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Operations: November, 1944

VIENNA, AUSTRIA - MISSION NO. 300 - NOVEMBER 1, 1944

Thirty-six aircraft took off and 20 aircraft dropped 40 tons of 500-lb. RDX bombs on the South Ordnance Depot in Vienna. Flak was heavy, moderate, and accurate. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results.

Seven aircraft bombed the Marshalling Yards at Graz, Austria, dropping 14 tons of 500-lb. RDX bombs by PFF with unobserved results.

One aircraft joined the 97th Bomb Group and dropped 2 tons of 500-lb. RDX bombs on the Graz Marshalling Yards.

Four aircraft bombed a Railroad Bridge at 45-00N - 14-40E, dropping 8 tons of 500-lb. RDX bombs by offset bombing with unobserved results.

One aircraft bombed warehouses and a railroad chokepoint at 47-15N - 16-37E, dropping 2 tons of 500-lb. RDX bombs by visual methods, hitting a warehouse.

One aircraft was an early return and jettisoned its bombs in the Adriatic. One other returned its bombs to Base.

Nine aircraft were damaged by flak. S/Sgt. R. J. Vandling, UT, 49th Squadron, died of anoxia.

B-17 #438, piloted by 1st Lt. William C. Donnell, made an emergency landing at Bari, Italy, due to lack of fuel. Five members of this crew bailed out in the vicinity of Wiener Neustater, Austria. No. 438 jettisoned its bombs on railroad tracks in town west of Lake Neustater.

Also missing is 2nd Lt. Harold E. Ayers, Bombardier on the crew of 1st Lt. Thomas M. Rybovich, 429th Squadron, who bailed out of his aircraft.

MISSING AIR CREW REPORT: A/C #44-6198 - 429TH SQUADRON

1st Lt.	Thomas M. Rybovich, 0-540274, P.	(RET)
2nd Lt.	Pat W. Farwell, 0-761776, CP.	(RET)
2nd Lt.	Donald F. Maine, 0-716492, N.	(RET)
2nd Lt.	Harold E. Ayers, 0-777294, B.	(MIA) (RET)
Sgt.	John L. Staup, 36563963, U/T.	(RET)
Sgt.	Harold F. Gross, 33409556, L/T.	(RET)
Sgt.	William H. May, Jr., 15176407, R/W.	(RET)
Sgt.	Richard O. Blackry, 39216422, T/G.	(RET)
Sgt.	Donald B. Parkins, 16119564, R/O.	(RET)

*This was a nine man crew

The following is a consolidated statement of 1st Lt. Rybovich, 2nd Lt. Farwell, and 2nd Lt. Maine. "While we were over the primary target, No. 4 engine of #190 received a flak hit which caused us to lose oil. Oil cooler of No. 4 was hit causing loss of engine. It then froze and eventually the prop fell off.

"The pilot instructed the navigator and bombardier to leave the nose section and ordered the rest of the crew to prepare, if necessary, to abandon the aircraft.

"The bombardier and navigator went to the flight deck, the bombardier under the top turret, the navigator behind the co-pilot's seat.

"As the prop seemed about to fly off, and was pointing toward the fuselage at an angle of about 20 degrees, the pilot and co-pilot decided to leave their seats and stand on the flight deck within reach of the C.I. This necessitated the navigator and bombardier to move further to the rear of the aircraft several times. When the bombardier saw the navigator's gestures and the pilot and co-pilot leave their seats, he went to the waist section, but was still not in communication with the pilot. The prop flew off several minutes after the bombardier left the flight deck. The crew members returned to their positions and the bombardier did not. On checking with the gunners in the waist, it was learned that the bombardier had bailed out. Two enlisted men stated that they could not see his chute open. No orders were given to abandon, only to put on chutes and be ready."

Statement of Lt. Harold E. Ayers: "I bailed out at around 26,000 feet due to lack of oxygen. I was unconscious for a period of 24 days and know nothing from the time I had lost my oxygen until I came to in (not legible) hospital."

Lt. Ayers was over Yugoslavia at the time he bailed out and was eventually returned to Allied control. No records were found regarding his rescue.

MISSING AIR CREW REPORT: A/C #42-07438 - 96TH SQUADRON

1st Lt.	William C. Donnell, 0-465920, P.	(RET)
2nd Lt.	Thomas J. Vaughan, 0-1695538, CP.	(RET)
2nd Lt.	Roy L. Compton, 0-2064527, N.	(POW)
1st Lt.	Charles W. Melvin, 0-727364, B.	(POW)
T/Sgt.	Jack D. Gruner, 16070475, U/T.	(POW)
S/Sgt.	John J. Meringola, 32425100, L/T.	(KIA)
S/Sgt.	James H. Holbrook, 39215382, R/W.	(RET)
S/Sgt.	James H. Pewitt, 14177013, L/W.	(RET)
S/Sgt.	Francis J. Maiers, 39342317, T/G.	(RET)
S/Sgt.	Stanley J. Pociask, 12077800, R/O.	(POW)

Statement of 1st Lt. William C. Donnell, after the mission: "Before the I.P. was reached, the No. 3 engine started running roughly and smoking. When the bomb bay doors had been opened, the formation started pulling ahead, and we were unable to keep up. We made a right turn after passing over Vienna and dropped our bombs on a R.R. line at a small town west of Lake Neusiedler.

"Shortly afterward, the engine got worse. The co-pilot hit the feathering switch, but it wouldn't feather. The engine was vibrating very badly, pieces of the cylinders flew out, and the cowlings came off. The prop shaft was red hot. The five members bailed out at this time by way of the bomb bay and the tail gunner saw them go past the tail section, and he saw at least three chutes open. This was at about 47-45N - 16-25E, S.W. of Wiener Neustadt at approximately 1311 hours. The pilot's interphone had gone out, but the co-pilot called the rest of the crew to stay with the plane. Shortly after this, the prop

came off, and this eliminated the mechanical difficulty. We took a 195 heading, hit the coast near Brindisi and flew to Bari, where we landed due to lack of gas."

Partial report of an Investigation Unit, Budapest, Hungary, 26 October 1945: On 1 November 1944, a plane was heard in Marcali, Hungary. A few minutes later eye witnesses saw three parachutes descending in the direction of Marcali. One was driven by the wind toward the village of Pajez and the other two landed 6 kms S.W. of Marcali. One man was captured that evening. Another was captured two days later. Three weeks passed and the body of an American soldier was found. His belongings had disappeared and no parachute was found.

A village doctor examined the body and was not certain of the time of death but put it at three to four weeks. Other witnesses felt that this body, buried in Marcali, came from the plane as there had been no other flights or a crash in that area.

The remains were disinterred and on the trousers, the name "J. J. Meringola," 32425100 was found in seven places. Records at the 2612 Graves Unit listed no one with this name or serial number.

1st Lt. Roy L. Compton, N, July 20, 1994: "On October 3rd we flew to Italy from Tunis. We landed in the southern part at a maintenance base where some further modification to our aircraft was completed. On the 10th we ferried the aircraft to our final base, near the town of Manfredonia. We were assigned to the 96th Squadron.

"The officers were assigned a tent with four canvas cots, and I think we were issued sheets and blankets. There was a wood floor, and occasionally electricity, although we used candles most of the time. Some of the other tents had stone sides as did other structures in the area.

"From what I can determine, we were on the seventh mission, having started on the sixth of October. On that mission, the bombardier, Charles Melvin, had six bombs 'hang up' (not release) and we had to go to another target. We had four holes in the aircraft from ground fires.

"Other missions were flown on the 17th, 20th, 23rd, 24th, and 29th. On the 10th of October, we flew a four-hour practice mission. Something about bad formations. The targets of these missions were Salzburg, Regensburg, and Vienna (Wien).

"The last mission on the 1st of November was to Wien. The target was a synthetic oil refinery south of the city. We were in the last position of a formation of ten planes. This aircraft was equipped with a 20 millimeter cannon along with a 50 caliber machine gun in the tail. This was provided to have the range to shoot at the German Me-109s which used the 20mm cannon in their armament. Also, there was a radar jamming device, which was turned on over enemy territory.

"Prior to the target we started having problems with the aircraft, and being 'tail end Charlie,' we could not keep up with the rest of the formation. We started back for Italy, and Charles Melvin, the bombardier, dropped the bomb load on a railroad, possibly near Salvar. As the trouble got more uncontrollable, a decision was made to head for the Russian lines, which at that time was East Hungary. A P-51 came alongside and directed us to Yugoslavia.

"Part of a letter from Bill Donnell to mother, December 29, 1944:

Roy had to bail out shortly after the bomb run over Vienna on November 1st. Our No. 3 engine's oil line broke and we couldn't feather the engine. After a short while, the prop ran away, setting up engine vibrations and creating excessive drag. Presently the cylinders started blowing off and several pieces came through the cockpit and nose making it a very precarious spot, making it necessary for everyone to get out of the nose. Shortly thereafter the whole works dropped off (prop, cowlings and all) and we were able to maintain our altitude and land at the first base we came to.

"Bill gave the order to evacuate the nose of the aircraft. I believe the alarm bell rang as we headed for the bottom door. After reading his letter, and thoughts of the radio operator, and

engineer/top turret gunner, I have no doubt in my mind that the alarm bell rang. I opened the door and dropped on it, as the door wanted to close due to the pressure of the slip stream and the hinges being toward the front of the aircraft. I guess my parachute harness caught the door handle, so I dangled against the bottom of the aircraft. I guess Charles either kicked off the handle, or pulled the hinge pin release, as soon as I was falling away from the aircraft. As I fell, I looked up and saw the aircraft streaming smoke and flying straight and level. I did not see any bodies or chutes from the aircraft.

"We had bailed out at about 31,000 feet, so we had been told in training to free fall to a lower altitude before deploying the parachute. When the tree branches were visible, I pulled the ripcord, and since I was face and head down, the chute went out between my legs, rolling me over, and when the chute filled, giving me a sharp jolt. On the way down, I wondered how I would get back for the donuts we always got when we landed. Little did I know I would be thinking about food for the next six months.

"A tree broke my fall, the chute holding me about six feet from the ground. I cut the chute from the tree, and buried it, and went into a swampy area and hid in some brush. Since we had been over Vienna at noon it was now about 2 p.m. I am not sure of the landing location, but it was south of Lake Balaton, possibly north of Nagykanizsa. I keep remembering Gyeric, but that is located north of the Lake, near Vienna. I did hear people searching the woods, but did not see anyone. I stayed in this area until dark.

"After dark when crossing a road, I was stopped and taken to a church which had a few houses around it. There the priest called someone on the telephone who spoke English. He asked me who I was and I was taken to the basement.

"A short time later, a military man arrived, I was put on a wagon and taken a couple of miles to an office in a small town. There, persons I assumed to be the local police tried to question me. They did not speak English and my knowledge of other languages was zero, so we did not communicate at all. They had a flotation device (Mae West) and wanted to know how it worked. I pulled the Co2 cord and it inflated. They ripped open a die marker and scattered it all over the floor. Part of it got on me and stayed for days before it wore off.

"Soon it was evident to the interrogators that their efforts were getting them nothing, so they started getting rough. Finally one hit me with a rifle butt and knocked me out. I woke up in the morning in a room adjacent to the offices, on the floor, shackled to the foot of a bed. Soon the police came, pushing Jack Gruner. He had been roughed up and did not have any shoes. I thought Charles Melvin was there, but another account indicates he joined us in Budapest.

"We did not speak, and in a short time, different guards came and took us out of the building, and walked us about a block to the railroad station. Outside the station was a pump, and I got my first water since bailing out, and rinsed off my face. The waste water was yellow from the dye marker.

"This was the afternoon of November second that we boarded the train with two guards. It was night when the train came to the west side of Budapest. We got off in a rail yard and walked to a concrete building. There were no markings to indicate where we were. We were taken to the basement, to a room about 20 x 20 feet, with a high ceiling. There was a small barred window, which was just below sidewalk level. About a quarter of the room was covered with straw in a burlap mattress. We were given some weak soup and permitted to wash.

"The bombardier from our crew, Charles Melvin, was brought in the next day. We were so dirty and unkept that we did not immediately recognize one another.

"For the next few days we talked very little, and I know nothing of the details of the others captured. Three crewmen of a B-24 were brought into the same cell. We were fed little and permitted out of the cell one at a time to go to the toilet. Another man was brought in to the cell, but he did not sleep on the mattress, and did not speak. When he left, we assumed he was listening to our talk, for

information. Also he knew the straw was full of lice, which we found out later. How long we were in the cell, I don't remember, probably only three days. The last day, the guards who were in their 50s, were laughing and showed us that they no longer had ammunition for their weapons.

"That evening, the six of us were taken by two new guards to a street car across the Danube River to a large railroad station. This area was being shelled by artillery and swarms of people were fighting to get on trains. The guards pushed us through the crowd and Jack Gruner left the group. We were put on a passenger car, and the guards shoved others off, so we had plenty of room. I thought the Russians were about to take the city, but it did not fall until about April of 1945. We tried to sleep, and picked lice out of each other's hair. After about three hours, Jack came into the car. He had tried to escape, but decided that the Russian's shelling was too bad, so he hopped on the train. The guards were angry at what he had done, so they hit the arch of his foot with a rifle, breaking the bones, so we later had to carry him. The next evening after many stops, we reached Vienna, possibly 6 November.

"My memory of Vienna is very limited. The Air Corp had done a lot of bombing in the area, so we could not get into the city by train. So we were put on a bus to the center of town. The guards were not familiar with Vienna, but did find a military soup kitchen, where we were fed. We then seemed to ride the street car in circles looking for the railroad that would take us east. Finally we got off in the center of town. The guards got directions from some civilians, but since it was six o'clock in the evening, and rush hour, they could not herd us onto a street car. I remember a large building behind us, that had cement figures of lions in front. Someone said it was a museum. Somewhere we got an old German raincoat with bread and meat to carry and to eat on the train, which we finally got to by street car.

"The distance from Vienna to Frankfurt is three times the distance from where we traveled to Bucharest, but I don't remember how long we were on the train. I do remember seeing a station marked Nurnburg, and arriving at the main station in Frankfurt. It was early morning and either foggy or misty. We walked out of the main entrance to the left and boarded a street car for the interrogation center (Dulag Luft) north of the city at the town of Oberusal.

"After walking through a wooden gate, we entered a building on the ground floor. The room was bare, with shower heads on the ceiling. We were told to undress, and our clothes were taken to another room, probably fumigated while we stood under the shower and washed off. For some reason we got rid of the lice in this procedure.

"This is the last I saw of Jack Gruner. In a letter from his mother to mine, dated February 21, 1945, she said Jack was in the hospital with a broken ankle. On April 4th, he was in Stalag IX C, KOM 1249, a hospital camp near Leipzig.

"Then, as individuals, we were taken upstairs to a long hall with many solid doors on either side. I was put in a room about eight feet wide by twelve feet long, which contained a wooden bed, with one blanket. There were no windows, and in the ceiling about 12 feet high, there was a single light bulb controlled from the hall. The cell temperature was either very hot or very cold, and the light would be off for a time and then on, then off, then on. The food consisted of a cup of ersatz coffee and a piece of black bread at a time which seemed like morning, and a cup of watery soup and a piece of bread in what was probably evening.

"After about a day, I was taken from the cell to an office, where questions were asked, but not answered, and threats were made, the chief one being that since I had no identification except dog tags, I could be a spy and would be turned over to the Gestapo, unless my answers were satisfactory. After about 30 minutes, I was returned to the cell. The next day the same routine was repeated.

"On the third day, I was taken to the office about noon, asked a few questions that were not answered and then taken to a large hall, where many German military men and a few American prisoners

were gathered. We were fed some soup and bread, and then saw a movie of a German circus. I was then returned to the cell block.

"Early the next morning, I was taken from the cell and with others walked to the street car and returned to the Frankfurt railroad station. There we were put in a room just to the right of the main entrance to wait to board a train. In 1954 when in Frankfurt, I went to the station. The room was an office.

"The trip to Wetzlar was about 50 miles, and we arrived early in the afternoon of the 22nd of November. During the walk from the train to camp, as we passed a brick wall, natives in the street threw stones at us. With the number of prisoners that passed this way, it now seems to me that this was a staged demonstration. That night we were fed and the next morning given a card to write our next of kin, and an issue clothing. After getting clothing, our pictures were taken for identification records. When we were liberated, these records were found and distributed to the prisoners.

"The time at Wetzlar seemed very short. I don't remember actually leaving the camp for Sagan (Zagan). The train car was a compartment affair, with each compartment having two facing bench seats with an overhead metal luggage rack. The compartments opened to a hall which ran the entire length of the car. There were toilet facilities at each end of the car. I believe there were bars on the windows, and a steel gate at each end, with a room for guards. There was one car of prisoners, with six to a room, with probably ten rooms. To rest, two men laid in the luggage racks, two on the seats, one on the floor and the other in the hall.

"The real event of the trip was in Leipzig. The car was removed from the train, and shuttled to a rail yard. Next to our car was an anti-aircraft gun on a flat car. About noon, the sirens went off signaling an air raid. Knowing one of the main targets of our bombers were railroad yards, and after watching our guards get out of the car, lock the doors, and leave the area, the prisoners in the car became panic stricken. From a shack at the end of a flat car, the gunners came out, took the covers off the gun, dusted it and the ammunition. They then started moving the gun around in search of a target. About that time a large explosion occurred. Whether it was a bomb or another anti-aircraft gun going off, I do not know. Upon hearing the explosion, the gunners leaped from the car and vaulted a stone wall about eight feet high. The panic turned to laughter and all was calm. About an hour later our guards returned, however, we did not see the gun crew again.

"We arrived at Sagan after dark. We walked through the woods and along a road to a building in the North Compound. Here we were stripped, our clothes taken away and probably searched and fumigated. We showered and our clothes were returned to us. We were then marched back along the road and continued around the town of Sagan about three miles to a camp on a bare hill, near a military airport. The place was called Belaria, and although a part of Stalag Luft III, very few men I have met from the main compounds knew of its existence.

"Records indicate that we arrived Monday, on the 27th of November. Charles Melvin, the crew bombardier, was sent to a billet room in one of the northern barracks and I to one in a southern building. There were 12 men to a room, and possibly five rooms to a building. There was a bath house, a kitchen, a theatre, and latrines. The last time I remember seeing Charles was when we entered camp. Camp life was survival. It was bitter cold, so little outdoor activity was taking place.

"The Germans had the exterior guards, interior guards (referred to as ferrets, since they were constantly snooping around, crawling under the buildings, etc.), and some laborers who would bring items to the kitchen.

"There was a radio in camp where BBC news was received daily. A penciled note of the days news was handed from prisoner to prisoner to read. Since we also officially received a German news release, we did not talk about the news, for fear we would say something that did not come from an authorized source.

"The clothing we received at Wetzler was the only clothing we received. Trades were made with other prisoners for better fitting items. All money was kept at the camp office since there was no canteen or any other use for money. When we left the camp, all records of the accounts were left behind, and the records have never been recovered. German food, as listed in German reports, was greatly overstated. There was one central kitchen at Belaria, which supplied some hot water, barley soup, vegetable soup and raw meat when available. All other cooking was done in the room on the stove which also was used for heat. All food for the room was pooled, with a meal schedule and what to fix and how specified by the majority. The typical day's menu as listed was for full German rations and a Red Cross parcel per man per week. Neither of these conditions existed.

"Some health care was probably available but I am not aware of what was available. As for bathing, our barracks was once walked back to the North Compound, deloused and given a shower. At the same time our barracks was fumigated and searched. This walk, etc., took all day. As far as sanitation goes, we had a central latrine which was used by all prisoners. At the end of each barracks there was a single, outhouse type facility. This was used only in emergency, at night, when the barracks were locked. The only time I know of its use, was Christmas, when we all got ill from rich food we received in a special parcel. As for mail, due to the time we were at Belaria, only one card was made available to us and, of course, no mail was received.

"The paradise of camp life came to an end in late January. The Russians were rumored to be in Breslau (now Wroclaw, Poland), about 35 miles away.

"Belaria (Note: The Camp) departed at 5 a.m., Sunday the 26th of November. They were the last unit of Stalag Luft III to leave. Temperature on the march was estimated to be from minus ten to plus twenty degrees Fahrenheit. It was a strange procession that wound over the German countryside to a village named Kunau, a distance of approximately 20 kilometers. We were put into barns in Kunau. The march wasn't too bad, the roads were frozen and it was easy for those that were pulling sleds. However, we were foot sore and extremely tired. We cooked meals over small fires and brewed tea or coffee. We had been given one Red Cross parcel before leaving camp which was a blessing. The Germans, during the complete march, gave us little or no food.

"We left the next morning around 9 o'clock and marched to Gross Selton and arrived around 4 o'clock. We were again put into barns. It was surprising that most German people along the march were friendly. We bartered for water and food for cigarettes. We had a warm and restful night here. We stayed there for one day to rest.

"We left Gross Selton, after a day of rest, at about 8 o'clock and marched about 20 kilometers to the village of Birkenstadt. It got warmer and there was a thaw which turned the roads to mud, and walking was more difficult and slowed the march considerably. We did not arrive until around 5 o'clock and were again put into barns. These were not as comfortable as our last stop. No heat and no lighting. We were locked in the barns and could not have fires because of the straw. There were no water taps and no sanitary arrangements.

"We spent the whole day there. We got one-fifth of a loaf of bread, the first German rations in five days. There was a much greater thaw that day and we realized that everything we wanted, had to be carried on our backs.

"The next day we set out over very heavy terrain, and the mud on the roads was ankle deep. We arrived at Schonheide and put into damp, straw less, unlighted barns. We were immediately locked in so could not cook a hot meal. Everyone was dead tired but found it difficult to sleep.

"The following day we marched to Spremberg. The Americans were separated and taken to a bombed out glass bottle factory. I don't remember if we were given anything to eat or drink, but I do remember Colonel Spevey, talking to about 80 Americans, saying he was on his way to Berlin to meet with the German High Command to get some treatment for the American POWs.

"It was the 4th of February when we were put into box cars at Spremberg. We must have been crowded, but I can't remember much of the trip to Moosdorf, the location of Stalag 7A. My notes indicate going through the following places: Lauta, Ruhland, Muchenburg, Pleasa, Chemnitz, Zwickau, Reichenbach, Jaheta, Jabnitz, Hapilbraun, Plauen, Waldgrün, Syra, Frontau, Meiltherer, Schenberg, Filzitz, Glerenfurst, Laudengune, Hof, Roslau, Herenbrunn, Augsburg, Marktedwitz, Hadpelmoor, Mannkapen, Munich, Friesing, and Moosdorf.

"One stop was in a rail yard where the cars were opened. The German workers were friendly, or maybe they were laborers from other countries. There was a latrine trench along the tracks that gave us a chance to relieve ourselves. I do not recall getting any food or do I remember any sickness. It was very cold, and all thoughts were of food and water.

"When the train reached Munich, we were on a siding and the doors of the cars were opened. There was a group of United Kingdom men with shovels filling in the bomb crater holes. One said something to the effect that you dig them and we fill them up.

"It was late the afternoon of the 7th of February that we were finally detrained at Moosdorf and entered Stalag 7A. I was crowded into a barracks which appeared to be in the center of camp. The kitchen stoves in the middle of the barracks had been buckled so badly that they were useless. In order to get something to burn in our tin stoves, we would crawl under the building, take the underfloor and use the boards for fuel. I did make one trip out of the camp to collect firewood. It was a pleasant day to walk through the countryside, however, the areas we traveled did not have anything burnable laying around. The natives were also in need of fuel, so most was already removed.

"April 9th we were notified President Roosevelt had died.

"There was a fear of being moved again, or of the Germans killing the prisoners. From the 1st of April there was always an American fighter aircraft over the camp. We were instructed that if any attempt was made to move the camp, or any shooting, we were to set fire to the buildings, and action would be taken.

"During those three months there were no showers, and only cold water to wash ourselves and our clothing. The problem of the latrines running over was constant. The tank trucks that hauled the sewage were painted with red crosses, but were still strafed and blown apart. The claim was that most of the trucks were destroyed, but I am sure there was also a shortage of fuel for this program.

"I did not see or hear the battle during the liberation of the camp on the 29th of April. Team "A" of the American 14th Armored Division, after a brief fight, liberated the camp. The only recollection I have is of a tank followed by a command car with General Patton in it going by on the main street of the camp.

"The Army set up a kitchen and bakery to provide us with food, but after one day everyone was sick from the white bread and military rations. They put us back on the Red Cross parcels and our own cooking. Some men left camp and got food from troops in the area. It was said that some ate so much of the concentrated army rations, that their digestive systems ruptured. Also, some Russians got into some industrial alcohol and died as a result of their drinking.

"On May 8th we were loaded on trucks and taken to an airport at Ingolstadt. While waiting there a German Me-109 buzzed the field with machine guns firing. We all jumped into bomb craters along the runway. The plane landed and I guess it was his last salute to the surrender of the Nazi military.

"Finally some C-47s landed and we were flown to Reims (Rheims), France. There we were given showers, deloused, and provided with new underwear, uniforms, insignia, and toilet articles. We were there only one day. How we left and got to LaHavre I do not remember. It must have been the 10th of May when we reached Camp Lucky Strike (LaHavre).

"It seemed to me that we were there a long time. We did get some money to use at the PX, but most items were not allowed for prisoners, since they were rich and made us sick. The food was very bland, with stewed chicken and mashed potatoes the main entree. We were watched to see that we did not eat more than one serving, and segregated from others.

"It was a long time, as I see by an order that I was assigned as Ticket Officer in the mess line of the SS Sea Porpoise on June 9th, 1945. As I recall the trip, I was billeted in a room back of the galley with five others. There were two stacks of three-tier bunks. We spent most of the time in the galley eating, especially frozen egg nog and peaches. The cooks also gave us brandy, but none of that would stay down.

"Nothing seemed important, we had been herded like animals for the past six months and it still was about the same without guns. The United States flag had been raised at Moosdorf, Rheims, and LaHavre, but we were still not really free.

"We entered New York harbor in the night. The lights of the city did not glow in the cloudless sky. Most of us were on deck when the Statue of Liberty, with the torch glowing, came into view. The sound of Gershwin's *Rhapsody In Blue*, was played repeatedly over the ship's speakers, and through the tears, we knew we were home.

"The ship was unloaded that night. I believe we were at Staten Island. A short train ride took us to Fort Dix where we were still under restricted movement. Some more clothes were issued and we were able to draw some money. Things were still rationed so our purchases at the PX were limited.

"After a short stay, probably one day, we were put on trains to the military installation nearest our home. Here we were given orders and told to leave our address for further orders. I ended up at home for over 60 days before being ordered to Miami Beach."

S/Sgt. James H. Pewitt was a Waist Gunner on the crew of Captain Charles Childs, 96th Squadron. S/Sgt. Pewitt was flying with a strange crew on the Group's 300th mission to Vienna, Austria, 1 November 1944. August 27, 1994: "That mission to Vienna was my first mission. They split up our crew to fly with old crews for a few missions. Believe me, I was broken in good!

"We were flying on the tail end of the formation. The pilot was flying his first mission as 1st pilot. When we got to Vienna we got that engine hit. I'm not sure where we dropped our bombs but we came back alone. For a brief time my oxygen went out and when I came to I heard the pilot say, 'I'll hold it, everybody jump.' I got up off the floor and was going for the door. About that time the pilot put it in a dive and threw me back on the floor. I saw the tail gunner trying to come up to the waist. When he came out of the dive, I tried to get to the door and just as I got the door open the prop flew by. I looked back and the co-pilot was standing in the radio room and motioned not to jump, but five had already jumped.

"When we hit the Adriatic Sea we were down real low on the water thinking we might have to ditch. We had no electrical system. When we hit land it was almost night and searchlights came on from the ground. We had no radio and I was in the top turret so I started shooting flares. We did not know where we were but could see a landing strip so we landed and spent the night.

"We flew back the next day. My crew was sure glad to see me. I had to fly again the next day but it was not so bad.

"I flew 16 missions. We went to Capri to the Rest Camp after my 15th mission. I got hit on my 16th mission over Vienna by flak. It broke my left arm and another piece went into the back of my left shoulder and it is still in there.

"This happened on February 21st and I was in the hospital over there until April 10th and we came back to the States. We left Naples April 10th and arrived in Boston April 20th, on a Troop Transport. I stayed in hospitals until January 21, 1946, and I was discharged.

"I live on a farm and farmed until 1985, semi-retired and rented my land out. Since then I have been working with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture.

"We meet every two years. Our first reunion was in 1967 and our last was in Sioux City, Iowa on June 10th of this year (1994). This was our 50th anniversary since we all got together. We did go to Dayton, Ohio in September 1991 to the dedication of the 2nd Bomb Group Memorial and it really was nice."

MOOSBIERBAUM, AUSTRIA - MISSION NO. 301 - NOVEMBER 2, 1944

Three aircraft took off at 1715 hours on a night mission to bomb the Chemical Works at Moosbierbaum. A/C #739, 20th Squadron, was piloted by 1st Lt. R. F. Bischoff; A/C #615, 96th Squadron, was piloted by 1st Lt. Arthur T. VanCura, and A/C #189, 429th Squadron, was piloted by 1st Lt. O. L. Printy. At 2044 hours, two A/C dropped 20, 500-lb. bombs on the target by PFF with unobserved results due to a heavy cloud cover. The plane of the 96th Squadron returned early and did not bomb.

MISSING AIR CREW REPORT: A/C #44-6399 - 20TH SQUADRON

1st Lt.	George (NMI) Reilly, P.	(DED)
1st Lt.	Arvin C. Hildebrand, CP.	(DED)
1st Lt.	Richard J. Glattly, N.	(DED)
S/Sgt.	Benjamin T. English, UT.	(DED)
S/Sgt.	Melvin Talley, RO.	(DED)

The following statement was issued by Captain William S. Dickens, Investigating Officer, dated 5 November, 1944.

Findings and conclusions regarding loss of a B-17 type aircraft, number 44-6399. This aircraft took off from its home base, Amendola, Italy, on 2 November at 0918 hours on an Instrument Navigational Training Mission. The crew was briefed to fly the following route at an altitude of 10,000 feet or above the current overcast; Amendola to Rome, to Naples, to Taranto, to base. Clearance was given for flight at 10,000 feet; weather was slight rain with 7/10 to 10/10 cloud coverage from 3,000 to 5,000 feet, visibility two to 22 miles, icing conditions at 7,000 to 18,000 feet.

Careful interrogation of other crews flying that day reveals that winds at 10,000 feet were between 40 - 50 knots from 240 degrees, blowing aircraft considerably off course. Icing conditions occurred at 9,000 to 12,000 feet.

There is no other information as to the fate of this aircraft as it was flying alone, and simply did not return to base at scheduled time. Search for the missing aircraft was conducted by Regional Flying Control.

VIENNA, AUSTRIA - MISSION NO. 302 - NOVEMBER 3, 1944

Six aircraft took off at 0642 hours to bomb the South Ordnance Depot in Vienna. Three aircraft dropped 30, 500-lb. RDX bombs on the target by PFF with unobserved results. Two aircraft dropped 20, 500-lb. RDX bombs on Graz, Austria, one visually and one by PFF, results unobserved. One aircraft was an early return. Flak at Vienna was heavy, moderate, and inaccurate. All aircraft returned safely.

REGENSBURG, GERMANY - MISSION NO. 303 - NOVEMBER 4, 1944

Thirty-five aircraft dropped 680, 250-lb. GP bombs on the Winterhafen Oil Storage at Regensburg. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. Flak was heavy, slight to moderate, and inaccurate. No losses, no injuries. One aircraft, an early return, dropped its bombs on Marshalling Yards at Lienz, Austria with unobserved results.

VIENNA, AUSTRIA - MISSION NO. 304 - NOVEMBER 5, 1944

Twenty-three aircraft dropped their load of 500-lb. RDX bombs on the Florisdorf Oil Refinery by PFF with unobserved results. Flak was heavy, moderate to intense and accurate, resulting in damage to nine B-17s. There were no losses and no injuries. One A/C dropped its bombs on the Marshalling Yards at Graz, Austria, and one A/C dropped its bombs on a Railroad Bridge at 47-00N - 16-03E. Results were not reported. Nine Me-109s attacked one A/C and it returned safely to base without injury to crew.

MOOSBIERBAUM, AUSTRIA - MISSION NO. 305 - NOVEMBER 6, 1944

Twenty-five aircraft dropped their 500-lb. RDX bombs on the Oil Refinery at Moosbierbaum by PFF with unobserved results. Flak was heavy, moderate, accurate. Two runs were made over this target. Six aircraft dropped their bombs on Marshalling Yards at Graz, Austria, with the bombs observed across the Yards. One aircraft dropped its bombs on Gleisdorf, Austria, and another dropped its bombs on Zeltweg, Austria. Results were not recorded. Thirteen aircraft were damaged by flak over Moosbierbaum, three severely. There were no injuries to crews.

MARIBOR, YUGOSLAVIA - MISSION NO. 306 - NOVEMBER 7, 1944

Twenty-seven aircraft dropped 263, 500-lb. RDX bombs on the Marshalling Yards at Maribor. Two runs were made on the target with bombs reported in the target area and several fires observed. Flak was heavy, moderate to intense, and accurate resulting in the death of 2nd Lt. Charles H. Ingles, CP, 96th Squadron, and slightly wounding T/Sgt. Joseph W. Buckwalter, T/Sgt. T. J. Collins, 2nd Lt. R. N. Duffie, S/Sgt. Felix A. Janas; all from the 96th Squadron, and Captain D. T. Joyce from the 429th Squadron.

S/Sgt. Andrew D. Miller was a member of the 96th Squadron and assigned to the crew of 1st Lt. Eliot B. Spiess. July 17, 1992: "My first combat mission was on September 6, 1944 and the Marshalling Yards at Oradea, Romania. It was the start of a long, tough haul, and I was very fortunate to complete my 35 missions.

"We went to Blechhammer three times, a long trip of nearly nine hours. One of those we did not get credit for even though our flight time was recorded as 8 hours and 45 minutes. Went to Munich three times, Vienna seven times, and five of those were my last five missions. A rough way to finish up! Went to Regensburg twice; Brux and Pilsen, Czechoslovakia which were 9 hours and 30 minutes. We had several raids to Italian targets but most missions were into the Balkan countries, Germany and Poland. Oil was a big target at that time.

"One of my most impressive missions, to me, was a mission to Maribor, Yugoslavia, November 7, 1944. It was to be a so called 'Milk Run' as we were briefed that it had only 32 heavy anti-aircraft guns. I don't remember the names of the others who flew with me on that mission but I remember that it was not my crew. I flew ball turret as I did on 32 of my 35 missions. The target was cloud covered and the Colonel in the lead plane decided to go under the clouds rather than bomb by PFF. They really peppered us! Rather than seeing puffs of smoke as usual, I saw shells bursting and smoke filled my turret. We had about 75 holes in our plane. After the report to call in at the conclusion of the bomb run, I could not readily talk. I had been extremely shaken. The crew thought I had been hit.

"Another interesting mission was to Villach, Austria, on November 11, 1944. There were seven or eight holes in my ball turret. One piece of flak hit my ammunition belt which flattened two bullets and cartridge linkage. If it wasn't for that, this piece of flak would have hit me.

"Our mission to Debreczen, Hungary, on September 21, 1944 was another one with sharp memories. This was only my sixth mission. When we landed after the mission, it was with a blown tire. The plane swung around to an abrupt stop. We all got out of our plane to watch the other planes land

over us. A shortened runway! No time to remove our plane as others had to land because of shortage of gas. One plane came down with the waist shot out (#078 Sweet Pea). One waist and tail gunner killed. The pilots flew it back rather than bail out as the ball turret gunner was not able to free from the turret. He was cut out with a torch after landing (rumor). Another plane landed with bomb bay doors open and they were sheared off. The propeller on one engine of another plane flew off across the field after it landed. One plane came down with wheels up. Several others were in bad condition.

"I flew one night mission on November 23, 1944 as a waist gunner to Linz, Austria. Mickey, inter-phone, radio equipment, and my electric suit all burned out. It was minus 35 degrees Fahrenheit but it wasn't as bad as it would have been when I was flying ball turret. Search lights were a long way off. The only other eventful occurrence was that a night fighter made a pass at us with no damage to the plane.

"We always dreaded going to Blechhammer as their flak always seemed to be so accurate. On a mission there on September 13, 1944 (my third mission), I saw two planes blow up. One was flying right beside ours. It spiraled downward in flames, breaking up into three parts before hitting the ground. There were no parachutes coming out.

"We were initially ordered to England but believe our orders were changed to Italy in Gander, Newfoundland. My discharge states that I served in England on the dates that I served in Italy. A history buff would certainly have a time trying to figure that one out after seeing my records!"

VIENNA, AUSTRIA - MISSION NO. 307 - NOVEMBER 7, 1944

Three aircraft took off at 0950 hours and dropped 30, 500-lb. RDX bombs on the Florisdorf Oil Refinery in Vienna at 1352 hours. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. Flak was heavy, intense, and accurate. No injuries, no losses.

SALZBURG, AUSTRIA - MISSION NO. 308 - NOVEMBER 11, 1944

Thirty-six aircraft took off at 0656 hours to bomb Brux, and after three runs trying to locate the target, turned and 27 aircraft dropped 313, 500-lb. RDX bombs on the Marshalling Yards at Salzburg. Flak was heavy, slight and inaccurate. Bombing was by PFF and results were unobserved. Nine aircraft became separated due to the weather and returned to base with one dropping its bombs on the Marshalling Yards at Villach, Austria. Results were not reported. All Aircraft returned safely.

BLECHHAMMER, GERMANY - MISSION NO. 309 - NOVEMBER 13, 1944

Four aircraft took off on a night mission at 2226 hours to bomb the South Oil Refinery at Blechhammer. Two aircraft dropped 20, 500-lb. RDX bombs on the Refinery at 0230 hours. Bombing was done by PFF. Large fires and explosions were observed. Flak was heavy, moderate to tense and accurate.

One aircraft dropped its 10, 500-lb. RDX bombs on an alternate target at Kaevinna, Poland by PFF with unobserved results.

B-17 #42-8189 was forced to crash land at the northwest tip of Lake Lessina due to shortage of fuel. The PFF went out and it was impossible to pick out the primary target. A large pattern of lights was seen through the clouds and this target was believed to be Gleiwitz, Germany. It was bombed visually. The plane was moderately damaged and the crew, with bombsight, returned to base. During the mission the tail radar flashed green, north of Budapest. The pilot dove, in diving turns and the signal would disappear. After 20 or 25 minutes the signal would reappear and the pilot used the same tactics. The enemy aircraft never came close enough to give the red signal. This pursuit lasted until $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour from the Yugoslav coast. Members of the crew were: Lt. S. G. Trump, P; Lt. W. E. Spencer, CP;

Lt. D. F. Maine, N; Lt. J. D. Sisson, B; Lt. L. H. Tope, RN; S/Sgt. G. E. McGuire, UT/ S/Sgt. C. Keene, RW; S/Sgt. C. C. Doty, LW; S/Sgt. R. C. Bartels, TG; and T/Sgt. D. C. Dvork, RO.

B-17 #44-8195 was forced to ditch in the Adriatic Sea, three miles south of Manfredonia due to a shortage of fuel. It was believed that two engines were damaged by flak as they went out on the home leg. The crew was ordered to prepare for ditching and they hit the water at 0718 hours. They were picked up by Italian fishing boats and brought to Manfredonia, then to base. Members of the crew were: Lt. Isaac C. Pederson, P; Lt. Robert D. Draper, CP; Lt. Arthur A. Worth, N; Lt. Raymond C. Tulwalski, B; Lt. Byron S. Martin, RN; T/Sgt. James F. Miller, UT; S/Sgt. James F. Goodrich, RW; S/Sgt. Theodore L. Scott, TG; T/Sgt. Carmine S. Noce, RO; and Cpl. George Barrett, Observer, *Yank Magazine*. Lt Martin received serious injuries during the ditching while S/Sgt. Goodrich, S/Sgt. Scott, and Cpl. Barrett were slightly injured.

S/Sgt. James F. Goodrich was a member of the 20th Squadron and on the crew of 1st Lt. Isaac C. Pederson. October 20, 1993: "On the night of 12/13 November 1944, I was on one of the four crews assigned to fly a 'Lone Wolf' mission to bomb an oil refinery at Blechhammer, Germany. Our ships were equipped with radar that allowed us to bomb through the clouds without the necessity of visually seeing the target. The night bombing could be done in rough weather, and also give us the ability to do a 'round-the-clock' bombing of enemy territory. It also made it more difficult for enemy fighters to locate us.

"At the briefing, we found that the four aircraft would take off at close intervals, not in formation, and that bombers from other Groups would be going to the same target but at different intervals. We were loaded with 10, 500-lb. bombs, some were fused to detonate from six to 36 hours after impact. We were the lead plane in our Group and scheduled to arrive a short time after other planes had bombed. We were told we could not return the delayed fused bombs and must bomb our target, or designated alternate, regardless of conditions, clear or cloudy. In prior missions, the crews were instructed not to bomb if the target was clear. This was because it was easier for the anti-aircraft and night fighters to locate us. We were told there was a great possibility of attacks by Me-110 night fighters and to make careful observations of tactics in order to help other crews.

"When we arrived at our aircraft, I found that we were to have an observer with us. This man was Cpl. George Barrett, a reporter from *Yank Magazine*. Our pilot felt that an 11th man created more weight for such a long mission and so, our left waist gunner, S/Sgt. David W. Dykes, was 'bumped.' I gave Barrett some instructions on use of the oxygen mask and left waist gun.

"We loaded up and got off on time. We climbed rapidly and over the Adriatic, test fired our guns. Around 10,000 feet, we went on oxygen and soon reached our assigned altitude. Flying at night was strange, we were blacked out and I had a feeling of being in a tunnel. Occasionally lights could be seen through breaks in the clouds and on one or two occasions, search lights came on but no flak was fired. It was bitter cold.

"As the target was neared, it was evident that the planes that had preceded us had alerted the Germans. The men in the nose reported that the flak was really heavy. Everyone put on their flak jackets and helmets and prepared for the worst.

"It was on the bomb run when we started having trouble. Blechhammer was visible but the bombardier reported that the bomb sight was useless. The temperature had dropped so low that the bombsight was covered with ice in spite of a special heated cover. It was now up to the radar to prove that we could bomb at night without the bombsight. Our 'Mickey' navigator took over and at 1430 hours the bombs were dropped along with some propaganda leaflets. The job was done and the pilot swung off the target to head for home base.

"As we turned off the target, the No. 3 engine died, apparently struck by flak. The co-pilot and engineer joined the pilot in attempting to feather the engine but were unable to get the prop feathered. The wind-milling prop created a terrible drag and then about 30 minutes later, No. 2 engine flamed and blew some cylinder heads. The gyro instruments went next and the radar quit because of a shortage of power. We were bucking a heavy head wind and we switched off our electric suits to give the navigator enough electricity to operate his instruments.

"With only two engines left, the situation certainly did not look good. We were 600 miles from base, mostly over enemy territory and the Adriatic to cross. The plane at this time was dropping 1,000 feet per minute. The pilot called for us to prepare to bail out. The emergency hatch was jettisoned and we checked our parachutes. Someone suggested that we lighten the plane so we immediately started to throw guns, flak vests, and everything else that could be moved, overboard.

"At 8,000 feet the engines began to operate better and our descent was reduced to 300 feet per minute. The Yugoslav mountains were the next concern and the pilot felt that we could clear them if we could hold our altitude to over 6,000 feet. The pilot then thought we could make the emergency landing strip at Vis, a tiny island off the Balkan coast. Suddenly, a storm over the mountains forced us to go lower and we flew along a canyon with the mountains sometimes visible, on both sides. We hung on and prayed for the best. About three and one-half hours after leaving the target, we arrived over Vis. We relaxed and felt most of our troubles were over.

"Suddenly the word came that the airstrip was covered with clouds, ceiling zero. Without radar we knew it was impossible to get in there. We were now faced with the Adriatic to cross. Lt. Pederson came on the interphone for a check of the crew and what

to do. He felt it was best to stay with the plane and, one by one, the rest of the crew agreed.

"At 4,000 feet the ship seemed to level off and we began to feel a little more comfortable about making it across the Adriatic. Suddenly, gusts of wind hit the ship and we were down to 2,000 feet and the radio operator sent out the 'May Day' distress signal. Everyone was at the point of getting ready to bail out when land was sighted. We now had a great feeling that we were going to make it to base. The radio operator canceled the 'May Day' call and we began to relax.



T/R - L/R - A. Worth, R. Tulwalski, R. McClure, I. Pederson
B/R - L/R - M. Miller, C. Noce, J. Miller, C. Stewart, J. Goodrich, and T. Lively
(Courtesy - J. Goodrich)

"Suddenly the No. 1 engine ran out of gas and the ship fell sharply. Lt. Pederson called over the phone to prepare for ditching. We removed our parachutes, checked our 'Mae Wests' and hurried to the radio room, our assigned stations for ditching.

"At 0718 hours we hit the water, three or four miles off the coast. A great burst of water smashed into the radio room and George Barrett was lifted up through the radio hatch. We scrambled around and finally got two dinghies out, piled into them and paddled away. It had been a close call, one engine out of gas, a wind-milling prop, and two other engines out.

"Italian fishermen picked us up and we watched our bomber sink, nose down, into the Adriatic. As we piled into the ambulances, waiting for us, the co-pilot looked at his watch, smiled and said, 'Some of those bombs should be blowing up about now.' Some of us got banged up during the ditching but it wasn't long before we were back in the air on another mission.

"I went on to finish my missions. Lt. Pederson, Lt. Draper, and T/Sgt. James Miller were missing on a mission to Salzburg, Austria on December 7, 1944, captured and interned. Of the crew on that mission, Lt. Pederson, T/Sgt. James Miller, S/Sgt. Charles W. Stewart, and S/Sgt. Morris Miller were members of my regular crew. I don't recall now about the other members of my crew. I lost track of all of them and went to the last reunion at Houston in September, 1994, hoping to find some of them.

"In the mission report of the raid, it was stated that I was injured. I was not injured."



T/R - L/R - H. Bullis, J. Tomsyck, A. Poindexter (*), F. Reed
B/R - L/R - E. Wagner (*), S. Heathman, L. Sambuco, R. Rudolph
*KIA 3-14-45 (Courtesy - R. Rudolph)

LINZ, AUSTRIA - MISSION NO. 310 - NOVEMBER 15, 1944

Six aircraft took off at 0752 hours and dropped 69, 500-lb. RDX bombs on the Benzol Plant at Linz. One aircraft dropped 5 bombs on this target and 5 bombs on an alternate, the Kapfenberg, Austria Steel Works. Bombing of both targets was by PFF. Results of bombing of both targets was not obtainable due to cloud cover. Flak was heavy, moderate to intense, and accurate. There were no injuries and no losses.

MUNICH, GERMANY - MISSION NO. 311 - NOVEMBER 16, 1944

Thirty-six aircraft took off and 34 aircraft dropped 260, 500-lb. RDX bombs on the West Marshalling Yards at Munich. Bombing was by PFF with hits observed on the Yards through holes in the clouds. Flak was heavy, moderate and accurate with no losses and no injuries. One aircraft dropped its bombs on the Marshalling Yards at Villach, Austria with one bomb hitting in the Yards. One aircraft dropped its bombs on Railroad Lines in the Brenner Pass and results were unobserved.

SALZBURG, AUSTRIA - MISSION NO. 312 - NOVEMBER 17, 1944

The primary target was to Brux, Czechoslovakia but the 36 aircraft were diverted to bomb the Marshalling Yards at Salzburg. When turning off the I.P. the lead aircraft opened its bomb bay doors, at which time a malfunction caused the bombs to be dropped. The second and third Squadrons dropped on the leader and the bombs fell into a wood and mountainous area six to eight miles south of Salzburg. Flak was heavy, slight and accurate. There were no losses and no injuries. The fourth Squadron of 10 aircraft did not bomb this target but dropped its 500-lb. RDX bombs on the Marshalling Yards at Villach, Austria with some bombs seen to be in the target area. These ten aircraft were the only ones credited with a mission.

VIENNA, AUSTRIA - MISSION NO. 313 - NOVEMBER 18, 1944

Thirty-six aircraft took off to bomb the Florisdorf Oil Refinery in Vienna. Thirty-five aircraft dropped 418, 500-lb. RDX bombs by PFF with unobserved results. One aircraft was an early return. Flak was heavy, slight to moderate and inaccurate. There were no injuries and no losses.

VISEGRAD, YUGOSLAVIA - MISSION NO. 314 - NOVEMBER 18, 1944

Eight aircraft took off to bomb Troop Concentrations at Visegrad and dropped 160, 250-lb. GP bombs. Two runs were made on the target with the bombs reported in the target area. Flak was heavy, moderate and accurate with no injuries and no losses.

VIENNA, AUSTRIA - MISSION NO. 315 - NOVEMBER 19, 1944

Twenty-eight aircraft took off with 22 dropping 427, 250-lb. GP bombs on the Winterhafen Oil Refinery in Vienna. Bombing was by PFF with unobserved results. Six aircraft were early returns. Flak was heavy, intense and accurate resulting in injuries to Cpl. A. L. Butcher, LT, and Cpl. N. L. Gillis, TG, both of the 49th Squadron, and S/Sgt. J. H. White, RO, Sgt. D. W. Dykes, LW, and Lt. O. H. Lynch, CP, from the 20th Squadron.

FERRARA, ITALY - MISSION NO. 316 - NOVEMBER 19, 1944

Eighteen aircraft took off to bomb Railroad Bridges at Ferrara. Due to cloud cover over the target, the Group returned to base without bombing. The Group did not get credit for this mission.

BRNO, CZECHOSLOVAKIA - MISSION NO. 317 - NOVEMBER 20, 1944

The primary target was the South Oil Refinery at Blechhammer but weather forced the Group to divert to Marshalling Yards at Brno. Thirty-three aircraft dropped their 200-lb. GP bombs on the Marshalling Yards. One aircraft bombed Trnava, Czechoslovakia and one of the 33 dropped half its bombs on Brno and dropped the remainder on a bridge at 48-09N - 17-06E. Bombing at the main target was by PFF with unobserved results. The Second Wave made two runs on the target. Flak was heavy, slight to moderate and accurate. There were no injuries and no losses.

MUNICH, GERMANY - MISSION NO. 318 - NOVEMBER 22, 1944

Thirty-eight aircraft took off with two early returns. Twenty-six aircraft dropped 208, 500-lb. GP bombs on the West Marshalling Yards at Munich. Bombing was done by PFF with unobserved results. Flak was heavy, intense, and inaccurate.

Targets of opportunity attacked: RR Bridge three miles south of Villach, Austria; RR Bridge at 47-28N - 12-35E; RR Line south of Salzburg, Austria at 47-18N - 13-13E; RR Junction north of Dorfgastein, Austria at 47-18N - 13-03E; RR Line and Industrial Buildings near Mittersill, Austria at 47-20N - 12-25E; and Marshalling Yards at 47-58N - 10-12E near Memmingen, Germany. A total of 80, 500-lb. GP bombs were released on these targets with results not noted.

B-17 #44-6487, 429th Squadron, piloted by Captain David Joyce, was forced to ditch in the Adriatic due to a shortage of fuel and damage by flak. Members of the crew were picked up by two Air-Sea-Walrus aircraft. Four men were taken in one Walrus and their names were not listed in the report. Six taken in the second Walrus were: Captain Joyce; 2nd Lt. William Misic; S/Sgt. Clair H. Schmitt; S/Sgt. Robert H. Gayle; Sgt. Kenneth L. Hoffman; and Sgt. Harold J. Brett.

LINZ, AUSTRIA - MISSION NO. 319 - NOVEMBER 24, 1944

Five aircraft took off at 2345 hours and four aircraft dropped their 500-lb. RDX bombs on the Benzol Oil Refinery at Linz by PFF. Results were unobserved. One aircraft dropped its 500-lb. RDX bombs on Marshalling Yards at Klagenfurt, Austria. There were no losses. The aircraft returned at 0650 hours, November 25th.

LINZ, AUSTRIA - MISSION NO. 320 - NOVEMBER 30, 1944

Five aircraft took off at 0110 hours with one early return. Four aircraft dropped 40, 500-lb. RDX bombs and four, M26 propaganda bombs on the Benzol Oil Refinery at Linz. Bombing was done by PFF with unobserved results. Flak was heavy, slight, and inaccurate. Two planes reported that tracers were fired at them just following bombs away. No injuries, no losses.