of the field, headed for a cliff which is part of the landing approach to the Saipan B-29 field.

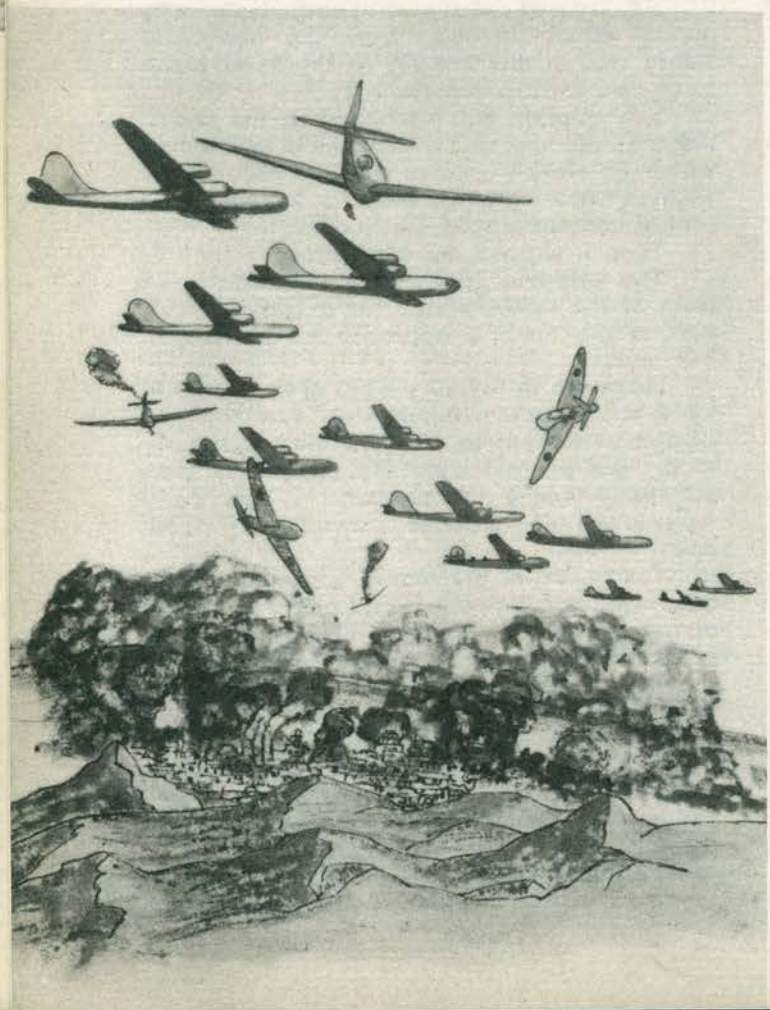
Gage, up in the very front of the plane in his bombardier's compartment, saw the embankment coming up fast. He tried spiritually to lift the bomber over the edge and then, helplessly turned and shouted: "If they could only lower the damned runway just about now!"

Fox pulled at his control wheel in desperation. Nothing happened. The plane continued diving straight for the cliff. Finally, in a last effort to bring its nose up over the edge of the runway, barely yards above, he put his feet up on the instrument panel, gave the wheel a last, frantic tug. Something snapped. The plane lifted abruptly, cleared the embankment and then plunged down onto the field and slid hundreds of feet, scraping, screeching, and sparking.

The main landing gear had held but the

Staff Sgt. Charles Mulligan

Artist's conception of Jan. 27th flight



nose wheel collapsed as the plane shot down the runway and turned under the fuselage to come crashing up inside the bomber, still spinning. It knocked injured Radio Operator Klimczak, who had been lain on the nose wheel hatch for comfort, far forward into the bombardier's compartment.

The plane continued to crash down the runway. Its number one engine burst into flames. Crewmen braced themselves as best they could, waiting. Then the wing of the bomber caught on an embankment at the edge of the strip, slammed the plane around with a terrific twist, tossed the burning engine completely off the wing with one final, awful crash, the bomber careened to a stop.

The bomber's lights were knocked out in the crash. There was a mass of tumbled bodies inside the plane as crewmen began to untangle themselves and crawl out of Jap-made, crash-made, American-made escape hatches.

Most everyone was clear—Avery, knocked unconscious in the crash, and Gage, whose back was sprained, had been carried and helped out and the injured radio operator had been removed—when someone shouted: "Where's Mulligan?"

Crewmen tumbled back into the plane, crawling over scattered equipment and picked their way into the blacked-out Radar compartment where the tail gunner had lain. "Mulligan, Mulligan." From a corner of the compartment, underneath a pile of clothing and wrecked equipment, a body stirred. The crewmen stumbled and picked their way over, snatched off the clothing and found the tail gunner in a ball, stashed in the corner.

"All Mulligan worried about when we finally got him out and down on the hard coral parking stand was the fact that he was stark naked," McHugh grinned. "But he was in pretty bad shape and we helped him quickly into a waiting ambulance and he was sped off to the hospital."

Nine members of the crew of "Irish Lassie" were decorated for their part in the historic mission. Airplane Commander Avery and Tail Gunner Mulligan were both awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, the Army's second highest decoration. Co-pilot Fox and Flight Engineer Watson won the Silver Star, third highest combat decoration, and Navigator Faubion and Bombardier Gage were each presented with the Distinguished Flying Cross. McHugh, Meyer and Nellums won the Air Medal for outstanding gunnery and for aiding the wounded crewmen.

Thus, on Saipan's friendly soil, ended a heroic and dramatic story written in blood and sacrifice in the hostile skies over Japan. With its defenses breached, its guard down and its innermost secrets explored, "Flak Alley" was no longer the bulwark it had been and for the avalanche to follow, the way had been shown by the gallant men of the 497th.

U S S R.
HOKKAIDO
Wakkanai
Otaru
Muroran
Hakodate
Aomori
Akita
Kamaishi
Niigata
Tokyo
Kobe
Osaka
Shimonoseki
Yawata
Kure
SHIKOKU
Nobeoka
KYUSHU
SEA OF JAPAN
HONSHU
PACIFIC OCEAN
JAPAN
Generalized Topography

Lt. Sutton's crew

Lt. Buck's crew

Capt. Young's crew

Lt. Cox's crew

Capt. Mulloy's crew

Lt. Garvin's crew

Lt. Crowe's crew

Major Baird's crew

Lt. Pickerel's crew

Capt. Hanley's crew

Lt. Campbell's crew

Col. Morgan's crew

Capt. Archer's crew

Lt. McGregor's crew

Capt. Snedaker's crew

Capt. Simms' crew

Capt. Barlett's crew

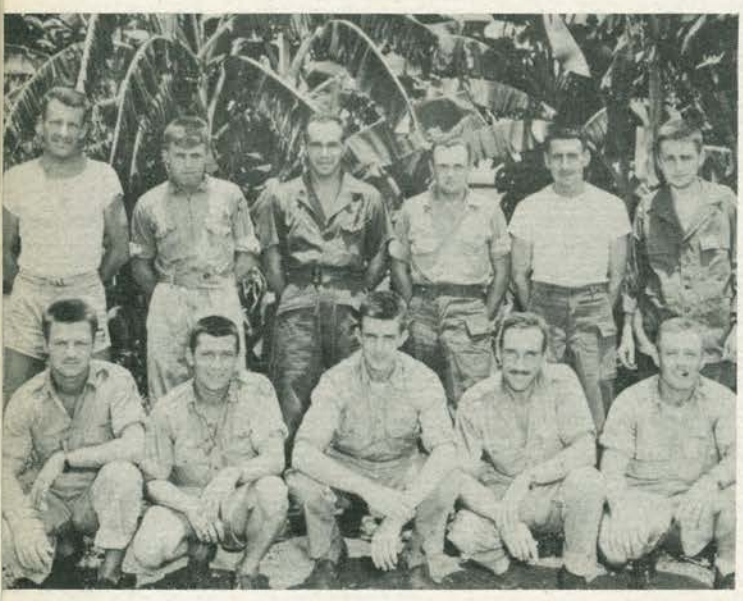
Lt. Dietzel's crew

Toyama Burns 99.5% 2 Aug. 1945

Lt. Drake's crew

Lt. Mayse's crew

Lt. Fate's crew



Capt. Wagner's crew

In Five Months Japan's War Economy Was Ruined

Japan's ability to continue the war finally collapsed amid the ashes of her burned-out cities. Her industry, blockaded and bombed into a shambles, finally could no longer support a large, modern war machine. This situation was caused by the B-29 which, in the final phase of the war, was the decisive factor.

The final phase was swift. President Truman's announcement of the surrender came 157 days after the Twentieth Air Force first cut loose with fire bombing. In those 157 days, the main strategic air weapon literally wrecked the enemy nation.

Our intelligence analysts rubbed their hands with anticipation when they examined Japanese industry. Here was no dispersed, well-organized system like Germany's. They knew that only a few vulnerable target areas had to be obliterated before Japan would be on the ropes. A study of her cities showed that the wood and plaster buildings were a set-up for area incendiary bombing Only 10 per cent were made of stone, brick, metal or reinforced concrete. Many modern factories were hemmed in by solid masses of flimsy workshops, the very homes of the workers themselves. Peacetime conflagrations had been frequent in Japan; this had not been true of Germany. Water supplies, never adequate, were dangerously low for large-scale fire fighting. In addition, our experts discounted all talk about Japan's ability to survive through her Manchurian industry alone. They were convinced that once the heart of the Empire had been gouged out, she was licked.

Lt. Vetter's crew

Lt. Wirth's crew

On the basis of these facts, the bombers of the Twentieth Air Force went to work. Their success is, if anything, considerably understated here because information is still incomplete in many instances. The aerial camera cannot peer into every remote corner of a country and disclose if this or that piece of factory machinery has been dispersed, gone underground, or whether it is scorched, corroded and useless. Until extensive surveys are made of each bombed area, any report can at best be only a partial one. It cannot, except in the case of the aircraft propeller industry, show exactly the specific bottlenecks caused by bombing.

For one picture of what happened to Japanese industry, here are some estimates of factory space destroyed by both area and precision attacks in 12 major war industries, listed in order of their importance.

Industry	Pre-attack Plant Area in '000s of sq. feet	Indust'l bldgs. destroyed or badly damaged
Aircraft	140,000	37%
Ordnance	110,000	15%
Shipbuilding and repair	45,000	15%
Oil (including storage)	150,000	5%
Electrical equipment	40,000	28%
Machinery & finished metal prod.	110,000	33%
Metals ferrous and non-ferrous)	150,000	14%
Chemicals	130,000	9%
Rubber	30,000	17%
Textiles	50,000	24%

Capt. Hubbard's crew

Capt. Thomas' crew

Capt. Ted Morgan's crew

Lt. Sturn's crew

Lt. Cripp and crew

Mil. and Gen. storage area	200,000	12%
All others	445,000	20%

Industrial damage totaled 288,000,000 square feet. Of industry in the 69 cities blitzed, 27.4 per cent was badly damaged. Yet this fails to tell a complete story. Many undamaged factories were of no use because the blockade and bombing of supporting industries denied them the necessary materials to fabricate. Likewise, it is impossible to translate physical plant damage into specific production loss. On the basis of what we learned in Germany, where fire bombing was much less successful than it was in Japan, the percentage of production loss for six weeks after incendiary missions was sometimes double the percentage of space destroyed. The Japanese, in contrast to the Nazis, did almost nothing to repair damage. They cleared up rubble inside bombed-out plants, then abandoned them completely. Other factors contributing to loss of output were: (1) shortages of materials; (2) transportation interruptions; (3) lowered worker morale; (4) absenteeism; and (5) administrative disorganization. All these probably added up to an actual percentage of production loss nearly double the percentage of physical plant damage.

Important results in some instances are hidden in the table above. Oil target areas are reported as only five percent destroyed. However, due to the fact that most production was confined to a relatively few modern facilities, the 315th Wing, by concentrating on 11 of Japan's newest refineries, reduced over-all oil output by 30 per cent in little more than a month of operations. Synthetic producion sagged even more sharply with a drop of 44 per cent, which represents an actual loss of some 265,000 barrels.

As in the case of Germany, the first target system of fundamental importance was the aircraft industry which was treated to both high explosive and incendiary attacks. Against this type of target, the fire bombing was even more effective than had been anticipated. Many large structures were consumed by flames which gave added dividends by ruining machinery that possibly could have been salvaged if subjected to HE only. Despite our attention to this industry, Japan still had plenty of planes at war's end so one might assume

that the B-29 effort was a wasted one. It was not, and for very simple reasons.

On 1 August 1945 Jap monthly production was estimated at 1,834 combat planes. This figure was 75 per cent of their production for December 1944, before bomb damage became appreciable. It indicates that by some dispersal, use of excess plant capacity and production in hidden sites (including a small number of underground shops), the Japs, like the Germans, were still able to produce a sizeable number of aircraft despite our prolonged attacks. Also, they had planned a considerable increase in production.

The Twentieth Air Force expended 45.5 per cent of the 15,000 tons it dropped on the aircraft industry against aero-engine plants. Another 49.5 per cent went on airframe assembly plants. This probably denied the JAF between 6,400 and 7,200 planes through July 1945. These, if it had been possible to employ them as Kamikazes at Okinawa, might well have delayed the outcome of the war.

Strangely enough, a portion of the remaining five per cent dropped on subsidiary aircraft industries by the Twentieth, plus extremely successful fire attacks against Osaka and Shizuoka, would have hurt the Japanese most during the balance of 1945. The Sumitomo propeller plants at Amagasaki, Shizuoka and Osaka, which, together with some damage to the Japan Musical Instrument Co. propeller plant in Hammamatsu, curtailed prop output sufficiently to cause a five-months production loss. It is estimated that the resulting bottlenecks would have forced aircraft production down to 41 per cent of its 1 January 1945 rate by November of 1945. Cumulative effects would have begun to be felt seriously just at the time our invasion was scheduled. It undoubtedly was one of the facts that convinced the Japs that the situation was hopeless.

Though aircraft continued to be No. 1 priority, other industries received an ample share of attention. Shipbuilding had dropped 60 per cent by V-J Day, partly due to the fire bombing of Kobe, Osaka, and Yokohama, but principally because of steel shortages. Ordnance, a particular pet of the Twentieth, was cut 40 per cent. Iron, steel and coke, the key heavy industries of war, were down 56 per cent primarily because of the blockade, but also partly due to bombing. Aluminum output

Maj. Smith's crew

Lt. Carl E. Fitz's crew

Lt. Duden's crew

Lt. Hill's crew

Lt. Avery's crew

Maj. Judd's crew

slumped 35 per cent. Military and industrial storage areas also suffered heavily.

Unlike the bombing program for Germany, where transportation rated top priority along with aircraft and oil, we had not yet reached the stage where it was necessary to concentrate on rail targets. Japan's rail system, incidentally, like her industry, was far more vulnerable than Germany's. Not until 14 August, the last mission of the war, did the 29s hit a Jap rail target. Nonetheless, the fire blitzes had an amazingly potent effect on land transport. Together with depreciation of already poor rail equipment, they cut railroad traffic to less than half the volume of a year ago. With coastwise shipping also disrupted, the Japanese were faced with what was admittedly their worst economic bottleneck. This was the most important byproduct of the incendiary attacks.

Many lesser industries contributing to the Japanese war economy also were heavily affected by B-29 bombing. Electronics equipment production, already insufficient to supply demands, was down 35 per cent. These in turn were badly needed for repairing bombed-out factories and for retooling damaged machinery. The little factories of 30 workers or less, where the Japanese produced components for delivery to larger assembly plants, took a terrible beating from area attacks. Just as the experts predicted, they were wiped out by the thousands in all the big cities.

Much of Japan's war industry was crammed into five cities. For example, 40 per cent of all aircraft engine production, 25 per cent of all final aircraft assembly was at Nagoya. Ordnance was somewhat more widely dispersed, but Toyko, Osaka, and Nagoya each contained about 10 per cent of the total. Tokyo, in addition to being the Empire's administraive and political nerve-center, teemed with thousands of shack-like workshops, too numerous to be selected as individual targets. Osaka, with its 1940 population of 3,252,240 was second only to Tokyo among the leading industrial communities of the Far East. It produced armaments, shipping and other tools of war. Yokohama also ranked high.

Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, Yokohama, and Kobe caught 44.1 per cent of all Twentieth Air

Force tonnage. Serious damage to identified industry ranges from 25 per cent in Osaka to 43 per cent in Nagoya. The aircraft industry within these cities suffered 50 per cent damage. Ordnance and metals were lowest at 21 per cent. Kobe's industrial area was 41 per cent obliterated. So thoroughly gutted were most sections of the "Big Five" (their burned areas totaled 103.22 sq. mi.), that they were no longer considered essential targets except for occasional pin-point "policing" attacks.

Once they had taken care of the big fellows, the 29s relentlessly went after the Toledos and Bridgeports of Japan. In all, 69 cities were treated to "burn jobs." On the basis of available photo coverage, 175 square miles of urban area were wiped out. Here is what the Tokyo radio announced on 23 August concerning casualties from air attacks in the home islands; 260,000 killed; 412,000 injured; 9,200,000 homeless; 2,210,000 houses demolished or burned, and another 90,000 partially damaged. Though these figures may not be entirely accurate, they compare favorably with estimates of our analysts who say that housing for 10,548,000 persons was destroyed. This is 50.3 per cent of the 1940 population in the 69 cities. Considering that half the population in the industrial centers was de-housed, the effect this had upon labor morale and absenteeism must have been enormous. The completeness of the chaos was reflected in the breakdown of all administrative controls. Workers, lacking orders from higher up, were hamstrung.

Wide variations exist in the percentages of pre-attack industrial area damaged within the 69 cities. Fukuoka, with only .6 per cent, Takamatsu with 89.3 per cent represent two extremes. Damage to residential structures ranges from 9.1 per cent for Nishinomiya to 98.2 per cent for Toyama. Impressive as these figures are, again they fail to tell the whole story. The "planned target area" was much smaller than the built-up urban area in nearly every case. Thus, after the last great fire mission to Tokyo on 25 May, some 86 per cent of the "planned target area" had been eliminated. Small wonder that a newspaperman could write, "Superfortress reports of damage in Tokyo were not exaggerated; if anything, they constitute the most shocking understatement in the history of aerial warfare."

Lt. Jones and crew

Lt. Foster's crew

Lt. Carroll and crew

Capt. Wolff and crew

Col. Haynes' crew

Capt. Lumpkin's crew

Lt. Delker's crew

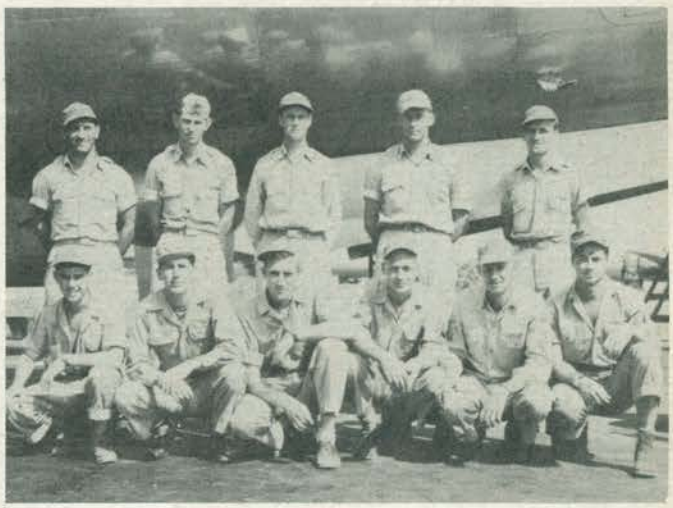
Capt. Campbell's crew

Capt. Brewster and crew

Lt. Cutler's crew

Capt. Stuart and crew

Capt. Beard's crew



Capt. Yon's crew

Lt. Wheatley's crew

Lt. Rodge's crew

Hitachi Engine works

Capt. Schramm's crew

Lt. Bolton's crew

Lt. Sargent's crew

Lt. Spies' crew

Capt. Arnold's crew

Lt. Abar's crew

Lt. Lind's crew

Lt. Lamback's crew

Lt. Hamilton's crew

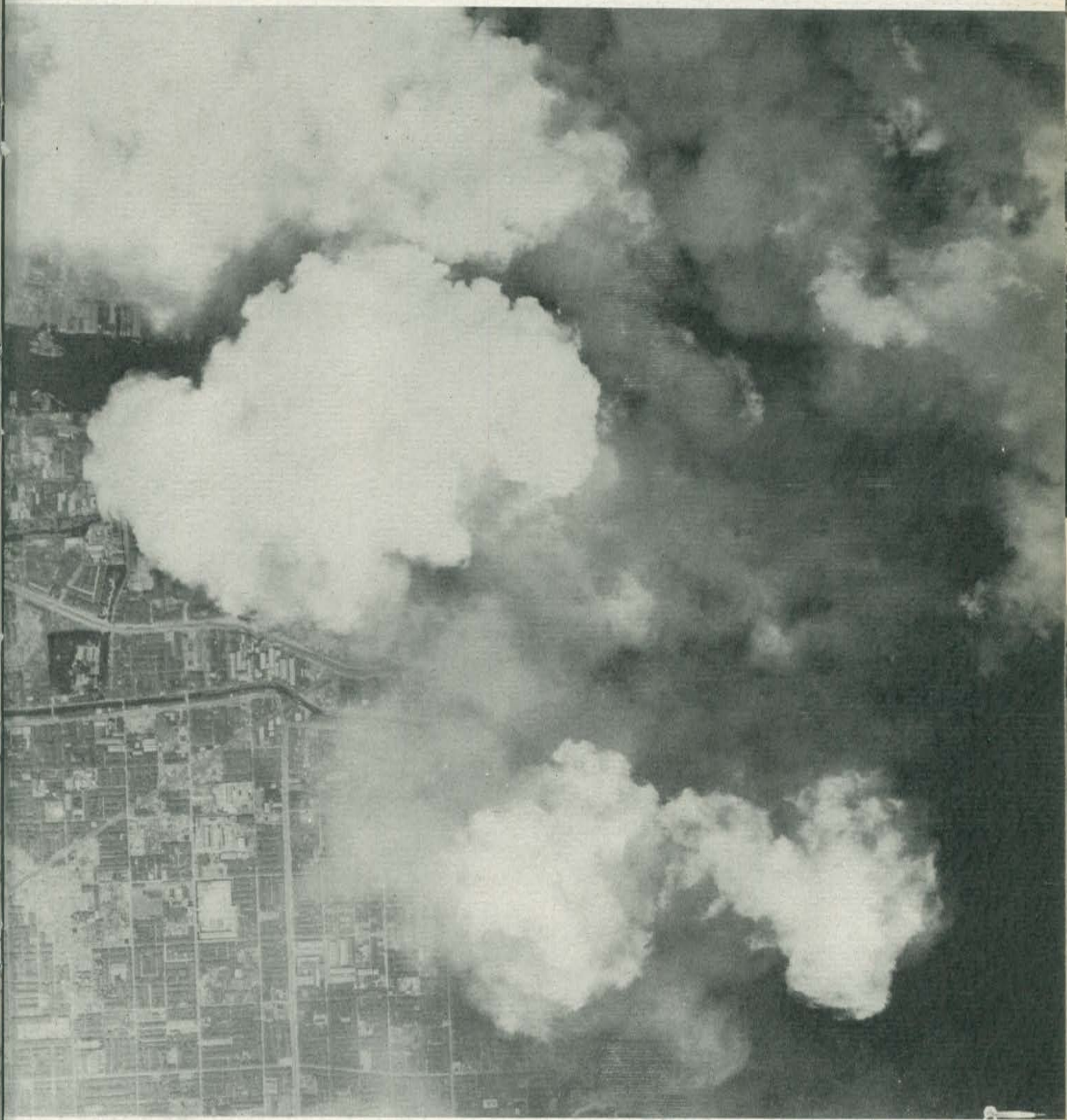
Lt. Kelly's crew

Musashino AC Plant, Tokyo

Kobe

Kawasaki Aircraft Plant Akaski

Musashino AC Plant, Toyko
(357)



Osaka Urban Area

Fukuoka

Yokohama Urban Area

Kure Naval Arsenal

Osaka Army Arsenal

Tachiarai, Kyushu

Yawata Urban Area

BOMBS DROPPED ON TARGET

	Group	869th	870th	871st
High Explosive	4234.37	1381.20	1408.52	1444.65
Incendiary	7470.78	2588.65	2384.08	2498.05
Fragmentation	132.50	46.43	42.21	43.86
TOTAL DROPPED	11837.65	4016.28	3834.81	3986.56
Jettisoned	952.09	291.59	360.42	300.08
Returned	70.82	19.66	17.56	33.60
TOTAL AIRBORNE	12860.56	4327.53	4212.79	4320.24
Per cent of Airborne Dropped on Targets	92%	93%	91%	92%

CUMULATIVE SORTIE RECORD

	Group	869th	870th	871st
Aircraft Airborne	2564	880	828	856
Completing Primary Purpose of Mission	2293	785	740	768
Per cent of Aircraft Completing Primary Purpose of Mission	89%	89%	89%	89%

FLYING TIME

	Group	869th	870th	871st
Combat Missions	34191	11886	10848	11458
Training	3192	824	940	1428
Administrative and Miscellaneous	1320	524	575	221
TOTAL HOURS	38703	13223	12363	13107

DECORATIONS

DFC	Air-Medal	P H	S. S.	S M	B S
731	4312	141	5	16	19

PERSONNEL CASUALTIES

	Group	Headquarters	869th	870th	871st
Killed	76	0	17	25	34
Missing	234	3	52	94	85
Injured	31	1	15	9	6
TOTAL	341	4	84	128	125

BOX SCORE — ENEMY AIRCRAFT

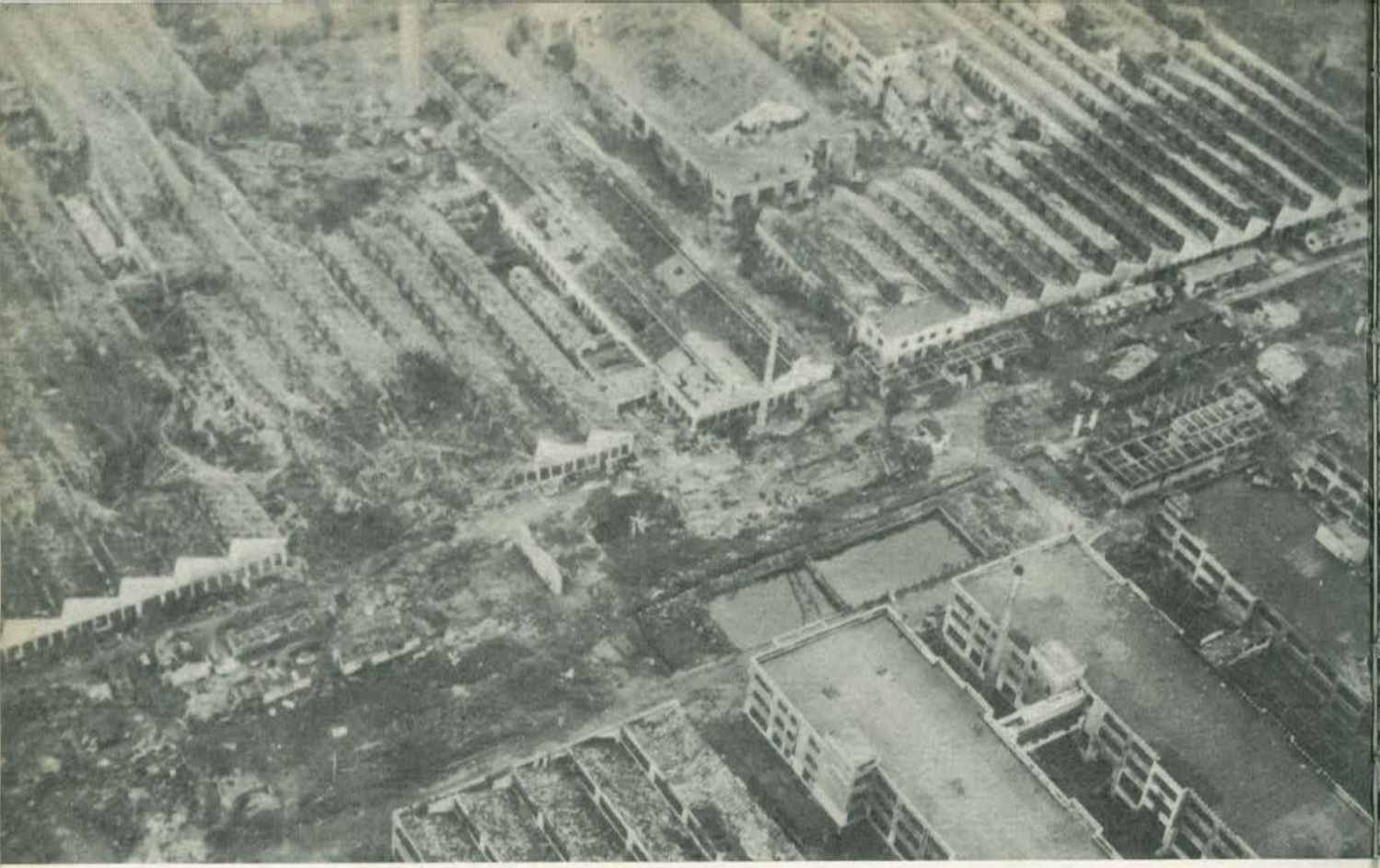
	Destroyed	Probable	Damaged
869th Squadron	46	19	37
870th Squadron	62	23	67
871st Squadron	44	39	38
GROUP TOTAL	152	81	142

BATTLE STARS AWARDED

Gen. Order	Hq.	Date	Campaign	Period
46	497BG	7-13-45	Western Pacific	9-16-44 to 2-18-45
51	497BG	8-15-45	Air Offensive, Japan	9-16-44 to 7-31-45
61	497BG	9-27-45	Eastern Mandates	4-16-44 to 8-15-45
12	WD	2- 1-46	Air Combat, Iwo Jima	

UNIT CITATIONS AWARDED

106	20AF	11-13-46	Musashino AC Plant, Tokyo	1-27-45
13	20AF	1-23-46	Matsuyama 73% destroyed Toyama 99.5%	7-26-45 to 8-2-45
			Osaka 3 sq. mi.	



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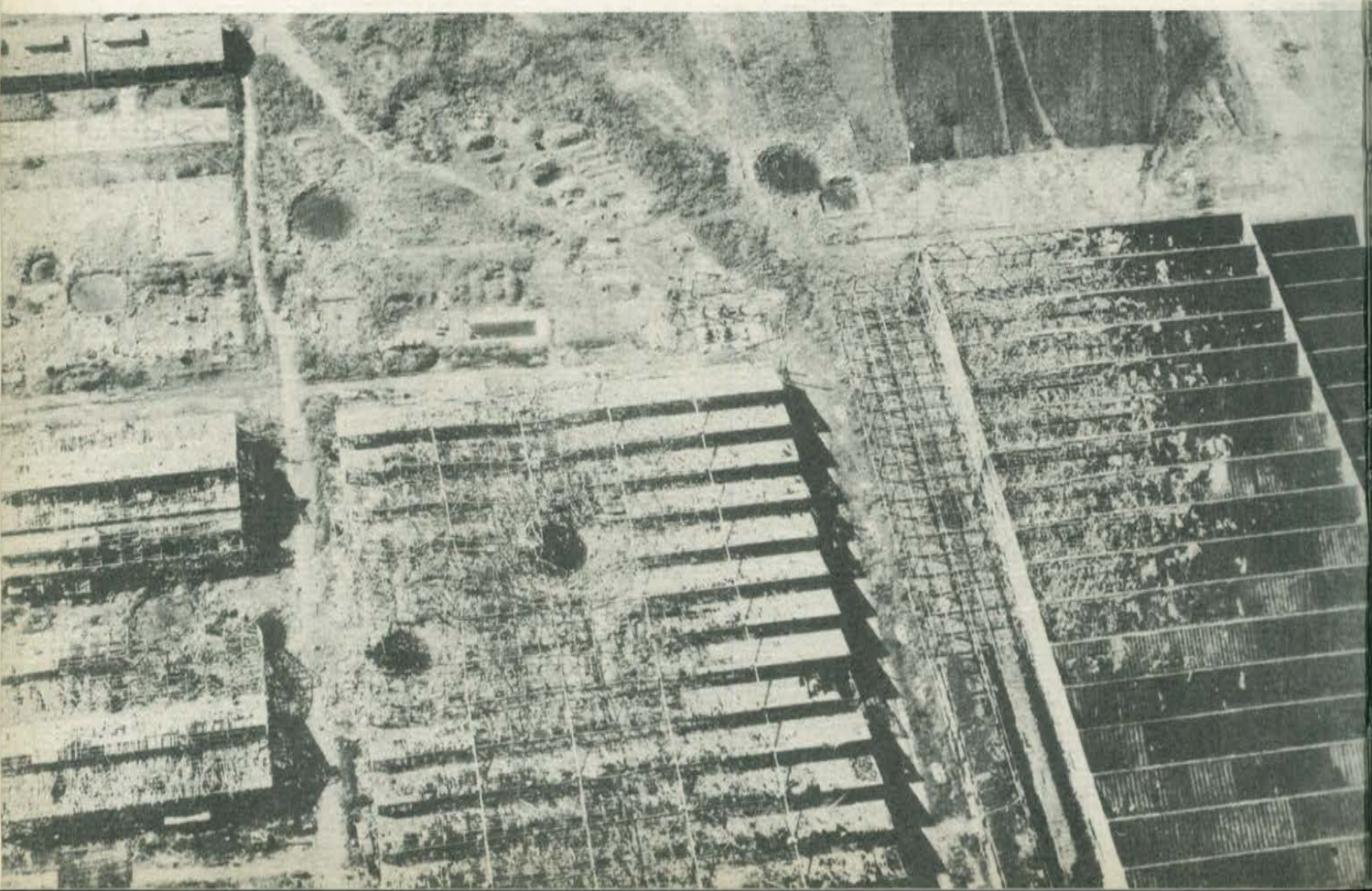

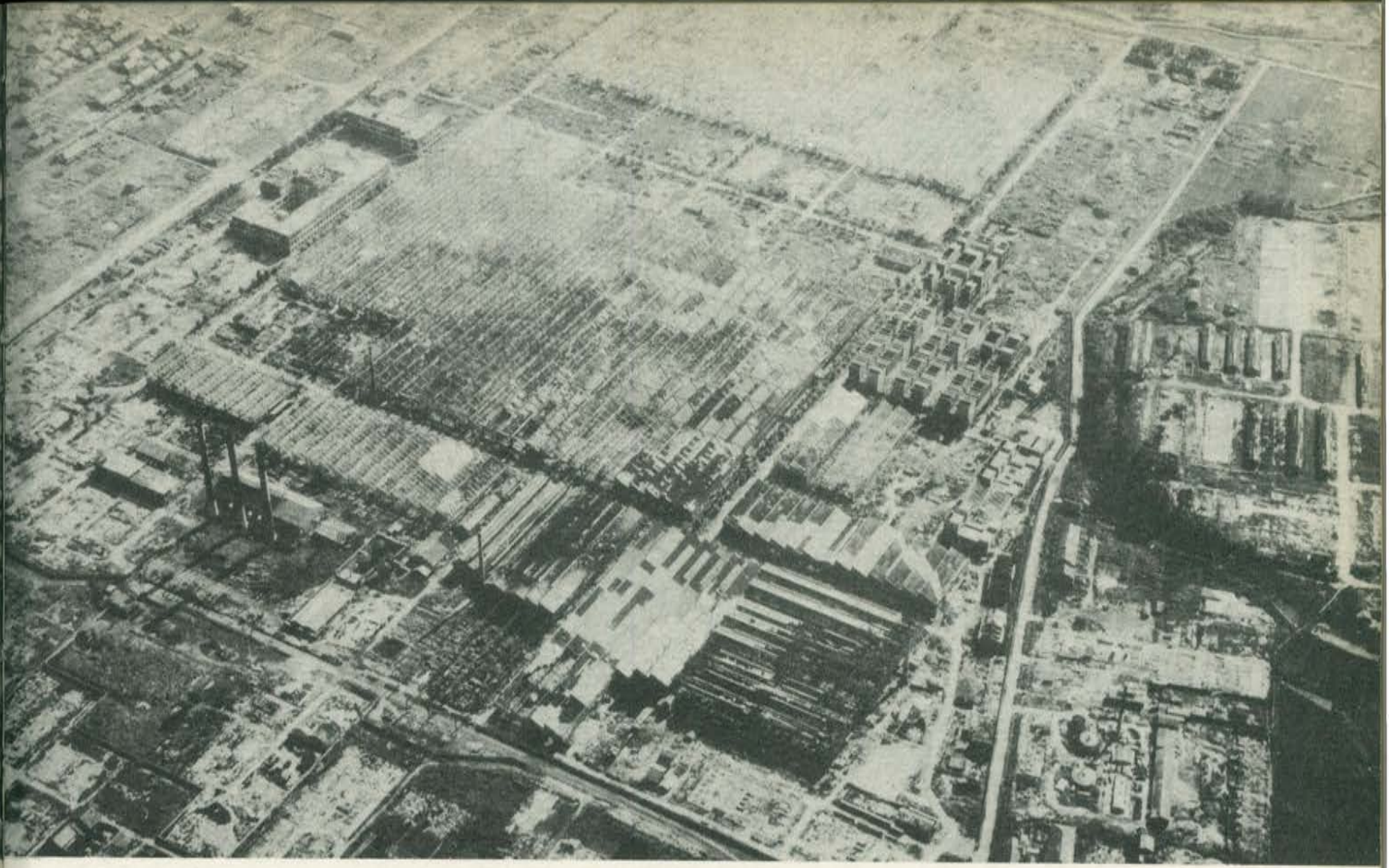

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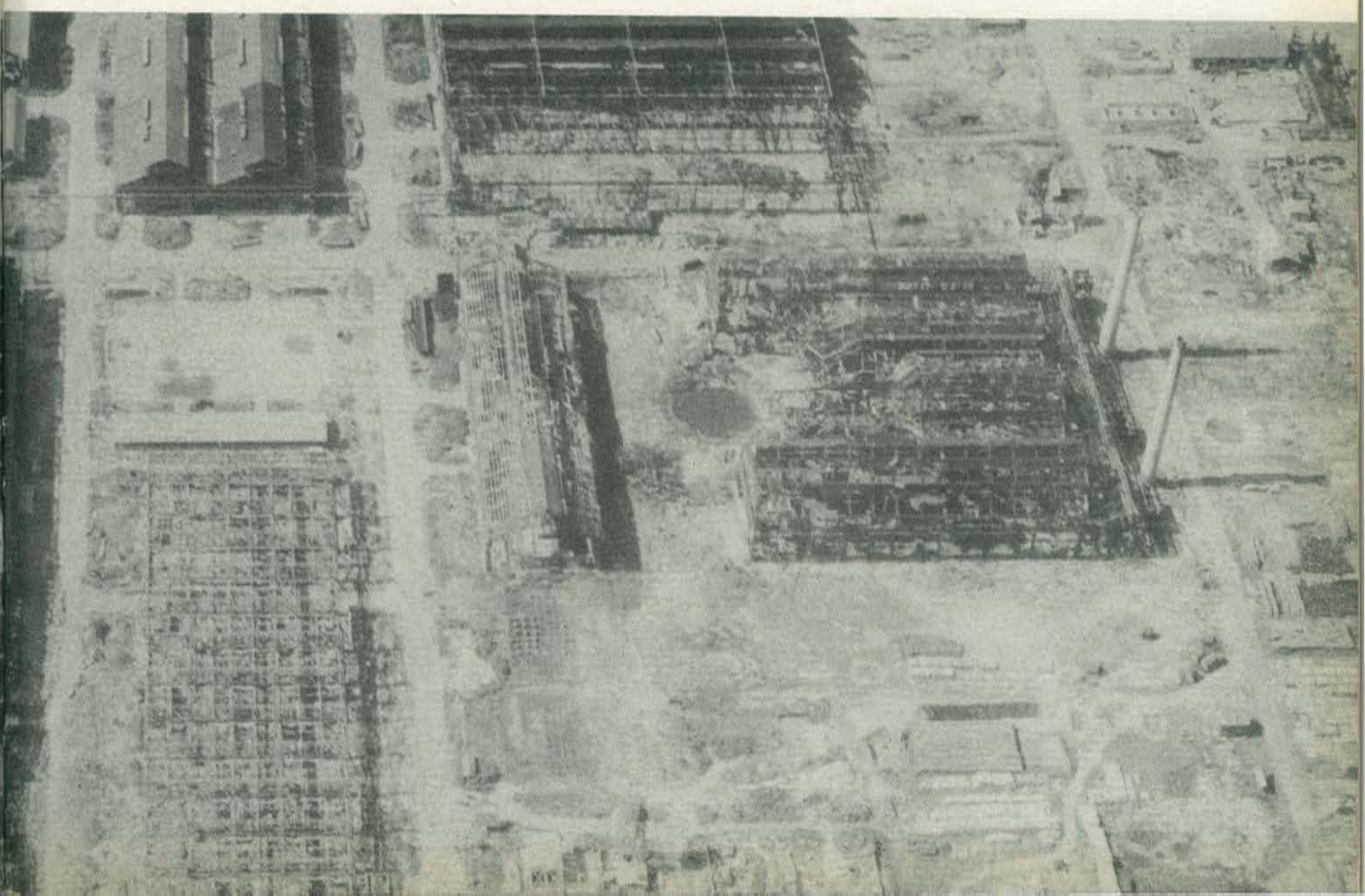

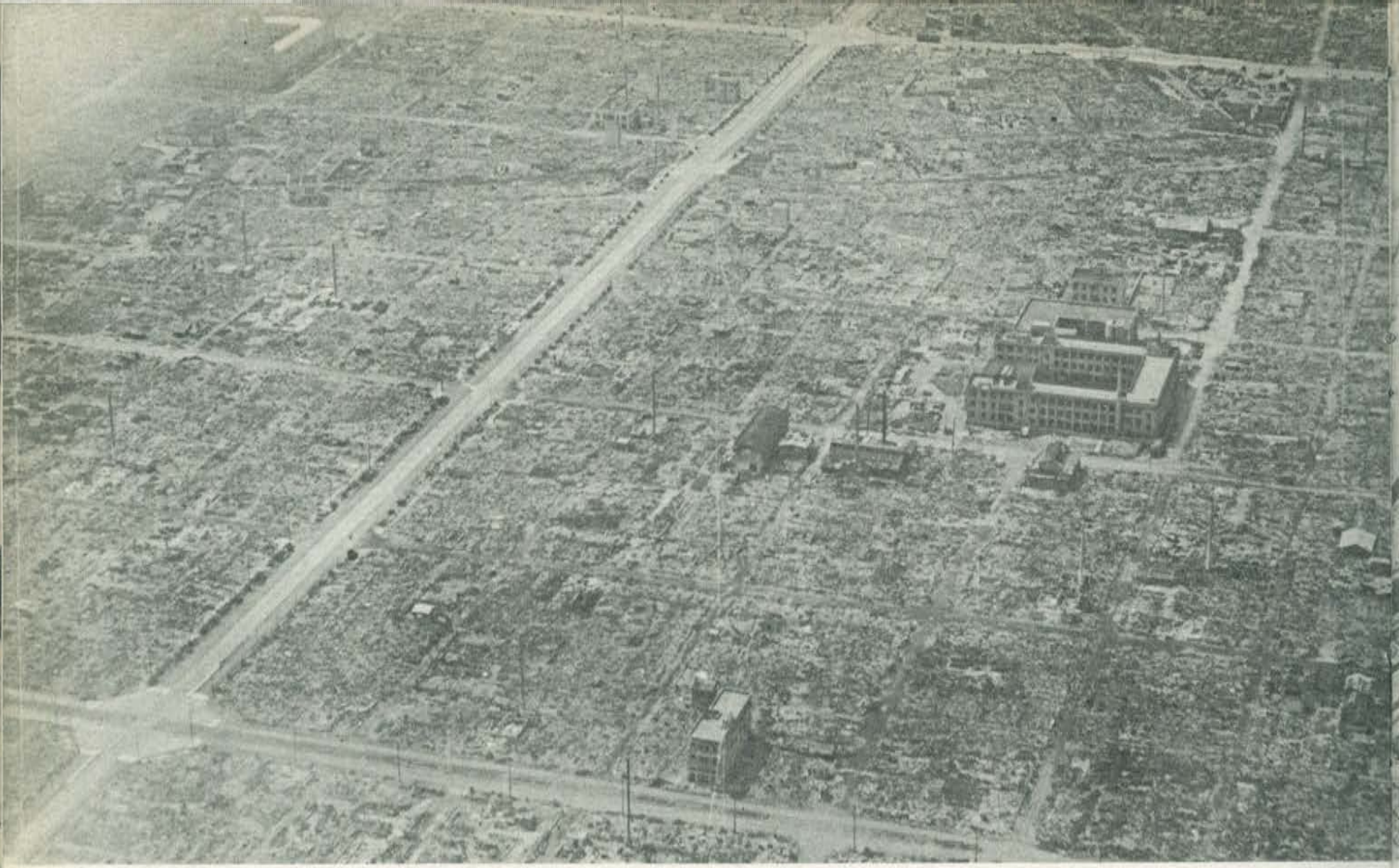

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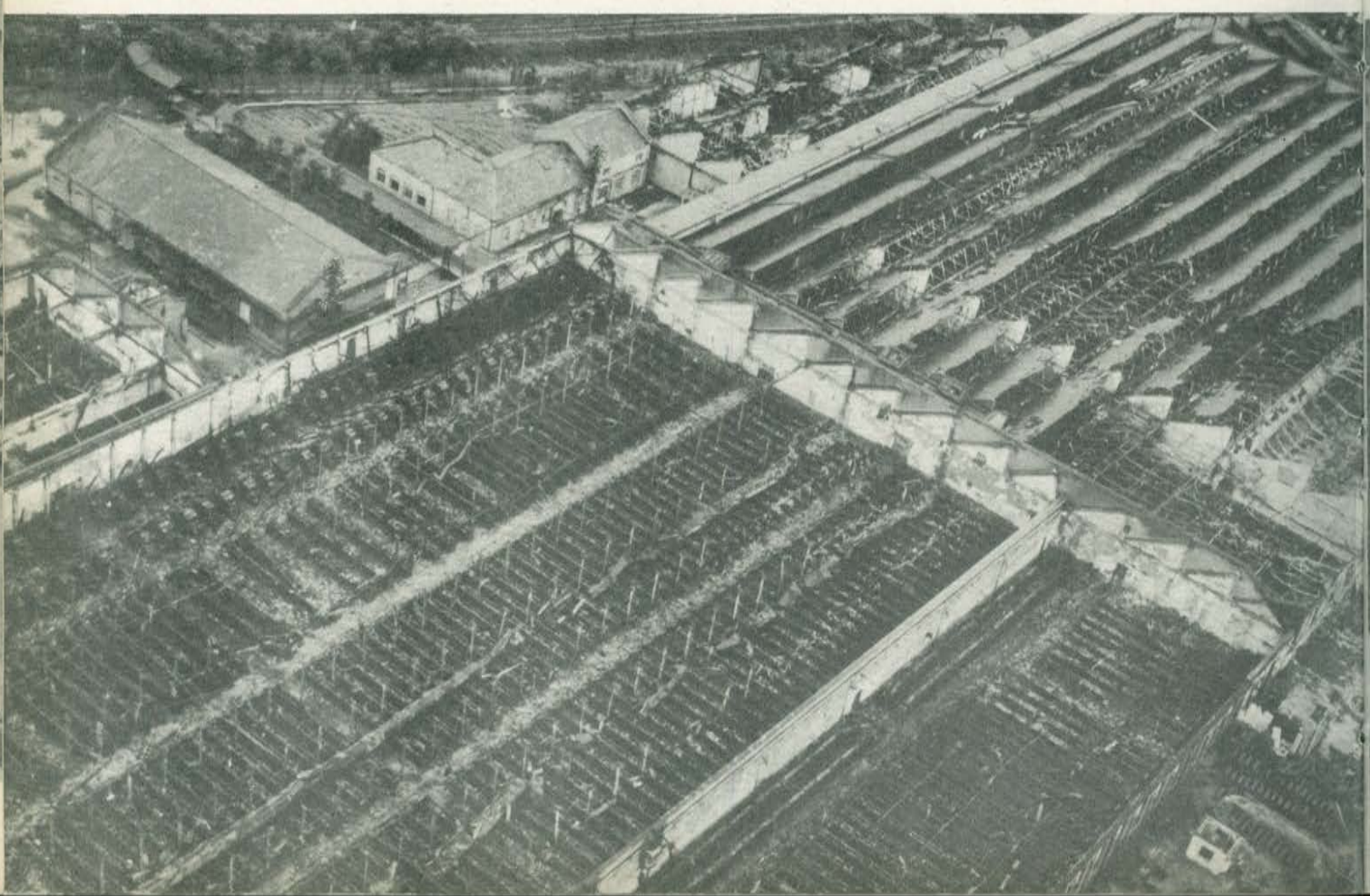

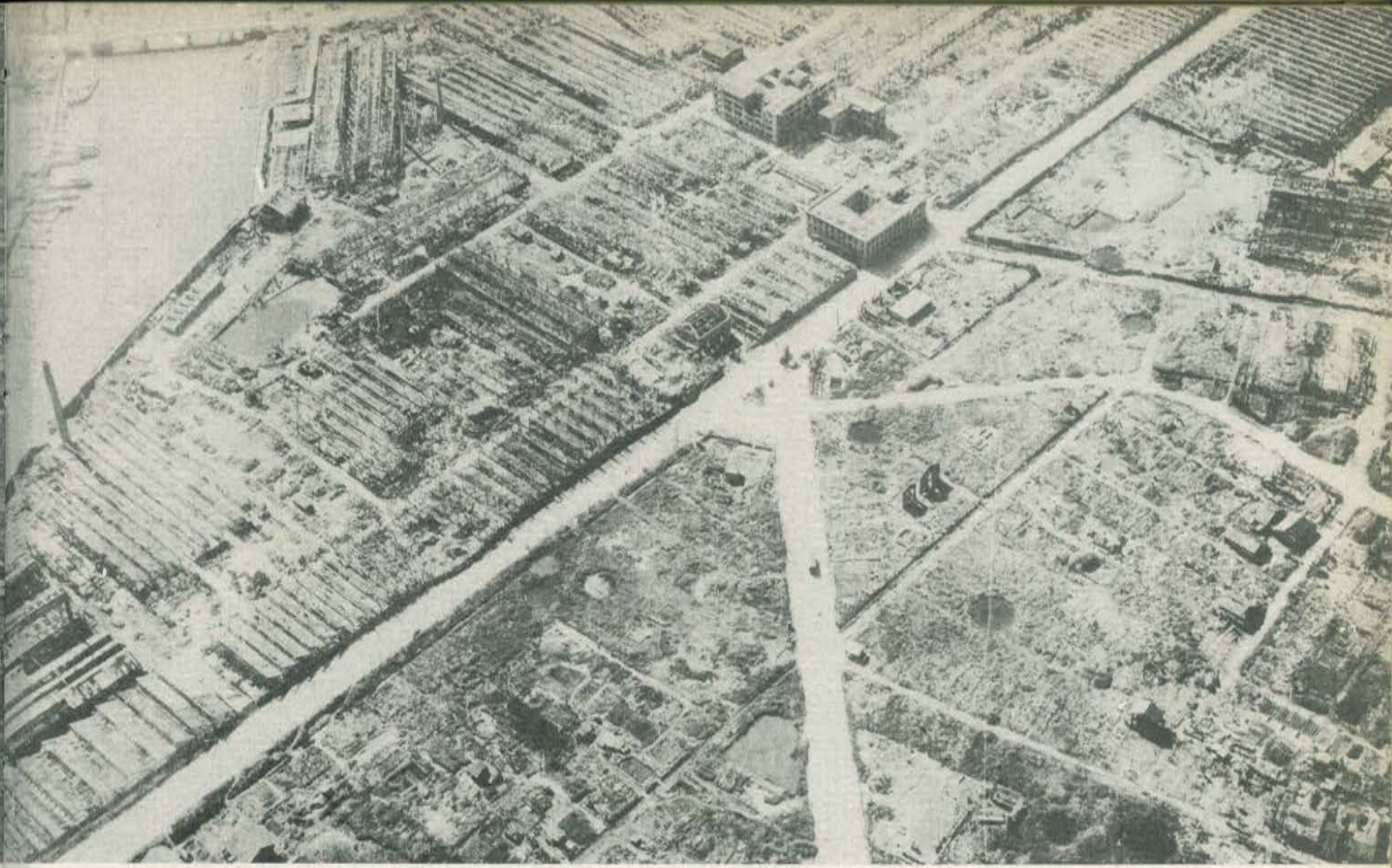

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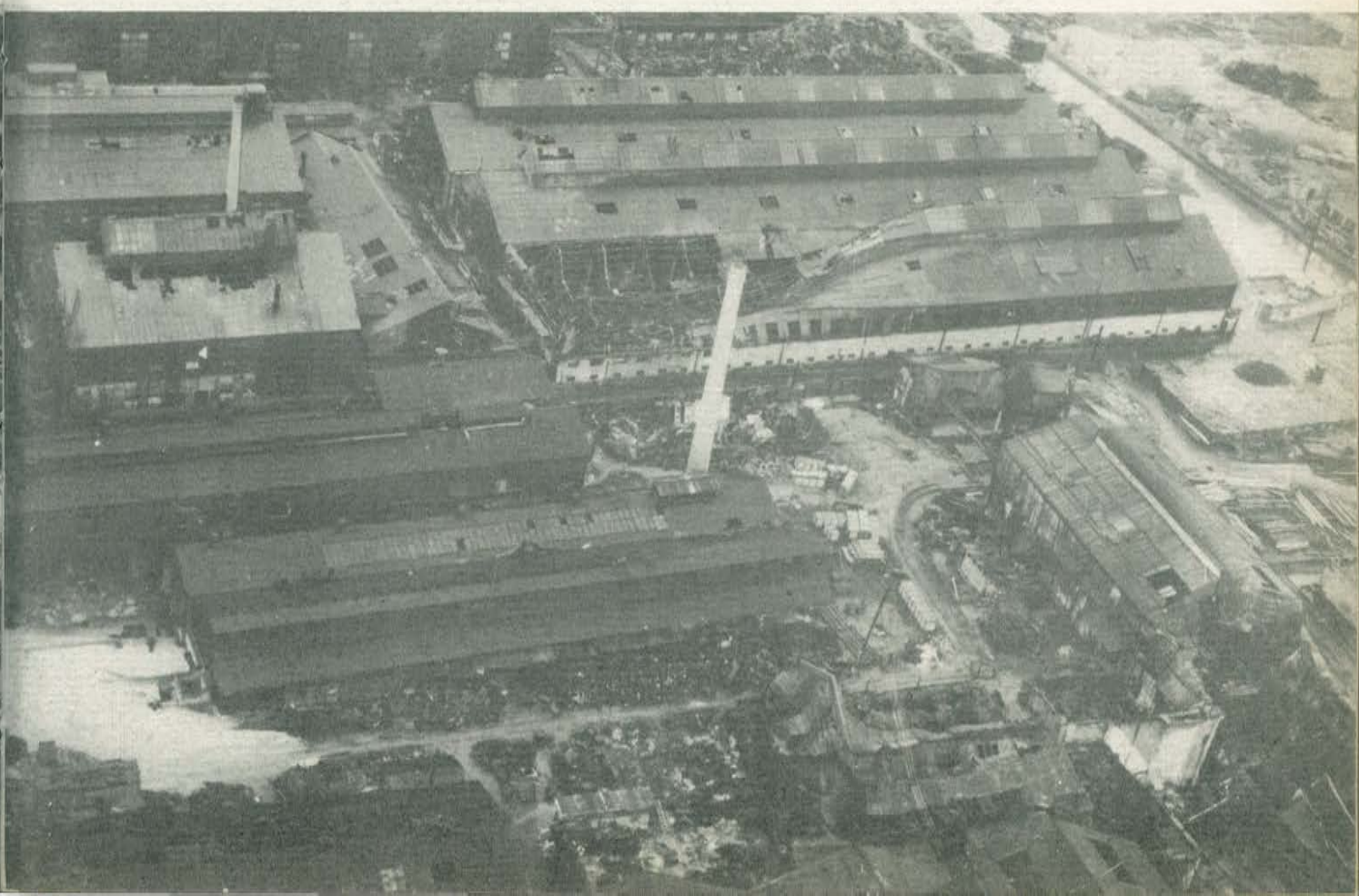
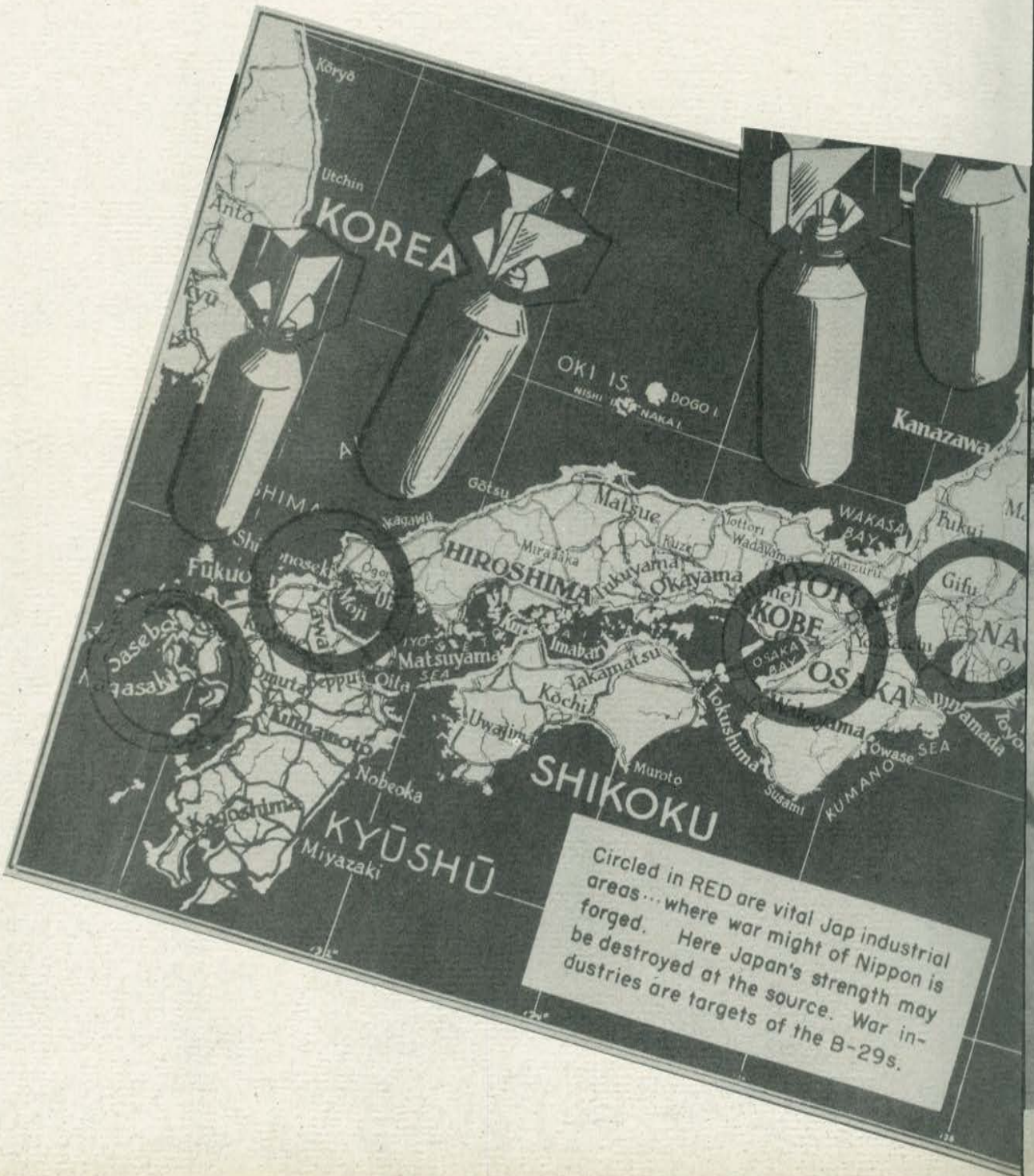




Circled in RED are vital Jap industrial areas... where war might of Nippon is forged. Here Japan's strength may be destroyed at the source. War industries are targets of the B-29s.

HOKKAIDO
SEA OF OKHOTSK
Nayoro
Okoppe
Rumoi
KUNASHIRI I.
OTARU BAY
Otaru
Asahigawa
Abashiri
Sapporo
NEMURO STRAIT
Kushiro
UCHIURA BAY
Muroran
TSUGARU STRAIT
Hakodate
MUTSU BAY
Aomori
Hachinohe
Akita
Morioka
Kuji
Miyako
Kamaishi
NORTH
PACIFIC
OCEAN
Yamagata
Onagawa
Sendai
Fukushima
Yonezawa
TOYAMA BAY
Takaoka
Toyama
Koriyama
Nagano
Utsunomiya
Maebashi
Takasaki
Kuji
Mito
Choshi
Shimizu
SURUGA BAY
HONSHŪ
ŌSHIMA
NIIJIMA
KŌZU
MIYAKE
MIKURA
JAPAN
ROADS
STATUTE MILES
RAILROADS

Air Raids

Anti-aircraft defenses

AIR RAID SECTION

2 Nov.—Alert 0130. Nine bombers dropped 5-pound fragmentation bombs on runway. Very little damage. One shot down near Tinian by AA. Other, a Betty, shot down by P-61, fell in Engineers' bivouac area, killing four and seriously wounding six. Recovered map showed aircraft had come from Bonin Islands.

7 Nov.—Alert 0130. One low flying aircraft strafed runway with little damage. Escaped without drawing fire. Alert 0430. One low flying aircraft swept over runway, dropped no bombs. Probably taking pictures. Escaped.

24 Nov.—Alert 0915. One Irving shot down by P-38 at 28,000 feet about five miles N.W. of Isely Field.

27 Nov.—No alert. Two Bettys passed over bivouac area at low level at 0005, bombed and strafed dispersal areas. At 1210, again without an alert, 17 Zekes came in over Isely Field and strafed it thoroughly. Then came over bivouac area. One man killed and several others injured. Considerable damage to aircraft, though fortunately most planes were airborne on a raid against Tokyo. A number of personnel injured in 500th Gp area when a Zeke was shot down by AA. One destroyed by P-47's near Pagan. One destroyed on Pagan airfield by another P-47 just after it landed. Other two aircraft possibly ditched because of battle damage.

29 Nov.—Alert 0000 hours radar picked up two targets about 140 miles from Saipan, each target consisting of four planes. Planes were at a height varying from 8 to 18,000 feet. Night Fighters were dispatched to intercept the Bogies but due to the extensive use of window employed by the targets, contact was not made. Only two planes were known to have dropped bombs, one dropping at the extreme northern tip of the Island causing no damage but seriously wounding a Marine. The other dropped six or seven bombs just off the eastern edge of the airstrip near the asphalt plant injuring no one and causing only slight damage. The planes were fired upon by the Island's AAA. The batteries on Tinian shot down one plane and claimed another probable. Batteries on Saipan claim one probable.

5 Dec.—Alert 1005. One Myrt (Recco Plane) shot down before it reached Isely, at 30,500 feet by a P-38, 10 miles N.W. of Tanapag. Two parachutes were seen to leave the plane and two of our fighters were circling them as they drifted out to sea.

7 Dec.—Alert 0404. Fifteen very low-flying Bettys strafed the bivouac areas, the Field, and the Island generally, especially East Field. About half-hour later, 13 planes at altitudes ranging from 13,000 to 33,000 feet came over. AA shot down six in all. Saipan AA got one, Tinian AA got one, and a minesweeper off shore got one. Three B-29's were destroyed, three badly damaged, 20 minor damaged. One man killed, two wounded, many minor casualties. Only one aircraft definitely identified—a Peggy.

20 Dec.—Alert 1943, a Recco plane sneaked in behind a B-29 and escaped after a chase.

23 Dec.—Alert 2007. Five planes damaged B-29's at Isely and one bombed a Navy quonset area near Tanapag, killing quite a few personnel. One shot down near East Field by P-61; AA got one.

25 Dec.—Alert 2010. Twenty-five planes at high altitude. Some damage done at Isely Field, East Field and Kobler, mostly at former. Raid lasted one hour, alert for three hours. One accurate glide-bomb attack destroyed a B-29, three planes shot down by P-61's. AA shot down one and had one probable. Considerable damage, although considering number of planes, damage was moderate.

26 Dec.—Alert 2210. Two separate enemy planes approached; one at 11,000, the other at 20,000. A P-61 shot down one 10 miles north of Marpi Point, before it reached the Field. The other passed the Island and came in from the South. It was shot down off Tinian before it reached its target.

2 Jan.—Alert 0335. A twin-engine plane came in from the east. Fifteen minutes later it dropped bombs on Isely Field—escaped. Alert 0416. One Jap aircraft was intercepted North of Island, and turned back. Alert 1235. One Myrt shot down five miles north of Marpi Point, after being over Island. One B-29 destroyed and three others damaged.

3 Jan.—Alert 0413. One Betty at 21,000 feet shot down by P-61, 35 miles north of Island. Aircraft never reached target. Alert 0459. One Irving at 21,000 did not reach the Island and was shot down by a P-61, 10 miles north of the Island.

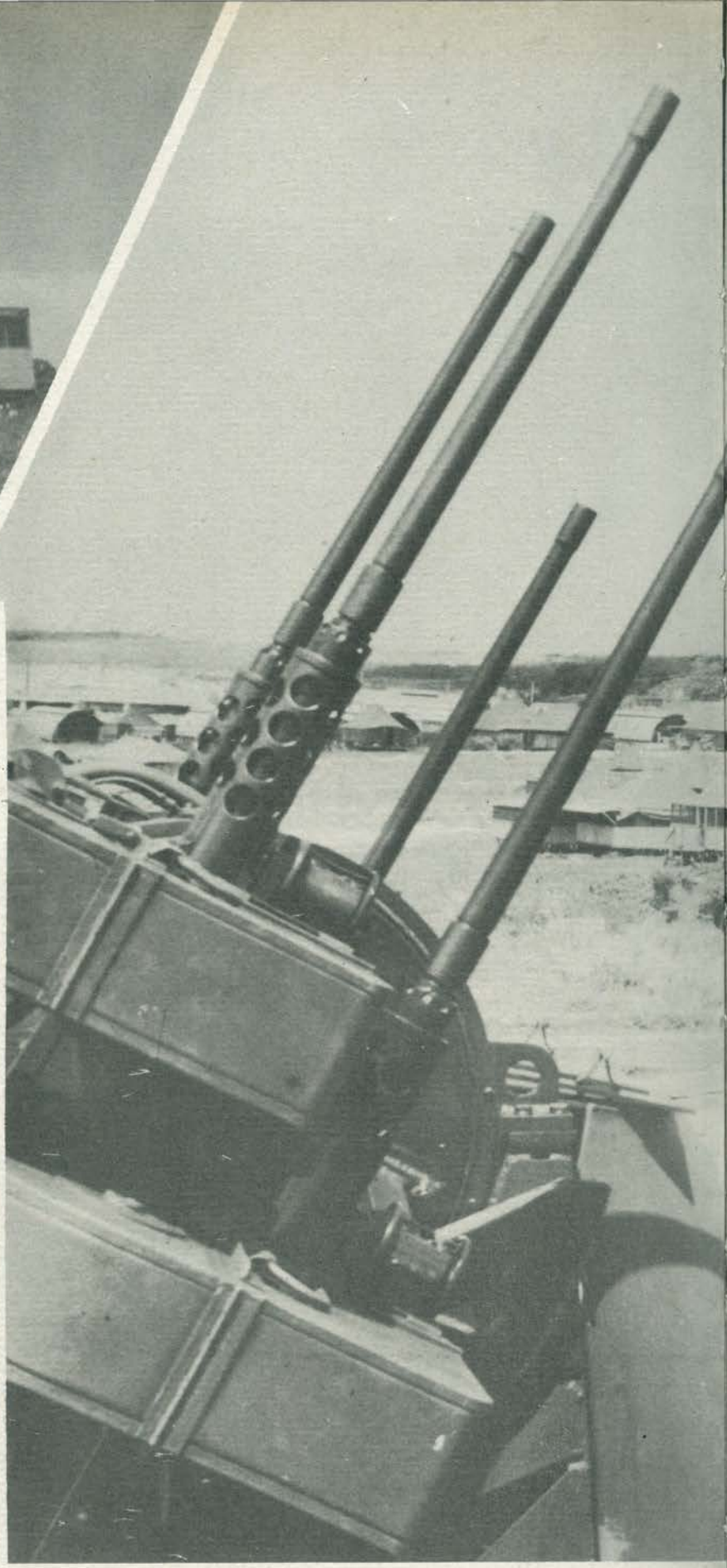
5 Jan.—Alert 1241. One aircraft came within 30 miles of Island, but was intercepted 40 miles to north. It was chased 80 miles by a P-38 and a P-47 but escaped.

15 Jan.—Alert 1205. One Myrt came in at 31,000 feet, close to Tinian—turned away and was shot down by P-47. No alert sounded.

2 Feb.—Alert 1025. One Myrt at 13,000, intercepted by two F6F's and shot down 20 miles north of Saipan. This was the last Jap effort to attack Saipan.

One of 17 Zekes attacking Saipan on Nov. 27, 1944

Burning Superfortress sends up heavy billows of smoke after Jap noon raid on Saipan, November 27 1944.



20 mm. AA Guns

Zekes attacking Saipan, Nov. 27, 1944

Jap bomber and souvenir hunters

Mission Summary

Date	Target	Altitude	Bomb Tonage	Our A/C Lost	Enemy A/C Lost	Results:
1944						
10-28	Dublon Is. Truk Sub Base	25,000	26	0	0	Seven A/C over primary target dropping 500 pounders smack on the Sub pen. Strike photos show 75% bomb load hitting center target area. Light Flak and enemy air opposition.
10-30	Dublon It. Truk Sub Base	26,350	27	0	0	Nine A/C over primary target which was completely obscured. However fires and explosions were observed in the general target area after the visual bomb run. Enemy opposition nil.
11- 2	Dublon Is. Truk Sub Base	25,000	20.75	0	0	Nine A/C over primary target. Direct hits observed on bridge, hospital and barracks area.
11- 5	Iwo Jima Airfield No. 1	27,000	72.25	0	0	Sixteen A/C over primary target with 50% bombs on runway. Balance close by. Black and brown smoke rising to 21,500 feet. Some flak but no enemy air attacks.
11- 8	Iwo Jima Airfield No. 1	27,000	30	0	0	Six A/C over primary target. Many bomb strike flashes noted on runway with well over 50% of bombs landing in target area.
11-10	Tokyo Recco	32,000	Recco	0	0	In spite of adverse weather mission was completed securing valuable information for future raids. One A/C on this mission.
11-24	Toyko Musashino A/C Plant 2nd Docks & built up urban area.	28,000	47.75	1	2 Des. 8 Prob. 5 Dam.	Twenty A/C over primary target with good to excellent results observed. Enemy freighter was bombed and left burning with near misses on other shipping. Accurate Flak and 59 fighter attacks kept the crews busy. No fighter escort.
11-27	Toyko Musashino A/C Engine Plant 2nd Docks & urban targets.	29,500 to 32,000	39.25	0	0	Fourteen A/C over primary target. Cloud cover forced radar bomb run with unobserved results. No enemy opposition and no fighter escort.
11-29	Toyko light industrial section.	25,000 to 31,000	28.84	0	0	Seven A/C over primary target on night radar bombing mission. Solid overcast in target area. No enemy fire encountered and no fighter escort.
12- 3	Toyko Musashino A/C plant. 2nd Dock & Industrial area.	30,000	37.5	1	3 Des. 3 Prob. 1 Dam.	Eleven A/C on primary target with many impacts noted around target area. Several small fires observed in target area and one large fire just East of the target. 100 enemy fighter attacks with moderate flak. No fighter escort.

Date	Target	Altitude	Bomb Tonage	Our A/C Lost	Enemy A/C Lost	Results:
12- 8	Iwo Jima Airfield No. 1	21,000	118	0	0	Twelve A/C over primary target. Due to cloud cover radar bombing was employed. No photo coverage but one squadron observed string of bombs "walking across" airfield target. No enemy action. No fighter escort.
12-13	Nagoya Mitsubishi A/C engine plant. 2nd: City.	27,000	43.5	0	3 Des. 0 Prob. 6 Dam.	Sixteen A/C over primary target with 66% of bombs on target starting many fires and causing considerable damage to the east portion of the plant. Intense flak and 50 fighter attacks before, during and after bomb run. We had three serious casualties. No fighter escort.
12-18	Nagoya Mitsubishi A/C Plant	29,700	37	1	0 Des. 3 Prob. 1 Dam.	Fourteen A/C over primary target. Bomb plot shows remarkable concentration of bursts in dead center of target wrecking dozens of buildings and putting the plant out of operation. 22 fighter attacks and light flak encountered. No fighter escort.
12-22	Nagoya Mitsubishi A/C engine plant.	30,000	36.25	1	6 Des. 7 Prob. 10 Dam.	Fourteen A/C over primary target. Cloud cover forced radar bomb run on target with scope photos showing good radar run. 316 enemy fighter attacks and moderate flak resulted in eight of our A/C receiving battle damage and two combat casualties. No escort.
12-24	Iwo Jima	300 to 11,000	0	0	0 0 0	Navigational aid mission to 318th Fighter Group.
12-27	Tokyo Musashino A/C plant.	29,500 to 30,500	41.25	0	6 Des. 5 Prob. 5 Dam.	Enemy air opposition heavy over the target with moderate flak. Nips launched 127 fighter attacks resulting in two wounded and two damaged aircraft for our side. We put 14 A/C over the primary target. Photos show light bomb damage in center of target but numerous fires burning in general target area. No fighter escort.
1945 1- 3	Nagoya Industrial & urban area.	29,000	53.5	2	9 Des. 6 Prob. 11 Dam.	Seventeen A/C over primary target. Observation and photos show excellent bombing results with heavy damage inflicted. Huge fires and large columns of smoke observed caused by our incendiary bombs. We suffered three wounded from 147 aggressive fighter attacks and flak. No fighter escort.
1- 9	Toyko Musashino A/C factory.	30,000 to 33,500	24.25	3	12 Des. 1 Prob. 3 Dam.	Photos show two bomb strikes in target area with 18 hits nearby causing widespread damage in general target area. 106 fighter attacks and flak damaged four of our A/C and wounded one man. We had 10 A/C over primary target.
1-14	Nagoya	29,500 to	44.82	2	5 Des.	One-hundred-twenty-two fighter attacks ended disastrously for the enemy. We placed

Date	Target	Altitude	Bomb Tonnage	Our A/C Lost	Enemy A/C Lost	Results:
	Mitsubishi A/C plant.	31,000			0 Prob. 12 Dam.	17 A/C over the primary target with unobserved results due to clouds. No fighter escort.
1-19	Akashi Kawasaki A/C engine plant.	26,400	40	0	0	Thirteen A/C over primary target. Strike photos show 50% of target in flames and smoke. Target (factory) covered an area of 8,000,000 square feet. No fighter attacks but one A/C damaged by flak. No fighter escort.
1-23	Nagoya (secondary target)	24,700 to 25,500	33	1	4 Des. 3 Prob. 13 Dam.	Eleven A/C over target. Radar bombing with visual correction. All bombs landed in target area with devastating results. One-hundred-twenty-eight enemy fighter attacks, wounding five crewmen and damaging three A/C. Flak damaged two others.
1-27	Tokyo Nakajima Musashino-A/C plant. Docks 2nd Tgt. plus built-up area.	25,000 to 26,500	39	5	34 Des. 7 Prob. 12 Dam.	Thirteen A/C over secondary target after fighting their way through 554 enemy fighter attacks. Fifty bomb impacts observed east of the Imperial palace with two bombs scoring near misses on heavy AA battery. Three A/C shot down before reaching target. Eight A/C damaged by flak and fighters. Nine men were wounded. No fighter escort.
2- 4	Kobe Port & Built-up urban area.	26,000	27.66	0	0 Des. 1 Prob. 10 Dam.	Ten A/C over primary target which was completely covered with clouds. However, it was ascertained that bombs hit from 500 feet to 1500 feet from AP. Eighty-four fighter attacks were repulsed with seven A/C damaged by flak and fighters. No fighter escort.
2-10	Ota Nakajima A/C plant.	27,000 to 28,300	25.50	0	4 Des. 2 Prob. 7 Dam.	Nine A/C over primary target. Damage assessment impossible due to cloud cover. Fifty-nine enemy fighter attacks wounded two men and damaged three A/C.
2-15	Nagoya Mitsubishi A/C engine plant. L.R.Tgt., any ind. city.	27,500 to 34,000	51.25	0	1 Des. 4 Prob. 9 Dam.	Six A/C on primary and eleven A/C in last resort target. Smoke from bomb impacts made damage assessment difficult. However, from the number of impacts in western half of target it is believed considerable damage was done to that portion of the target. LR results unobserved. Fifty fighter attacks damaged four of our A/C.
2-19	Tokyo Harbor facilities and urban area.	27,200 to 29,210	64.75	1	0 Des. 1 Prob. 0 Dam.	Twenty A/C over target dropping 75 bombs in populated area and 55 bombs in industrial area with excellent results. Heavy flak, damaging four A/C and 12 enemy fighter attacks. No escort.
2-25	Tokyo urban area	26,300 to 29,300	43.66	2	0	Nineteen A/C over primary target with radar bombing. 10/10 cloud coverage prevented damage assessment. One A/C damaged by flak and two lost due to collision prior to assembly point. No enemy attacks.

Date	Target	Altitude	Bomb Tonnage	Our A/C Lost	Enemy A/C Lost	Results:
3- 4	Tokyo urban area.	25,400 to 27,500	101.5	1	0	Thirty two A/C over target. Complete undercast prevented taking strike photos therefore damage assessment impossible. No fighter attacks. No escort.
3-9-10	Tokyo urban area. Incendiary mission	7,000 to 8,400	220.5	0	0	Thirty-four A/C over target on night mission. One-fourth of the city in flames destroying 15.8 square miles in urban area. Nine enemy A/C attacks wounded two men and flak damaged five A/C. No guns or ammunition carried. No fighter escort. Enemy employed automatic weapons and 125 searchlights.
3-11-12	Nagoya urban area. Incendiary mission.	5,900 to 8,000	220	0	0	Night mission with 34 A/C on target. Many fires started destroying 2.05 square miles of target area. Nineteen enemy fighter attacks damaging three A/C. Planes encountered automatic weapon fire and numerous searchlights.
3-13-14	Osaka urban area	6,000 to 8,000	232.3	0	1 Des.	Night incendiary strike with 35 A/C over primary target destroying 8.1 square miles in target area. Four enemy fighter attacks damaging one of our A/C. No escort.
3-16-17	Kobe urban area	5,800 to 7,800	340.4	0	0	Thirty-eight A/C over primary target on night incendiary strike destroying 2.86 square miles of city in target area. Enemy made eight passes. We had one casualty and two A/C battle damaged. No escorts.
3-18-19	Nagoya urban area.	5,000 to 7,300	307.36	0	0	Low altitude incendiary night attack on primary target. Thirty-eight A/C on target burning and destroying 2.95 square miles of Nagoya proper. Nineteen of the 24 enemy fighter attacks were directed against one B-29. We had two A/C battle damaged. No escort.
3-24-25	Nagoya Mitsubishi A/C engine plant.	6,400 to 8,500	209.25	1	0	Twenty-seven A/C on night radar bomb mission. Some hits and many large and small fires observed around target area but smoke, clouds and searchlights prevented complete bomb damage assessment. One enemy fighter attack and five A/C damaged by flak. No escort.
3-27	Tachiarai (Kyushu) Army airfield.	15,230 to 16,200	101	0	0	Eighty seven per cent of bombs in 29 A/C landed in target area destroying 50 enemy A/C on ground and wrecking seven huge hangars and numerous small shops. Photos show direct hits on hangars. No enemy fighter attacks with very little flak. No escort.
3-31	Tachiarai (Kyushu) machine shops.	15,500 to 17,050	116	0	0	Twenty nine A/C on target with all bombs hitting in target area. Many direct hits were observed. Smoke prevented further assessment. No enemy fighter attacks. Light flak. No escort.
4- 1- 2	Tokyo Musashino	5,830 to	231	1	1 Prob.	Night bomb attack with 25 A/C on target using delayed action fuses. No photos taken

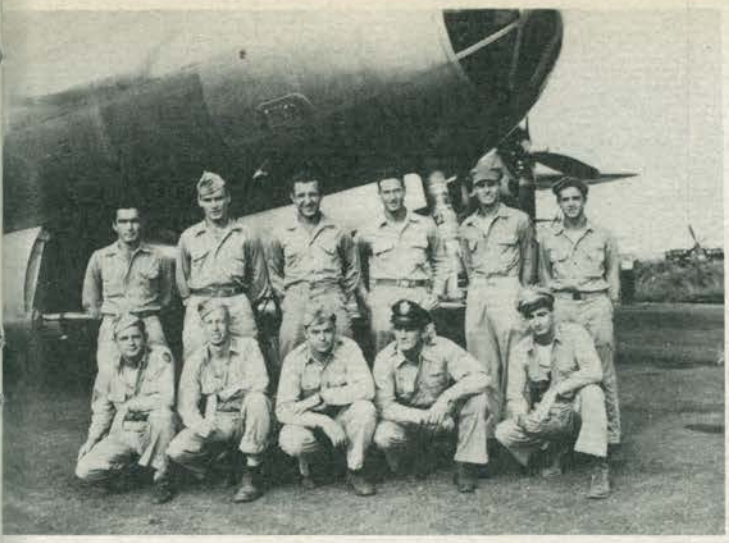
Date	Target	Alti-tude	Bomb Ton-age	Our A/C Lost	En-emy A/C Lost	Results:
	A/C engine plant.	7.530				but Bombardiers believed they got hits and near-hits on target. Enemy used automatic weapons and S/L in addition to usual flak and six fighter attacks resulting in three of our A/C being damaged. No escort.
4-3-4	Tachikawa A/C plant.	5,800 to 6,950	117.75	0	0	Seventeen A/C on primary target plus seven A/C on city of Kawasaki with an additional 58 tons of bombs. No photos taken on this night mission but many large fires were observed in both target areas. One A/C damaged by flak and two-enemy fighter attacks. No escort.
4-7	Tokyo Musashino A/C engine plant.	11,500 to 12,650	145	0	37 Des. 14 Prob. 15 Dam.	Seventy-five per cent of eastern half of target destroyed by 29 A/C. Our first escort, P-51's, helped to ward off 130 enemy fighter attacks yet we had 29 A/C damaged by flak and enemy air attacks.
4-12	Tokyo Musashino A/C engine plant.	11,850 to 14,000	114	0	2 Dam.	Ground haze prevented bomb damage assessment after 24 A/C, escorted by P-51's, dropped their bombs. Flak damaged 10 A/C and enemy fighters made 21 passes. We had eight A/C damaged in battle.
4-13-14	Tokyo Arsenal area	7,300 to 9,100	199.33	1	0	Night incendiary attack with 29 A/C over target. Extensive damage to North Tokyo with many fires visible for 150 to 200 miles. Five A/C damaged by flak and one casualty. Three enemy air attacks. No escort.
4-15-16	South Tokyo	8,300 to 9,500	153.25	0	0	Large fires observed with smoke rising to 15,000 feet. Photos show two fires covering large areas right at AP. Two of the 23 A/C over the target were battle damaged. Two enemy air attacks. No escort.
4-17	Tachiari Airfield (Kyushu)	15,000 to 15,600	43.75	0	1 Des. 6 Prob. 2 Dam.	Eleven A/C over target after evading 56 enemy fighter attacks. Approximately 300 frag bomb bursts spotted, half of which hit within boundaries of A/F. Three parked E/A destroyed. No escort. We had one casualty and three damaged A/C by enemy fighters.
4-18	Tachiari Airfield (Kyushu).	15,000 to 15,400	40	2	3 Des. 1 Prob. 3 Dam.	Daylight visual bomb mission with 10 A/C. Three-hundred-fifteen bombs (98% of bombs released) landed squarely on the target. We had 22 casualties and four A/C damaged in battle. One of the lost A/C ditched en route home. No escort.
4-21	USA Air-field (Kyushu).	14,000 to 14,500	93.5	0	0	Twenty A/C on target dropping 184 bombs in center of target with 50% on either side of the MPI. Hits bunched in hangar area inflicting considerable damage. Four enemy A/C destroyed and two damaged on ground. No enemy air attacks. No escort.
4-22	Tomitaka Airfield (Kyushu).	17,500	34	0	0	Eight A/C on target. Eighty-two per cent of bombs released striking target within 1000 feet of MPI. Strike photos show heavy dam-

Date	Target	Alti-tude	Bomb Ton-age	Our A/C Lost	En-emy A/C Lost	Results:
						age inflicted in the building area. Little oppostion. No escort.
4-24	Hitachi A/C plant, Tachikawa.	10,000 to 11,000	52	0	3 Des. 2 Prob. 3 Dam.	Eleven A/C over target fighting off 51 enemy fighter attacks. We dropped 208 bombs within 1500 feet of AP. Photos show direct hits on many buildings. Fifty-four per cent of bombs dropped were direct hits. Nine A/C were damaged by flak and E/A. Two men were wounded. No escort.
4-26	USA Airfield (Kyushu).	15,500 to 26,500	76.5	0	2 Des.	Two Betty's destroyed on ground by an alert LG in one of our A/C from 7000 feet. Eighteen A/C over target bombing by radar. Undercast on target prevented damage assessment and photos could not be taken. No fighters, no flak, no escort.
4-27	Miyazaki Airfield (Kyushu).	11,950 to 12,100	42.5	0	0	Ten A/C on target with all bombs landing in vital areas. Bombs hit AP and 'walked' across field leaving installations and runways inoperative. We had two A/C damaged by flak. No fighters, no escort.
4-29	Miyazaki Airfield (Kyushu).	15,000 to 15,500	109.25	0	1 Des.	Our Super Dumbo chases and destroys a Paul at 500 feet. Nineteen A/C dropped 217 bombs within 500 feet of center of target and 116 bombs within 1000 feet radius of AP. No enemy attacks and no losses. Meager flak.
4-30	Hamamatsu urban area	18,600 to 19,000	51.75	0	1 Dam.	Nine A/C over target on radar bombing mission. Strike photos show numerous bomb hits just south of Marshalling Yards located in center of Hamamatsu. We repulsed two enemy air attacks and had one A/C damaged by Flak. No escort.
5- 5	Hiro Naval A/C plant.	18,900 to 23,600	97	1	1 Des. 1 Dam.	All bombs of the 25 A/C over the target hit in target area with excellent results observed tho' heavy smoke made complete damage assessment impossible. Eleven aggressive enemy fighter attacks plus Flak damaged five of our A/C. No escort.
5-10	Tokuyama Naval Fueling Station.	20,400 to 21,080	124.5	0	0	Huge, dense, black clouds of smoke arising to 18,000 feet over the target was the result of 28 A/C hitting the bullseye. We had six A/C damaged by Flak. No escort.
5-11	Kawanishi A/C plant.	16,800 to 17,300	44.75	0	3 Des. 1 Prob. 1 Dam.	Cloud coverage, 10/10, forced our seven A/C to bomb target by radar with unobserved results. Twenty-eight enemy air attacks and Flak damaged five of our A/C resulting in two casualties. No escort.
5-14	Nagoya	16,400 to 18,500	186.5	1	3 Des. 1 Dam.	Incendiary raid with 36 A/C on the target. Bombs plotted within a few hundred feet of AP. Tremendous fires and large volume of smoke observed in target area. Our A/C experienced 12 enemy air attacks and Flak damaged three of our planes. No escort.

Date	Target	Altitude	Bomb Tonage	Our A/C Lost	Enemy A/C Lost	Results:
5-16-17	South Nagoya	9,240 to 18,200	319	0	0	Night incendiary strike with 35 A/C on the target bombing by radar. No strike photos available but many large fires were observed in vital target area. Approximately 92 searchlights were encountered in the vicinity of Nagoya. No escort.
5-19	Hamamatsu	13,970 to 24,900	126.5	0	0	Twenty-two A/C bombed target by radar. Results unobserved. Photos record only clouds. P-51 escort lasted for 10 minutes due to weather.
5-23-24	South Tokyo	11,300 to 11,900	276.4	0	0	No Photos taken but crews on 35 A/C over target observed many large fires and heavy smoke in target area. Seven fighter attacks with six A/C battle damaged. Many S/L and automatic weapons fire encountered. No escort.
5-25-26	Palace area Tokyo	10,400 to 11,900	232.75	1	0	Night incendiary raid with 30 A/C on target. Bombs saturated target area. Glow from fires observed 230 miles from Tokyo. Strike photos show many large fires converging into one huge conflagration. Many S/L and automatic weapons. No fighter attacks. No escort.
5-29	Yokohama urban area.	18,500 to 20,400	194.4	0	1 Dam.	Strike photos show many fires and large volume of smoke. Damage assessment gives 6.9 square miles target destroyed. Twelve of the 34 A/C over the target received battle damage from flak and five fighter attacks. No escort.
6-1	Osaka urban area.	19,300 to 19,800	192.65	2	1 Des. 2 Dam.	Thirty-two A/C on target destroying 3.43 square miles in vital area with smoke arising to 17,000 feet from dock area. Twenty-two fighter attacks and flak resulted in 16 casualties and one damaged A/C. No escort.
6-5	Kobe urban area.	14,500 to 16,500	199.4	0	7 Des. 5 Prob. 4 Dam.	Hundreds of fires started destroying 4.3 square miles of city. Thirty-one A/C over the target received 33 fighter attacks and heavy flak resulting in battle damage to 22 of our A/C. No escort.
6-7	Osaka urban area.	20,400 to 21,980	154.35	0	0	P-51's escorted 24 A/C over target on radar run. 10/10 cloud coverage but photos taken later show 3.4 square miles target area destroyed. No attacks.
6-10	Hitachi Engineering Works.	19,600 to 20,100	203	0	0	All bombs hit in the target which was borne out by strike photos showing an unusually good bomb pattern. Over 50% destruction estimated. P-51's escorted 29 A/C on this mission. Two half-hearted fighter attacks.
6-15	Osaka-Amagasaki	16,300 to 24,500	282.5	0	0	Unusually rough weather forced 36 A/C to bomb by radar through 10/10 cloud coverage, laying waste to 2.71 square miles in target area. No fighter attacks and very little flak. No escort.

Date	Target	Altitude	Bomb Tonnage	Our A/C Lost	Enemy A/C Lost	Results:
6-17-18	Hamamatsu	8,500 to 9,000	215.7	0	0	Smoke rose to 12,000 feet when 35 A/C destroyed 1.28 square mile in target area on radar run. No fighter attacks and nil flak. No escort.
6-19-20	Fukuoka	9,400 to 10,000	211.7	0	0	Night incendiary strike with late planes over the target reporting a general conflagration in the target area. Our 34 A/C bombing received considerable automatic weapons fire and dodged several dozen S/L in target area. We had one A/C damaged by flak. No escort.
6-22	Kure Naval Arsenal	18,450 to 26,250	126.75	0	0	Strike photos show beautiful concentration of bombs on target destroying 70% of all installations. Sixteen of the 24 A/C over the target were damaged by flak. No escort.
6-26	Osaka Arsenal	17,400 to 29,060	161	0	0	Radar bomb run with 24 A/C over the target with many bombs hitting to left of MPI and 'walking' along that side of target. Large fires and explosions observed in S.W. portion of target. No fighter attacks but two A/C damaged by flak. No escort.
6-28-29	Sasebo	10,600 to 11,200	308.35	0	0	Large concentrated fires glowing through heavy undercast with smoke arising to 15,000 feet observed but complete damage assessment impossible. Two of the 41 A/C over the target were damaged by flak. No fighter attacks. No escort.
7-1-2	Kumamoto	10,650 to 11,450	246.8	1	0	Heavy undercast at the target but a large glow was observed. Last plane over target observed glow from lands end. Six explosions were observed in the target area. Thirty-eight A/C bombed the target. No opposition. No escort.
7-3-4	Kochi	10,830 to 11,350	239	1	0	A large fire burning in the city from dock area past MPI. Smoke up to 18,000 feet was more turbulent than any encountered since the first Tokyo mission. A general conflagration seemed to be consuming the entire city. Thirty A/C on the target. Nil opposition. Reason unknown for missing A/C. Five casualties due to air turbulence. No escort.
7-6-7	Akashi	7,580 to 7,900	239	0	0	Overcast (9/10) at target for our 30 A/C but strike photos show many large fires in target area. No fighter attacks. Meager flak. No escort.
7-9-10	Sakai	11,100 to 11,200	182.5	0	0	Photos show a general conflagration in center of city with strings of fires burning fiercely both North and South of center of city. Five of the 29 A/C over the target were damaged by flak. Four enemy fighters made passes. Effective searchlights. No escort.
7-12-13	Ichinomiya	10,300 to 11,000	206.3	0	0	Solid undercast prevented complete bomb damage assessment but the glow from many fires was observed by the crews of

Date	Target	Altitude	Bomb Tonage	Our A/C Lost	Enemy A/C Lost	Results:
						the 33 A/C over the target. No opposition. No escort.
7-16-17	Oita urban area.	10,900 to 11,250	185.8	0	0	Well concentrated fires observed in center of built-up area and scattered fires on outskirts of city. Smoke to 10,000 feet with glow from fires observed 120 miles from target on return trip. .55 square mile target area destroyed. 30 A/C on target. No opposition. No escort.
7-19-20	Hitachi urban area.	12,920 to 13,490	212.58	1	0	Results were mostly unobserved. Some of the last crews over the target could see large fires through the undercast and a column of smoke built up to 8,000 feet. No opposition but we suffered seven casualties when one A/C ditched shortly after take-off. We had 30 A/C on target. No escort.
7-23-24	Kuwana urban area.	19,900 to 23,000	226	0	0	Complete undercast forced our 35 A/C to bomb by radar with unobserved results. We had three men wounded and 18 A/C damaged by flak. No escort.
7-26-27	Matsuyama	11,650 to 12,350	227	0	0	General conflagration centered in MPI and covering the entire city. Photos show 1.22 square mile city destroyed. Two fighter attacks damaging one A/C. We had 32 A/C on target. No escort.
7-28-29	Ichinomiya	14,900 to 15,400	183.8	0	0	Smoke to 15,000 feet. Seventy-five per cent, (.96 square mile), of built-up area destroyed. One of our 26 A/C on the target was damaged by flak. Two enemy fighters made passes. No escort.
8-1-2	Toyama	12,900 to 13,200	389.3	0	0	Many fires photographed with bomb damage assessment set at 1.87 square mile (99.5%) of built-up area destroyed. Forty-four A/C bombed this target. Only one enemy fighter attacks. Meager flak. No escort.
8-5-6	Nishinomiya	15,370 to 15,410	261	0	0	Three good concentrations of fire at each of the three AP's with smoke arising to 25,000 feet. Thirty-three A/C on the target with flak damaging one A/C. Two enemy fighters made passes. No escort.
8-8	Yawata urban area.	22,900 to 23,800	183.25	0	1 Dam.	P-47's escorted 30 A/C over target yet enemy fighters made six passes. Bomb damage assessment shows 21% (1.22 sq. mi.) of built-up area destroyed. Smoke rose to 25,000 feet. We had five damaged by phosphorus bombs and flak.
8-14	Osaka Army arsenal	16,000 to 24,500	154.5	0	0	Strike photos show bombs well concentrated in target area destroying greater portion of Arsenal installations. Thirty-four A/C on target with one damaged by flak. No escort.
8-14-15	Isesaki urban area.	15,800	48	0	0	Results unobserved due to 10/10 cloud cover but some crews report seeing large glow through cloud cover. No opposition. No escort.



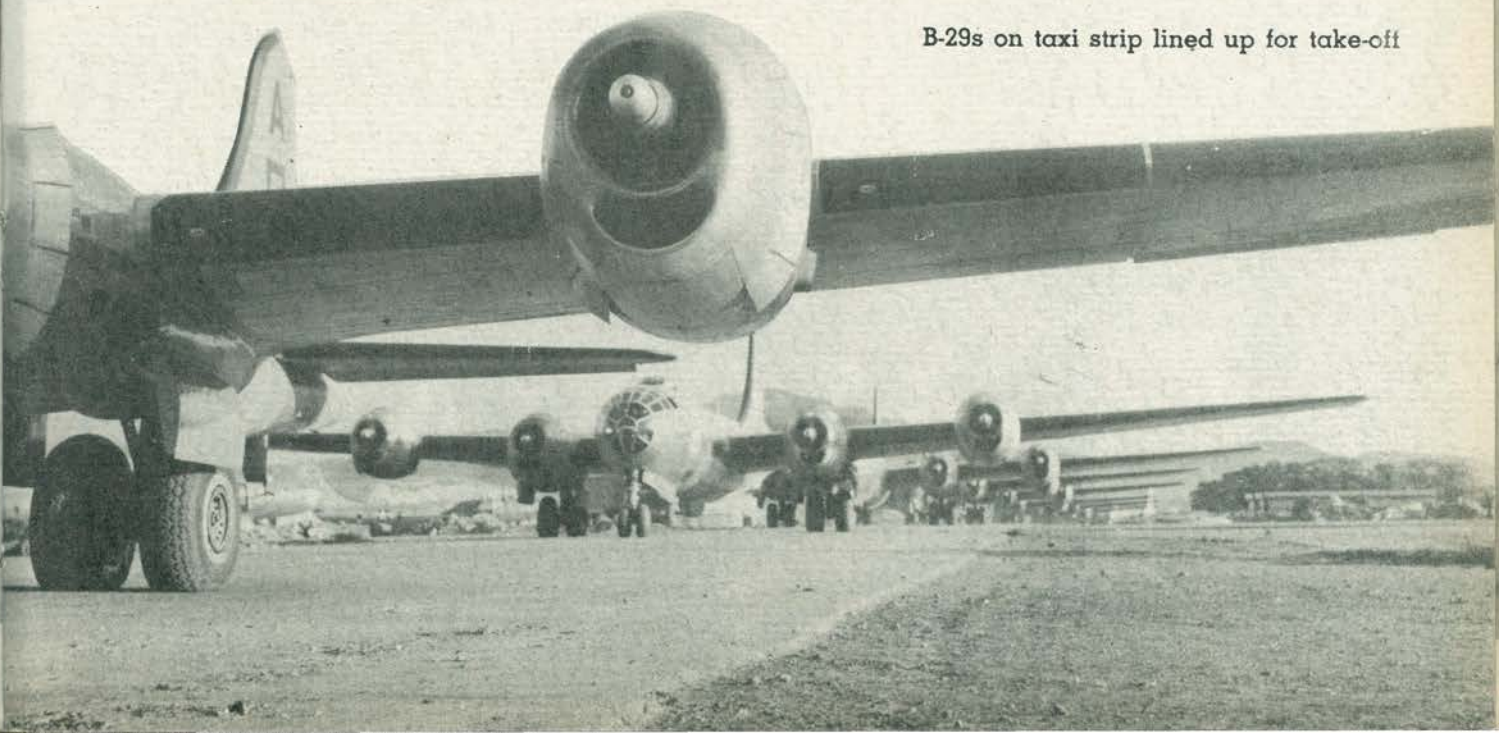
Lt. Hornor's crew

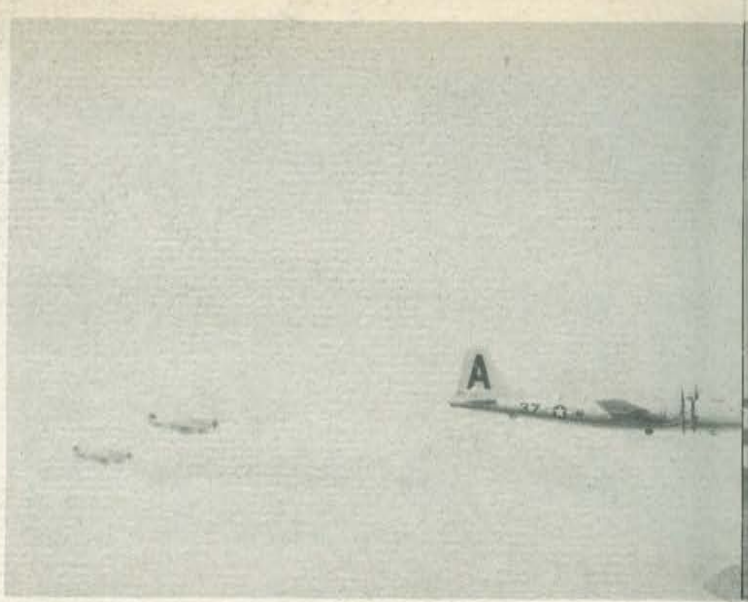
Battle damage

Lt. Austin's crew

A battle casualty

B-29s on taxi strip lined up for take-off

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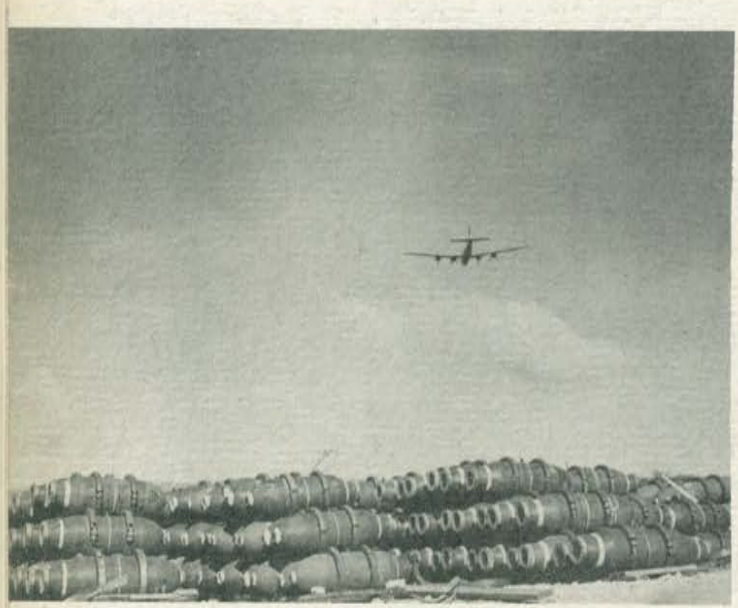

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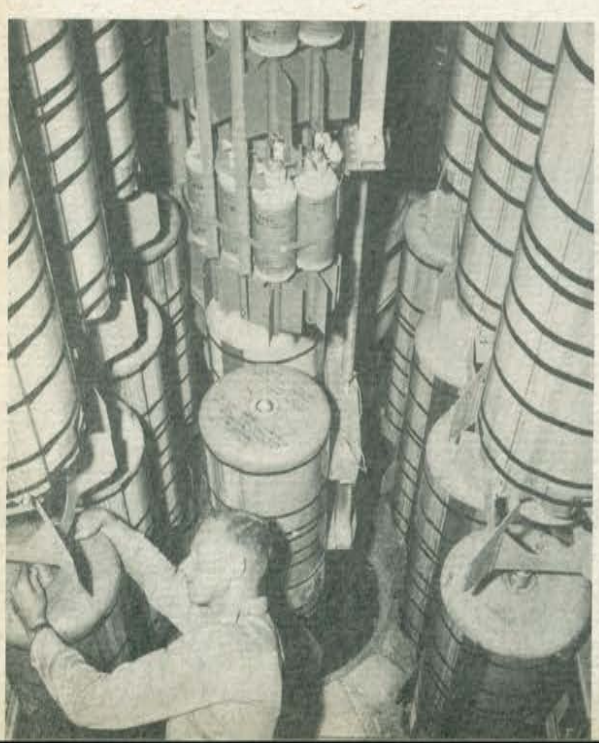

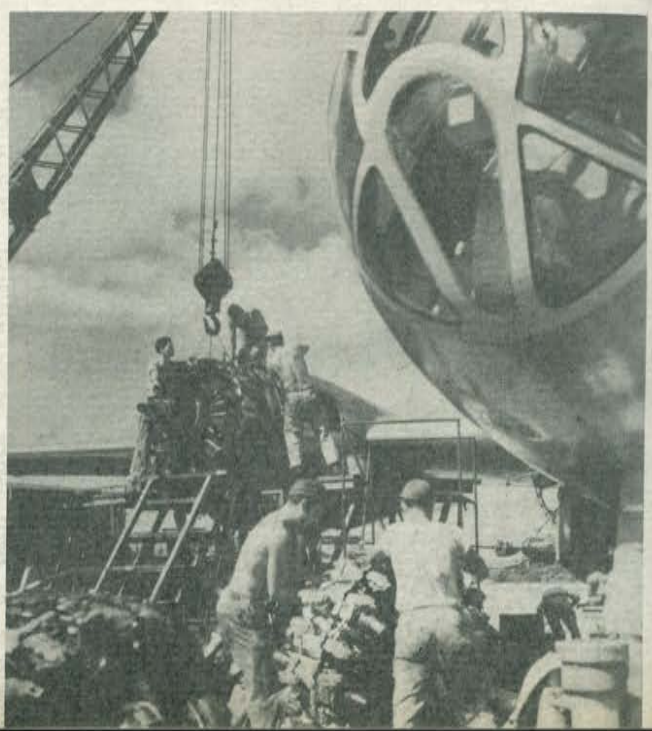

Shady Lady
JUMBO
KING OF THE SKOW
Miss BEHAVIN
AMERICAN MAID
WFGU
CAPT(FOREVER) J.C. ARNOLD
Texas Doll
SKY-SCRAPPER
Jokers Wild
"SWEAT'ER OUT"
HUMP'S HONEY
WHEEL N' DEAL

TERRIBLE TERRY
The JUMPIN STUD
STRIPPED
FOR ACTION

Haley's Comet
TEASER
BAD
BREW
"RED HOT RIDER"
DAUNTLESS
DOTTY
A
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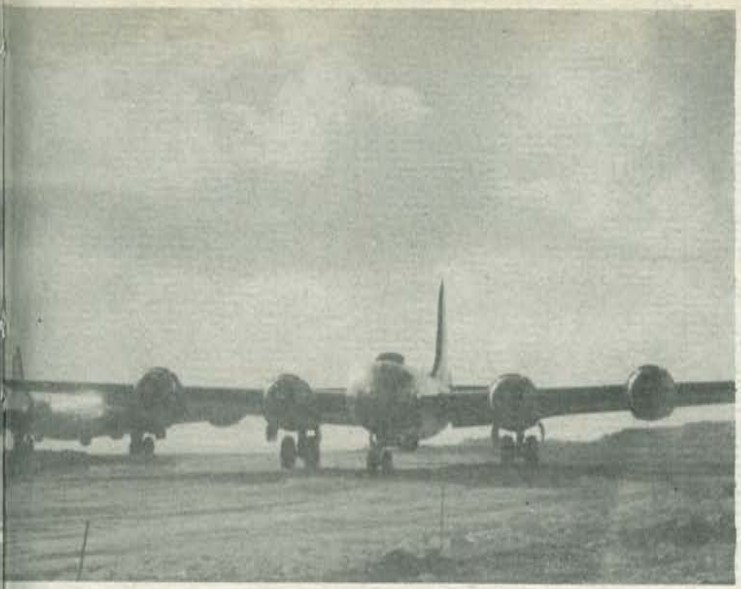
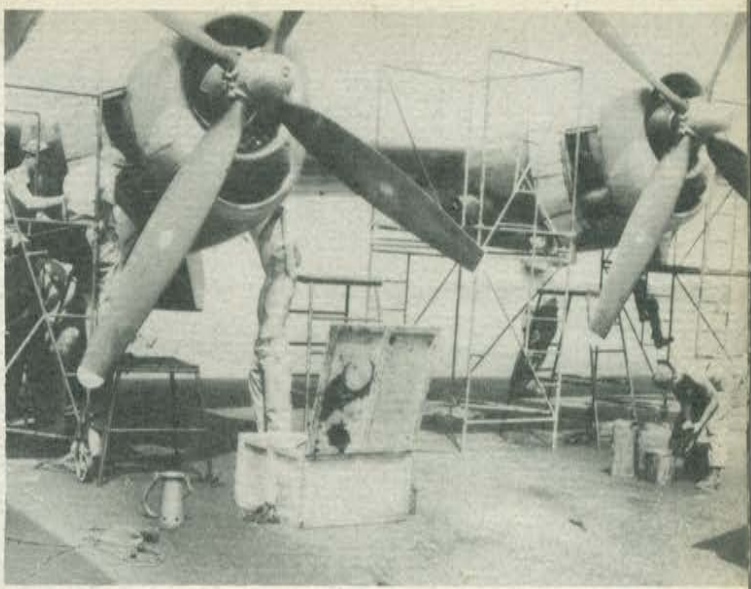
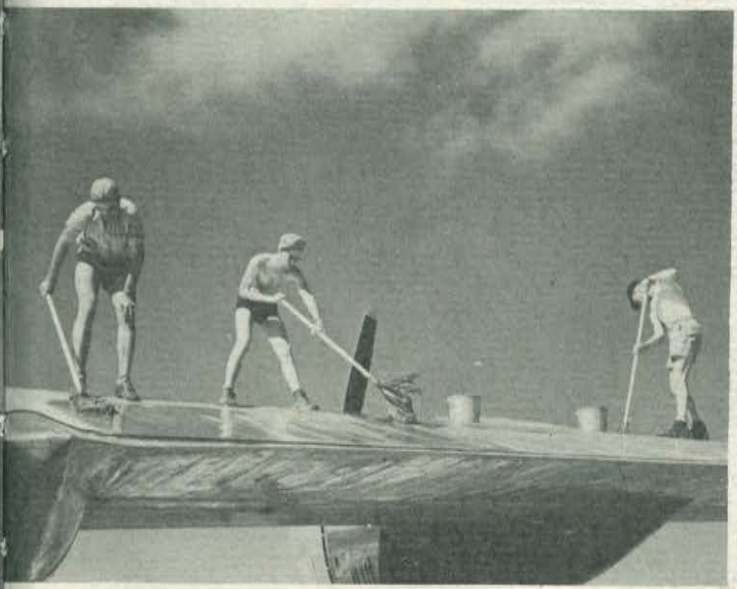
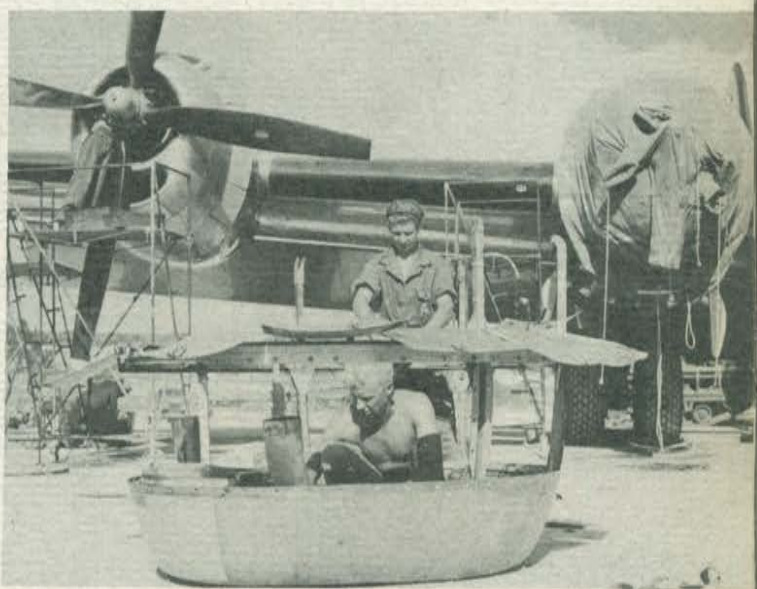
3463

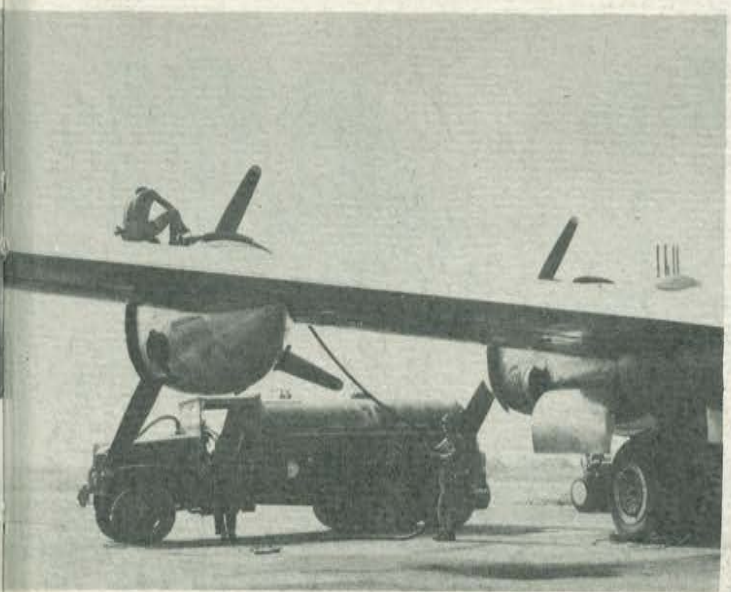
THUNDERHEAD
STAR DUSTER
CORAL QUEEN
Marianna Ram
LUCKY IRISH
THE DRAGON LADY











APO 237

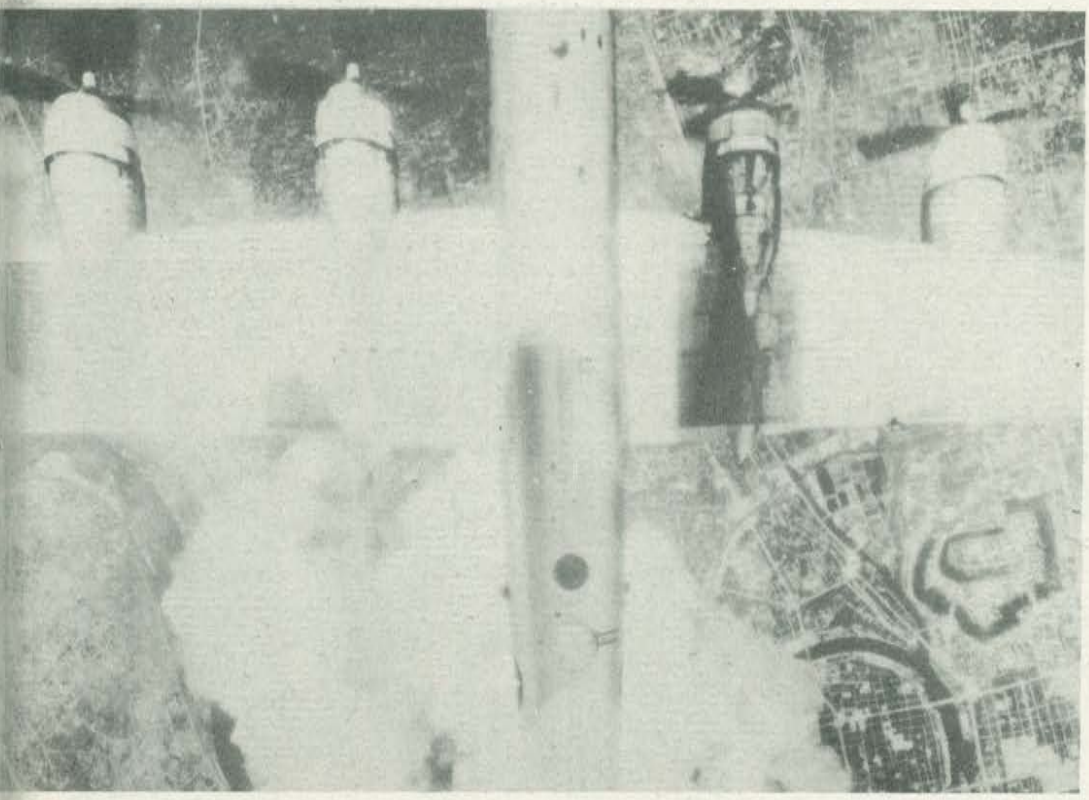
Japanese children lined up for school with their teacher talking with them. The children pay strict attention and are good students. They are instructed in Japanese and in English. Saipan.

Jap Shinto Temple in the heart of ruined Garapan town

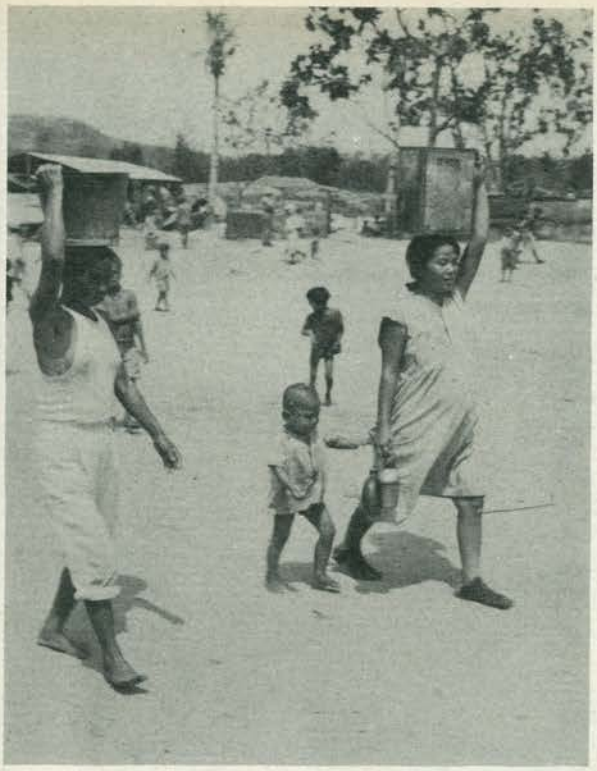
Tanapag Harbor

Loading Incendiary Bombs

Isley Field, Saipan



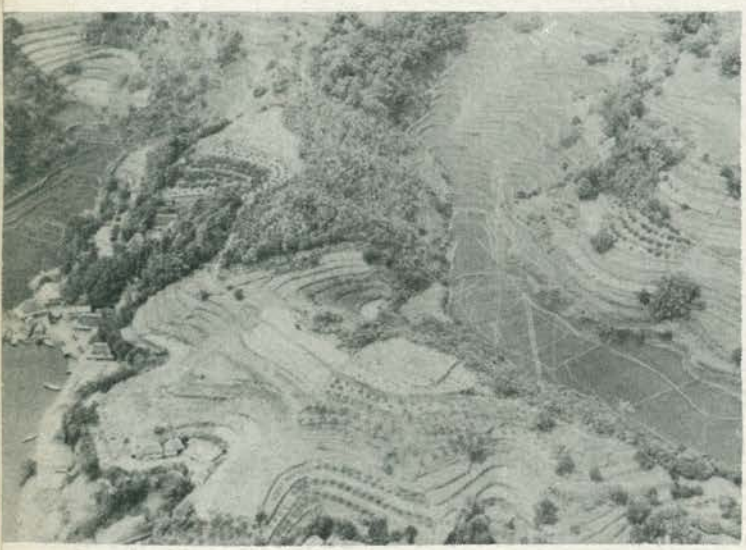
1400 miles from home and see Eng. No. 3

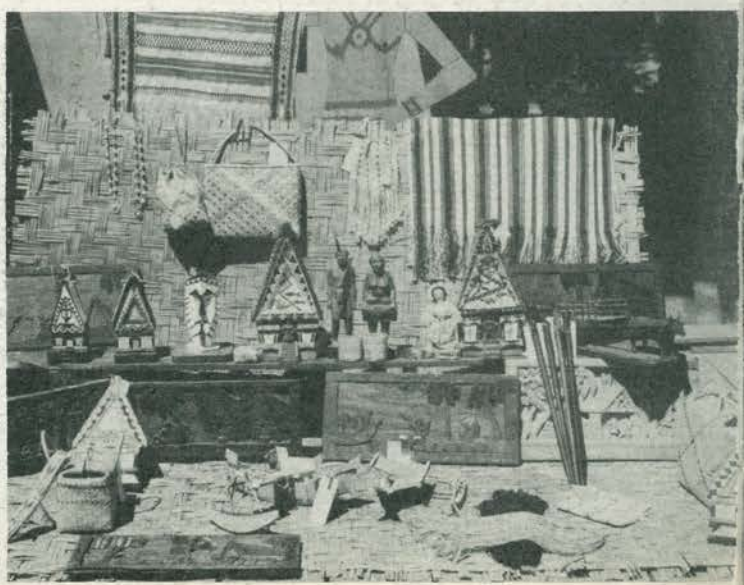


Civilian internees on Saipan, Island. Shot shows two natives carrying pails of water on their heads.

The civilian Japanese and Chamorro farmers are rebuilding the land of Saipan, aided by "Civil Affairs." The produce runs along the line of any truck farm. Each farmer takes his products to a distribution center where each section draws its ration and exchanges produce with other sections. Shown here is a general view of the Farm Center.

All the native islanders of Saipan, banded together into one organization and have set up the Native Hobby Shop. The products go to the island's PX's where they are sold for a nominal price. All proceeds go to the Co-op overseer who pays each one a share and puts the rest in a material pool. Interior of weaving room is shown here.





Friendly natives of Charan Kanoa, Saipan Island, shown receiving rations.

Maj. Gen. Curtis E. Le May, CG, 20th AAF

Brig. Gen. Emmett O'Donnell, CG, 73rd Wing

PARODY ON "TAKE IT EASY"

Stand in line, stand in line,
What do you do just when the sun
Peeks out in the sky,
Stand in line, stand in line,
When you're hungry, want some chow
On this you can rely,
Stand in line, stand in line.
Then the P.A. calls and if you really want your mail,
Stand in line, stand in line,
I can see no stop to this so I will end my tale,
Here's my card, here's my card, punch number nine,
Here's my card, here's my card, hope there's still time.

S/Sgt. John J. Ciezarek
869th Sqdn. 16140803

FAR ABOVE KYUSHU'S WATERS

Tune: Cornell's "Far Above Cayuga Waters"

I

Far above Kyushu's waters,
Winging to the sun,
Soared a mighty force of warriors,
Fearing no one's guns.

Chorus: Stand, ye humble, sing their praises,
Wish them God speed home,
We will never be forgetful
Of the job they've done.

II

Through the years our Air Force thundered,
Terrorizing foes,
Far above their little brothers,
Superforts reposed.

Chorus: Strong and graceful, deathly beauty,
Symbol of our might,
May their days be long and fruitful,
For their crews, "Long life."

Cpl. Jack Cohen, 6997908
871st Bomb Sqdn.

PROPAGANDA LEAFLETS DROPPED OVER JAPAN

I WANTED WINGS!

(Chorus)
I wanted wings 'til I got the goddam things
Now, I don't want 'em any more!

(1st Verse)
First they taught me how to fly, then they sent me here to die
I've had a belly full of war!
You can save those Zeroes for your goddam heroes
And Distinguished Flying Crosses, do not compensate for losses, Buster!

(Chours) Repeat

(2nd Verse)
Air combat's no romance 'tho it makes me wet my pants
I'm not a flier I have learned.
You can save those Mitsu "bitches" for some other sons of "bitches"
Oh I'd rather have a woman, than be shot down in a Grumman, Buster!

(Chours) Repeat

(3rd Verse)
I'm too young to die in a damned old PBY
That's for the eager, not for me!
I don't trust to luck to be picked up by a Duck
After I've crashed into the sea.
Oh I'd rather be a bell-hop, than a flier on a flat-top
With my hands around a bottle, not around a goddam throttle, Buster!

(Chours) Repeat

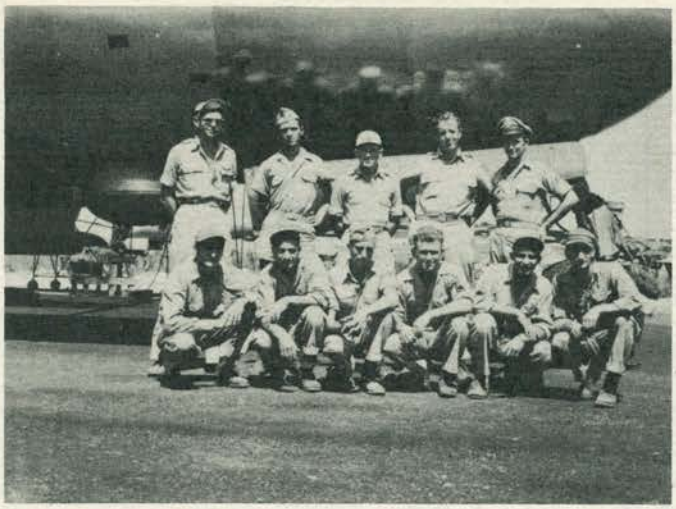
(4th Verse)
I don't want a tour, over Berlin or the Ruhr
Flak always makes me part my lunch.
I get no Hey-Hey, when they holler Bombs Away!
I'd rather be home with the bunch.
Now here's one thing you can't laugh off
And that's if they shoot your ass off.
Oh, I'd rather go home Buster, with my ass, than with a cluster, Buster!

(Chours) Repeat

To the tune of "MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS

Meet me over Iwo Jima, we've no gas to spare.
Don't tell me the planes are landing any place but there.
We can't get back to Saipan, cause Wg. screwed up the
flight plan.
Meet me over Iwo Jima,
We will soon be there.

Meet me over 357, we will soon be there
Don't tell me the bombs are landing any place but there.
The sky is full of Zeroes and Kamikaze heroes.
Ninetten crews have gone to heaven
We will soon be there.



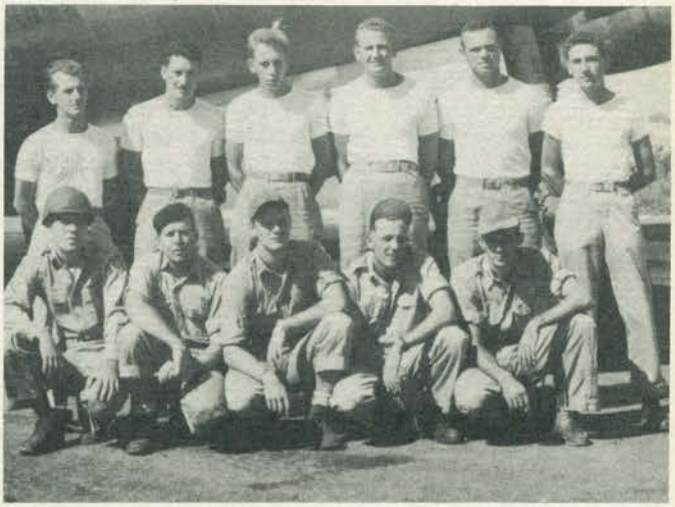
Lt. Conway's crew

Capt. Peterson's crew

Lt. Crowell's crew

Major Fowler's crew

Lt. Crowder's crew



Capt. Morgan's crew

IF IT WERE U. S.

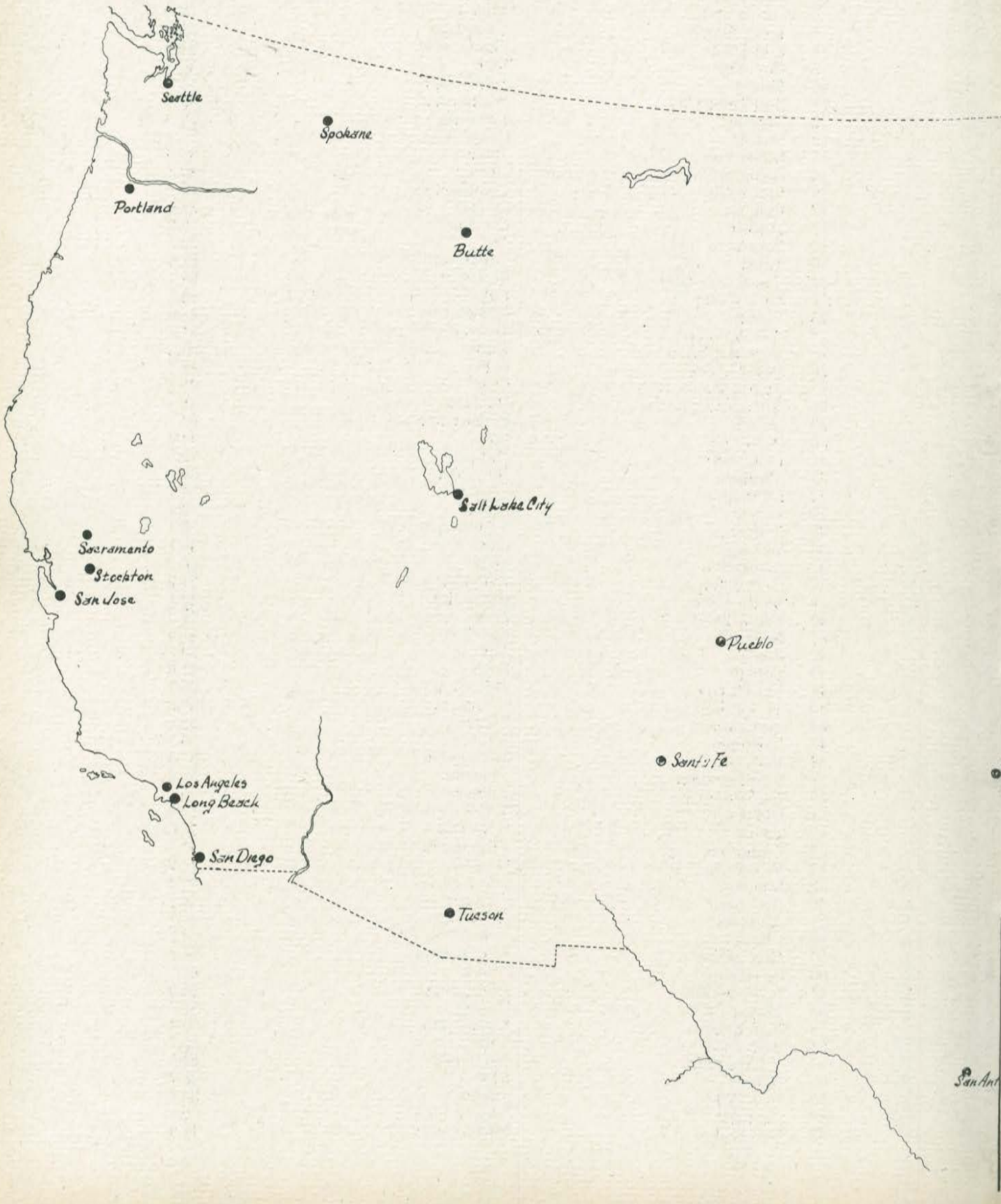
If the sixty-nine U. S. cities at the right had been battered by Jap bombers free to strike any time and anywhere at will in this country, you can vividly imagine the frightful impact it would have had upon our morale and war potential. Yet this is precisely what the B-29s did to Japan. And because of the very constricted nature of that country—55 per cent of our population squeezed into a land only four per cent our size (approximately the same area as Montana)—the effects were infinitely more disastrous than they would have been in our case.

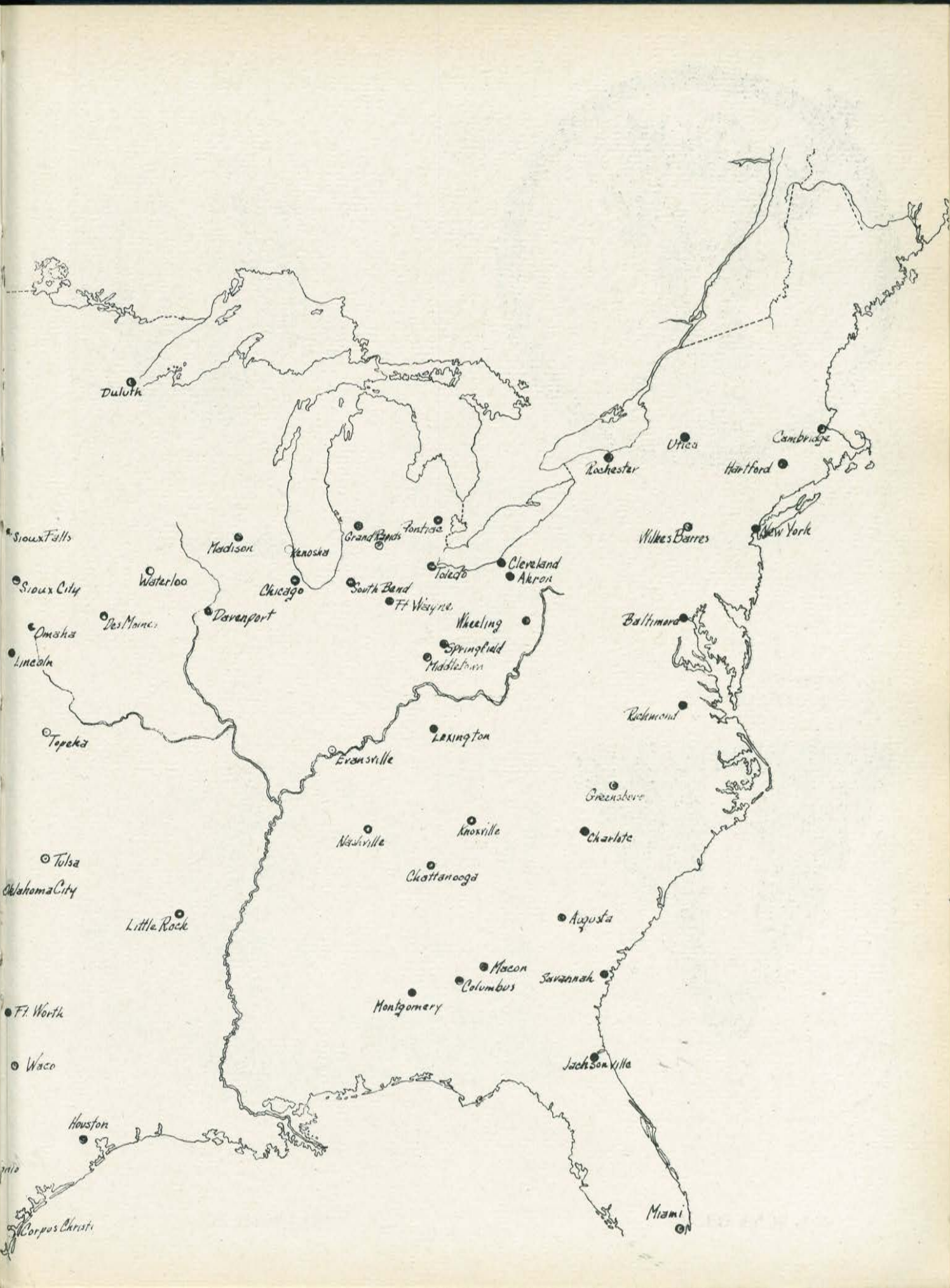
The comparison here is made on a basis of 1940 census figures. In each case a U.S. city is paired with a Japanese city of approximately the same population. The percentages of Japanese cities destroyed or badly damaged are the estimates of our intelligence analysts. They show only the results of Twentieth Air Force incendiary and high explosive attacks on the built-up urban areas of Japan, excluding results of one-plane B-29 strikes, Navy, Fifth, and Seventh Air Force attacks.

The U.S. cities were chosen to give a broad representation throughout the nation. No attempt was made to match cities in terms of their industrial importance. Naturally, if the Japs had been able to bomb the heart of our war industry, they would have included among their targets such places as Detroit, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

Tokyo radio on 23 August announced a list of 42 cities which had suffered over 50 per cent loss of buildings by fire to air attacks. The broadcast named 15 cities, including Osaka and Nagoya, in which, according to our estimates, less than 50 per cent was destroyed. Of the 46 largest Jap cities, 36 were hit by B-29 fire bombing.

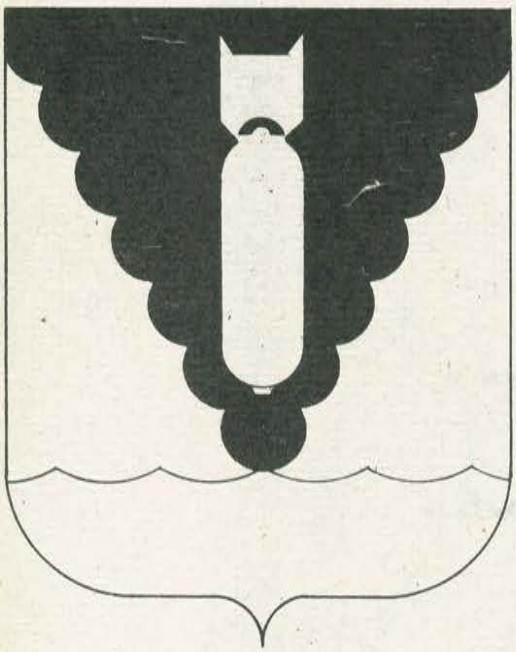
No.	AMERICAN CITY	JAPANESE CITY	PER CENT DESTROYED
1	Seattle	Hiroshima	41.8
2	Portland	Kawasaki	35.2
3	Sacramento	Kochi	52.2
4	Stockton	Imabari	63.9
5	San Jose	Shimizu	42.1
6	Los Angeles	Nagoya	40
7	Long Beach	Okayama	68.9
8	San Diego	Shimonoseki	37.6
9	Spokane	Moji	23.3
10	Butte	Tokuyama	48.3
11	Salt Lake City	Wakayama	50
12	Tucson	Kuwana	75
13	Pueblo	Uwajima	53.2
14	Sante Fe	Omura	33.1
15	Sioux Falls	Isezaki	56.7
16	Sioux City	Utsunomiya	43.7
17	Omaha	Sendai	21.9
18	Lincoln	Okazaki	32.2
19	Topeka	Tsu	69.3
20	Tulsa	Toyohashi	67.9
21	Oklahoma City	Shizuoka	66.1
22	Fort Worth	Sakai	48.2
23	Waco	Numazu	42.3
24	San Antonio	Yawata	21.2
25	Corpus Christi	Ogaki	39.5
26	Des Moines	Gifu	69.6
27	Saint Joseph	Oita	28.2
28	Galveston	Hachioji	65
29	Duluth	Matsuyama	64
30	Waterloo	Saga	44.2
31	Little Rock	Hitacki	72
32	Madison	Nagaoka	64.9
33	Davenport	Miyazaki	26.1
34	Peoria	Himeji	49.4
35	Kenosha	Kumabaya	55.1
36	Chicago	Osaka	35.1
37	Evansville	Fukui	86
38	Grand Rapids	Kumamoto	31.2
39	Battle Creek	Hiratsuka	48.4
40	South Bend	Kofu	78.6
41	Nashville	Sasebo	41.4
42	Pontiac	Mito	68.9
43	Toledo	Kure	41.9
44	Ft. Wayne	Tokushima	85.2
45	Springfield	Ichinomiya	56.3
46	Middletown	Tsuruga	65.1
47	Lexington	Akashi	50.2
48	Knoxville	Takamatsu	67.5
49	Chattanooga	Toyama	95.6
50	Montgomery	Aomori	30
51	Cleveland	Yokohama	57.6
52	Akron	Nagasake	35.6
53	Columbus	Ujiyamada	41.3
54	Wheeling	Choshi	44.2
55	Macon	Fukuyama	80.9
56	Rochester	Fukuoka	24.1
57	Augusta	Nobeoka	25.2
58	Charlotte	Yokkaichi	33.6
59	Greensboro	Miyakonojo	26.5
60	Savannah	Chiba	41
61	Jacksonville	Amagasaki	18.9
62	Miami	Omuta	35.9
63	Richmond	Kagoshima	63.4
64	Baltimore	Kobe	55.7
65	Wilkes-Barre	Maebashi	64.2
66	Utica	Ube	20.7
67	New York	Tokyo	39.9
68	Hartford	Hamamatsu	60.3
69	Cambridge	Nishinomiya	11.9


Seattle
Spokane
Portland
Butte
Salt Lake City
Sacramento
Stockton
San Jose
Pueblo
Santa Fe
Los Angeles
Long Beach
San Diego
Tucson


Duluth
Sioux Falls
Madison
Kenosha
Grand Rapids
Pontiac
Waterloo
Sioux City
Chicago
South Band
Ft Wayne
Toledo
Cleveland
Akron
Davenport
Des Moines
Omaha
Lincoln
Wheeling
Springfield
Middletown
Topeka
Evansville
Lexington
Rochester
Utica
Cambridge
Hartford
Wilkes Barres
New York
Baltimore
Richmond
Greensboro
Knoxville
Nashville
Charlotte
Chattanooga
Tulsa
Oklahoma City
Little Rock
Augusta
Macon
Columbus
Savannah
Montgomery
Ft. Worth
Waco
Jacksonville
Houston
Corpus Christi
Miami

870th BOMB SQ.

869th BOMB SQ.

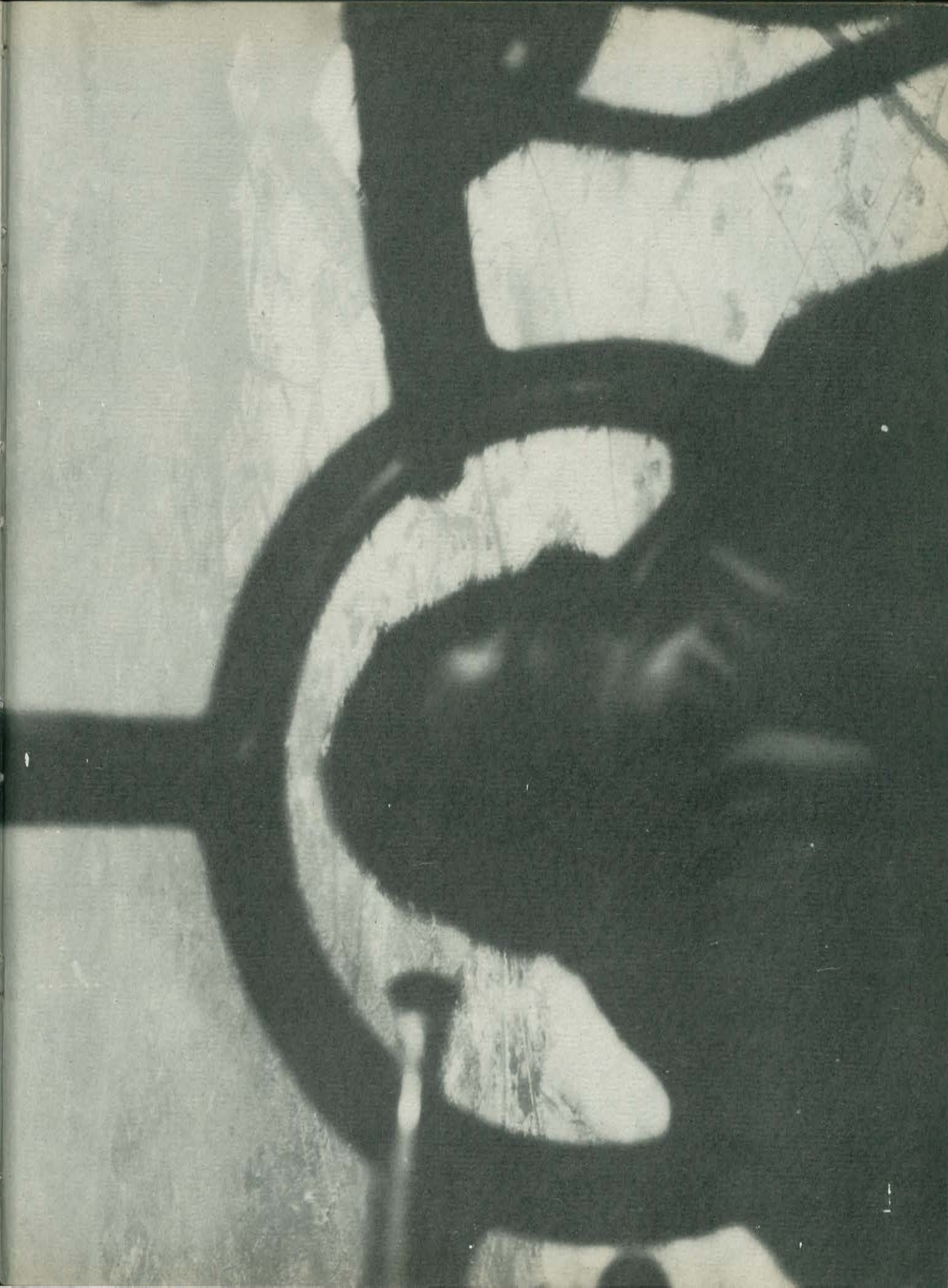


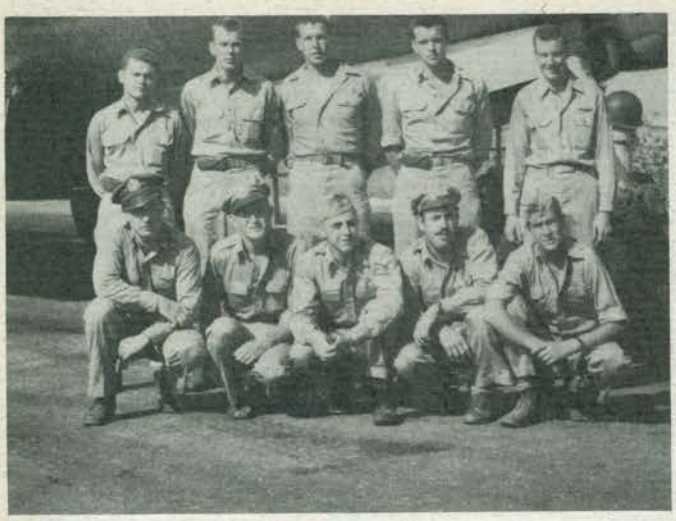
497th BOMB GROUP

871st BOMB SQ.

FIRST ATOM BOMB, HIROSHIMA
Aug. 6, 1946

3431





Capt. Geyer's crew

Lt. Shaffrath's crew

Lt. Anderson's crew

Lt. Gray's crew

Capt. Walker's crew

Col. Davis' crew

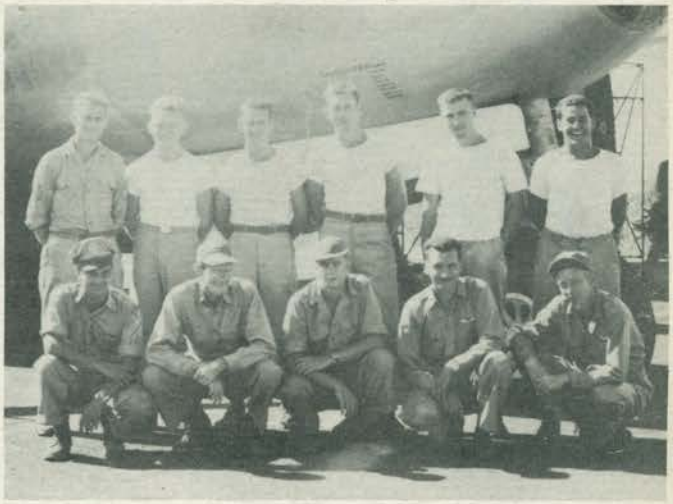
Bombs for 357
1,000'

Sugar Mill, Charan Kanoa, Saipan

Capt. Price's crew

Major Trickey's crew

Major Ball's crew



Capt. Lampley's crew

Capt. Lawson's crew

Lt. Walling's crew

Lt. Simond's crew

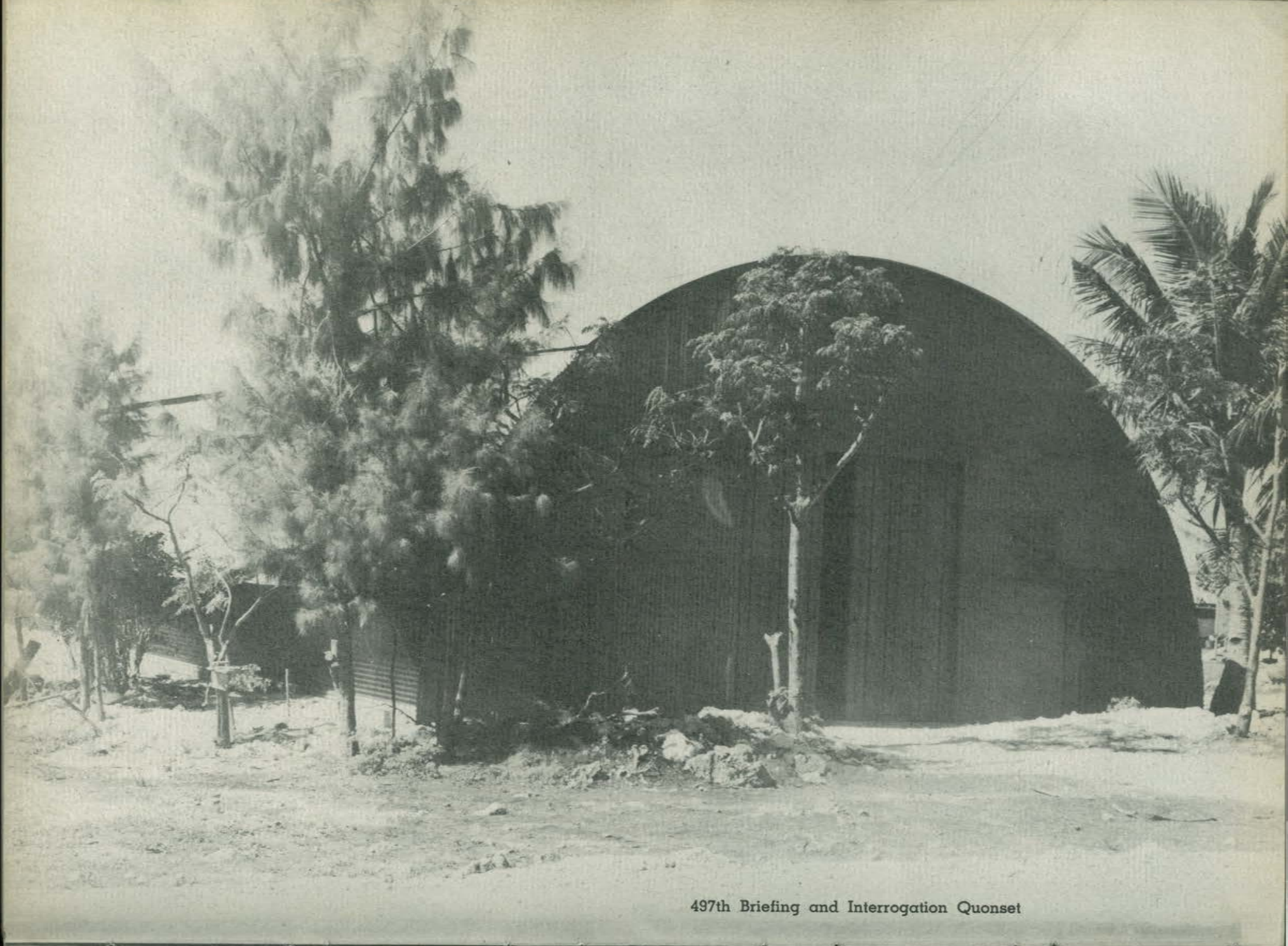
Lt. Francis' crew

Lt. Tribbett's crew

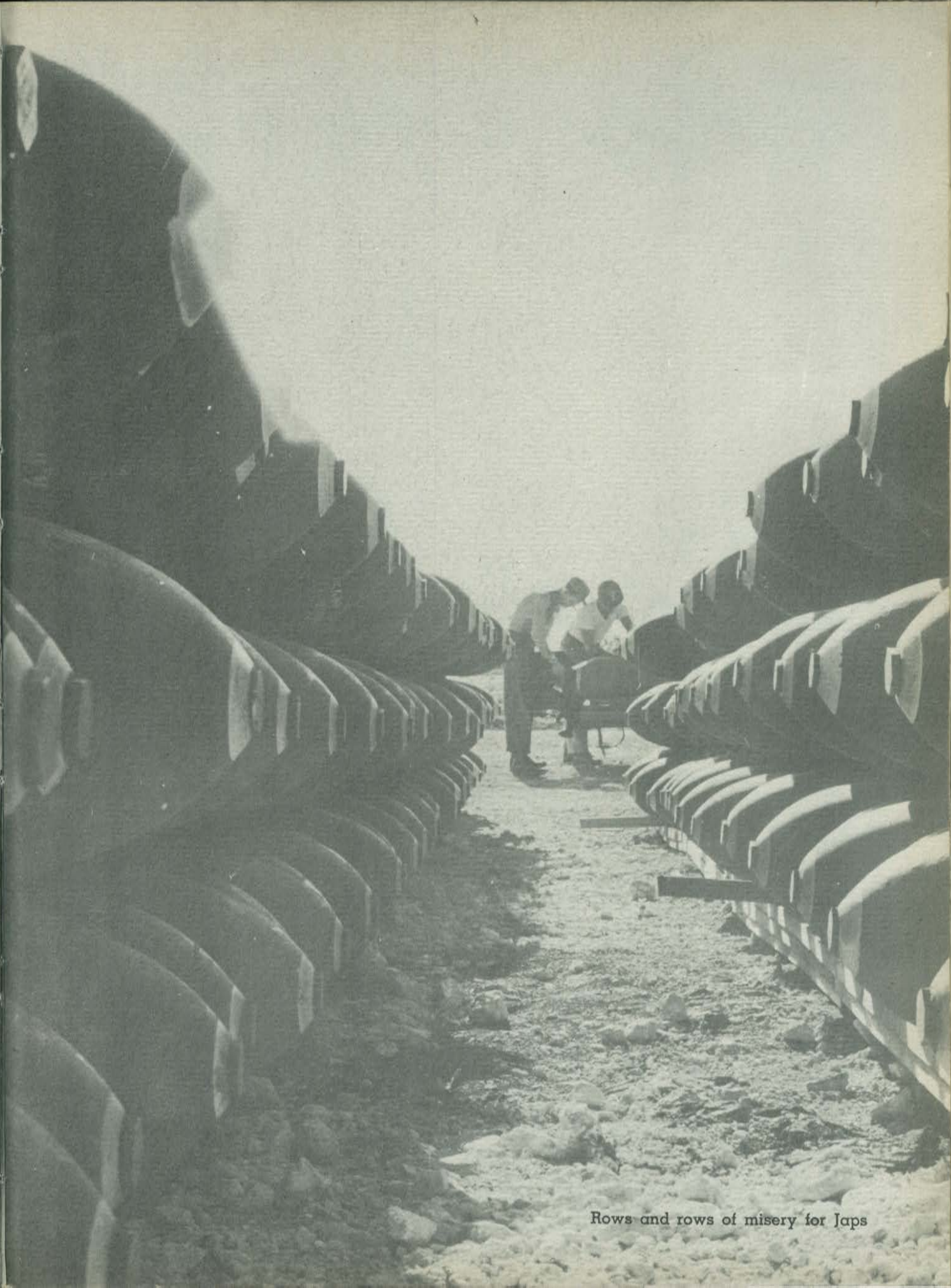
Lt. Buckheit's crew

Lt. Westervelt's crew

Lt. Keith's crew



497th Briefing and Interrogation Quonset

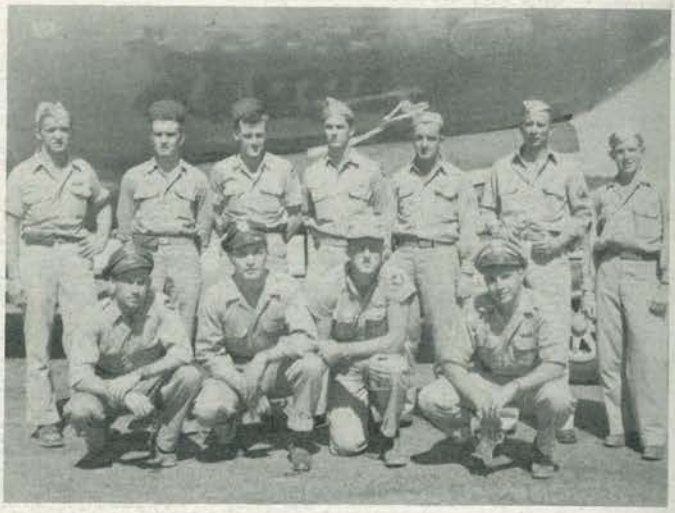


Rows and rows of misery for Japs

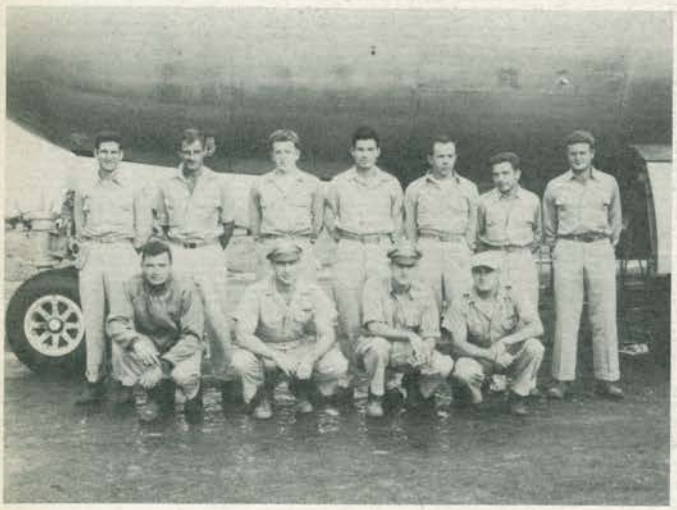
Lt. Barnes' crew

Lt. Mourning's crew

Lt. Whyte's crew

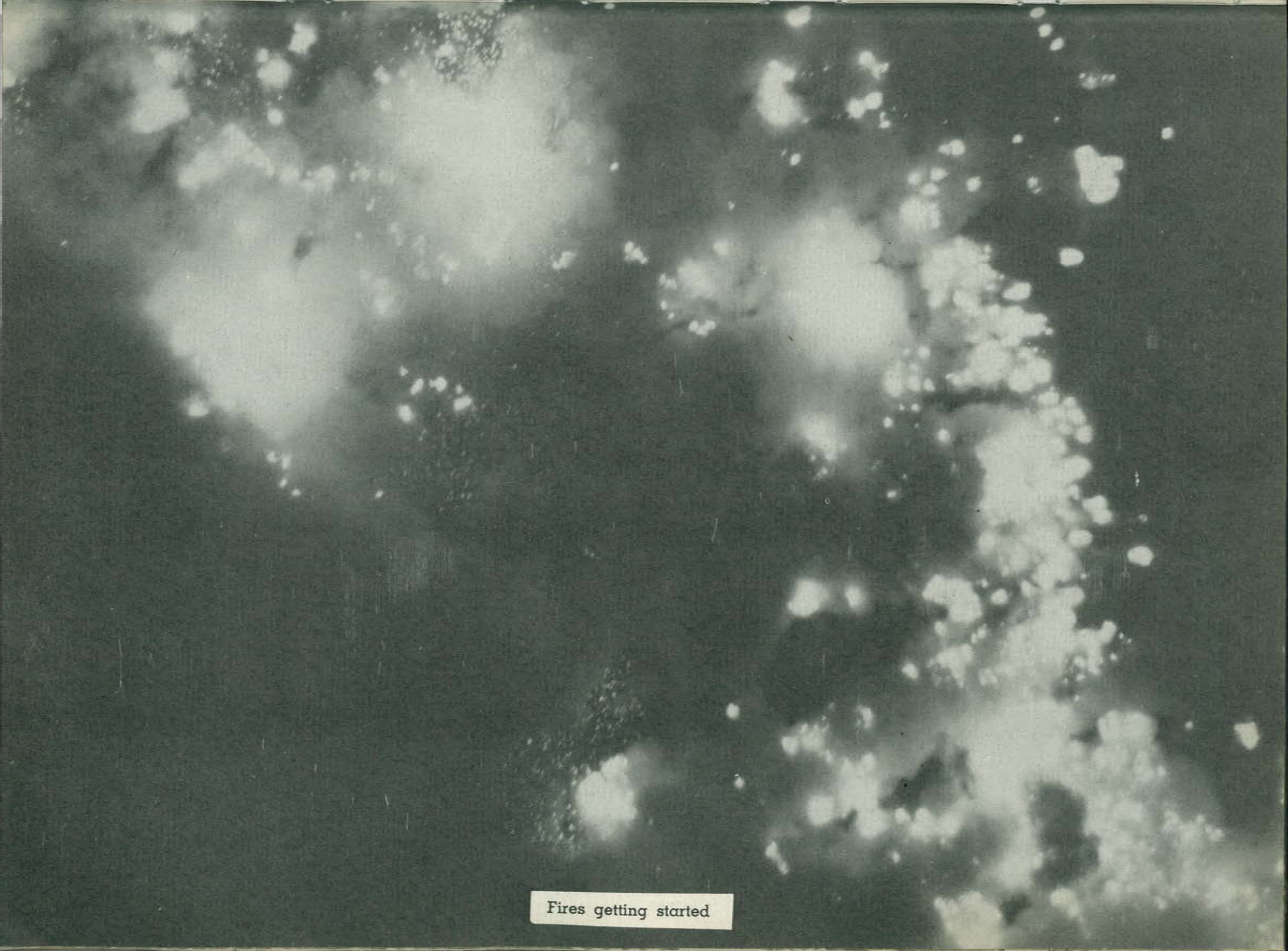


Lt. Evans' crew



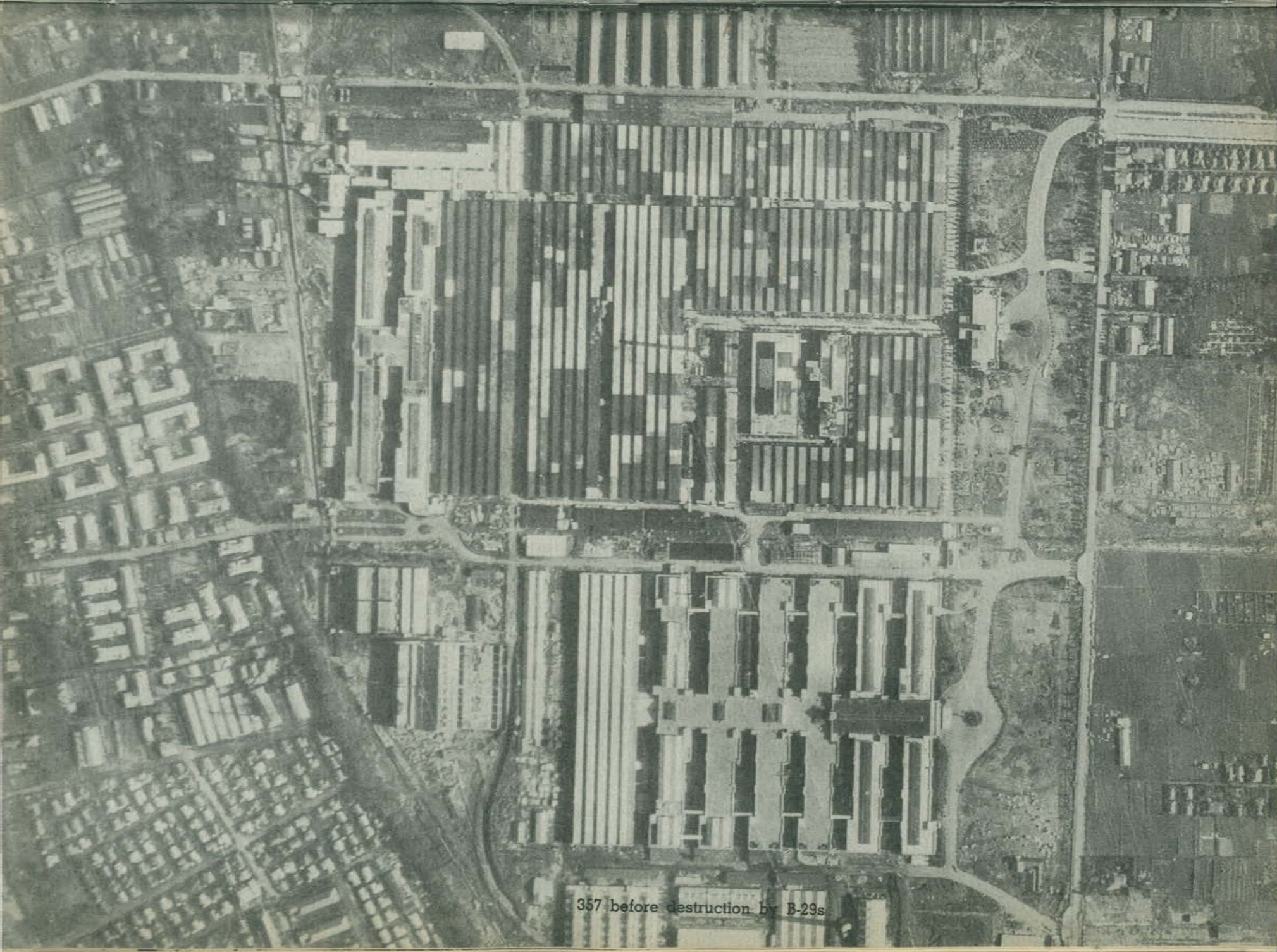
Lt. Cardone's crew

Lt. McSpadder's crew



Fires getting started

A scene on Saipan



357 before destruction by B-29s

Japan's terraced land

Lt. Brookman's crew

Lt. Voigt's crew

Capt. Moore's crew

Lt. Hunter's crew

Lt. Williams' crew

Major Merrill's crew

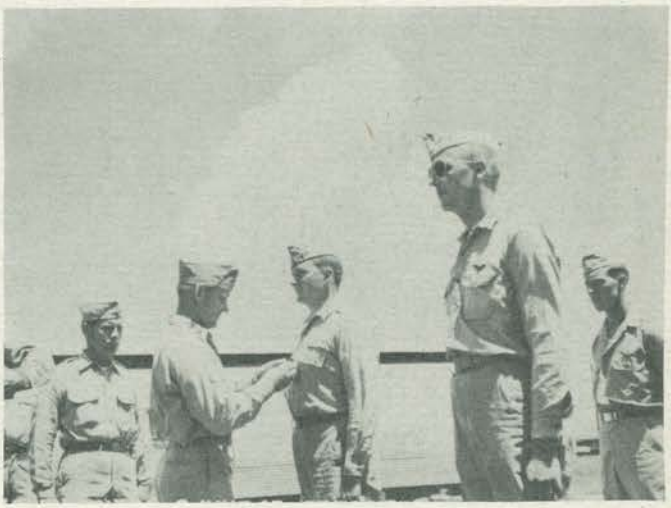
The Bank of Garapan, Saipan

The Japs did this

Capt. Fox's crew

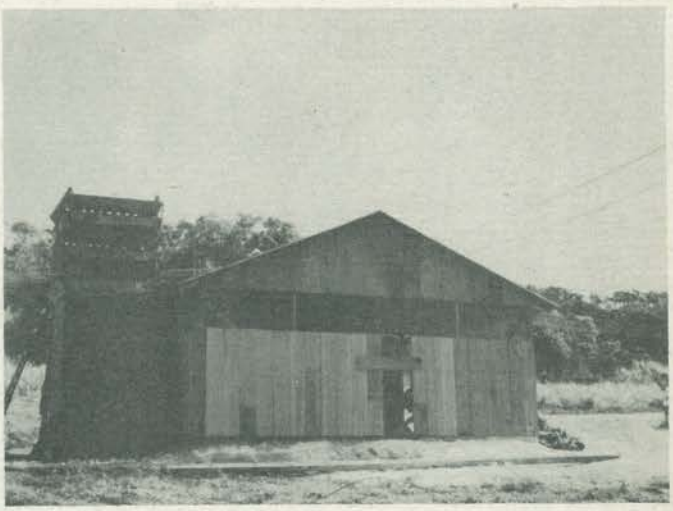
Lt. Bowry's crew

Capt. Hahn's crew



Presentation of Awards

Empty bomb cases, Saipan



Power plant complete, Saipan

Abbott, Orville L., Parma, Idaho
Abraham, Paul L., (Address unknown)
Acker, Jace E., 1308 North Genessee, Los Angeles, California
Adams, Frank H., Jr., Transfer, Pennsylvania
Adams, Howard S., 206 Walhalla Street, Westminster, South Carolina
Adams, John B., Box 210, Decatur, Mississippi
Adams, John B., 1026 20th Street, Central City, Nebraska
Adams, Verna G., 206 Walhalla Street, Westminster, South Carolina
Adams, Wavel L., Tower Grove Bank & Trust Co., 3134 S. Grand Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri
Adamson, David F., 215 West Hill Street, Neosho, Missouri
Aden, Thomas B., Jr., 380 South Franklin, Denver, Colorado
Ahearn, Maurice A., (Address unknown)
Albertson, Ralph, Route 5, Newton, Kansas
Albright, John G., Schwenksville, Pennsylvania
Alcabes, E., 1560 Grand Concourse, Bronx, New York
Aldrich, Robert G., 21 Archer Avenue, Buffalo 10, New York
Aldrich, M. S., Alarka, North Carolina
Alex, K., 1245 50th Avenue, Oakland, California
Alexander, Josehp B., 709 Hazelwood Avenue, Detroit, Michigan
Allee, Phil R., 301 East Mayfield, San Antonio, Texas
Alleman, Charles R., 115 Willow, Schuylkill Haven, Pennsylvania
Allen, Bernard F., Green Bay, Wisconsin
Allen, Charles D., Van Nuys, California
Allen, Charles R., Box 450, Route 4, Akron, Ohio
Allen, Dale L., (Address unknown)
Allen, J. H., Sumter, South Carolina
Allen, Milton S., (Address unknown)
Allen, Robert L., Route 1, Magnolia, Mississippi
Allinger, Perry H., Sulphur, Indiana
Allison, Martin S., 28220 Wacerly Street, Roseville, Michigan
Allison, Robert G., (Address unknown)
Aloia, Earl V., 559 Mount Street, Gray, Indiana
Alton, Noel S., 1234 Ulloa Street, San Francisco, California
Alton, William D., 8606 148th Street, Jamaica, Long Island, New York
Alton, William D., Bellingham, Washington
Alves, Charles S., 37 Maple Street, Braintree, Massachusetts
Amadon, George F., Framingham, Massachusetts
Ambuske, Richard J., Route 3, Cattargus, New York
Amorello, Edward V., 232 Plantation Street, Worcester, Massachusetts
Amunds, George R., Jr., 11480 77th Street, Brooklyn, New York
Anaenos, John, 752 Acaica Street, Hawthorne, California
Anderson, Charles E., (Address unknown)
Anderson, Dorcas I., 11 Park Street, North Warren, Pennsylvania
Anderson, Earl R., 2410 South 10th Street, Council Bluffs, Iowa
Anderson, Gordon B., 1956 Edgemont Place, Seattle, Washington
Anderson, Oliver B., Route 4, West Point, Georgia
Anderson, William R., Fort Benton, Montana
Andrea, Arthur V., 2112 Linden Avenue, Nashville, Tennessee
Andrews, George L., Endicott, New York
Angelbeck, Charles C., 549 West 9th Avenue, Rosselie, New Jersey
Archer, Oneal J. T., 1517 3rd Street, Brownwood, Texas
Armeen, Mitchell J., 420 North Poplar Street, Charlotte, North Carolina
Armstrong, Jack, 556th E. 4th Street, Brooklyn, New York
Arnoff, Joseph M., 11414 Temblett Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio
Arnold, Forrest E., (Address unknown)
Arnold, James C., 253 Melrose Avenue, Corpus Christi, Texas
Arringdale, Leroy B., 2517 North 49th Street, Omaha, Nebraska
Arrington, James, Addison, Alabama
Arrington, James, 703 Bradley Street, Bessemer, Alabama
Arthur, Robert M., 110 S. E. 5th Street, Washington, Maryland
Ashcraft, Floyd D., 1210 North Ann Street, Pontiac, Illinois
Atherton, Donald C., (Address unknown)
Atwater, Stephen K., (Address unknown)
Atwell, Charles D., 505 E. Barbee Street, Louisville, Kentucky
Atwell, Kenneth E., (Address unknown)
Austin, Arthur, Eagle Rock, California
Austin, Thomas J., Kirkwood, Missouri
Auten, Kanford L., Box 164, Bridgman, Michigan
Avon, George W., Syracuse, New York
Avriette, V., U. S. Naval Hospital, Dental Clinic, San Diego, California
Babits, William P., 54 Pteeyplain Road, Greenfield, Massachusetts
Bach, Edward A., 617 Bergen Street, Newark, New Jersey
Bachelder, William F., Box 569, Burns, Oregon
Bachelder, William F., 1714 South West Emigrant Avenue, Pendleton, Oregon
Baeza, Hilbert R., 3312 Pecan Street, Los Angeles 33, California
Baggett, Gerald, 1514 Kirkmzan Street, Lake Charles, Louisiana
Baguhn, Russell, Route 2, Ladysmith, Wisconsin
Bailey, Ralph W., (Address unknown)
Bailey, Vern C., 218 Cumberland Street, Brooklyn, New York
Baker, Roland, Newburgh, New York
Baldaszarre, Albert B., 283 Mott Street, New York, New York
Ball, Donald D., Ravenna, Nebraska
Ball, Theodore B., (Address unknown)
Ballard, Robert C., 3611 Travis Street, Dallas, Texas
Balzarini, LeRoy B., (Address unknown)
Bands, Petrq, General Delivery 2, Torrance, California
Banderdistel, John C., 52 Jones Street, Denver, Colorado
Banker, William C., Cannon Falls, Minnesota
Banovitz, William J., 5428 Henderson Street, Chicago 4, Illinois
Barbeaux, John E., 3026 O Street, Sacramento, California
Barefoot, Armond D., 522 West Dorothy, Hollis, Oklahoma
Bardin, Robert M., (Address unknown)
Bartlett, John D., 8 West Harrison Avenue, Bazeman, Montana
Barnes, Carl R., Route 1, Box 66, Los Altos, California
Barnes, Marcum W., 2606 Michigan Street, Dallas, Texas
Barnes, Robert L., c/o S. C. Barnes, Williston, North Dakota
Barr, Joseph F., 274 North Bellview Place, Indianapolis, Indiana
Barriere, Leander E., Leominster, Massachusetts
Barron, Harry C., 691 Bell Street, Akron, Ohio
Barron, James M., Jr., 5630 Miriam Road, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Bartels, Eugene S., (Address unknown)
Barthold, Carl H., 3006 Delavan Drive, Belnor, Missouri
Bartlett, John D., (Address unknown)
Bastasch, A. E., 3115 N.E. 54th Avenue, Portland, Oregon
Bastin, Earl W., Elmdale, Kansas
Bastin, Earl W., 1116 North 21st Street, Parsons, Kansas
Bathrust, William, 1513 19th Street, Altoona, Pennsylvania
Bauml, Richard C., 162 Delamine Drive, Rochester, New York
Bazin, Joseph W., (Address unknown)
Beal, Charles W., 10 Faragut Street, Uniontown, Pennsylvania
Beall, Arthur L., 432 C Bonita Avenue, Long Beach, California
Bean, Edward, Jr., Box 119, Brookfield, Illinois
Bean, Robert K., Illma, Missouri
Beard, Paul, (Address unknown)
Beatty, Calvin J., 15329 Rolson Avenue, Detroit, Michigan
Beck, George N., (Address unknown)
Becker, Donald W., (Address unknown)
Becker, Howard H., 715 South Oakes Street, Tacoma, Washington
Becker, LaVern H., 95 South Washington Street, Oxford, Michigan
Beckett, David M., 232 East Hickory Street, Hinsdale, Illinois
Beckett, David M., Box 903, Boulder City, Nevada
Bednarczyk, Betha, 20 Center Street, Yonkers, New York
Beeh, Edward A., Jr., 617 Bergen Street, Newalle, New Jersey
Beek, George A., 1304 B Avenue, Ft. Madison, Iowa
Beggs, Gordon C., (Address unknown)
Begin, Leo E., 163 Middle Street, Lewiston, Maine
Beitia, John J., 1503 North 11th Street, Boise, Idaho
Beitia, John L., Shoshone, Idaho
Belanger, Nelson A., Marine City, Michigan
Bell, Charles L., Route 1, Thompsonville, Illinois
Bell, Edwin B., Big Sandy, Tennessee
Belschner, Eugene W., (Address unknown)
Belshaw, Wilbur M., (Address unknown)
Benjamin, G. Roe, Jr., (Address unnown)
Bennett, George W., (Address unknown)
Bennett, John J., Camden, New Jersey
Bennett, William J., 137 Brighton Road, Columbus, Ohio
Bennett, Vernon E., German, Texas
Benton, Norman, c/o S. H. Wilson, 808 High Street, Eugene, Oregon
Benton, Raymond P., 132 Ridge Road,J West Rochester, New York
Bentzlin, Bertil V., 865 Burr Street, St. Paul, Minnesota
Beratz, John F., Dayton Bluff, Route 4, St. Paul, Minnesota
Berdy, Morton, (Address unknown)
Berkowitz, Joseph A., 1643 Popham Avenue, Bronx 53, New York City, N. Y.
Berkowitz, Martin, 2198 Coney Island Avenue, Brooklyn, New York
Berman, Jerome S., c/o K8S f and 10, Belmar, New Jersey
Berner, Gerald J., 15232 Promenade, Detroit 24, Michigan
Berning, John, 2038 East 6th Street, Tucson, Arizona
Bernzett, Edward G., (Address unknown)
Berry, John V., 434 Maple Way, Pasadena, California
Best, Orle R., 1125 Harding Avenue, Ames, Iowa
Betia, John L., Box 175, Shoshone, Idaho
Bety, Oscar A., Jr., (Address unknown)
Betz, Francis C., 173 Eureka Street, San Francisco, California
Bevilacqua, Eugene, (Address unknown)
Bianco, Phillip J., 417 Cherry Street, Niles, Ohio
Bienski, Albert, Bryan, Texas
Bienski, Leon L., General Delivery, Bryan, Texas
Bisanz, Jack B., 2218 Atkins Avenue, Lakewood, Ohio
Bischoff, Hans M., 4386 Mayfield Road, South Euclid, Ohio
Biser, David M., (Address unknown)
Bishop, John W., Jr., 422 East Capital, Little Rock, Arkansas
Bittner, Allen A., 815 Ship Street, Joseph, Michigan
Bittner, Maurice J., Solon, Iowa
Black, Donald T., (Address unknown)
Black, Frank A., 612 Woodland Avenue, Houston, Texas
Black, Frederick W., (Address unknown)
Black, Valentine D., 861 South 12th Street, Salem, Oregon
Black, William F. S., Box 849, Brownsboro, Texas
Blake, John E., Wapato, Washington
Blair, Lafayette F., 2122 29th Street, Ashland, Kentucky
Blaun, James H., (Address unknown)
Bleutioan, Jack A., (Address unknown)
Blood, Craig N., 1331 41st Street, Sacramento, California
Bloomenthal, Harold S., (Address unknown)
Blum, Bernard, 321 South 58th Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Bluto, Mary, 130 Pacific Avenue, Long Beach, California
Board, John S., 530 Maplewood Avenue, Houston, Texas
Board, Paul, c/o Clayton National Bank, Clayton, St. Louis, Missouri
Bobbouine, Louis, 14 Park Avenue, Pillston, Pennsylvania
Boberg, Edward H., 3174 West 116th Street, Cleveland, Ohio
Bobo, Juane W., 824 Highland, Houston, Texas
Boffouine, Louis, 14 Park Avenue, Pittston, Pennsylvania
Bogan, Joseph V., 1818 Robinson Avenue, Portsmouth, Ohio
Bohling, Charles F., 320 East Hellman Avenue, San Gabriel, California
Boisvert, Joseph A. R., (Address unknown)
Boisvert, Roger, 306 Dubuque Street, Manchester, New Hampshire
Bolen, William A., (Address unknown)
Bolinsky, Samuel J., 1511 Sheridan Avenue, Bronx, New York
Bolton, Charles F., (Address unknown)
Bolton, Paul D., 1449 Rollins Road, Toledo, Ohio
Bones, James C., 1020 North 7th Street, Monroe, Louisiana
Bonham, Charles C., Jr., (Address unknown)
Bonivici, Thomas L., Bridgeport, Connecticut
Bonomo, Raymond, Box 100, Noark, Connecticut
Boodrookas, Constantine, 237 Paterson, Ogden, Utah
Booth, Nobert E., 417 Garison Street, Fremont, Ohio
Bopp, Warren G., 4018 Courville, Route 2, Detroit, Michigan
Borden, Alvin J. C., (Address unknown)
Borenstein, Nathan B., 6824 21st Avenue, Brooklyn, New York
Borm, Hans C., (Address unknown)
Borotz, M., Dayton Bluff, Route 4, St. Paul, Minnesota
Borst, Samuel W., Bainbridge, Ohio
Bosse, William A., (Address unknown)
Bouck, Aubre J., 1863 Smith Street, Muskegon, Michigan

Bourland, M., 216½ North 7th Street, Springfield, Illinois
Bowen, Charles L., 461 Park Avenue, Collingswood, New Jersey
Bower, Robert G., Creek Road, Poughkeepsie, New York
Bowerman, Robert C., Aberdeen, Washington
Bowers, James B., Box 423, Johnson City Hi-Way, Kinkscort, Tennessee
Bowman, Stanley R., Route 1, Kirkwood, New York
Bowry, Donald W., 9 Auburn Street, Brookline, Massachusetts
Bowser, Richard M., 130 West Laurel Street, Nryhleham, Pennsylvania
Boxter, Jay, 508 North State Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois
Boyd, James A., Tanneytown, Maryland
Boyd, Willie B., Route 3, Jayess, Mississippi
Boyer, Paul E., Dudley, Illinois
Boykin, Thomas C., Cottonwood Falls, Kansas
Boyles, Robert E., (Address unknown)
Bracken, Lester B., 460 North Howard Street, Akron, Ohio
Braden, David R., 4343 Dickason Avenue, Dallas, Texas
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