

1945

14th Combat Bombardment Wing (H)

United States Army Air Forces

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14TH BOMB WING



14th Combat BOMBARDMENT Wing (H)

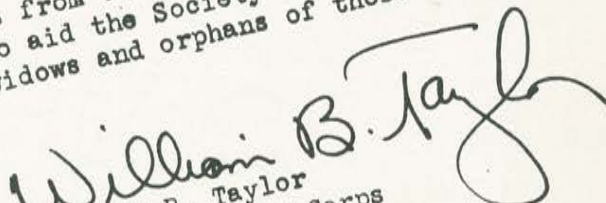
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PREFACE

In editing this book on the 14th Bombardment Wing and its three outstanding stations--Shipdham, Wendling, and North Pickenham--I have attempted to include material that will aid in recapturing some of the memories of the days when we were "sweating it out in the ETO".

I wish to thank General Leon W. Johnson, Colonel Lorin L. Johnson, Lt. Col. Harold Brandon, Lt. Col. H. M. Stephey, Major William Shy, Major Alfred Hayduk, Captain Nicholas Jabbour and Master Sergeant William Douglas for the aid given me in the preparation of this book by the use of pictures from their albums.

I have assigned the royalties from the sale of this book to the Army Air Forces Aid Society to aid the Society in its program of giving a helping hand to the widows and orphans of those who were not as fortunate as we.


William B. Taylor
Lt. Colonel, Air Corps

ADONAS
LIBRARY
YARRELL
JAN 1948

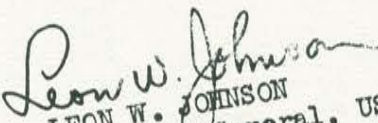
HEADQUARTERS 14TH COMBAT BOMBARDMENT WING (H)
AAF STATION 115
APO 558

SUBJECT: Commendation

TO: The Officers and Men of the 14th Combat
Bombardment Wing (H)

Words of mine cannot pay adequate tribute to the skill and courage of the air crews; the unending task of the ground crews; and the loyalty and devotion of all members of the 14th Combat Bombardment Wing (H).

It was indeed a great honor to have had such splendid Groups as the 44th Bombardment Group (H), 392nd Bombardment Group (H), 491st Bombardment Group (H), and the 492nd Bombardment Group (H) under my command.


LEON W. JOHNSON
Brigadier General, USA
Commanding



Leon W. Johnson—Brigadier General USA—
Commanding General—14th Combat Bombard-
ment Wing (H)



Col. Fred R. Dent



Lt. Col. Lorin L. Johnson



Col. Irvine "Bull" Rendle



Col. Allen W. Reed



Col. Vernon C. "Mike" Smith



Col. Eugene H. Snavelly

CHIEFS OF STAFF



History-14th Combat Bombardment Wing (H)



The 14th Combat Bombardment Wing was activated on 13 September 1943, at AAF Station 115, better known as Shipdham, Norfolk, with Colonel Leon W. Johnson, the former commanding officer of the 44th Bombardment Group, in command.

The Wing had been in operation as the 202nd Provisional Combat Bomb Wing since 3 September 1943.

The Wing was formed from personnel of the 44th Bombardment Group, on whose station the Wing was located, and the 392nd Bombardment Group, which was located at Wendling, Norfolk.

On 22 November 1943, Colonel Leon Johnson was presented the Congressional Medal of Honor by Lt. General Jacob Devers, the Theater Commander. The citation which read in part, "—by his gallant courage, brilliant leadership, and superior flying skill, Colonel Johnson so led his formation as to destroy totally the important refining plants and installations which were the object of his mission. Colonel Johnson's personal contribution to the success of this historic raid, and the conspicuous gallantry in action, and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty demonstrated by him on this occasion constitute such deeds of valor and distinguished service as have during our nation's history formed the finest traditions of our armed forces", succeeded only in couching in military terminology a description of heroic leadership of a heroically gallant group of men whose belief in their ideals raised them to a pinnacle of courage whose story can never be adequately described nor completely told.

The announcement of Colonel Johnson's promotion to Brigadier General was made seven days after the Congressional Medal presentation.

On 11 May 1944, the 492nd Bombardment Group, located at North Pickenham, Norfolk, flew its first mission with the other groups of the Wing. In August the Composite Command sent out an urgent request for a Group to do secret work and the 492nd ceased operations and was transferred to the Composite Command.

The 491st Bombardment Group moved

from the station at Metfield, Suffolk to North Pickenham, replacing the 492nd Bomb Group.

The Wing compiled the following record during its first year of operation.

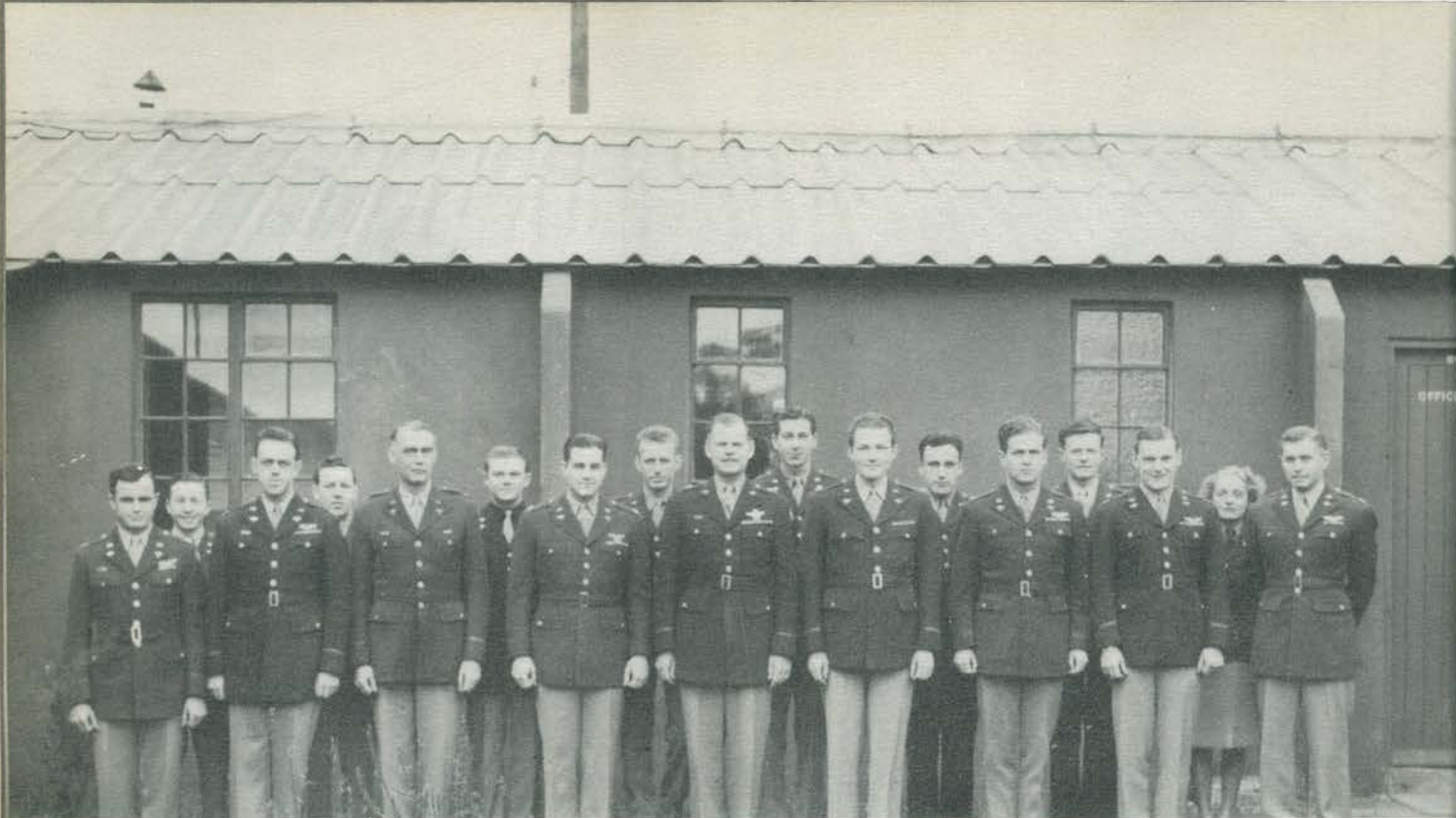
During the year 13 September 1943—13 September 1944, 10,611 aircraft were airborne for attacks against enemy targets, with 90% of these aircraft reaching the target. These Liberators dropped a total of over 23,000 tons of bombs. The Wing lost 283 B-24's and destroyed 309 enemy aircraft.

The Wing attacked such vital targets as Kiel, Hannover, Hamburg, Emden, Furth, Gotha, Gdynia, Brunswick, Stuttgart, and Berlin in Germany; as well as an untold number of other targets in Germany, France, Belgium, Holland, Norway, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Austria. The peak day of operations was attained 6 June 1944, when in support of the mightiest amphibious invasion in the world's history, the 14th Wing dispatched a total of 209 a/c in one 24-hour period. This figure was 17 times greater than the first formation dispatched by the Eighth Bomber Command in its first mission to Rouen, France in July 1942.

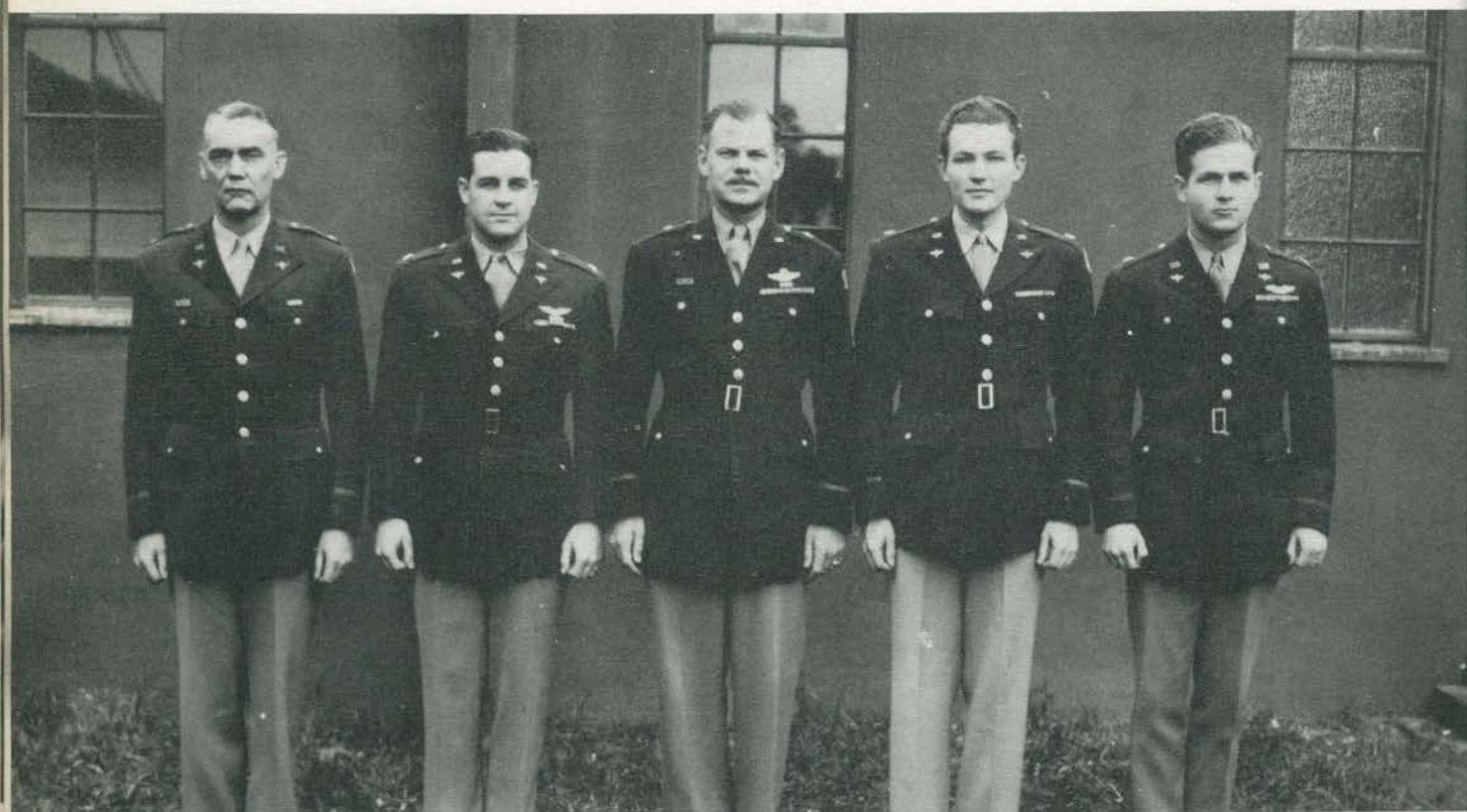
The 14th Combat Bomb Wing pioneered the development of the Radio Bomb Release, better known as RBR. This system allowed the bombardier of the lead ship to drop his bombs and the bombs of the other ships in his Squadron, giving a perfect pattern. The Wing pioneered in the installation of GH and H2X in the same airplane. This meant a saving of one airplane per group when the bombing was to be done by instruments.

With the advent of V-E Day, the 44th, 392nd and 491st Bombardment Groups redeployed to the United States. The 14th Combat Bombardment Wing moved to Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, where it absorbed the 4th Combat Bombardment Wing and became the 14th Bombardment Wing.

The Wing, after spending a delightful English summer, sailed for the United States 26 August 1945 on the Queen Elizabeth. The Elizabeth docked in New York on 31 August 1945, and the personnel were sent to the various reception centers for 45 days Temporary Duty at their homes. The Wing re-assembled at McChord Field, Washington where it was inactivated.



Officers—Spring 1944—Front row, left to right: Rebich, Bunker, Benton, Johnson, Johnson, Taylor, Phillips, McFadden, Johnson. Back row: Bounds, Parker, Colburn, Dodd, Parrish, Toskey, Tierney, Luce.

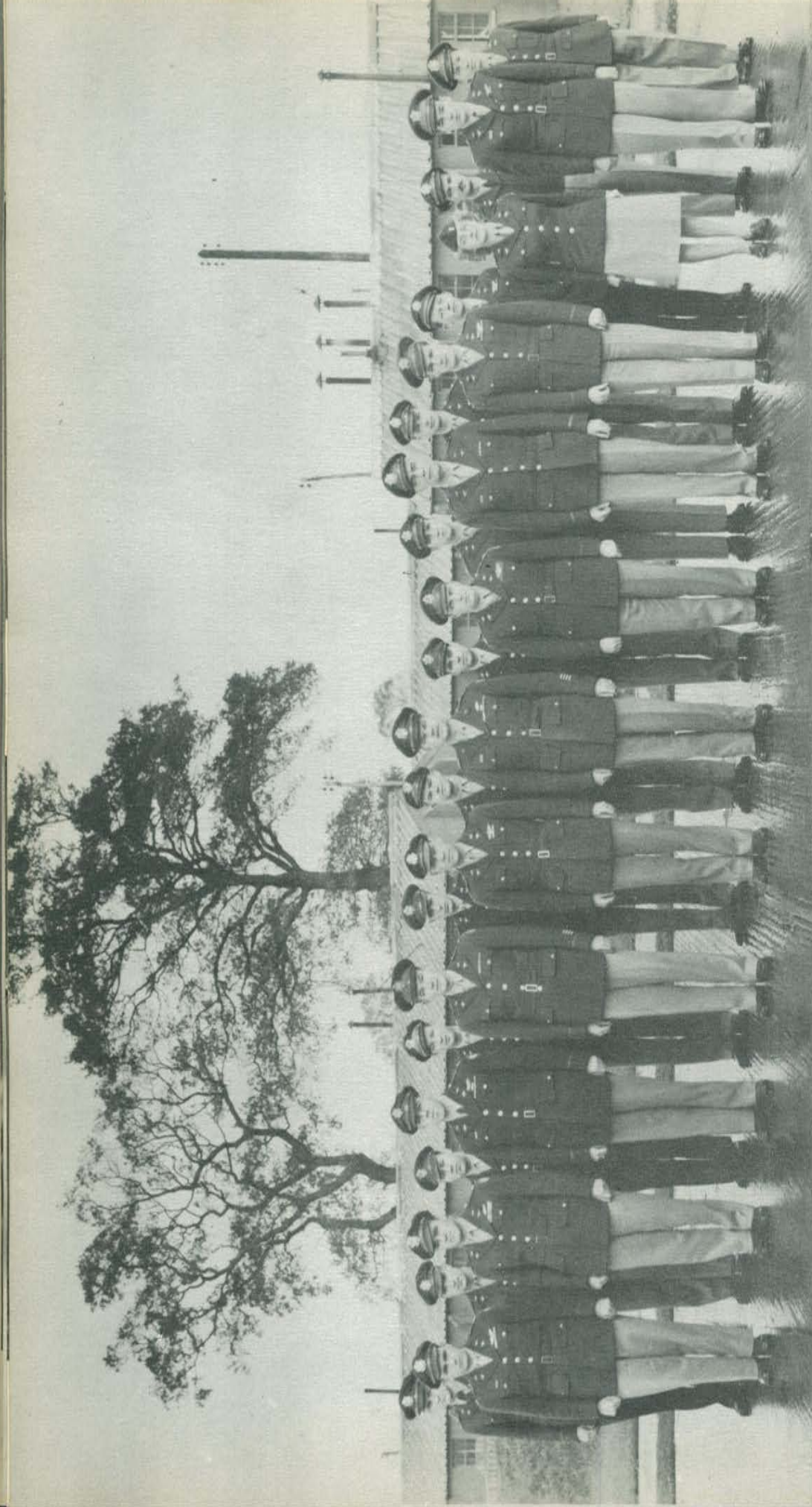


Staff—Spring 1944—Left to right: Major Greene Benton—A-2, Lt. Col. Lorin Johnson—Chief of Staff, Brig. Gen. Leon W. Johnson—Commanding General, Major William B. Taylor—Adjutant—A-1, Lt. Col. Reginald Phillips—A-3.



**FOURTEENTH COMBAT BOMB WING EM
BRIG. GEN. LEON W. JOHNSON, COMMANDING
ENGLAND 13, NOVEMBER 1944**

Front row, left to right: Gen. Johnson, Douglas, McDonald, Brody, Gifford, Patten, Hoosier, Fazio,
Whannel, Waterman. 2nd row: Johannes, Massey, Johnson, Rosen, Keene, Murphy, Carlson, Bress-
ler, Dunn. 3rd row: Fieman, Featherstone, Reed, Blanchard, Theado, Buchner, Davis.

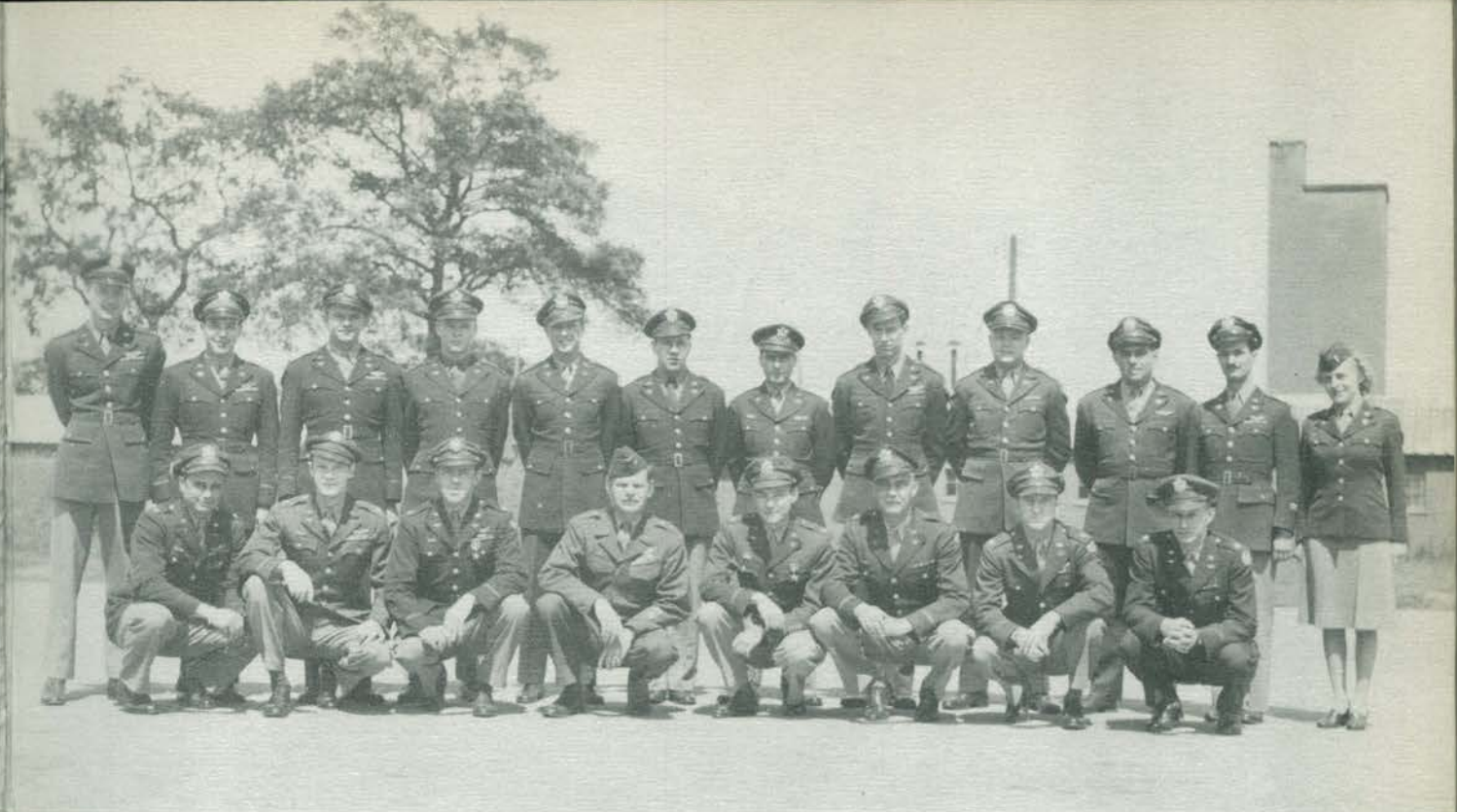


FOURTEENTH COMBAT BOMB WING OFFICERS

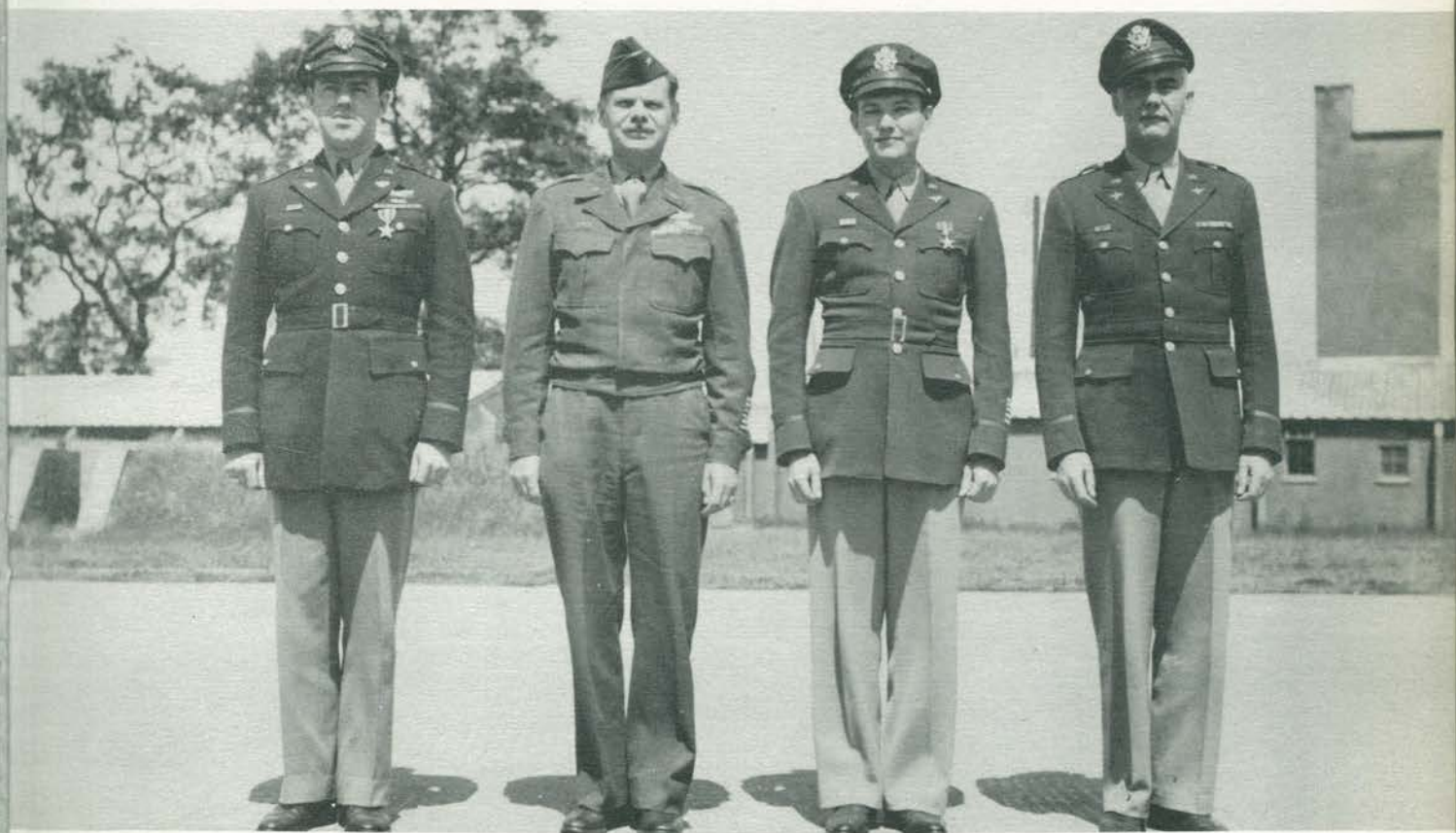
BRIG. GEN. LEON W. JOHNSON, COMMANDING

ENGLAND 13, NOVEMBER 1944

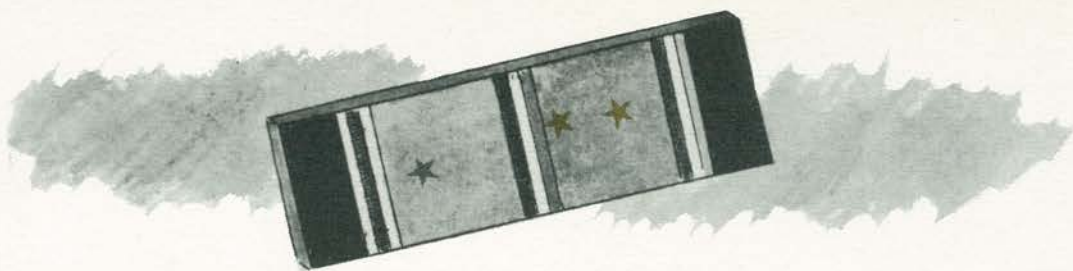
Left to right, front row: Rebsch, Francine, Bunker, Taylor, Smith, Johnson, Adams, Benter, McFadden, Luce, Sayler. Back row: Hager, Church, Parker, Morton, Dodd, Colburn, Lehr, Simonds, Crowley, Jacobs, Stahl, Bonds.



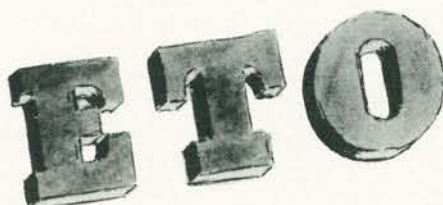
Officers—May 1945—Left to right: Rebich, Walsh, Bunker, Johnson, Taylor, Benton, Simonds, Dodd. Standing: Crowley, Sayler, Colburn, Hughes, Morton, Parker, Lehr, Linse, Schroder, Dallman, Stahl, Luce.



Staff—May 1945—Left to right: Lt. Col. Walter I. Bunker—Actg. Chief of Staff—Operations, Brig. Gen. Leon W. Johnson—Commanding General, Major William B. Taylor—Actg. Chief of Staff—Administrations, Major Greene Benton—A-2.

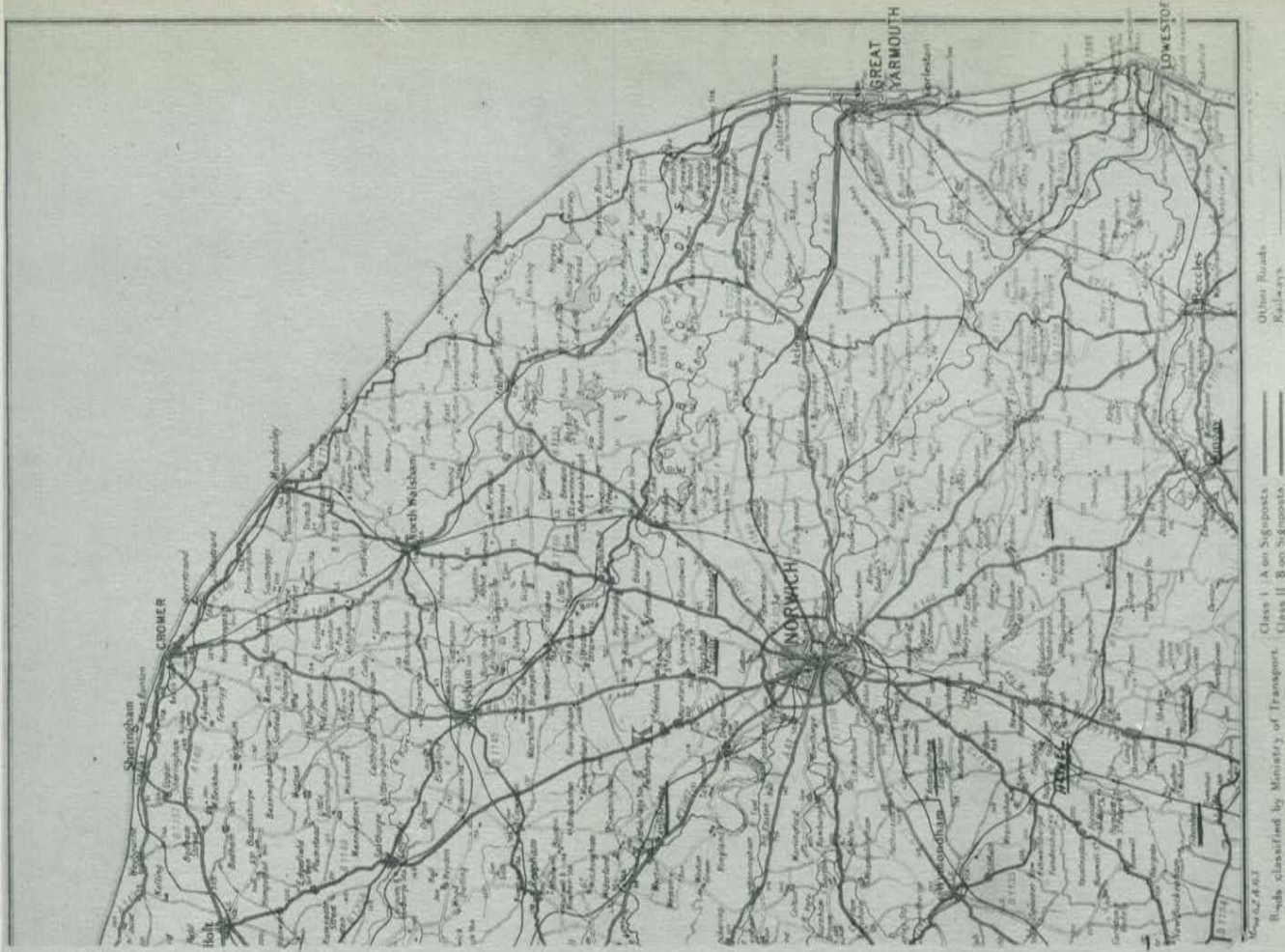
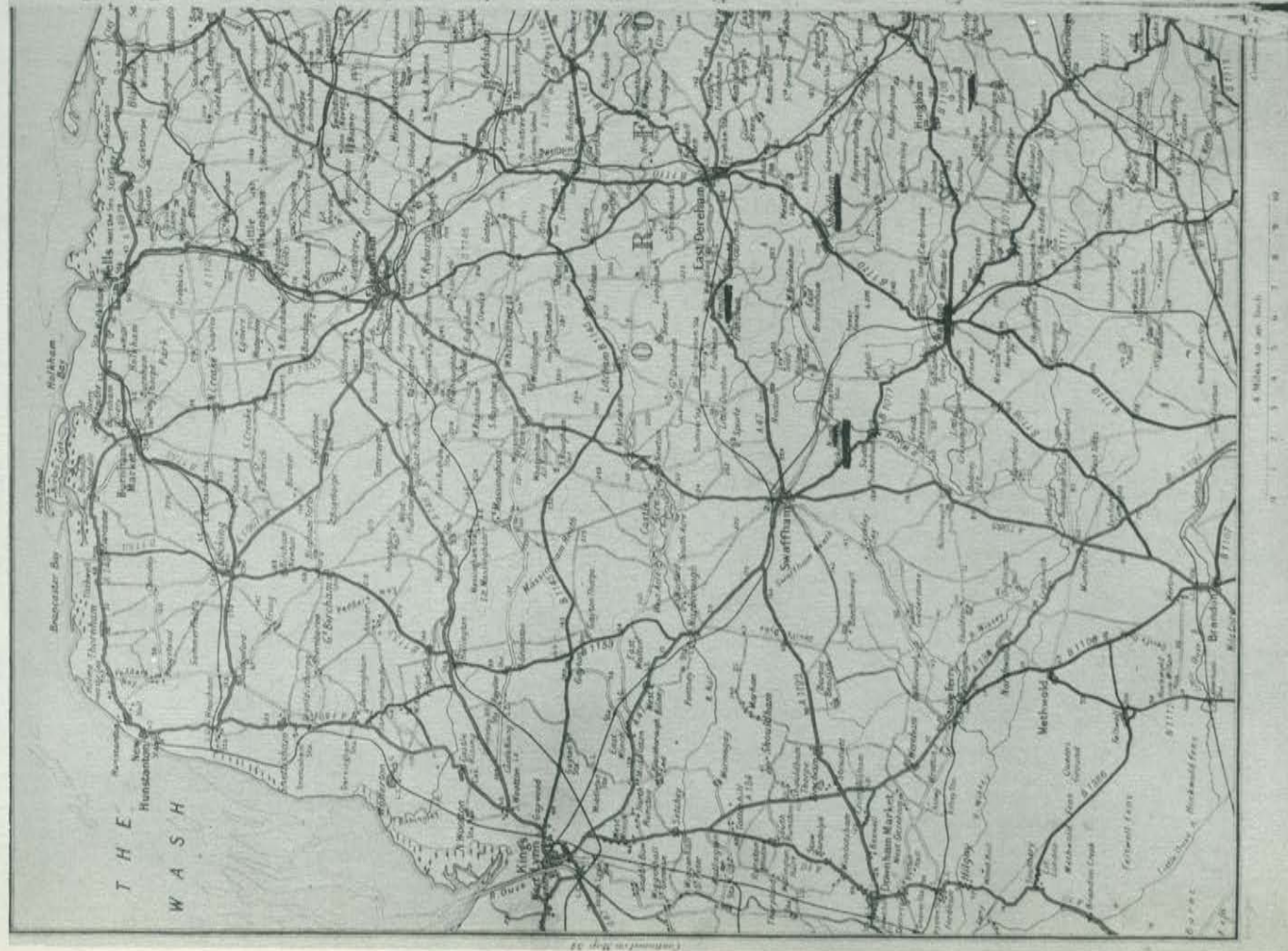


14th Combat Bombardment Wing (H)



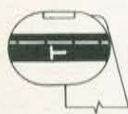
<i>Battle Credits</i>	<i>Time Limitation</i>	<i>War Dept. Gen. Orders</i>
Air Offensive Europe	4 July 1942—5 July 1944	85, 1945
* Naples-Foggia	18 Aug. 1943—21 Jan. 1944	96, 1945
Normandy	6 June 1944—24 July 1944	102, 1945
Northern France	25 July 1944—14 Sep. 1944	103, 1945
Central Europe	22 Mar. 1945—11 May 1945	116, 1945
Rhineland	15 Sep. 1944—21 Mar. 1945	118, 1945
Ardennes	16 Dec. 1944—25 Jan. 1945	114, 1945

G O 96, 1945 gave the 44th Bombardment Group (H) credit for this campaign. The 14th CBW was attached to the 44th Bombardment Group by 44th Bombardment Group Special Orders 18 September 1943, thus giving the 14th CBW credit during the period 18 September—4 October 1943.



EAST ANGLIA—Featuring Shipdham, Wendling, North Pickenham

Those guys on the line



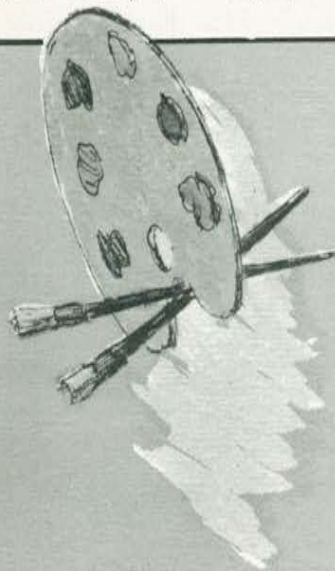
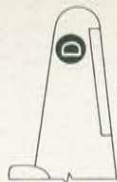
44TH BOMB GP.



392ND BOMB GP.



491ST BOMB GP.



14th Combat Bombardment Wing
Combat Markings

Take-off as seen from the control room of Flying Control

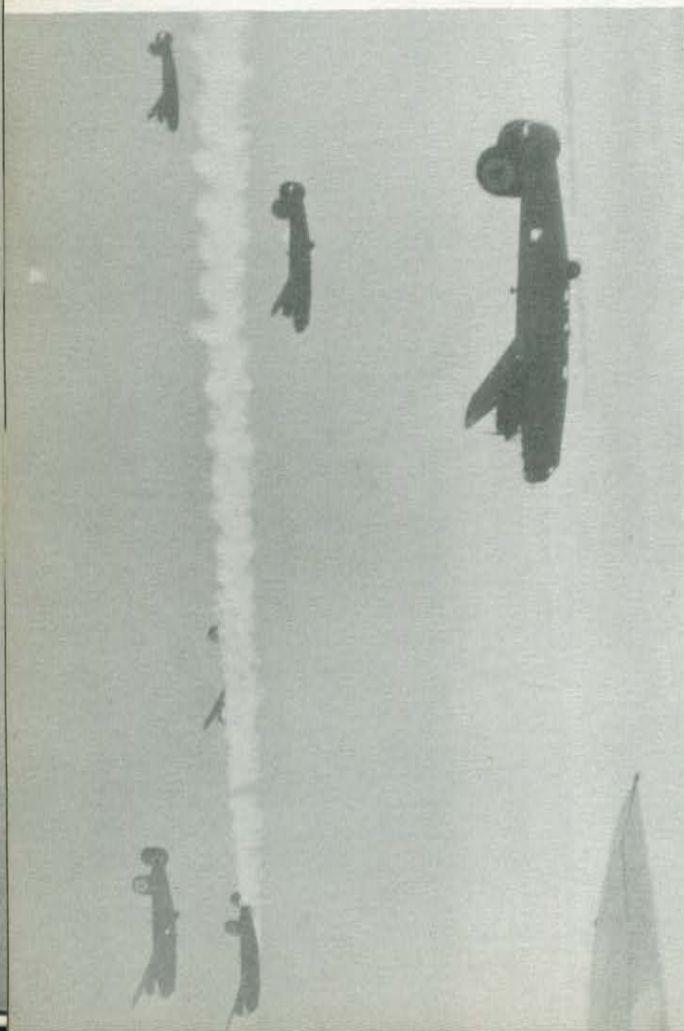


Assembly





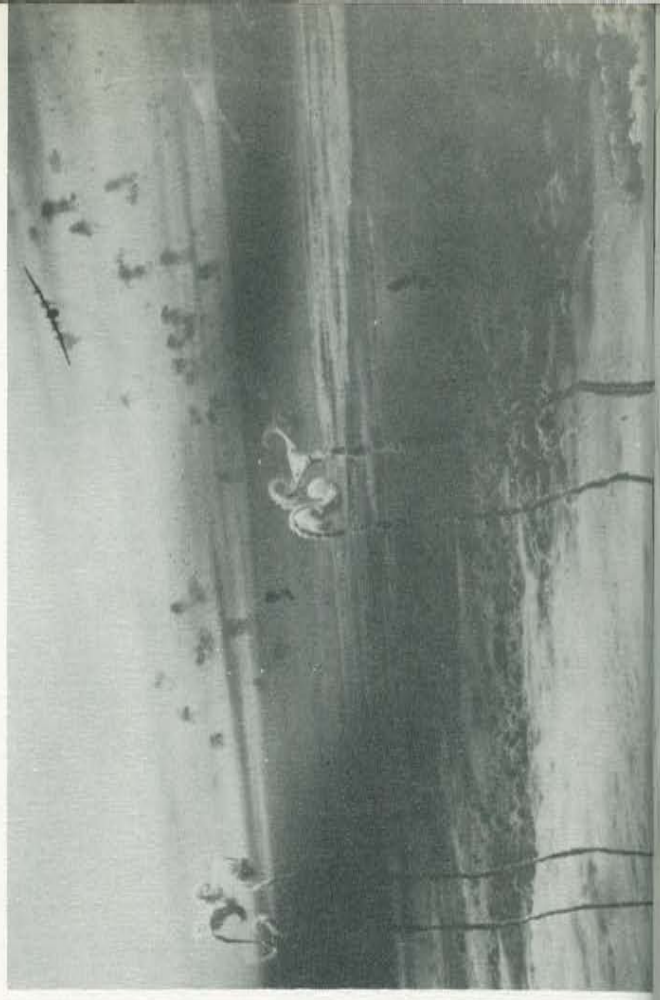
ON OUR WAY



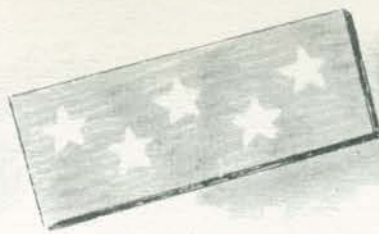
14th Combat Bombardment Wing Formation
Bombs Away



Flak Bursts
Enemy Defenses







Presentation of Congressional Medal of Honor to Colonel Leon W. Johnson, November 1943



General Ira C. Eaker Reads the Citation

The National Anthem



Lt. General Jacob Devers presents the medal

Col. Johnson points with pride to one of the original 24's of the 44th Bombardment Group flown by Capt. Holmes

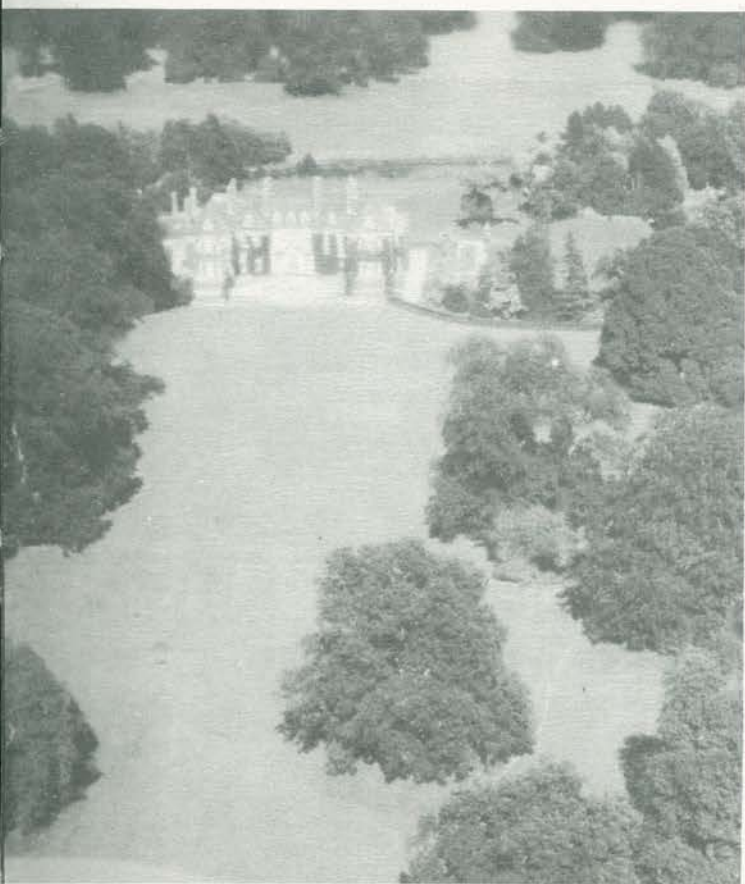




Visit to Wing by Chief of Staff Czechoslovakian Army



The home of the 14th C.B.W.



Litton Hall



Church at Southburgh



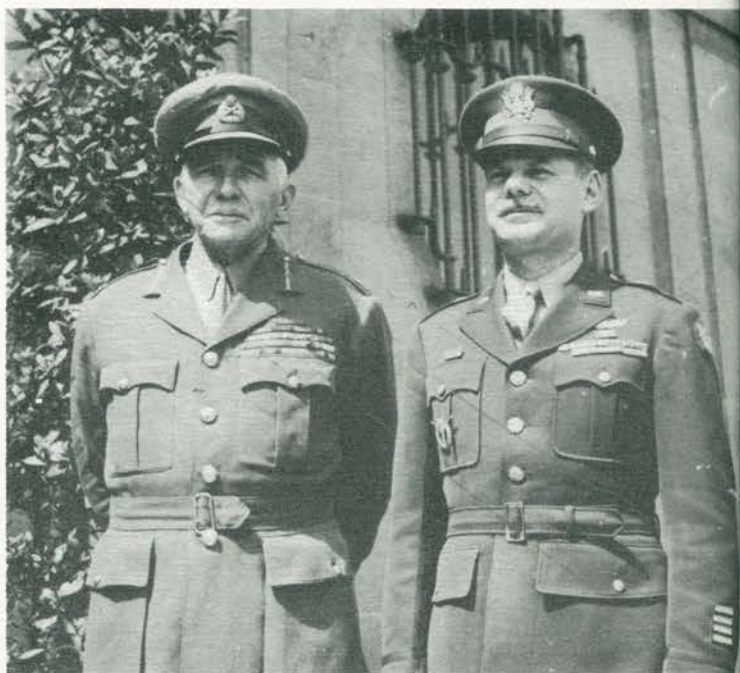
"There isn't an airplane made that I can't wreck" Klemmer



A visit by Maj. Gen. Jones, the Air Inspector

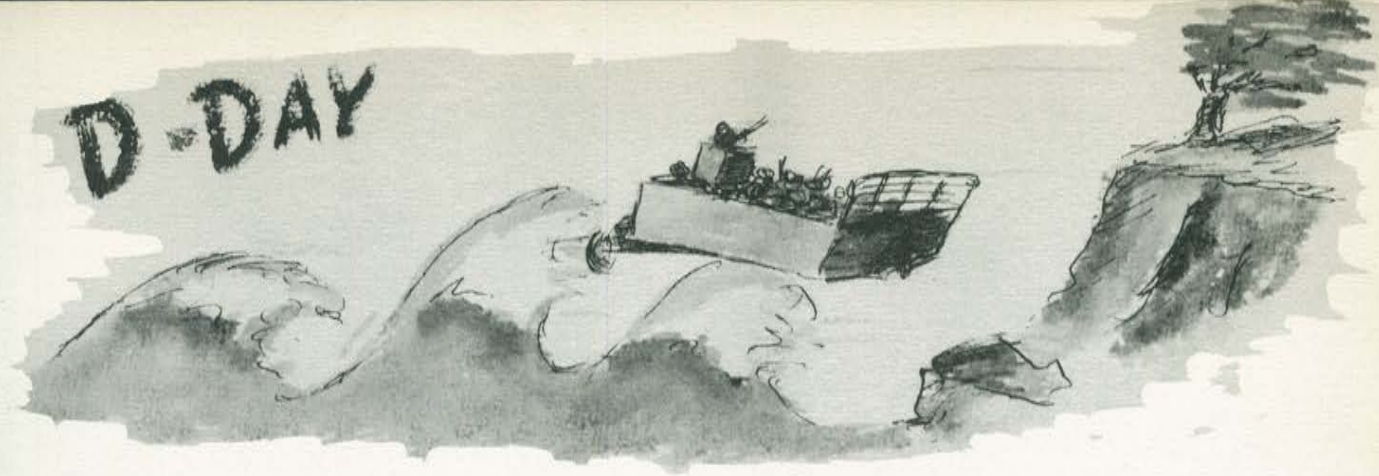


Presentation of Legion D'Honneur and
Croix De Guene 3 May 1945.



Field Marshall Lord Ironsides—
General Johnson

D-DAY



The Invasion Coast



The Beach



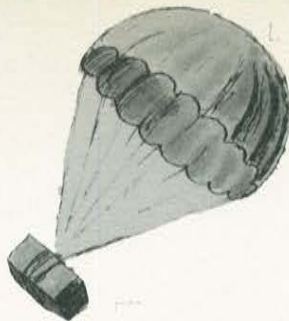


Landing Craft
The Beach



RE-SUPPLY

BEST HOLLAND



MISSION

18 SEPTEMBER 1944

(ARNHEIM)



RE-SUPPLY

WESEL



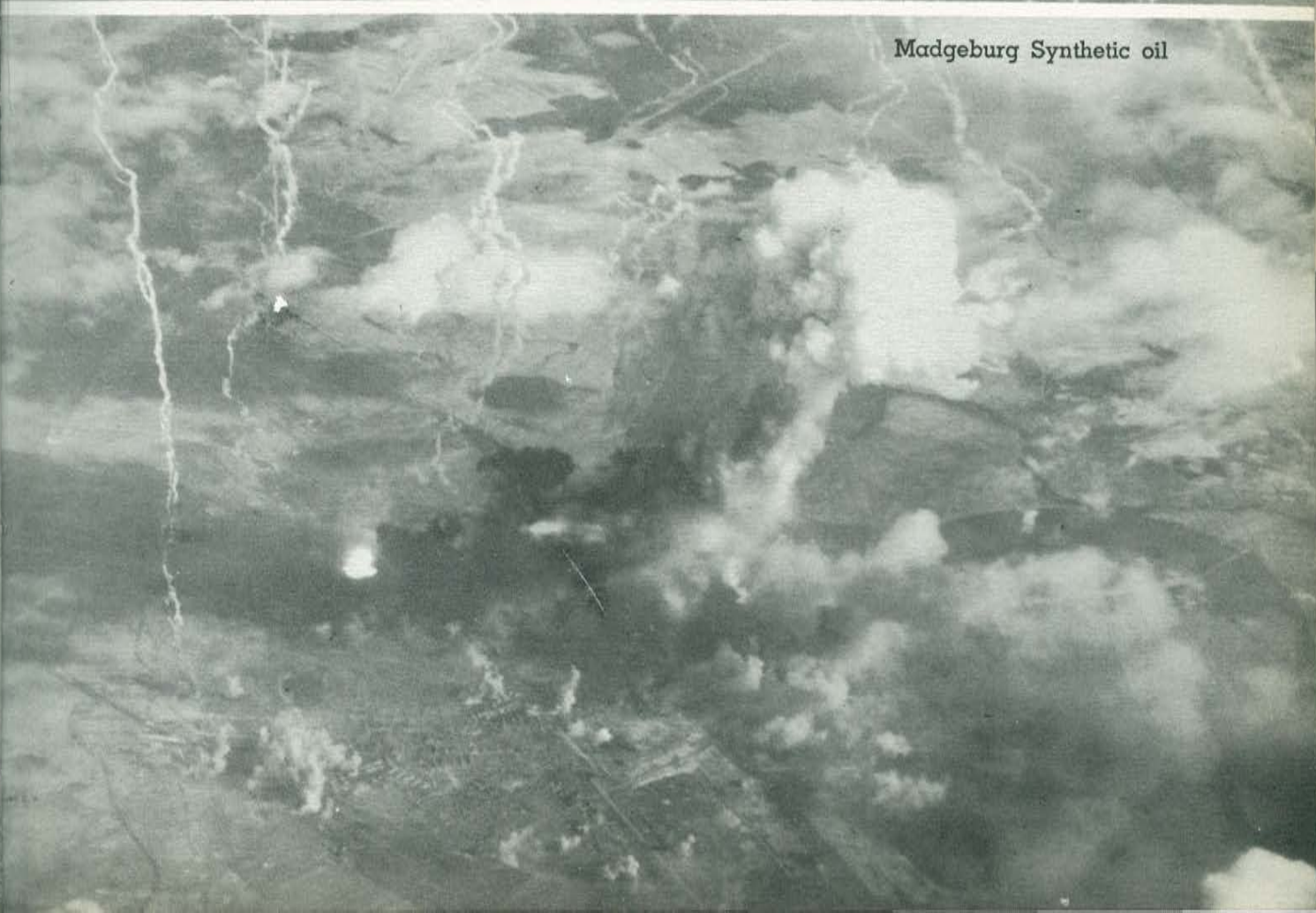
MISSION

24 MARCH 1945



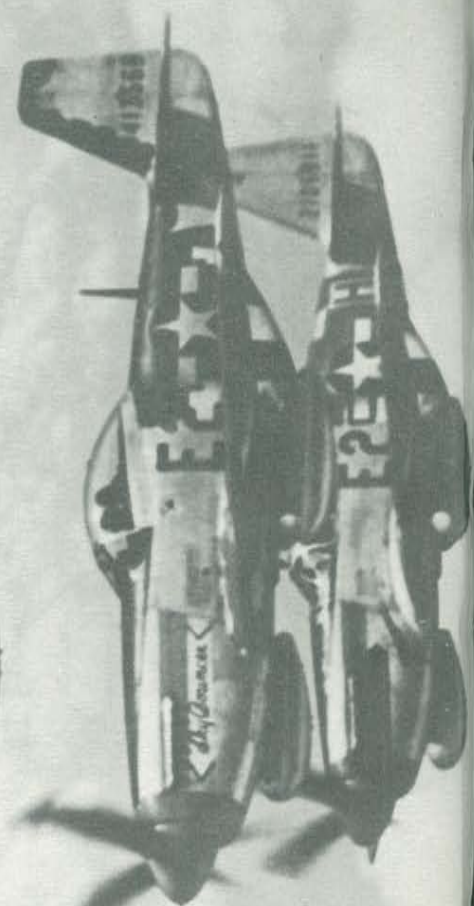
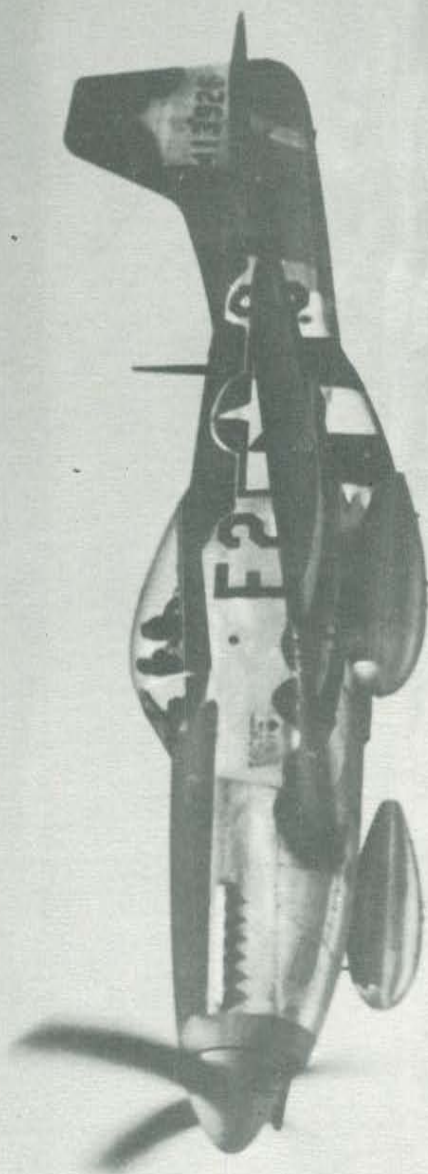
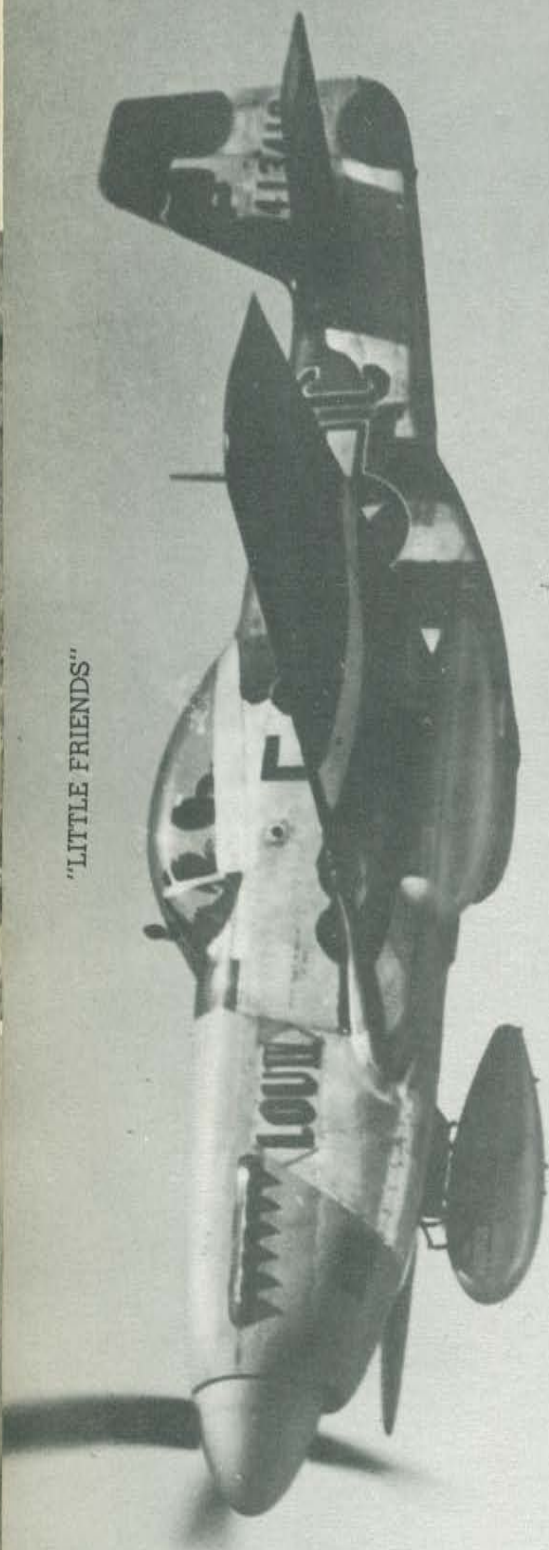


Smoke Markers



Madgeburg Synthetic oil

"LITTLE FRIENDS"





V-E day parade



Gen. Johnson and the Lord Mayor of Norwich
The colors



Lord Ironsides takes the salute
The WACs from Division Headquarters





Unbelievable but true—Hannover

"Think I'll go down and take a look"—Bingen



Hamburg.



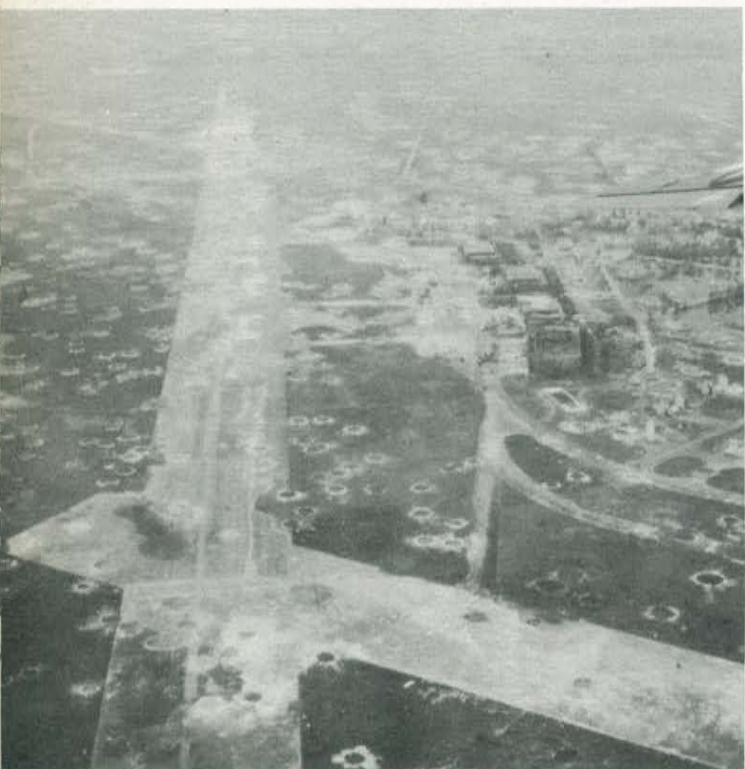


Hamm



Munster

Vechta Aerodrome



Misburg



14th C.B.W. Weddings

BEFORE

AFTER



Wedding party for Cpl. Christenson and Cpl. Dunn
Wedding ceremony Lt. Klemmer



14th C.B.W. Wedding!

BEFORE

AFTER



Captain and Mrs. George Rebich
Sergeant and Mrs. Gifford



14th C.B.W. Weddings

BEFORE

AFTER



Major and Mrs. William B. Taylor

Major and Mrs. Howard B. Walsh

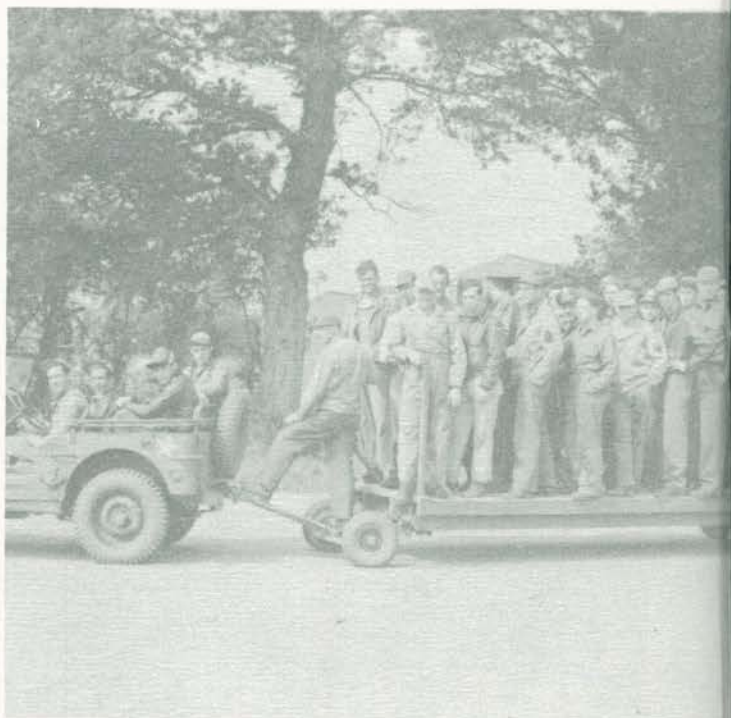


Scenes Around Shipdham



Sgt. Fink delivers the mail

The Shipdham hep cats



It's a hellova lot better than walking

Having a pot of tea with a few RAF Blokes
and those grand Red Cross girls





Lt. Col. Griffin—Better known to friends as
"Groupe Gop Griff"

Old man Brown the "Clock" of works



Humphery and Jones of Utilities

Miss Hoback, Capt. Fairchild, Miss Hardy





The 4:45 puffs into Thuxton station

Miss Hardy, Field Marshall Lord Ironsides



Johannas with the famous lawn mower

Wroxham—July 1944

Anderson, Johannas, and Reed





The "Nitch" and "Chick"

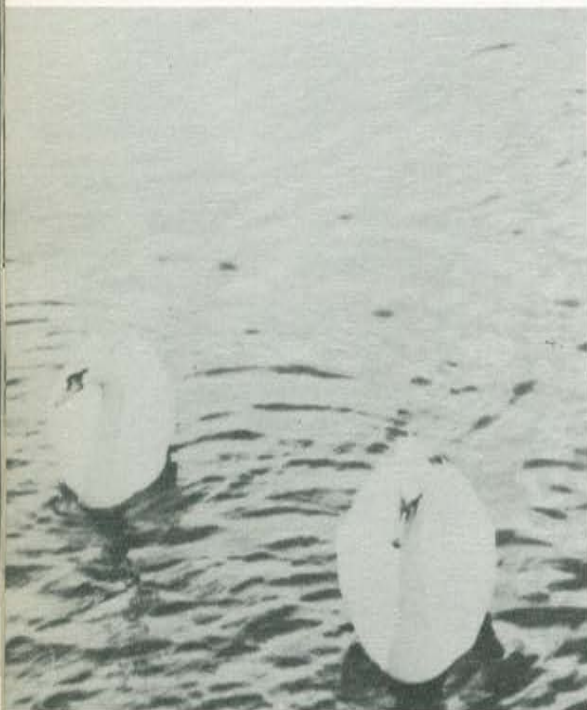
Kannenburg



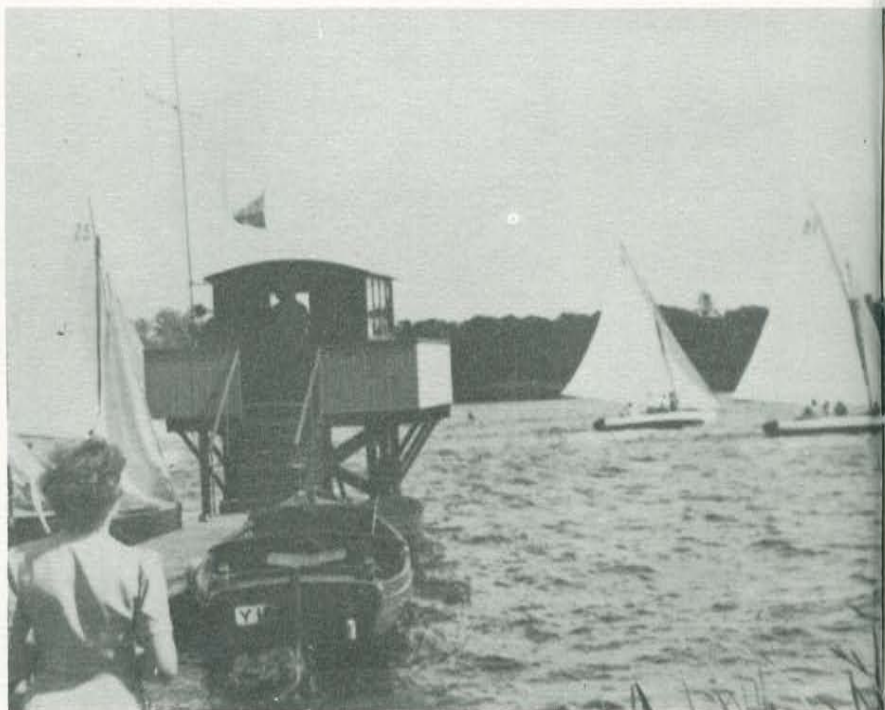
The General in a favorite pose

Rebich to Dent "I guess it is MR. 5 by 4½ now"

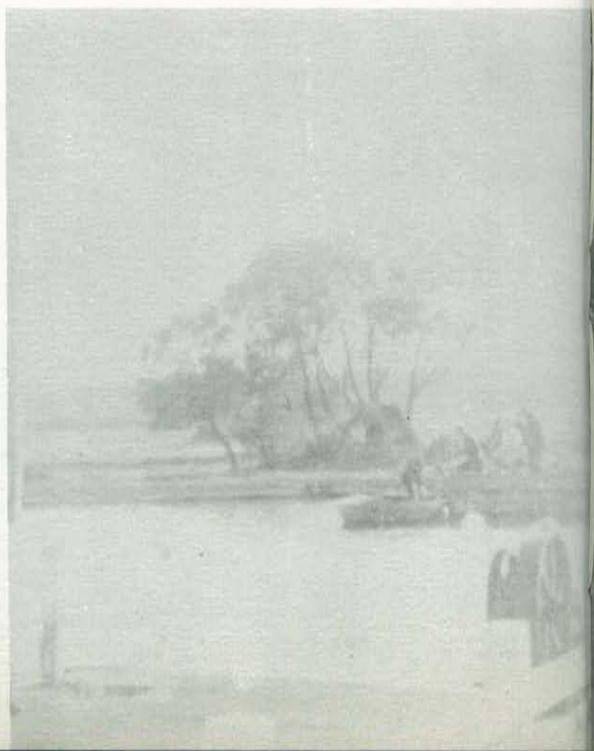
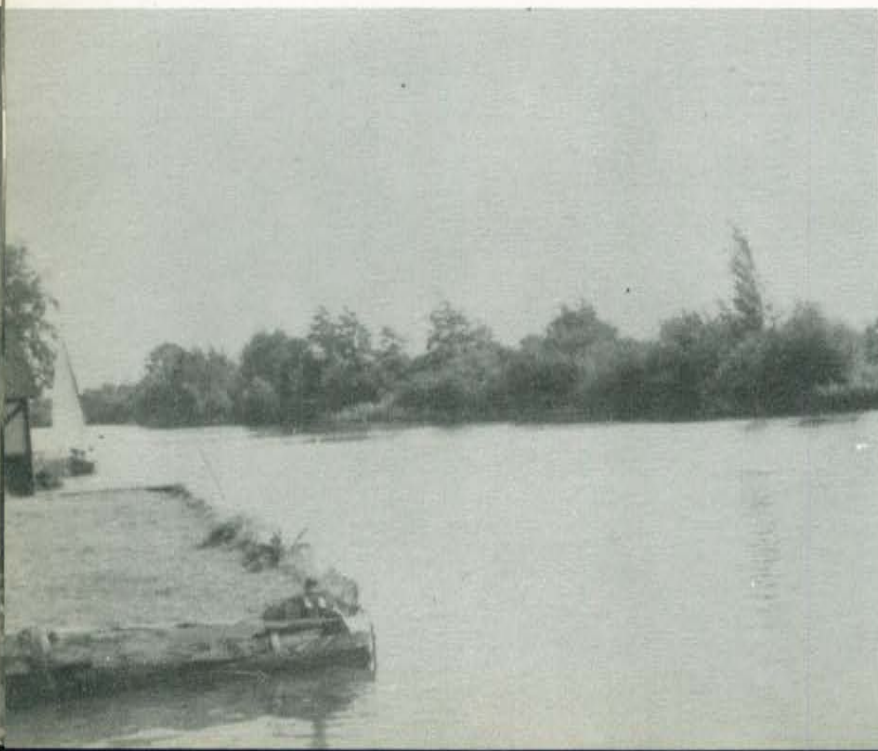




Swans at Wroxham
The River Yare



Sailing on the Broads
Horning Ferry





Buchner and the boys spreading top soil
Transforming a mud hole into a garden spot



Taylor and Dooley on opening day
Johnnie Reed asks Ambrose what is the chance
of an extra piece of pie





Phil, Ab

Through this kitchen passed the best food
in the ETO



Theado and Carr

That midnight shift





Wing party at Wroxham

Damage done by V-1 Buzz Bomb at Shipdam



Bachman and Anderson

Some of the boys





Mural by Wingert



Jake the Crow

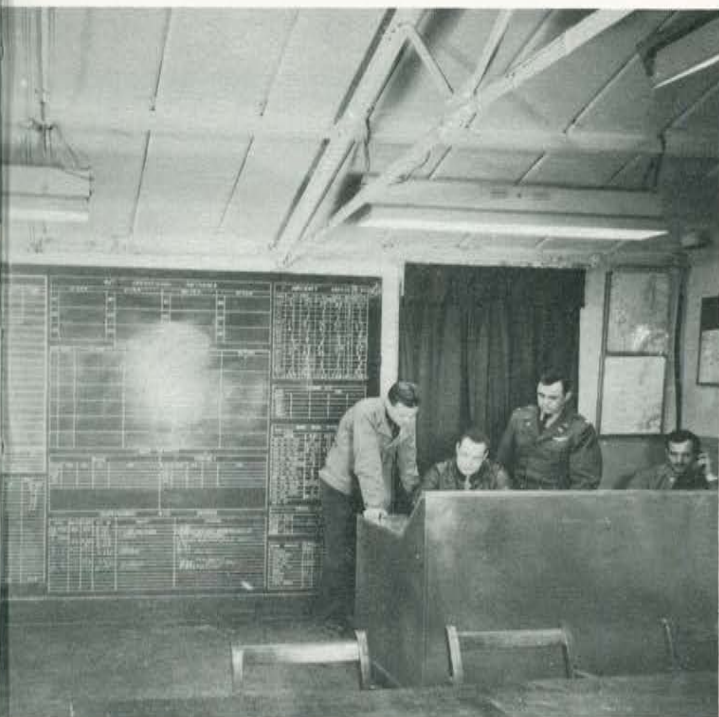


The Guy on the left doesn't know it but the General is slipping him a Mickey

That day in July, that was summer

Turn off that bright Light! You're blinding me





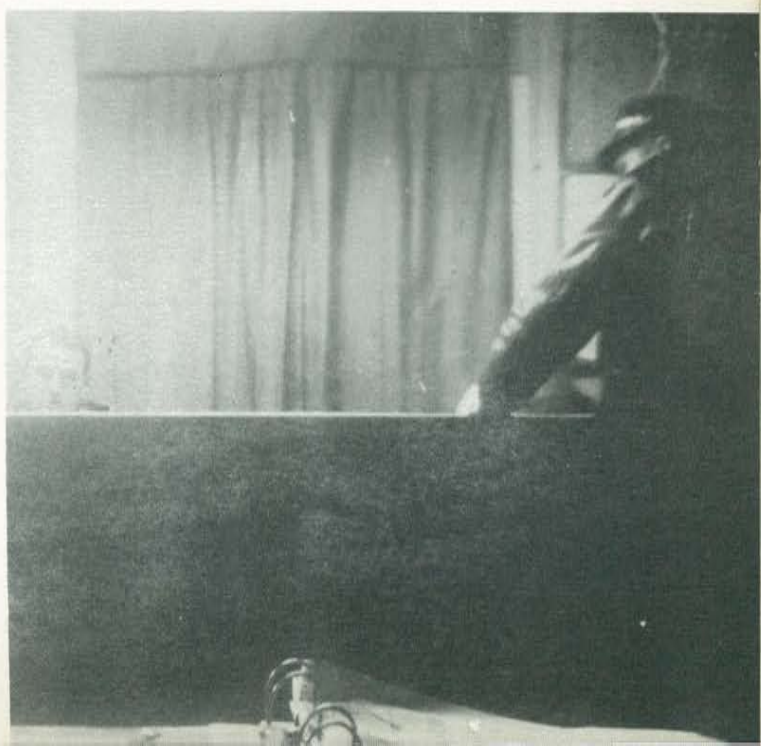
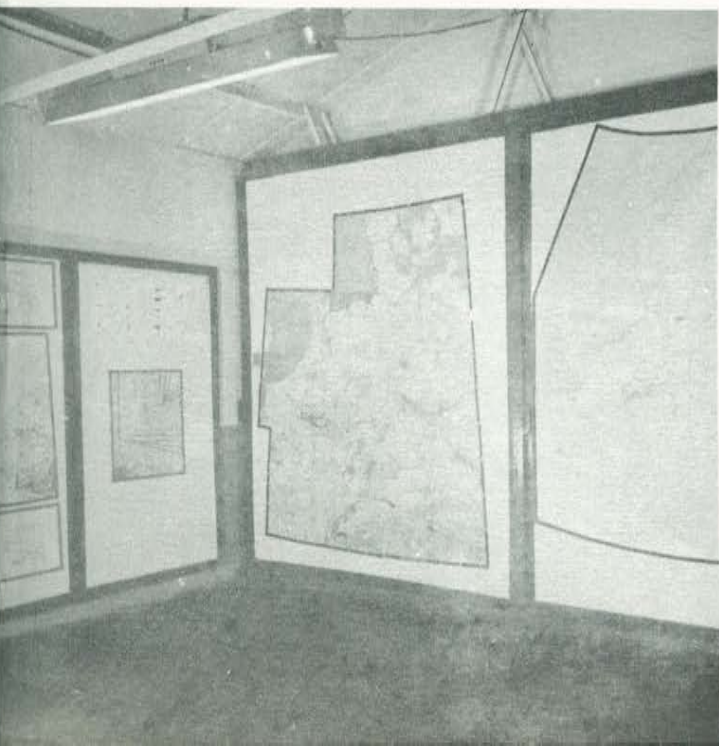
The beginning of a mission



The target today is

Maps

The controller, controlling





The general leaves the wing June 1945,
for the states

The Place du Concorde, Paris



General Jack Wood and Greene Benton drop
by the generals room in Paris

The Eiffel Tower





Hoosier, Douglas, Wiggins, Waterman lend a hand on the new club

Kabot, the first to leave for Civvie Street



Buster looks the situation over

Damn cold, these English winters





"Cheers"



Wendling Station

Cute isn't he?



PICTURESQUE



England



INNERS COTTAGES, DEREHAM



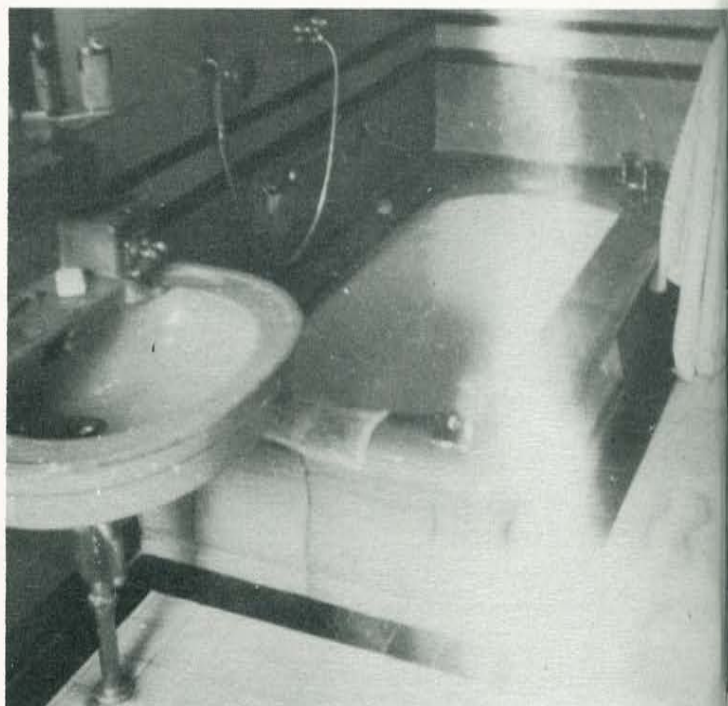
CHURCH STREET, DEREHAM.



CONNAUGHT RD., AILEBOROUGH



Hotel room
Taxi Sir!



Some of the British plumbing isn't too bad
Big Ben





Selfridges, the American department store, on Oxford Street, London

The bloomin' laydie is tyken the rotor out of 'er bloomin' car. Jerrie might steal it, you know



Buckingham Palace, changing of the guard

The first turning on the roit tykes you to Shipdham Aerodrome. You can't miss it!



Sandringham, The King's Country Estate

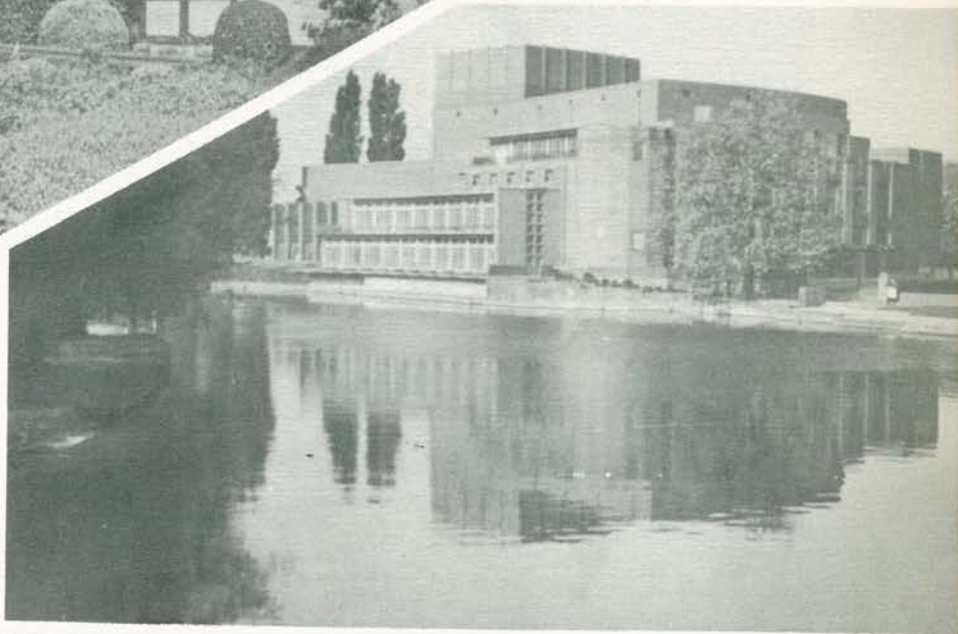


STRATFORD-ON-AVON



Stratford-On-Avon
Ann Hathaway's cottage

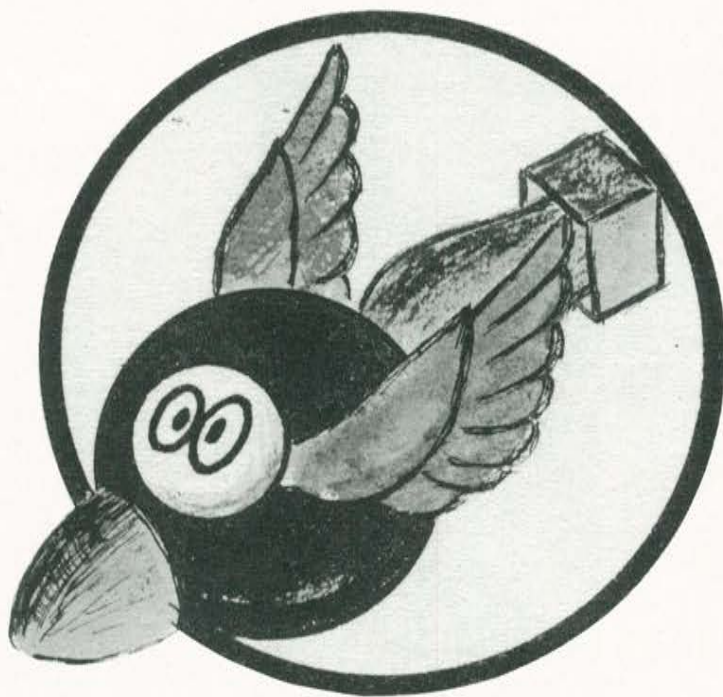
Shakespeare Memorial Theater



Shakespeare's home



44th Bomb Group (H)



Shipdam

The following units comprised the famous station at Shipdham, Norfolk

14th Bombardment Wing (H)
44th Bombardment Group (H) Headquarters
66th Bombardment Squadron (H)
67th Bombardment Squadron (H)
68th Bombardment Squadron (H)
506th Bombardment Squadron (H)
464th Sub Depot
50th Station Complement
1646th Ordnance Company
806th Chemical Company (Detachment A)
1287th Military Police Company
2033rd Engineer Fire Fighting Platoon
1132nd Quartermaster Company



44th BOMBARDMENT GROUP

Battle Credits

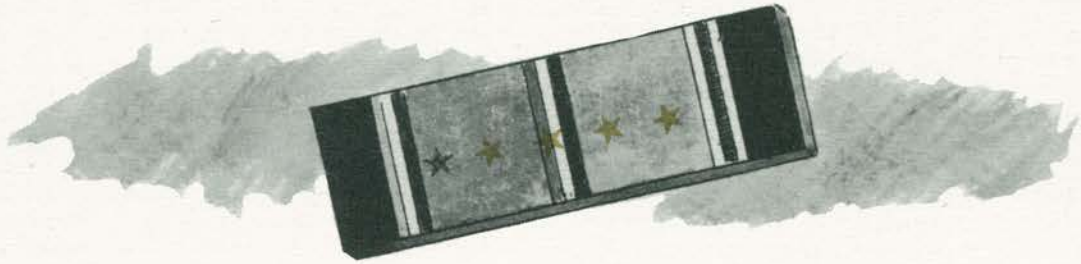
Time Limitation

War Dept.

Gen. Orders

Anti-submarine

28 Jan. 1942—22 July 1942 85, 1945



ETO

Battle Credits

Time Limitation

War Dept.

Gen. Orders

Air Offensive Europe	4 July 1942—5 July 1944	85, 1945
Ploesti, Rumania	1 Aug. 1943	59, 1945
Sicily	14 May 1943—17 Aug. 1943	91, 1945
Naples-Foggia	18 Aug. 1943—21 Jan. 1944	96, 1945
Normandy	6 June 1944—24 July 1944	102, 1945
Northern France	25 July 1944—14 Sep. 1944	103, 1945
Central Europe	22 Mar. 1945—11 May 1945	116, 1945
Rhineland	15 Sep. 1944—21 Mar. 1945	118, 1945
Ardennes	16 Dec. 1944—25 Jan. 1945	114, 1945

DISTINGUISHED UNIT

CITATION WITH CLUSTER



KIEL, GERMANY

The 44th Bombardment Group (H), Headquarters 66th, 67th, 68th, and 506th Bombardment Squadrons (H), have distinguished themselves by outstanding performance of duty in the attack on the naval and shipbuilding installations at Kiel, Germany, on 14 May 1943, one of the greatest aerial battles of this war.

On this mission a single group was, for the first time, fully loaded with incendiaries to be dropped after the lead groups had released their high explosive bombs. Because of the trail of the incendiaries the 44th Bombardment Group (H), which had been assigned this task, was required to continue its bombing run for some two miles beyond the release point of the other groups in order to bomb effectively. To accomplish this it was necessary to fly alone, without supporting fire power of other groups, over one of the most heavily defended areas in Germany with a formation considerably smaller than the minimum for mutual self-protection. The mission was undertaken with full knowledge of the extreme hazards involved. Its successful performance demanded the highest degree of bravery and skill.

With only 19 B-24's, the 44th Bombardment Group (H) followed three B-17 groups to the target. Fierce and determined attacks by some 120 enemy fighters commenced at the

German coast and continued until after leaving the coast on the return route. After the B-17's had reached their release point and turned away, the 44th Bombardment Group (H) proceeded alone in the face of continuous attacks by swarms of enemy fighters and increasingly concentrated flak. By opening its formation as required to clear the incendiaries of ships ahead, it was rendered particularly vulnerable to enemy attack. Five of its airplanes were shot down on the approach to and over the target. Despite these losses, the group held the necessary formation and continued on its run alone to its bomb release point. Bombing was extremely accurate and the target was blanketed with incendiaries. Widespread fires destroyed or damaged many enemy installation. One additional airplane was lost after leaving the target.

This small force was officially credited with 23 enemy aircraft destroyed, 13 probably destroyed, and one damaged.

The successful fulfillment of this highly dangerous mission was due to the extraordinary courage, skill, and devotion to duty of all concerned, which will always be worthy of emulation. Such heroism reflects the greatest credit on the 44th Bombardment Group (H) and its component squadrons and upon the United States Army Air Forces.

PLOESTI, RUMANIA

The 44th Bombardment Group (H) is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy on 1 August 1943. Arriving in Africa without certain needed ground force personnel, this organization rapidly and efficiently completed preparation and training for a low level bombing attack, which constituted an innovation in aerial combat. After thorough familiarization with their objective and the landmarks of their 2,400 mile flight, the crews of this organization's aircraft departed on this dangerous mission in the calm and efficient performance of their duties. Though separated en route to the target from a portion of the formation, they proceeded undaunted to the initial point where it was discovered that their target had been previously attacked by an-

other element. Though the element of surprise upon which the safety and success of this type of attack depended so strongly was now lost, they fearlessly approached their target through the maelstrom of anti-aircraft fire, exploding oil storage tanks and plants, despite the simultaneous attacks of enemy fighter aircraft. At the risk of their lives and often at the sacrifice of their lives, these gallant airmen left this enemy oil refinery, plant, and installations at Ploesti a blazing inferno and twisted mass of wreckage. This organization by its successful accomplishment of this mission in such a gallant and distinguished manner rendered a service to our nation and to our allies which will always be conspicuously outstanding in the annals of our air forces.

COMMANDING OFFICERS 44th BOMBARDMENT GROUP

Col. Frank Robinson
1942—3 January 1943



Col. Leon W. Johnson
4 January 1943—2 September 1943



Col. James Posey
3 September 1943—3 December 1943

Col. Fred R. Dent
4 December 1943—28 March 1944

Col. John H. Gibson
29 March 1944—14 August 1944

Col. Vernon C. Smith
17 April 1945—

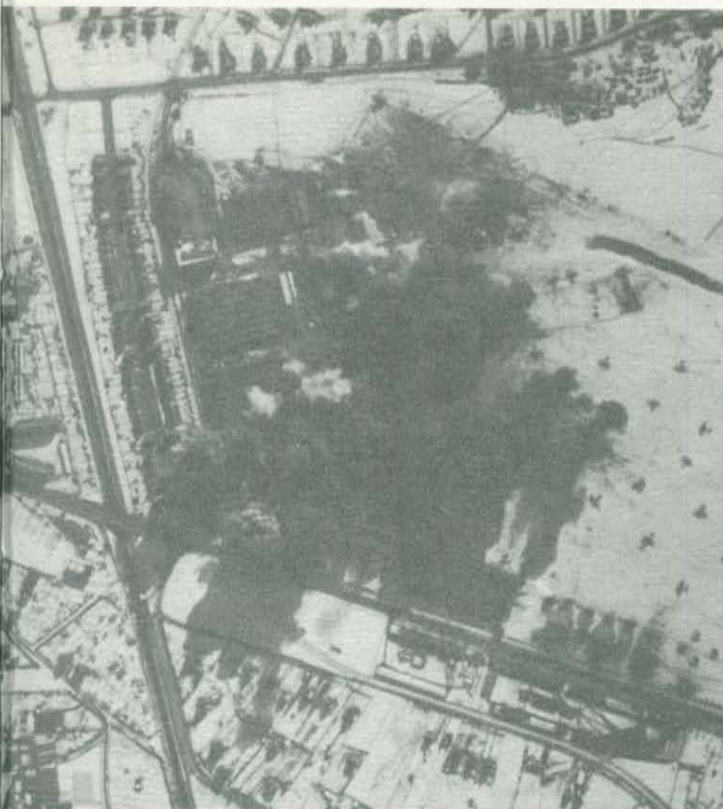


Col. Eugene H. Snavelly
15 August 1944—16 April 1945



STAFF





And Furth went up in smoke on 25 Feb. 1944



Likewise for Bernburg 11 April 1944

Zeitz, 28 May 1944





Kassel, 7 October 1944—They were making
too damn many Tiger Tanks here

Hemmingstedt, 20 March 1945



Lippstadt, 5 October 1944

Stormede, 24 March 1945





ME 262 attacking 44th B. G.



Fort De Royan

Smoke markers



Flak scarecrow







Brandon and crew on leave



Johnson (without mustache) Posey, Snavelly, Norsen

Volley Ball court in front of officers mess



The Quid disbursing section







Waiting for take-off

Hodge, Spinkle, Griffin



Briefing

Arnold, Kolliner, Col. Johnson, McPhillamey,
McCoy, Misner



FIGHTER SUPPORT



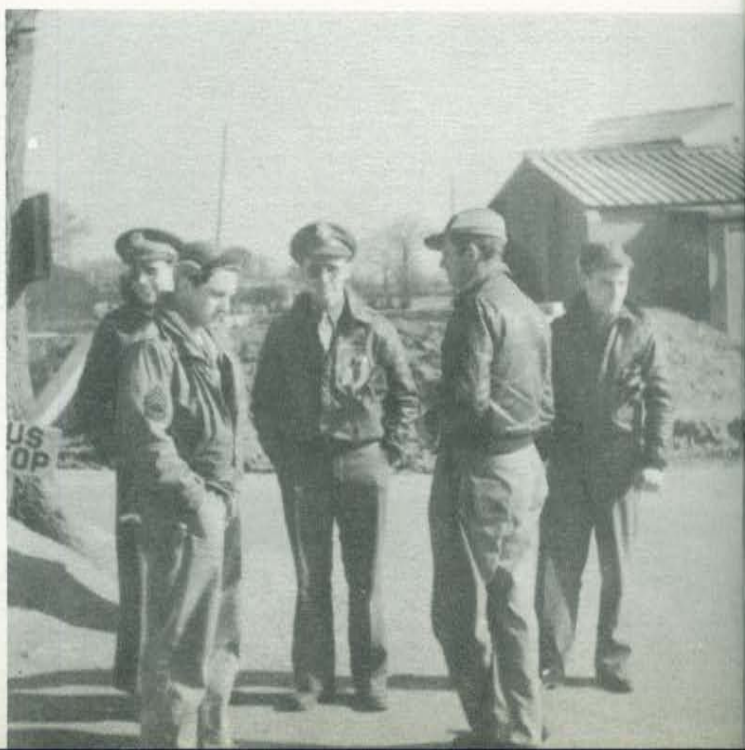
P-47's — American

The 44th flies damn close formation



Spitfire — British

Waiting for the bus at "the big tree"





Al Carr gives Gen. Hodges and Group staff the low down

We got things pretty well under control at the end

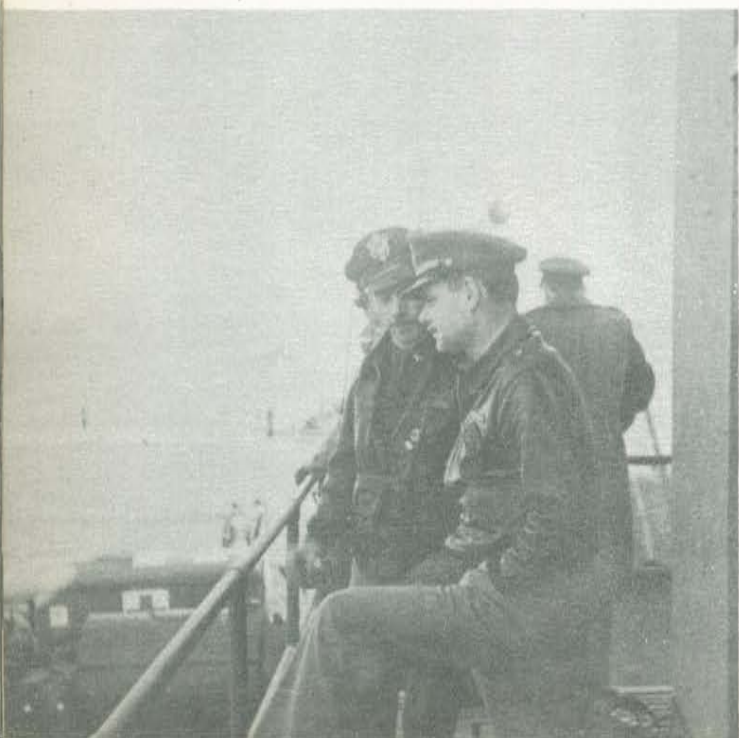




Lt. Col. Brandon, "on duty"
Dent and Johnson at Flying Control



Sgt. Marnell and King
Hero sweats the weather out



44th Bombardment Group Party, 2 Sept. 1944



Left to right: General Johnson, General Kepner,
Lord Ironsides, Colonel Brandon

"Tupence change from a pound, sir."



That nasty rum

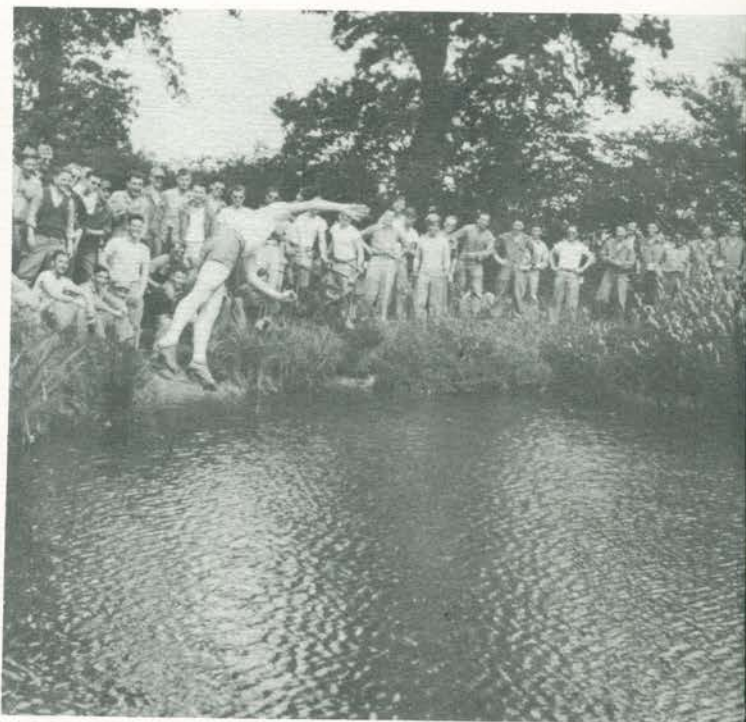
Our British friend, Major Mike Parker



200th MISSION PARTY



Col. Gibson hits the pond
Place your bets, gentlemen



General Johnson—likewise
2000 gallons of beer for 3000 men isn't bad





Blind out, isn't it?
The den of iniquity



'Ave a go, 'Arry
Funny as hell, wasn't it General?





Step right up, a bob a time

Nice



Mild and bitter

How did Red Wright get in this picture?





That ice cream was the first they had ever had
Darn nice toys, even if they were grapefruit cans



Don't be shy, little girl
And a present for you





392nd BOMBARDMENT GROUP

Wendling

The following units comprised the outstanding
Station at Wendling, Norfolk:

392nd Bombardment Group (H) Headquarters

576th Bombardment Squadron (H)

577th Bombardment Squadron

578th Bombardment Squadron

579th Bombardment Squadron

2974th Finance Detachment (Prov)

568th Army Postal Unit

2101st Engineer Fire Fighting Platoon (Avn)

1217th Quartermaster Company (Avn) (RS)

806th Chemical Company Detachment H

1825th Ordnance S & M Co. Detachment H

1287th Military Police Company Detachment H

10th Station Complement

History 392nd Bombardment Group (H)

The 392nd Bombardment Group was activated on 26 January 1943, the cadre coming chiefly from the 39th and 34th Bomb Groups, Lt. Colonel Irvine Rendle commanding.

The first B-24's of the Group landed at Wendling, Norfolk on 15 August 1943. The first mission was made on 10 September 1943 against Poix Airfield, France.

By 1 January 1944, the 392nd Group had 21 missions to its credit.

The Group's outstanding mission was the mission on 24 February 1944 to the Gotha Waggenfabrik at Gotha, Germany, the largest twin engine fighter plant in the Reich. Lt. Colonel Lorin L. Johnson was the command pilot for the 392nd and 14th Bombardment Wing formation.

The 392nd ships fought their way into the target and dropped 98 per cent of their bombs within 2000 feet, completely destroying the target.

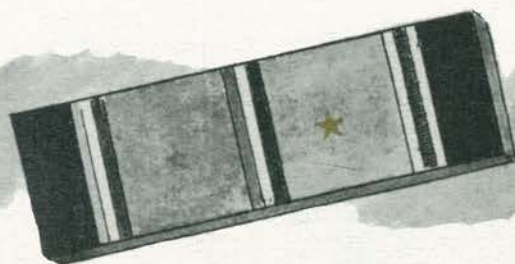
The 392nd flew its 100th mission on 6 June 1944—D-Day. The target—The Invasion Beach, France. The 392nd was cited by Major General James P. Hodges for a degree of bombing accuracy on its 100 missions consistently better than that of any other unit of the 2nd Air Division.

Operational personnel changed in 20 months. All the faces that meant "Old Crew", the teams that trained in the states, disappeared. Some were missing in action, turning up later as prisoners of war. Others were never heard from. Others were retired from combat after completing their tour of missions. Only four men of the crews that flew the first mission, flew in the 200th.

Colonel Lorin L. Johnson replaced Col. "Bull" Rendle as C.O. and the squadrons were commanded by new squadron commanders.

At the war's end, the 392nd had flown 285 missions against enemy targets ranging from Norway to Southern France, and as far east as 12 miles ahead of the advancing Russian Armies at Swinemunde near Gdynia. The combat and ground personnel received over 9,000 decorations for valor and meritorious achievement. With this, the outstanding combat record of the 392nd was brought to a close.

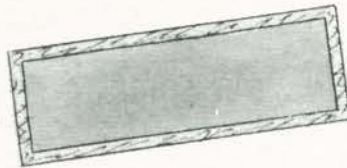
392nd BOMB GROUP



ETO

<i>Battle Credits</i>	<i>Time Limitation</i>	<i>War Dept. Gen. Orders</i>
Air Offensive Europe	4 July 1942—5 July 1944	85, 1945
Normandy	6 June 1944—24 July 1944	102, 1945
Northern France	25 July 1944—14 Sep. 1944	103, 1945
Central Europe	22 Mar. 1945—11 May 1945	116, 1945
Rhineland	15 Sep. 1944—21 Mar. 1945	118, 1945
Ardennes	16 Dec. 1944—25 Jan. 1945	114, 1945

DISTINGUISHED UNIT CITATION



Gotha, Germany

The 392nd Bombardment Group (H), 2nd Air Division, is cited for outstanding performance of duty in armed conflict with the enemy on 24 February 1944. The group dispatched thirty-two B-24 type aircraft, the maximum number available to bomb the most valuable single target in the enemy twin engine fighter complex, the aircraft and component parts factory at Gotha, Germany. Of these, one was forced to turn back shortly after take-off. Flying as the lead group of the second combat wing in the division formation, they were attacked by the enemy upon entering the Dutch Coast. In the bitter aerial battle that ensued, the group was viciously attacked for over 2½ hours by approximately 150 enemy fighters, consisting of FW-190's, ME-110's, ME-210's, and JU-88's, who raked them with cannon and rocket fire and even attempted air-to-air and cable bombing in a vain effort to disrupt the formation. As the 392nd Bombardment Group (H) neared the initial point, the units of the lead combat wing were observed to be proceeding on divergent courses. The group was faced with the decision to follow the lead units of the air division to a questionable target and maintain the integrity of the division formation, or to pursue a separate course that might later prove to be erroneous and which would expose the group formation to even greater enemy attacks. The group chose the latter, and maintaining perfect formation valiantly fought its way through the flak defenses to bomb the target with pin-point accuracy, virtually destroying it. Although seven of their aircraft were lost to the relentless enemy in the battle into and from the target and an additional 13 aircraft suffered battle damage, they accounted for the confirmed destruction of 16 enemy fighters, the probable destruction of one, and the damage of five additional fighters. The destruction of this high priority target was a serious blow to the German air force and was a contributing factor to its impotency in the invasion of Continental Europe. The aggressive courage, determination to do their task at all costs and combat efficiency of the air crews, together with the professional skill and devotion to duty of the ground personnel of the 392nd Bombardment Group (H), 2nd Air Division, reflect great credit on themselves and on the armed forces of the United States.

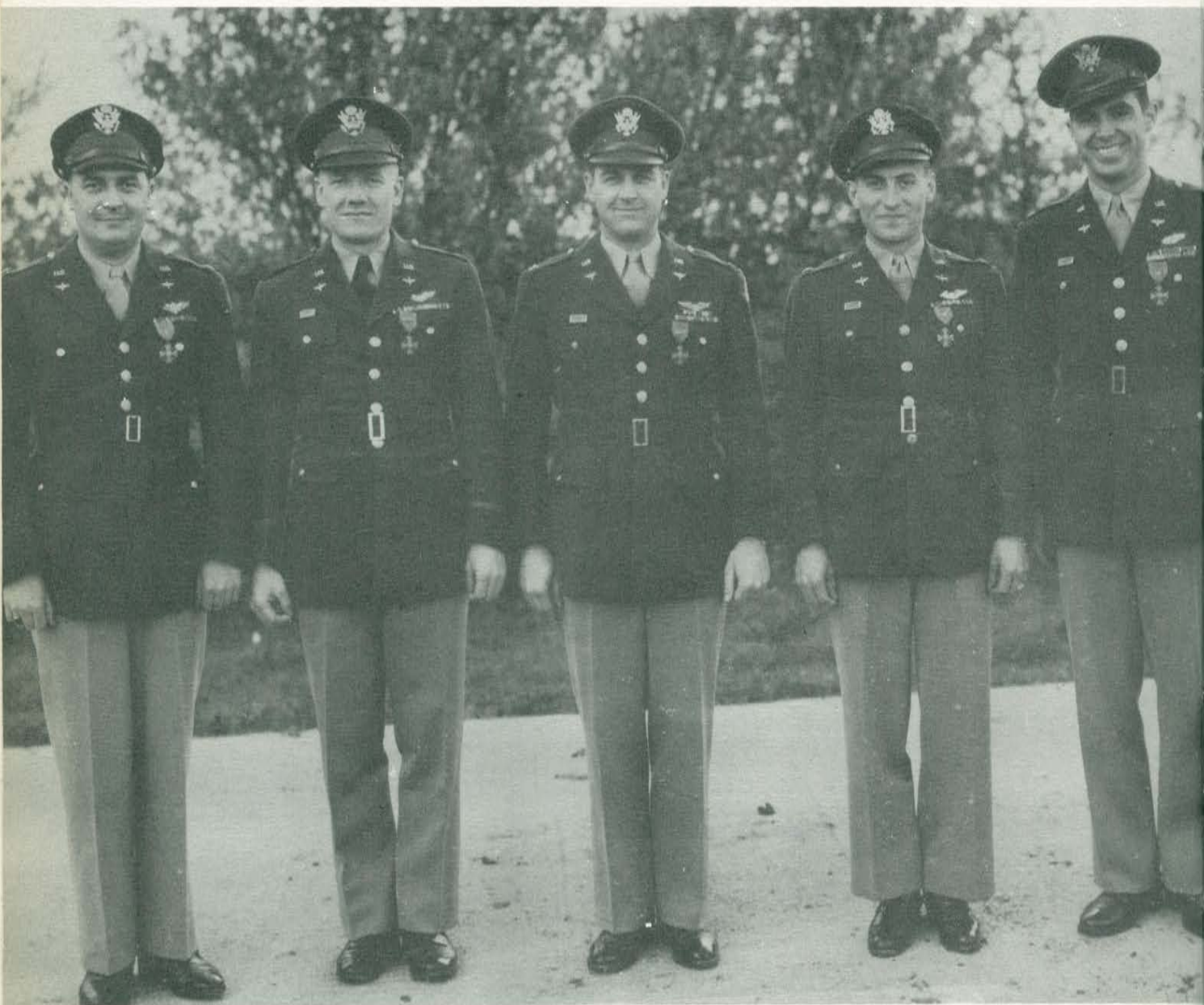
COMMANDING OFFICERS 392nd BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)

Col. Irvin "Bull" Rendle
— 27 June 1944



Col. Loring L. Johnson
—to 26 June 1944





COL. JOHNSON AND STAFF

GOTHA, GERMANY-24 FEBRUARY 1944

392nd BOMBARDMENT GROUP AWARDED
UNIT CITATION FOR THIS MISSION



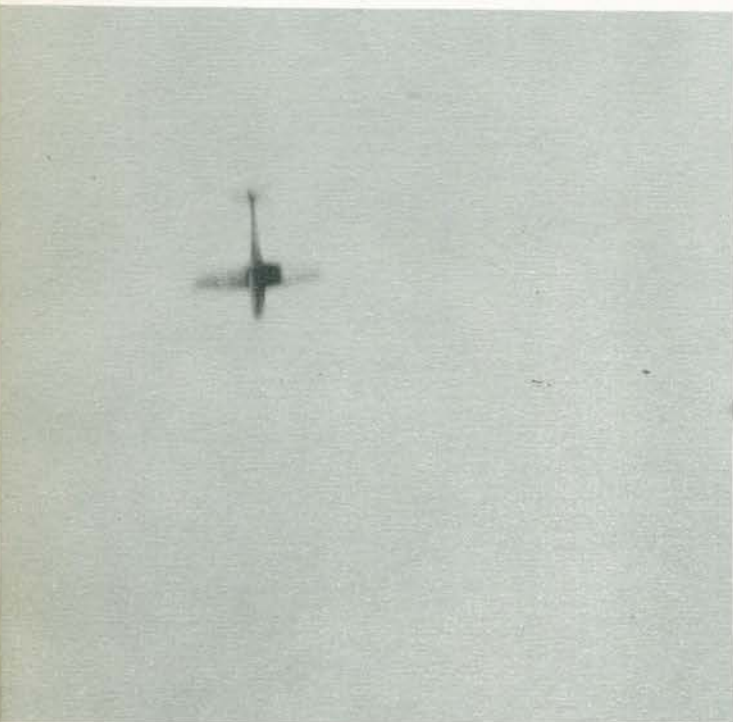
Lead Squadron



Low Squadron

High Squadron





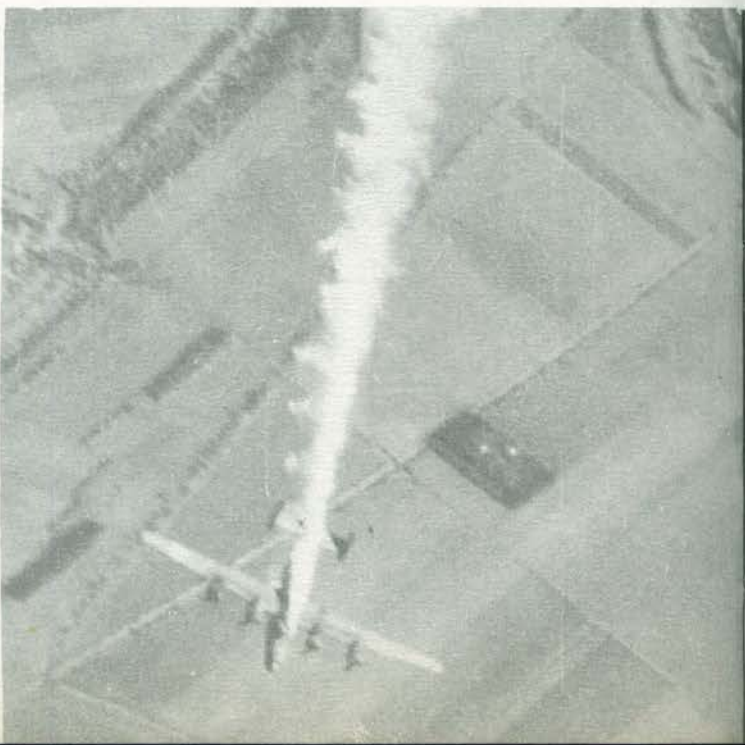
ME-109 Attacking Formation

The first mission to Berlin



Danzig—Germans attempt to conceal target
by use of smoke

Going down





Flak over Berlin

Hamburg, 6 August 1944



Politz, 20 June 1944

Aschaffenberg, 25 February 1945





General Ira Eaker inspects 392nd B. G.
17 September 1943

"Salute the Ground Man" address



Col. Johnson decorated by General Johnson

A visit by Major Alexander Seversky
30 April 1945





Could that be our CO "smiling"
S-2 Library

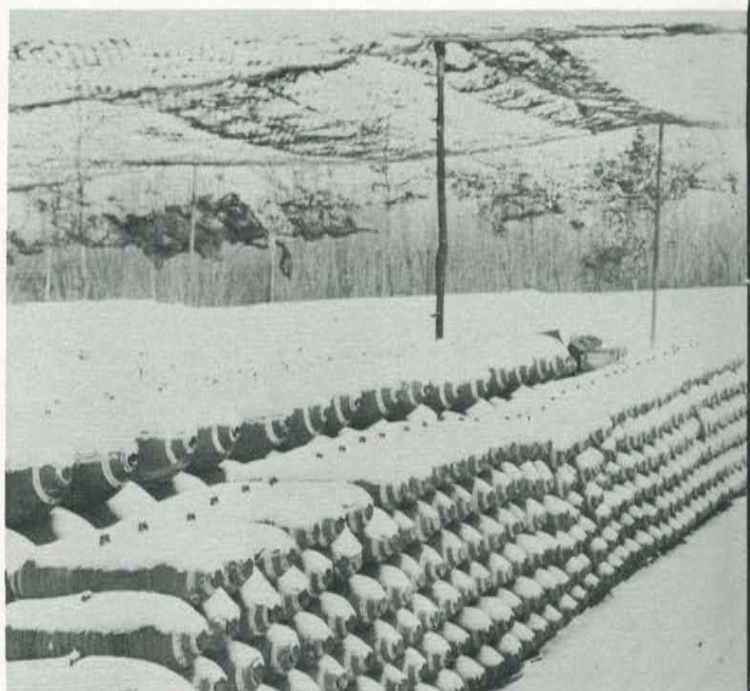


Gen. Hodges, Gen. Johnson, and people
Interrogation

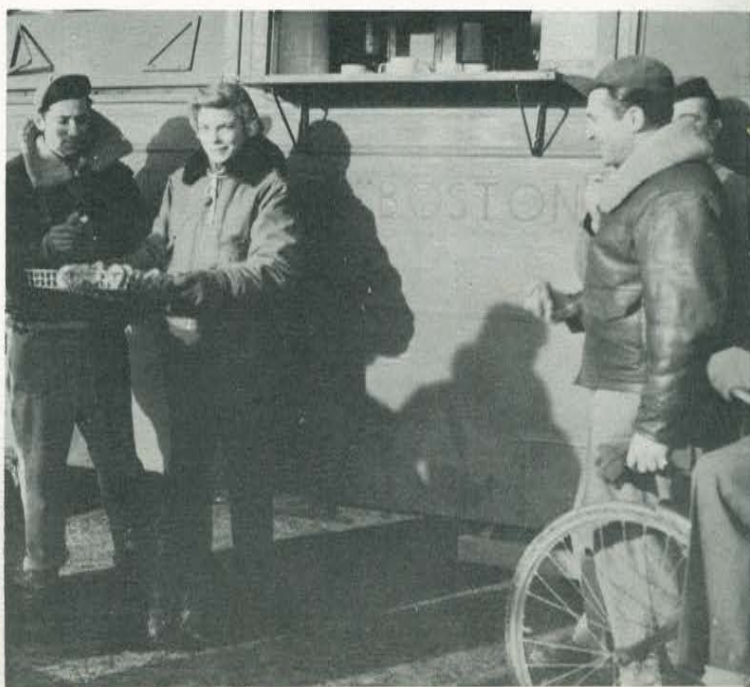


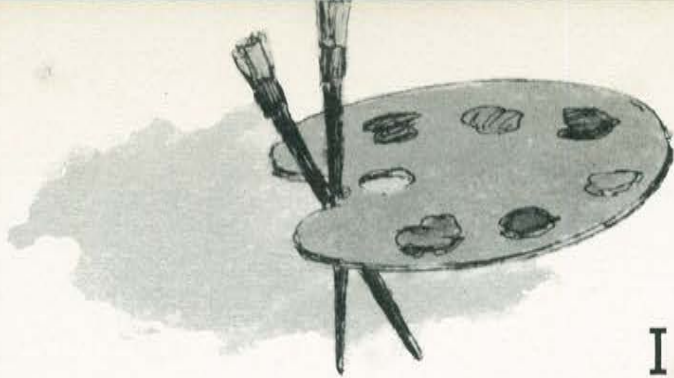


The snow—Go
We got strafed



Pretty, aren't they?
Those Red Cross girls were swell





INSIGNIA





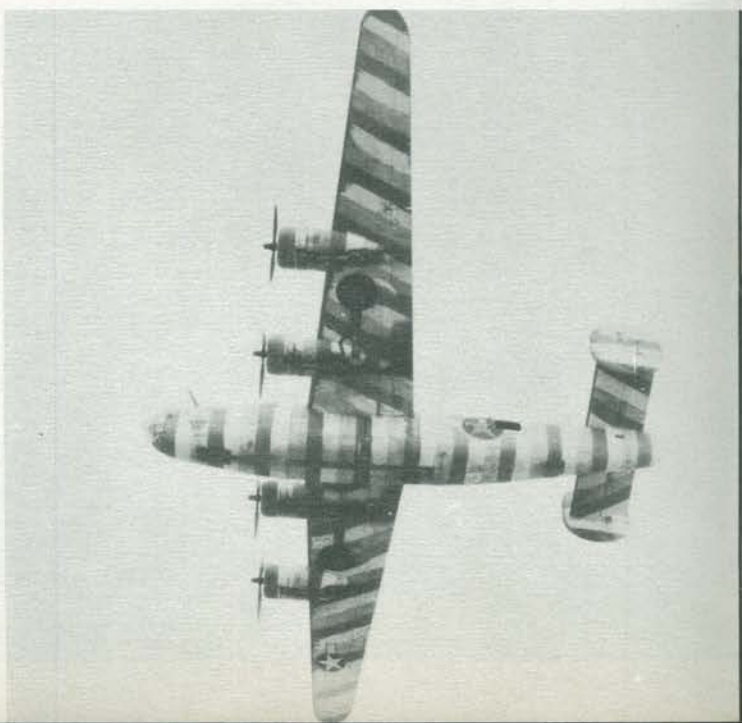
Col. Johnson with combat equipment

Black Widow project—52 men carried in a B-24 on a 10-hour flight



Sgt. Hoffman in the waist

Assembly ship





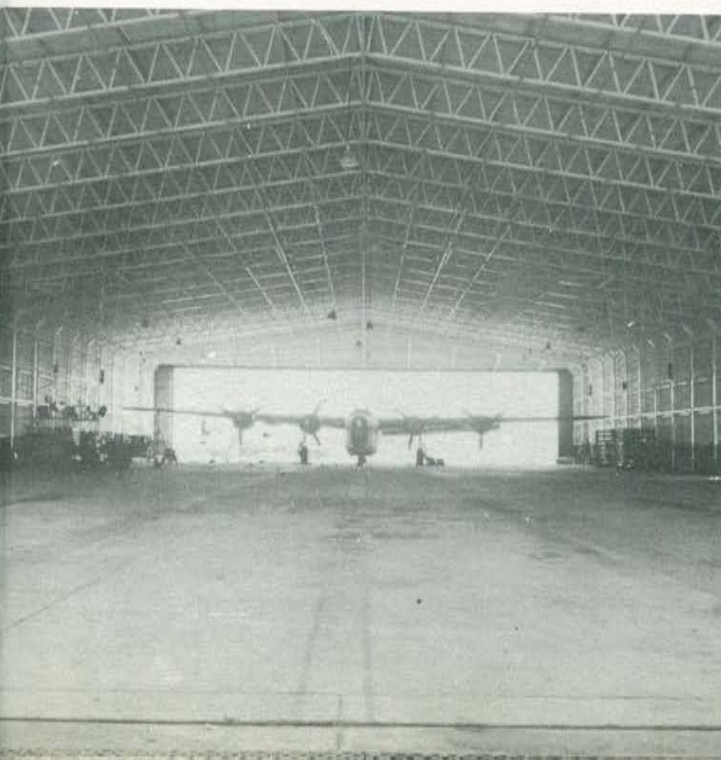
Loading for low level resupply mission—
Wessel

Hangar



British sea cadets visit field

Briefing for 200th mission



The Commanding Officer
and the Officers
U.S.A.A.F. Officers' Club
WENDLING, NORFOLK

cordially invite you to attend a

200 Mission Party and Dance

On FRIDAY, 8th December, 1944

L. L. JOHNSON
Colonel Air Corps
Commanding

MUST BE PRESENTED
AT THE DOOR

The Enlisted Personnel
U.S.A.A.F. Enlisted Club
WENDLING, NORFOLK

cordially invite you to attend a

200 Mission Party and Dance

SATURDAY, 2nd DECEMBER, 1944

Tea Dance - - 3-5
Supper Dance - 8-12

Movies, Floor Show, Athletic Contests
and other attractions

— TRANSPORTATION PROVIDED —

MUST BE PRESENTED
AT THE DOOR

L. L. JOHNSON
Colonel Air Corps Commanding



from the Officers and Men of the
392nd Bomb Group



Col. Johnson, Major Severslsy, General Johnson

Lead crew for 200th mission



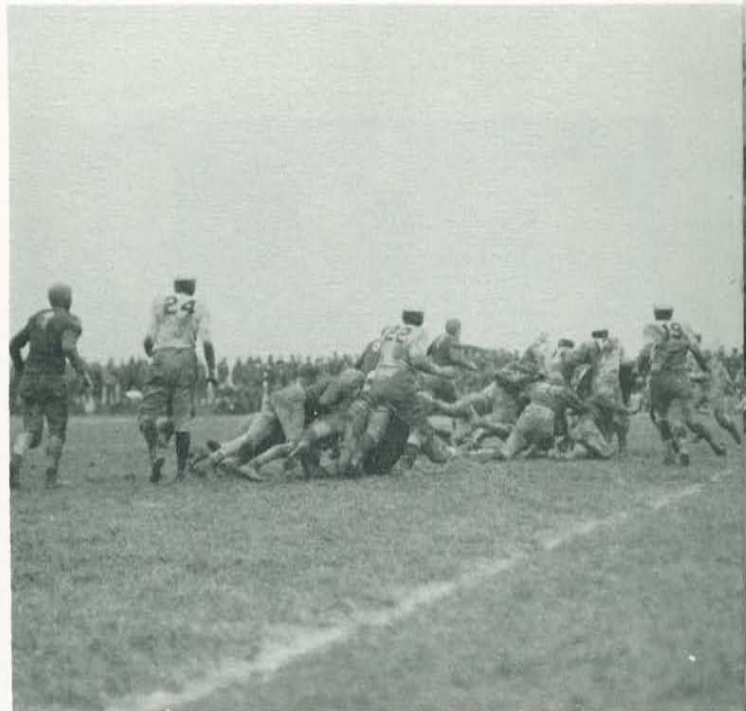
Major Severslsy and officers

Capt. Caldwell and crew of first mission to Russian territory. Name of ship "Tovorich"



Football

WENDLING-vs-TIBBENHAM



Major Glenn Miller and his AAF overseas band visit Wendling





First B-24 built by Ford
USO Show



Fusing bombs before take off
Christmas party





Chow
Invasion News



The Clubmobile
He has a feeling for form



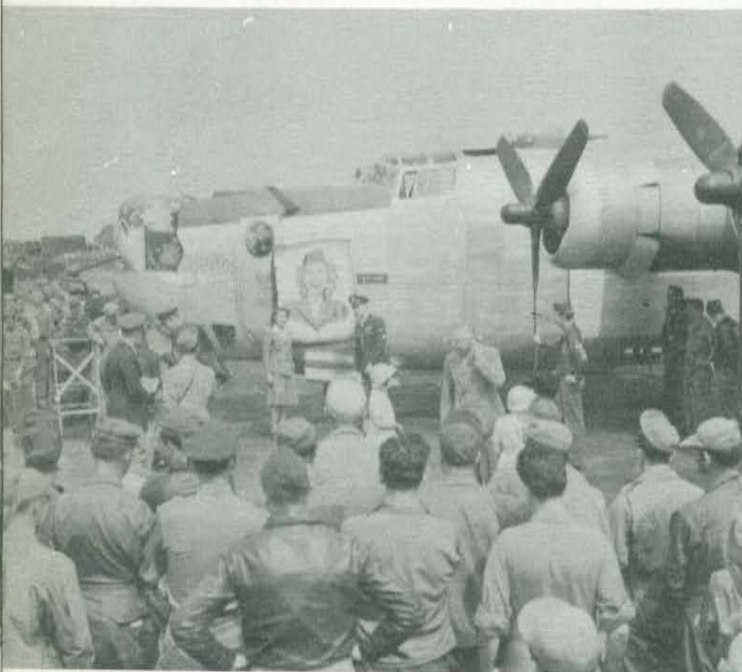


Bicycle race on perimeter track
Capt. Tynell and Chaplain McDonough



Pfc. Birkes and anti-aircraft gun
Flying control





Christening of B-24 in honor of Miss Birdie Schmidt, the ARC director

Base theater

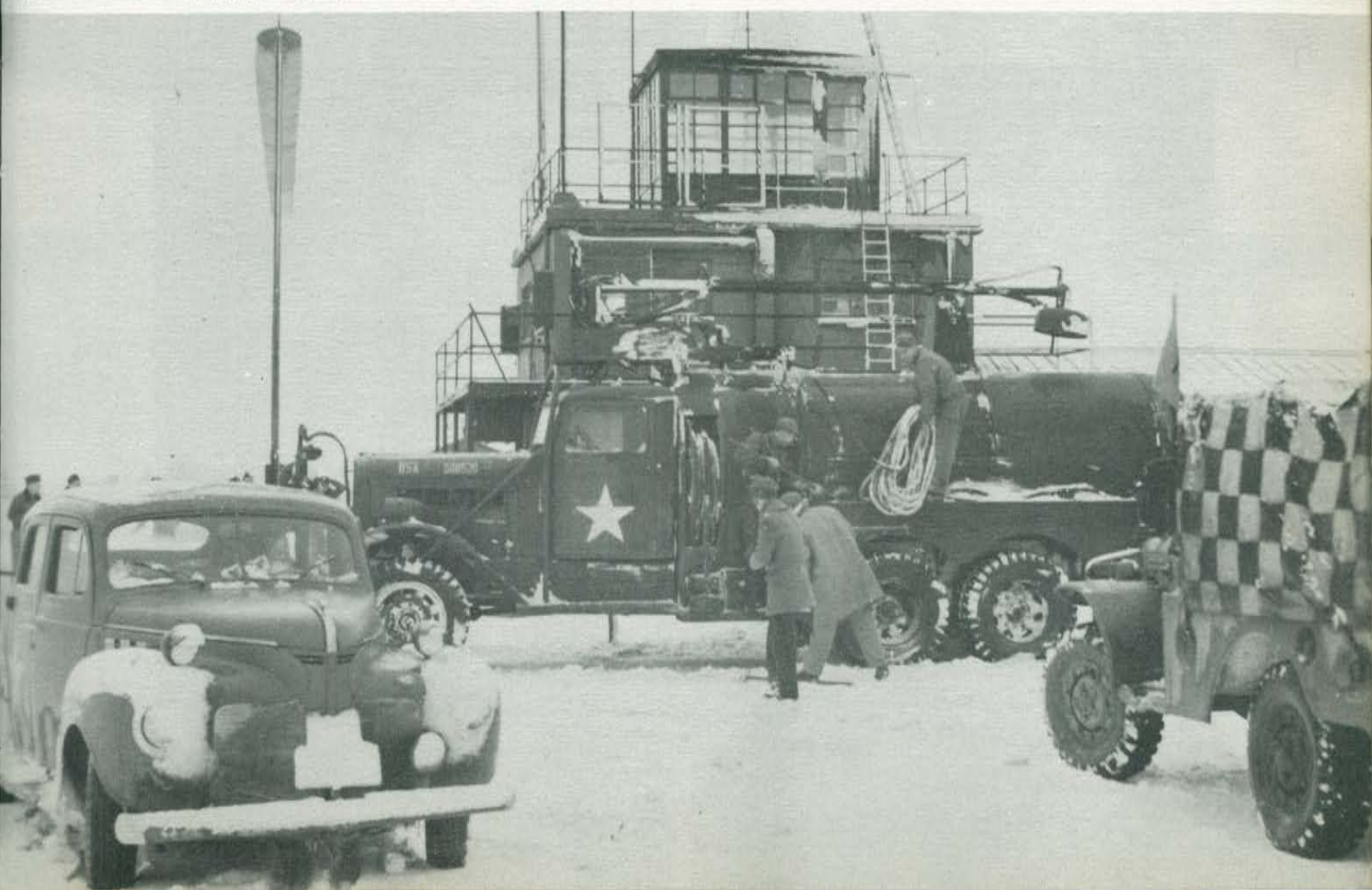


General Johnson decorates M/C Collins

Christmas dinner



I'M DREAMING OF A WHITE CHRISTMAS



RECEPTION HELD BY LORD MAYOR OF KINGS LYNN



FIELD MARSHALL LORD IRONSIDES VISITS WENDLING



The mess, Thanksgiving Day





491st BOMBARDMENT GROUP

491st BOMB GROUP HISTORY

1. General Order No. 135, Section 3, paragraph 1, Headquarters Second Air Force, Colorado Springs, Colorado, dated 22 September 1943; directed the activation of the 491st Bombardment Group. Originally three squadrons composed the Group: 852nd, 853rd, and 854th with the fourth squadron 855th being assigned while stationed at Tucson, Arizona to begin its training. At this point a cadre was dispatched to Orlando Field, Florida to take up its first phase of training. Upon completion, the group then assembled at Biggs Field, Texas for its second phase of training. It was in its third phase of training which was held at Pueblo, Colorado, that the group actually came into its own as a full fledged group. At Pueblo, Lt. Col. Carl T. Goldenberg assumed command of the group and under his direction and guidance the final bit of training was completed and the group was ready for combat flying. The twenty-fourth of April 1944 saw the first plane take off and wing its way toward England. This was to be the home of the 491st B. G. while it flew into combat against the German nation.

2. As the flight echelon with a skeleton ground force was on its way toward England, a ground force was drawn together of AAF personnel who were already over in England. These personnel were to be the bulk of the ground force. The station picked for this group was Metfield Airdrome, formerly occupied by P-47's. As the ground crews were hastily preparing the field for combat operations the first B-24 lowered its landing gear over the field on the 15th of May. Immediately an accelerated indoctrination program was set up to acquaint the crews with combat procedures and tactics in the E.T.O.

3. Exactly 17 days later on the 2nd of June, the Group was alerted for its first mission. An airfield in France was the target. From that day on this Group became an important cog in the fighting forces opposed to aggression. From the first day our troops landed on the beaches of Normandy the Group gave them both tactical and strategical support. This included D-Day tactical support, bridge bombing, enemy troop bombing, dropping of supplies to advancing paratroops, marshalling yards, refineries, cities, etc. The Group celebrated its 100th mission against the enemy with a party on December 1st, 1944.

4. The Group had just settled down at its field at Metfield after several months of operation when the bomb dump exploded causing the group to go non-operational for two days. Shortly thereafter August, 1944, the order came to move. North Pickenham, Norfolk was the new field designated for the group. The moving was carried on in very quick order so that only two days elapsed before operations were again resumed. Operations were car-

ried out from North Pickenham till this date under the green and white tail marking until we adopted the traditional black and white insignia of the 14th Combat Wing. During the period from September to December, 1944, the 491st Bomb Group led the 2nd Air Division in bombing, with 62% of its bombs within 2000 feet of the M.P.I.

5. Administratively the Group was continually rated excellent. 5,000 officers and enlisted men records were kept up to date daily. The men of the 491st performed their combat, technical and administrative duties in a highly efficient manner, evidenced by the hundreds of awards and decorations bestowed upon them. The paper work involved to obtain these awards and decorations promptly and expeditiously was tremendous. The importance of properly reporting battle casualties was an exacting task. There is no doubt that the technical and the administrative men stand side by side with the men who flew in receiving the honor and respect due this Group for its job—well done.

6. On 24 April 1945 the 491st Bomb Group was alerted to fly, but was "stood down", so its mission on 22 April 1945, which was its 187th, was the last combat mission flown by this Group. For the two months prior to VE-Day the 491st Bomb Group achieved the honor of becoming the leading Group in the 8th Air Force in bombing efficiency. VE-Day came two weeks later. No other Group has ever been committed to action so fast and flew so many missions in so short a time, achieving such fine results.

7. On 1 June 1945, the 491st Bomb Group was alerted for redeployment to the Pacific, which would first take the personnel to the United States for thirty days' rest and recuperation leave, then transition training from B-24's to B-29's and subsequent shipment to the Pacific, to join the 8th Air Force which was already operating against Japan.

8. On 16 June 1945, the first flight of the Air Echelon left for the United States. On the two succeeding days the remainder of the Air Echelon took off. On 4 July 1945 the Ground Echelon boarded trains at Swaffham, England with the Port of Debarkation in Scotland. At this port they boarded the Queen Mary for the trip home.

9. The entire Group re-assembled at McChord Field, Tacoma, Washington, in the middle of August 1945. VJ-Day came soon thereafter and the 491st Bomb Group was inactivated on 8 September 1945.

10. Three men have directed the destiny of the Group since it began combat operations two years ago. They are: Lt. Colonel Carl T. Goldenberg, Colonel Frederic H. Miller, Jr., and Colonel Allen W. Reed. They were ably supported by the following staff members:

Deputy Group Commander: Lt. Colonel Jack G. Merrell and
Lt. Colonel Lyman H. Goff
Group Executive Officer: Lt. Colonel Charles J. Halbert
Group Personnel Officer (S-1): Captain Nicholas Jabbour
Group Intelligence Officer (S-2): Major Herbert Bronnor and
Major Verle Pope
Group Operations Officer (S-3): Lt. Colonel Lyman H. Goff
Major Alfred G. Hayduk
Major William Shy

Group Supply Officer (S-4): Captain Neville H. Gibson
CO, 852nd Bomb Squadron: Lt. Colonel Kenneth R. Strauss
CO, 853rd Bomb Squadron: Lt. Colonel Harry M. Stephey
CO, 854th Bomb Squadron: Lt. Colonel Charles C. Parmelee
CO, 855th Bomb Squadron: Lt. Colonel Escar Watts, Jr.
CO, Air Service Group: Lt. Colonel Leroy Everett
CO, Air Materiel Squadron: Captain Albert Sells
CO, Air Engineering Squadron: Major William Neff

North Pickenham

The following units comprised the excellent station at North Pickenham, Norfolk:

491st Bombardment Group (H) Headquarters

852nd Bombardment Squadron

853rd Bombardment Squadron

854th Bombardment Squadron

855th Bombardment Squadron

479th Sub Depot

1261st Military Police Company

326th Station Complement

1450th Ordnance S & M Company

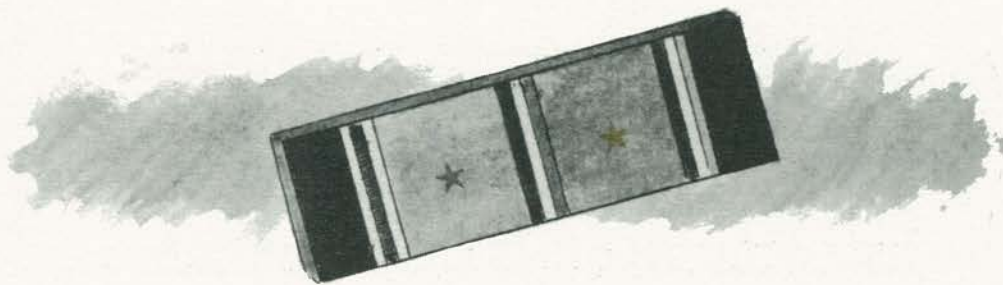
1234th Quartermaster Company Service Group
(Avn)

2108th Engineer Fire Fighting Platoon (Avn)

266th Medical Dispensary (Avn)

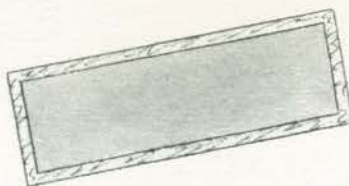
208th Finance Section (Avn) Detachment B

491st BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)



ETO

<i>Battle Credits</i>	<i>Time Limitation</i>	<i>War Dept. Gen. Orders</i>
Air Offensive Europe	4 July 1942—5 July 1944	85, 1945
Normandy	6 June 1944—24 July 1944	102, 1945
Northern France	25 July 1944—14 Sep. 1944	103, 1945
Central Europe	22 Mar. 1945—11 May 1945	116, 1945
Rhineland	15 Sep. 1944—21 Mar. 1945	118, 1945
Ardennes	16 Dec. 1944—25 Jan. 1945	114, 1945



Misburg, Germany

The 491st Bombardment Group (H), 2nd Air Division, is cited for outstanding performance of duty in armed conflict with the enemy on 26 November 1944. The group dispatched thirty-one B-24 aircraft to bomb the only remaining active oil refinery in Misburg, Germany. As the group, flying as an individual wing, approached the target area, enemy fighters engaged the 1st Division and all area fighter support was diverted to meet this encounter. The group's close fighter support was engaged at the initial point by 300-400 single engine enemy aircraft. The air commander had to decide whether to uncover his three squadrons in the face of imminent enemy attack or to preserve the group formation and meet the enemy with a united front. Realizing that superior results could only be obtained by uncovering, he unhesitatingly ordered this maneuver. As the bombs of the lead squadron went away, more than 100 FW 190's and ME 109's struck the high squadron and a vicious battle ensued to the point of release. Fighting off savage attacks from determined enemy fighters that closed to within 100 yards, this squadron successfully dropped its bombs on the target and valiantly defended itself until the entire squadron was wiped out. The low squadron was next attacked by the enemy, who using the same tactics downed all but four of its Liberators. These aircraft rallied with the lead squadron and with their mutual fire support held the enemy at bay until friendly fighter support arrived. The 491st Bombardment Group (H), 2nd Air Division, was given confirmed credit for seven aircraft destroyed, 11 damaged, and three probables. These figures do not include the aircraft destroyed by the fifteen B-24's that failed to return from this mission. Despite the vicious, relentless, and overwhelming numbers of the Luftwaffe, and disregarding intense and accurate flack, the small gallant force, stripped of its fighter support, courageously opposed the enemy for more than 30 minutes to reach this vital target, inflicting heavy damage on the installations at a time when its operation was imperative to enemy's resistance. Photographs show that extensive damage was done, and much of the destruction may be credited to the valiant airmen who battled a numerically superior force, tenacious in his endeavor to halt the Liberators. By the outstanding valor, professional skill, and determination of the combat crews, together with the technical ability and industry of the ground personnel, the 491st Bombardment Group (H), 2nd Air Division, has honorably upheld the highest traditions of the military service, reflecting great credit on itself and the armed forces of the United States. (General Orders 181, Headquarters 2nd Air Division, 31 May 1945, as approved by Commanding General, European Theater of Operations).

COMMANDING OFFICERS 491st BOMBARDMENT GROUP

Col. Fred Miller—26 June 1944—
2 January 1945



Col. Allen W. Reed—2 January 1945





OUR SQUADRON COMMANDERS



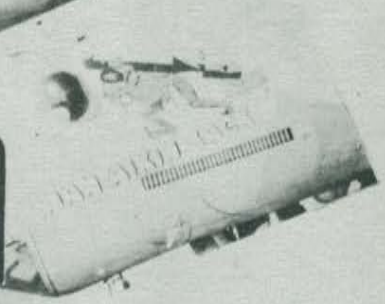
852nd



853rd



854th



855th



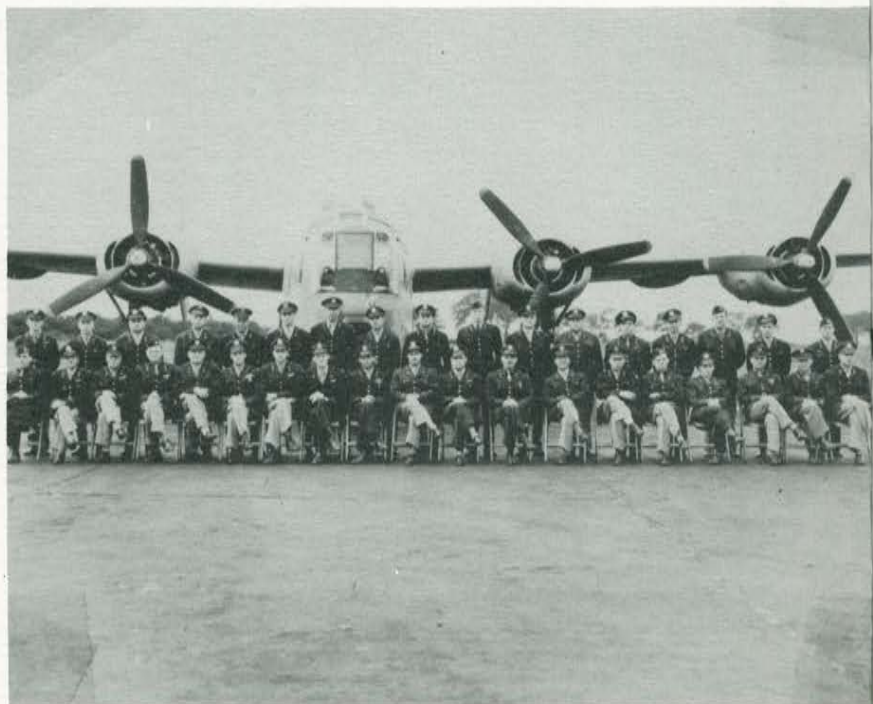
OUR OPERATIONS..



491st Bombardment Group



The General and the Colonel



The Staff

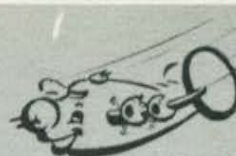
Attention



Shy gets the DFC



Arrival... OUR FIRST SHIPS AND COMMANDING OFFICER —



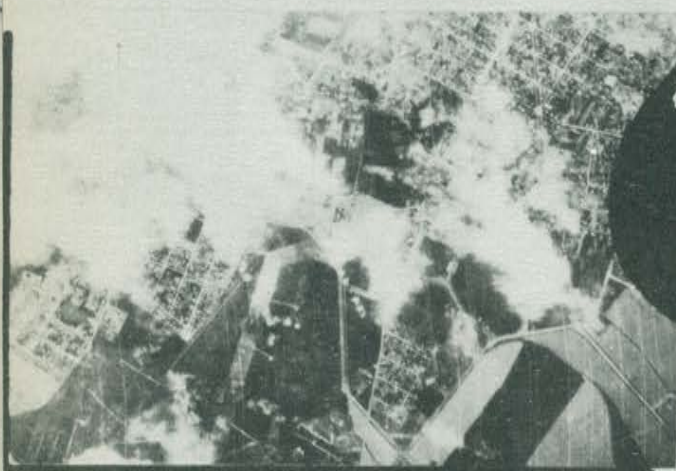
WETFIELD

MAY 15, '44





BRIEFING



STRIKE!

LANDING AT DUSK -



2 JUNE, 1944

TARGET: ORLY $\frac{A}{F}$ FRANCE

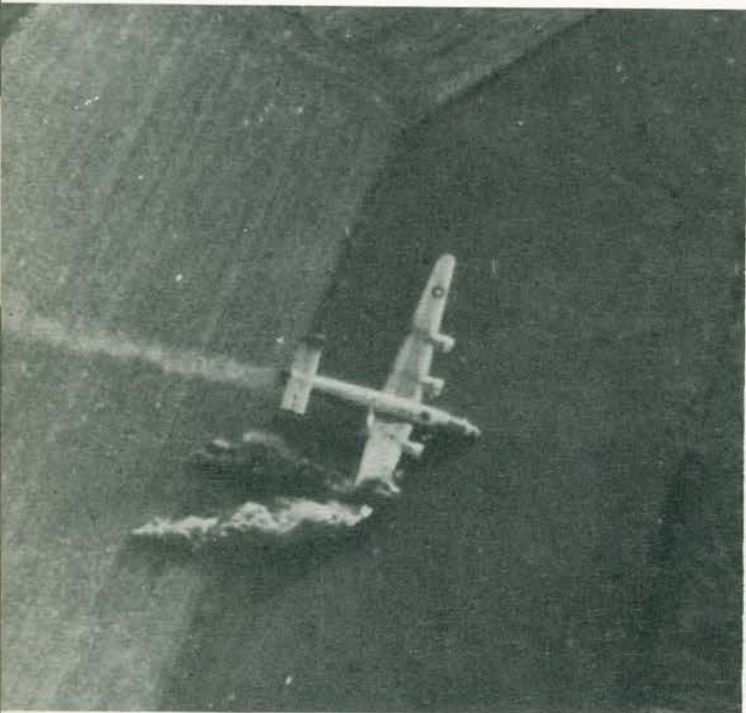
RESULTS: FAIR



INTERROGATION



Coming Home

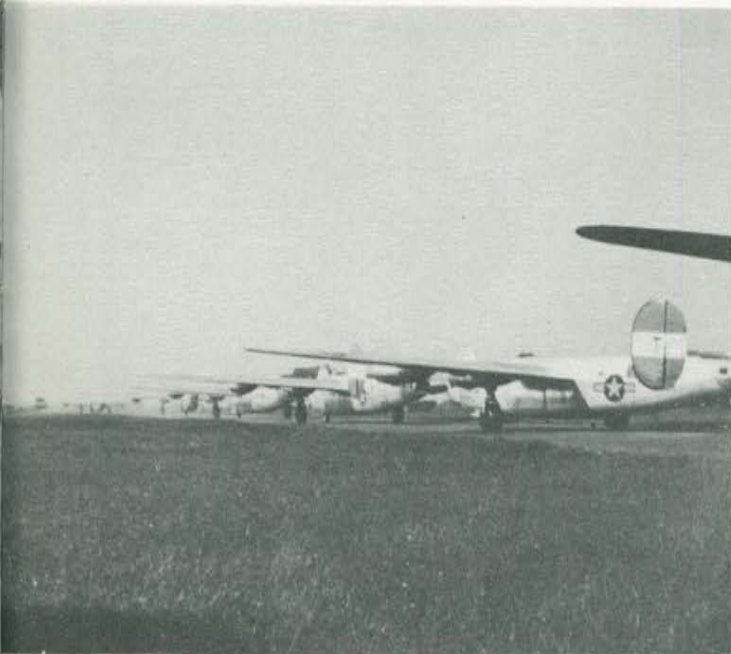


One that didn't get home
Hemmingstedt Oil Refinery 14 January 1945

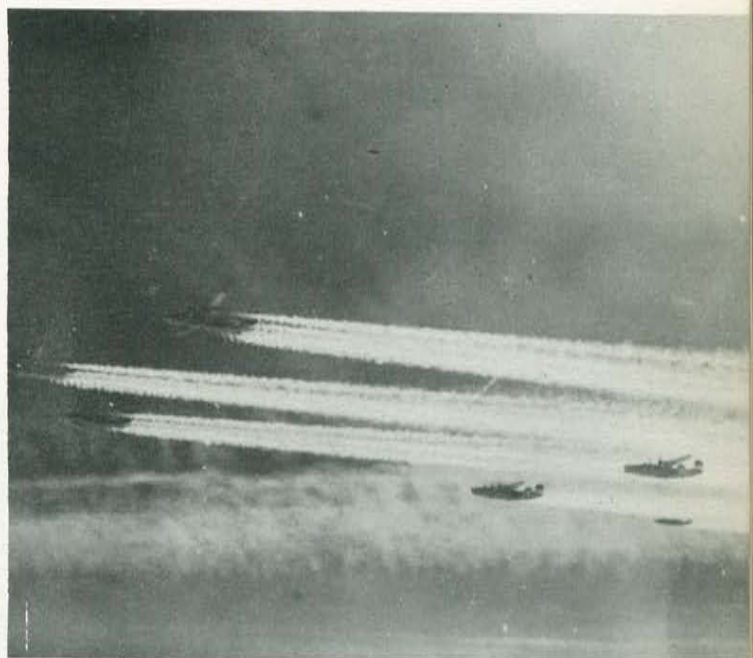


Hanover 24 August 1944
Eschwege 22 February 1945





Assembly on the perimeter track

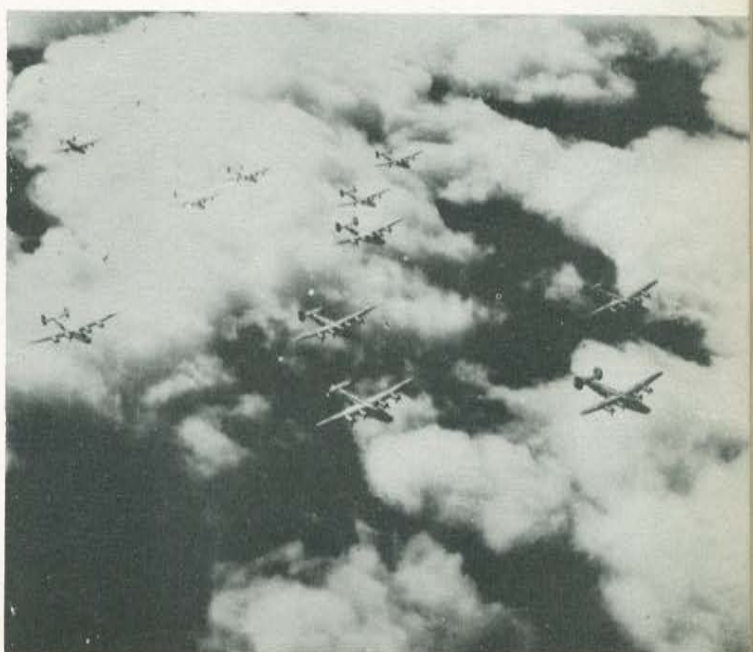


Contrails

Tuck it in



491st Formation

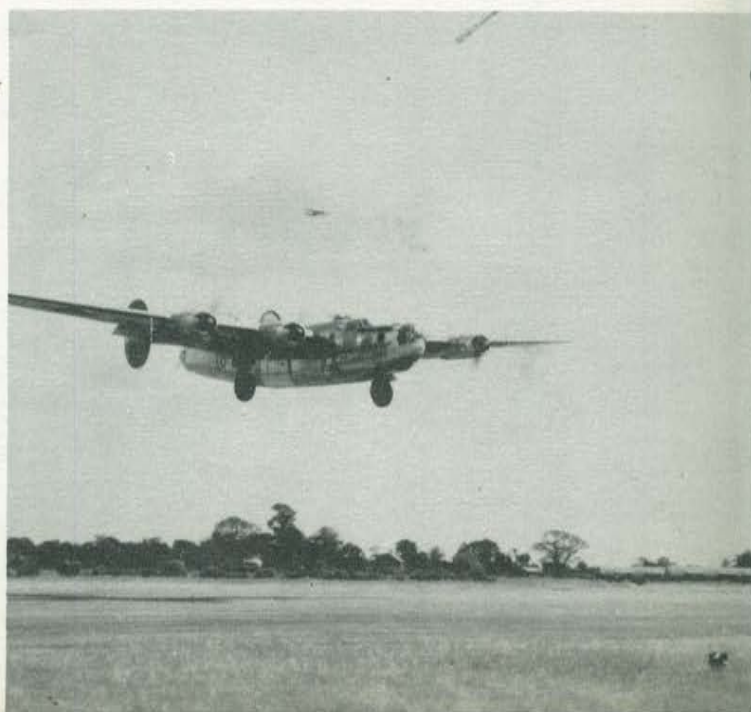




Bombs away
The trip home is the longest



Down they go
Home never looked as good as North Pick





The ground looks a long way down
English countryside



He floats thru the air
"The line"

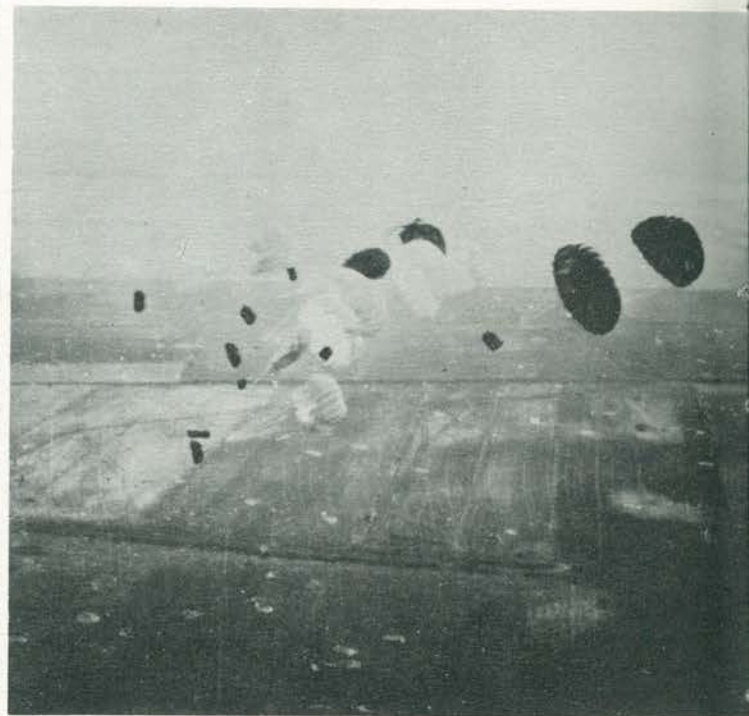


Re-Supply Mission-Best Holland

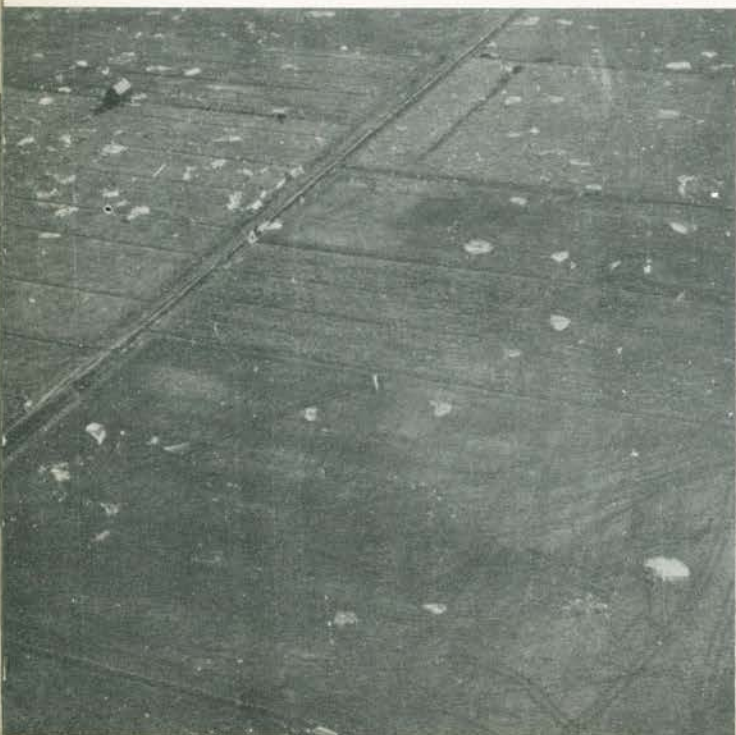
15 September 1944



Out they go
Mission completed



Dead center
Lets go down and take a look



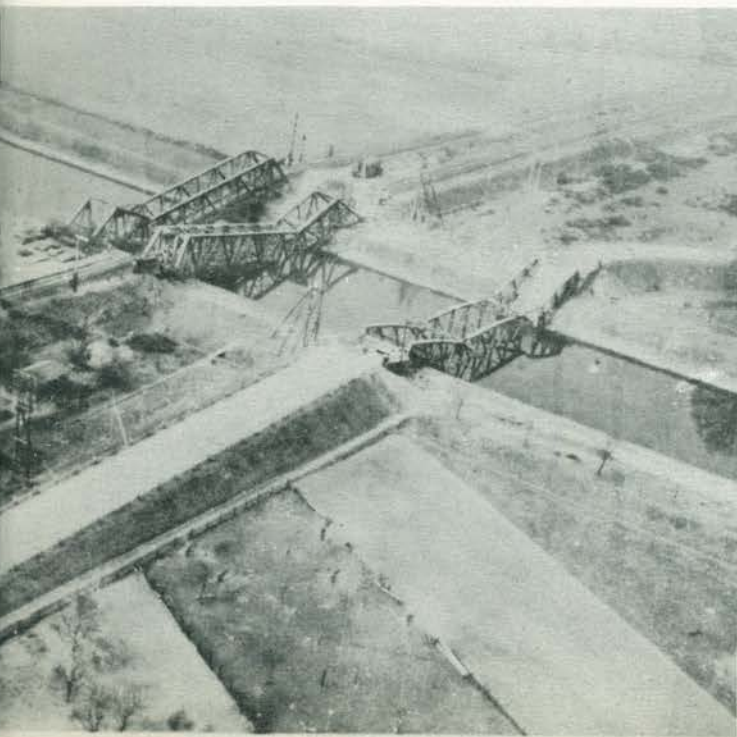
"Der Vaterland"



Germany was nice for a day anyway
We should have left a bridge for our use



War is hell—Cologne
Mein Gott, it iss Col. Reed
and Harry Stephey





"I do"

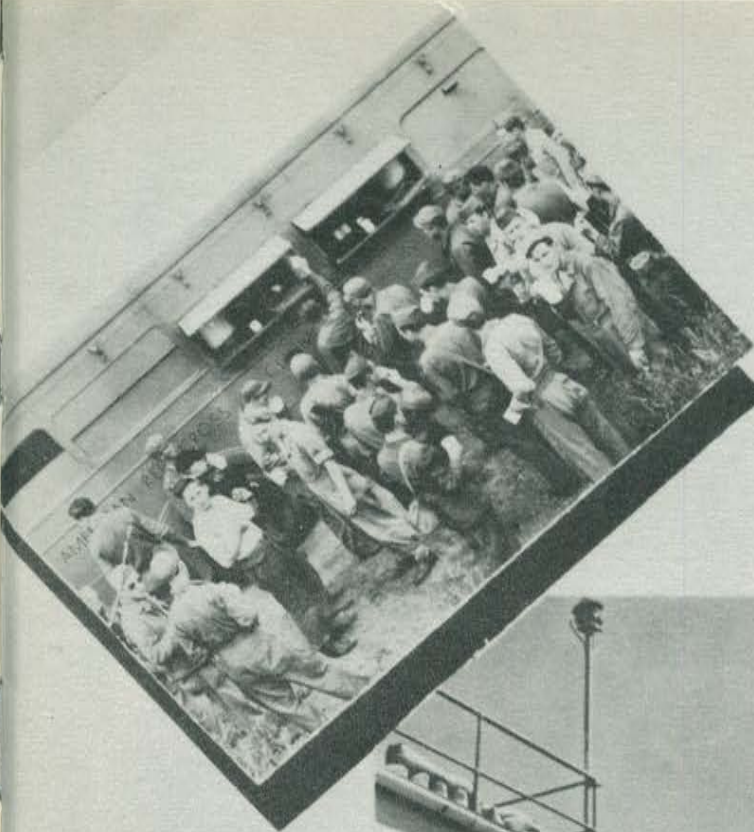
Lt. Col. Stephey, SQ. C. O.



Self explanatory

Damn cold, these English winters





LIFE



*IN THE
491ST*





Norfolk, in "SUNNY" ENGLAND ...





Group S-1 Staff



Gp. Personnel Officer: Capt. N. Jabbour
Personnel Sergeant Major: M/Sgt. John W. Anderson



Mike, Ray, Nick and Duck
"Is that Paris? OO-LA LA!"

Duck dinner for the Medics



Jack, Hurd, Horse and Woopy



Waiters for a day

"In my father's house, we'll have rest"—One time!



Bless 'Em All

They say there's a troop-ship just leaving Bombay,
Bound for old Blighty's shore,
Heavily laden with time-expired men,
Bound for the land they adore,
There's many an air-man just finishing his time,
There's many a "twirp" signing on,
You'll get no promotion this side of the ocean
So cheer up my lads, bless 'em all,
Bless 'em all, bless 'em all,
The long and the short and the tall,
Bless all the sergeants and Double your Ones,
Bless all the corp'rals and their blinkin' sons,
For we're saying good-bye to them all,
As back to their billets they crowd,
You'll get no promotion this side of the ocean,
So cheer up my lads, bless 'em all.

I'VE GOT SIXPENCE

I

I've got six-pence, jolly, jolly six-pence,
I've got six-pence to last me all my life.
 I've got tup-pence to spend
 And tup-pence to lend
And tup-pence to send home to my wife,
 Poor wife.
No cares have I to grieve me
No pretty, little girls to deceive me.
I'm happy as a king, believe me,
As we go rolling, rolling home.

REFRAIN

Rolling home, rolling home
By the light of the silvery moon;
Happy is the day when the airman gets his pay
As we go rolling, rolling home.

II

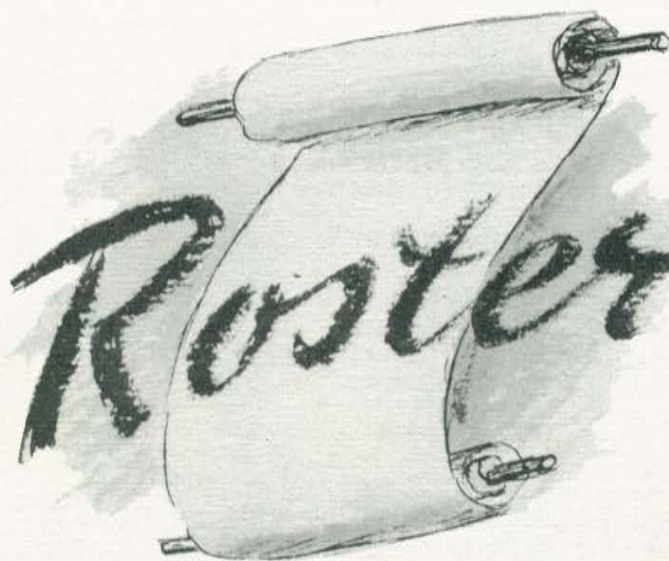
I've got four-pence, jolly, jolly four-pence,
I've got four-pence to last me all my life.
 I've got tup-pence to spend
 And tup-pence to lend
And no pence to send home to my wife,
 Poor wife.
No cares have I to grieve me, etc.

III

I've got tup-pence, Jolly, jolly tup-pence,
I've got tup-pence to last me all my life.
 I've got tup-pence to spend
 And no pence to lend
And no pence to send home to my wife,
 Poor wife.

IV

I've got no-pence, jolly, jolly no-pence,
I've got on-pence to last me all my life.
 I've got no-pence to spend
 And no pence to lend
And no pence to send home to my wife,
 Poor wife.



These men were members of the
finest Wing, of the finest Division,
of the finest Air Force, in the AAF

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