

533rd Bomb Squadron War Diary

1943: Precombat, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec

1944: Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec

1945: Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr

Precombat: January to May 1943

533rd Bomb Sq.
381st Bomb Group (H)
WAR DIARY
Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty



Transcribed from microfilm by Dave Osborne.

JANUARY 1943

3. Activated on 3 January 1943, as one of the four squadrons composing the 381st Bomb Group, the 533rd was organized as a cadre at Blythe AAB, California, under the command of Captain Landon B. Hendricks of Matewan, West Virginia.

Heading the squadron departments were: 2nd Lt - Kreidler - Operations Officer; 2nd Lt Thomas Tompkins - Adjutant; 2nd Lt Robert Thayer - Communications; 2nd Lt John J. Tutsock - Supply and 2nd Lt - Russell - Armaments.

Model combat crew around which the squadron's air echelon was developed, included; 2nd Lt James Deeds - pilot; 2nd Lt Karl Franek - co-pilot; 2nd Lt Joseph Rothenburg - navigator; 2nd Lt Leo K. English; S/Sgt Louis Smulowitz - engineer/top turret gunner; S/Sgt Irwin Bohlander - radio operator/gunner; S/Sgt Joseph J. Kristapovich - ball turret gunner; S/Sgt James J. Lintgen - waist gunner; S/Sgt Elwood Harris - waist gunner; S/Sgt Christian Langolf - tail gunner.

Other men, taken from the 34th Bomb Group at Blythe, in the cadre were: T/Sgts Joseph C. Howard, Marshall C. Peavy and Rhea H. Rutherford; S/Sgt Joseph H. Hildahl (1st Sgt); Sgts Walter M. Balasa, John R. Chapman, Morris Goldman, - Milaef, Roy Ridenour; Cpls Dale E. Cain, Joseph L. Gray, Wayne E. Holtz, Charles R. James, Robert G. McCormick, Lucian A. Naff, George A. Ranger, Kenneth Stone, Charles H. Wilton; Pfc's - Barone, Henry Buongiorno, Dennis L. Collins, Walter Cripe, Michael J. Egan, Adam J. Gaidecki, Jesse G. Hyten, Robert Jenkins, - Johnson, - Jones, James F. Kaestner, - Kirkpatrick, - Krauss, - Kueker, William Lanese, Clarence D. Loch, William J. Mackey, James A. Main, - Malone, - Manson, Luther B. McRaine, - Mitchell, Alfred G. Nichols, Erlan Rantilla, - Ross, - Teixeira [Tony J.].

5. Arriving at Pyote Air Base in Texas, the 533rd took up garrison duties awaiting the arrival of more troops from Salt Lake City AAB, Utah.

12. 2nd Lt Ernest E. Murray, a 14 year army veteran and B-17 aircraft specialist was assigned as head of the largest single department - Engineering.

17. Capt John H. Hamilton, was assigned as Operations Officer, replacing Lt Kreidler was transferred to the 302nd Bomb Group.

24. A total of 111 enlisted men were assigned, bringing the squadron up to operational strength. 2nd Lt George Kessel succeeded Lt Tompkins as Adjutant and 2nd Lt David H. Spencer was assigned as Assistant Engineering Officer.

28. Capts Hendricks and Hamilton, Lts English and Rothenburg, Sgts Bohlander, Harris and Smulowitz, Sgt Kristapovich and Pfc Stern made a flight to XC, destination secret (cross country ?), returning Jan 31.

The squadron strength was slowly increased during the last week of month.

FEBRUARY 1943

1. Ten Lts and two F/Os were attached to the squadron for duty.

Cpls Cain, Gray, Holtz, McCormick, Naff, Ranger and Wilson were all promoted Sgt; while Pfc Brooks, Holloway, Toole and Pvts Cripe, Davis, Egan, Gaidecski, Jenkins, Johnson, Krauss, Lee, Mackey and Main were promoted Cpl.

During the early part of the month the 533rd received more EM in addition to 2nd Lt Harry Bonneau, S-2 Officer, who was assigned on the 4th.

8. 1st Lt Louis G. Ralston was assigned as Medical Officer..

9. Fifty privates were appointed Pfc, as per S.O. No. 4, para 1.

Work progressed in assigning men to permanent squadron duties, and establishing quarters for all squadron departments. When the cadre arrived from Blythe, the entire squadron had engaged in construction of offices on the line to house communications, engineering and tech supply equipment.

10. 2nd Lt Julius Eichenbaum was assigned as Ordnance Officer.

18. 2nd Lt Russell was relieved of duties as armament officer and transferred to Blythe, Cal.

19. 2nd Lt McLaughlin was assigned as Asst S-2 Officer and 2nd Lt Turner assigned to the squadron as navigator. W/O Joseph Nutt was assigned as Armament Officer.

21. 2nd Lt Ray assigned as navigator and Lt Rothenburg transferred to 382nd BG.

23. 2nd Lt Ray transferred to 351st BG.

The month ended quietly with all departments performing usual duties. Men became accustomed, during this period, to the hot sunshine, the dust, the violent sandstorms and the clean, chilly desert nights of Pyote. Many night training flights were carried out by combat crews, and ground crewmen gained experience in servicing aircraft during the hours of darkness.

Squadron strength was 25 officers and 271 enlisted men.

MARCH 1943

1. S/Sgt Joseph Hildahl, acting 1st Sgt was appointed T/Sgt. Other promotions: Sgts to S/Sgts: Balasa, Gray, Holtz; Cpls to Sgts: Bilicki, Brooks, Egan, Gaidecski, Goldhammer, Holloway, Jenkins, Lee, Rantilla, Stern, Toole; Pfc to Cpl: Babin, Borchardt, Doswell, Hersom, Hyten, Jones, Knowles, Loch, McRainey, Meyers, Nelson, Nichols, E.W. Smith, Staats, Stanley, and Teixeira.

2. Cpl Lehman and Pvts Reichert and Sundry discharged as per S.O. No. 54.

3. Sgt Milaef, Pvts Lucas, Jakubowski and Floyd transferred to the 410th Base Sq, Pyote; T/Sgt Rutherford promoted to M/Sgt as of 1st of month.

4. 2nd Lt Peterson assigned from Group HQ.

5. 2nd Lts James H. Alexander, Olaf M. Ballinger, Edwin A. Milkey, Martin Shenk, and Charles E. Hedin (pilots); William J. McDaniel, John M. Carah, Herbert Swein, William R. Grant, Rudolph G. Duncan (co-pilots); Hubert McDaniel, - Jikutz, John F. Lander, Thomas L. Keheley, Donald F. Hamm (navigators); Paul E. Tull, George C. Williams, Moses J. Hoppenstein, Glen R. Cotter, Frank E. Cappel (bombardiers); S/Sgts John K. Lane, Gerald E. Fruitt, Edward F. Metcalf, Alphonse J. Molis, Francis E. Owens, Byron J. Gronstal, Robert L. Mandell, Leonard J. Fornaro, Albert G. Wackerman, Thomas A. Childress, Harry N. Bauscher, Irvin T. Johnson, Robert W. McNair, Raymond A. Genz, Richard G. Henry, Anthony L. Budzic, John D. Sinclair, Mitchell J. LaBuda, Charles W. Brinton, George Bardsley, James F. Sloan, Richard H. Hanna, Robert L. Potts, Vivian M. Thomas, Stewart McDonald, Arnold B. Lorick, Clifford J. Marhefke, Shirley Goucher, William C. Howell, Wade McCook, all assigned from the 34th BG at Blythe. Pvts Cowdery and Speciale assigned from the 18th Replacement Wing, Salt Lake City.

6. No change.

7. Pfc Truhar transferred as Pvt to 410th Base Sq, Pyote.

8. No change.

9. S/Sgt Smulovitz and Sgt Kristapovich reduced to Pvt. Pfc Mitchell reduced to Pvt. Pvt Daniel A. Vina assigned from Group HQ.

10. 2nd Lts Inman Jobe, Robert Withers, John J. Martin and Robert K. Schrader promoted 1st Lts; S/Sgt Bardsley reduced to Pvt; Pfc - Hill, - Kellner, James P. Gatto, Cecil Florea, Peter P. Diaz, - Harding, Wendell M. Heil and Pvts Leo A. Dow, Merlin H. Hinz, George W. Hall, Henry T. Jozwiak and - Hanson assigned from Group HQ.

11. 2nd Lt Peterson transferred to 330th BG, at Alamogordo, N.M.; Pfc - Bjorholm reduced to Pvt.

12. Pvts Nathan A. Ainis, Kenneth K. Bell, - Bowman, Thomas S. Campbell, George W. Cathcart, - Chiono, Martin DeJong, Harry Dill, Russell M. Drumm, Milton J. Foerstal, Robert G. Franklin, Earl Friedmann, - Goodhart, Leslie C. Grell, Alfred Hajduk, George J. Halbach, - Hepburn, Perry F. Hodge, - Horton, Andrew L. Ingles, Joseph M. Karam, James H. King, Erling Knutsen, Joseph J. Kohler, James L. Lawrence, - Lucas, Coral F. Mann, Anthony M. Monobianco, Paul E. Marston, Melvin O. McManus, Robert L. Moss, George C. Minger, Charles A. Mullinger, William H. Multop, George Y. Muse, Joseph L. Neel, Frederick C. Paine, - Pitkin, - Roeser, Paul J. Simmons, Loren A. Skirvin, Sam M. Spivak, Joseph F. Sproha, Herbert Swerns, Dominic D. Taurone, Thomas F. Walsh, Earle C. Young promoted to Pfc.

Pvt Ulysses DePriest, Pvt Emil E. Ketterhagen, Sgt Christian Langolf, Pfc Paul L. Thiessen, Pfc Doughty, Pvt Gorman were assigned from Group HQ.

13. Pfc Keuker, Friedmann and Multop transferred to 534th. Pvt Wierich assigned from Group HQ; Pvts Johnson and Pinter promoted to Pfc.

14. Pvt Berg assigned from Group HQ.

15. Pvt Clifford H. Larson, - Demarti, - McLarnan, - Bilderbeck and Lawrence J. Coleman assigned from 18th Rep. Wing, Salt Lake City; Cpls Duncan and McMullen assigned from Ft George Wright, Wash.; Pvt Shilk discharged per S.O. No. 59, Pyote AAB.

16. 2nd Lt Martin Healey, S-2 officer, assigned from 18th Rep Wing, at Salt Lake City, along with Pfc John E. Barnes, Vernon J. Chamberlain and James W. Wentworth.

17. 2nd Lt Jack Taylor, S-2 officer, assigned from 18th Rep. Wing, SLC; Pfc Goodhart transferred to 333rd BG, Dalhart, Tex; Pfc Connick, Doughty, Rogers and M.M. Johnson transferred to 19th BG, Pyote; Pfc Raymond Timm and Mallne reduced to Pvt.

18. No change.
19. Pvts Bland, Thomas J. Janiec and Pierce assigned from 410th Base Sq, Pyote; Pvt Daniel A. Vina transferred to 534th.
20. Pvt Thompson assigned from Group HQ, and Pfc Babick from 534th.
21. 2nd Lts Ernest E. Murray - Engineering Officer and John J. Tutsock -Squadron Adjutant, promoted 1st Lt.
22. 2nd Lt Jikutz transferred to 535th and 2nd Lt Paul H. McConnell from 535th.
23. Pfc Taylor, Pfc Backrack and Kirkpatrick discharged as per S.O. No. 77, Pyote.
24. 2nd Lt William Dendy - Supply and Transportation Officer, assigned from 535th; Pvt Mitchell transferred to 532nd; Pfc Beckwith discharged as per S.O. No. 78, Pyote AAB.
25. No change.
26. No change.
27. Cpl Hix and Pfc Manson discharged as per S.O. No. 82, Pyote AAB.
28. Sgt Becker, Pvts Lawson, McLarnan and DiMarti transferred to ACU and attached to 410th Base Sq, Pyote; Pvt Connell transferred to 19th BG, Pyote; Pvt Errigo transferred to Medical Detachment, Biggs Fd, El Paso, Tex.
29. 2nd Lt Sawin transferred to 534th; Cpl Janes to 410th Base Sq, Pyote; Pfc Knutsen to Group HQ; Pvt Ice assigned from 18th Rep. Wing.
30. Pvt Rooney transferred to 410th Base Sq, Pyote; Pvt Blanton to 532nd; S/Sgt Paul P. Smoogen assigned from Group HQ.
31. No change.

Squadron strength is 50 officers and 302 enlisted men.

APRIL 1943

1. 2nd Lts Hedin, Milkey and Shenk appointed 1st Lts; Pvt Parks transferred to 410th Base Sq, Pyote AAB. Other promotions include:- to M/Sgt: Howard, Peavy and LeFaive; to T/Sgt: Balasa, Lanham and Gray; to S/Sgt: Cain, Chapman, Egan, Goldman, Jenkins, McCormick, Naff and Wilson; to Sgt: Bennett, Boland, Cripe, Davis, Hersom, Hyten, L. E. Johnson, Knowles, Krauss, Loch, McRaney, Nichols, Smith, Staats, Stahley, Thole and Willis; to Cpl: Ainis, Allen, Baze, Bell, Buongiorno, Cathcart, Collins, Congiardo, DeJong, Eckhoff, Foerstall, Franklin, Grell, Hajduk, Hepburn, Hicks, A.B. Hodge, Horton, Ingles, Jackson, Johnson, Kaestner, Klien, Kohler, Konieczny, Kristapovich, Lanese, Larson, Lazzaroni, Lucas, Madden, Monobianco, Maupai, McLendon, Miller, Minger, Moss, Muse, Neel, Paez, Paine, Pinter, Pitkin, Roesser, A.J. Smith, Smulowitz, Sorci, Spivak, Stille, Theiser, and Walsh; to Pfc: Barnes, Haffner, Kish and Lindsay.
2. No change.
3. Cpl Paul Meyers transferred to ACU as per VOCO, Pyote AAB HQ. Pvts Bland and Pearce transferred to 1263rd Guard Sq, Alexandria, La.
4. Sgt Brundage assigned from Group HQ.

Having spent the week packing equipment for shipment, the ground personnel of the squadron entrained at Pyote for Pueblo. Colo., at 19.00 hrs. During the remaining five hours of the day the squadron travelled 163 miles towards Pueblo.

5. Ground personnel spent the day aboard the train travelling 900 more miles towards Pueblo. The air echelon, led by Capt Hendricks flew from Pyote to Pueblo.

6. The squadron ground crewmen arrived in Pueblo at 08.00 hrs. The total distance was 990 miles. Greeted at the station by the Pueblo Air Base Band, the squadron marched in formation with other squadrons of the 381st, to their new quarters. Remainder of the day was spent unpacking equipment.

Cpls Adamczyk, Schaedler, and Sullivan were assigned from AAFTTC, Lowry Fd, Denver; Cpl Beck assigned.

7. Cpls Houk and Weitz assigned from AAFTTC, Lowry Fd, Denver; and Pvts Davidson, Dunkle, Marconi and Martinez from 18th Rep. Wing.

8. Pvt Rosentraugh assigned from Group HQ.

9. S/Sgt Weitz assigned from 535th.

10. Pvt Mastrantonio transferred to Base HQ, Pueblo.

11. Sgt Korka assigned from Base HQ, Pueblo; Pfc Bowman transferred to hospital, El Paso, Texas.

12. No change.

13. Pvts Atchison and Jones assigned from Base HQ, Pueblo; three enlisted men attached for rations and quarters.

14. Pfs Baldassara, Berrells and Denning, and Pvt Miller assigned from Group HQ.

15. Sgt Brundage transferred to 19th BG, Pyote; Pfc Floyd reduced to Pvt; Pvts Floyd and Murr transferred to 1263rd Guard Sq. Alexandria, La; Cpl DuBois assigned from Alamogordo AAB, N.M.

16. Lt Duggan assigned from Yuma, Ariz.; T/Sgt assigned from Group HQ to replace T/Sgt Joseph Hildahl as squadron 1st Sgt; Pvt Dean assigned from Lowry Fd, Denver; Cpls Becker, Houk, Schaedler and Weitz, and Pfc Rosentraugh transferred to Base HQ, Pueblo; Pvts Alexander, Bell, Berg, Brown, Burkland, Chamberlain, Corley, Cowdery, D'Angelo, DeNubilo, Dunkle, Fiamma, Garvey, Hanson, Hall, Hicks, Hinz, Hunt, Joachim, Kennell, Kelly, Ladner, Liddell, Matus, McCarron, McDuffee, Meseroll, M.L. Miller, Oviatt, Powell, Riel, Robertson, Rybka, Sanchez, Saunor, Smith, Smothers, Speciale, Stanley, Stapp, Stein, Terry, Thomassen, Trevisani, Ward, Weinrich, Wentworth, Williams, Zappa and Zimmerman appointed Pfc.

17. Sgt Broslawsky assigned from AAB Alamogordo; Pvts DiNicola, Clark and Zakal assigned from 18th Rep. Wing, SLC.

18. No change.

19. 1st Lt Louis G. Ralston, Squadron Flight Surgeon promoted to Captain; 2nd Lts Thayer and Turner to 1st Lts; Pfc Frazee, Fingerman, Heist, and DelPont assigned from 18th Rep. Wing, SLC; and Pvt Dolfen from Base HQ, Pyote.

20. F/O Cytarzinski transferred to 532nd; S/Sgt Heist and Budzic assigned to 535th; Pvt Nason from 18th Rep. Wing, SLC; Pfc Heil and Pvt Bjorholm transferred to Base HQ, Pyote.

21. 2nd Lt McCarthy assigned from Blythe AAB, Cal., 2nd Lt Stewart and T/Sgt Timm from El Paso AAB, Tex; S/Sgt Henry transferred to 532nd.

22. Pvts Humber, Poszko, Bailey, Ciardu, Huskey, Hard, Sarate, Charlton assigned from Blythe AAB, Cal.; S/Sgt Denning from 532nd; Cpls Nelson and Nicholas from 18th Rep. Wing, SLC.; Pfc Baldassara, Pvts Jones and Ray transferred to 302nd BG, Clovis, NM.

23. No change.

24. 2nd Lts Alexander, Ballinger and Eichenbaum promoted to 1st Lts; Pvt Mastrantonio assigned from Group HQ; and Pfc Selvaggio from Blythe AAB, Cal.

25. No change.

26. S/Sgt Genz transferred to 532nd; Pvt Tishon assigned from 532nd; Pfc Clayton assigned from 18th Rep. Wing, SLC.

27. 2nd Lt Crymes assigned from 18th Rep. Wing, SLC; Cpl Geirer, Pfc White and Hambar from Base HQ, Pyote.

28. No change.

29. T/Sgt Hildahl, Pvc Cowart and Malone transferred to Base HQ, Pyote; 2nd Lts Bonneau and Tompkins promoted 1st Lts; Pfc Mauzy assigned from 18th Rep. Wing, SLC.

30. Pfc Atchison and Wojdowski reduced to Pvt.

MAY 1943

1. Cpl Seaton assigned from 18th Rep. Wing, SLC; S/Sgt Wilson promoted to T/Sgt; Sgt Stone reduced to Pvt; 2nd Lt Lander transferred to 302nd BG Clovis, N.M.; S/Sgt DiSimone to 392nd BG Alamogordo, N.M.; S/Sgt McNair to 389th BG, Lowry, Col.; T/Sgt Thomas Burns appointed permanent squadron 1st Sgt.

Promoted to M/Sgt: Lanham; to T/Sgt: Bohlander, Cain, Cutting, Fruitt, Goucher, Gronstal, Hanna, Holtz, Jenkins, I. T. Johnson, Klick, Lantto, McCormick, Moore and Naff; to S/Sgt: Bardsley, Englett, Fox, Gaidecki, Holloway, Hutchinson, Hyten, Krauss, Langolf, Loch, Ranger, Seiber, Staats, Stahley, Toole and Willis; to Sgt: Babin, Baze, Buongiorno, Cathcart, Collins, Congiardo, DeJong, Eckoff, Franklin, Grell, Haffner, Hajduk, Hepburn, Hodge, Horton, Kish, Klein, Kristapovich, Lanese, Larson, Lindsay, Monobianco, McLendon, R. Miller, Minger, Moss, Neel, Nelson, Pinter, Pitkin, A. Smith, Smulowitz, Spivak, Stille, Teixeira, Walsh; to Cpl: Adams, Alexander, Babich, Ball, Barron, Belche, Betanzo, Brown, Caldwell, Campbell, Chiono, Cowdery, DeNubilo, Dill, Drumm, Dufilho, Dunkle, Dunning, Feeley, Fiamma, Flinn, Florea, Gatto, Geary, Hall, Hanson, Harding, J. Hicks, Hill, Hunt, Jerkins, Joachim, Karam, Kellner, Kenelley, King, Lawrence, McDuffee, Mulligan, Newman, Piech, Ridenour, Simmons, Skirvin, Speciale, Sproha, Stapp, Trevisani, Wagner and Weirich.

2. S/Sgts Mandell, Potts, Sinclair and Yarnell promoted to T/Sgt.

3. S/Sgt Paul Smoogen transferred to Group HQ.

4. The following were reduced to Pvt: T/Sgts Klick, Lantto, Yarnell; S/Sgts Frisbee, Howell, Langolf, Hutchinson, Maloney, Englett, Seiber, Weitz, Willis; Sgts Kurnafil, Lindsay, Osborne, Pruiett; Cpls Dufilho and Geary.

Cpl Lowther assigned from Tuscon AAB, Ariz.; Cpl Kot from Clovis AAB, NM; Pvt Maykowski from Base HQ, Pyote; Cpl Duncan transferred to 502 Chemical Storage Co. Pueblo.

5. The following were sent for Detached Service at Salina AAB, Kansas: Capts Hendricks and Hamilton; 1st Lts Alexander, Ballinger, English, Hedin, Jobe, Martin, Murray, Schrader, Shenk, Turner, and Withers; 2nd Lts Bradley, Cappel, Carah, Duggan, Grant, Hamm, Hoag, Hoppenstein, Johnson, Samara, Tull and Williams; F/Os Duncan, Hudson and Marsh; M/Sgts Rutherford and Peavy; T/Sgts Bohlander, Cutting, Pruiett, Goucher, Gronstal, Hanna, Mandell, Potts and Sinclair; S/Sgts Bardsley, Bauscher, Brinton, Childress, Fornaro, Fox, Harris, Labuda, Lane, Lintgen, Lorick, MacDonald, Marhefke, Molis, Owens, Sloan, Thomas, Wackerman; Sgts Kristapovich, Smulowitz,; Pvc Howell, Langolf and Weitz.

Pvt Sparks transferred to 389th BG, Denver; Pfc Young assigned from Clovis AAB, NM.

Six day furloughs were granted to all squadron personnel during March and April, previous to movement of the 381st BG to its combat station overseas.

6. 2nd Lt John Lander transferred to 535th; Pvt Clark to Base HQ, Pueblo.

7. 1st Lt Tompkins, Milkey and Cooter; Sgt Eckoff; Cpls Chiono, Sullivan; Pfc Smith, Pessko; transferred to Base HQ, Pueblo.

Pfc Boorman assigned from 532nd; Pfc Mauzey transferred to 535th.

8. T/Sgt Ray Timm transferred to 61st Sqd, Alamogordo, NM; Pvt Nason to 7th Sqd, Tucson, Ariz; Cpl Paine, Pvs Mastrantonio and Tiskon to Base HQ, Pueblo.

9. Squadron ground crewmen were assembled in full field equipment, marched to the train station with other squadrons of the group and entrained at 18.30 hrs. In the remainder of the time before midnight, the squadron traveled 50 miles to Colorado Springs, Colo.

New assignments were: S/Sgt Law, Cpls Pay and Lixey, Pvt Sahrock.

10. Leaving Colorado Springs at 00.01 hrs, the squadron traveled through Nebraska and arrived at Guardula, Iowa., at midnight, a trip of 798 miles.

11. The squadron left Guardula at 00.01 hrs and arrived in Akron, Ohio at midnight, after 700 miles.

12. The squadron left Akron at 00.01 hrs travelling eastward through Pittsburg, Pa., Washington, Baltimore and arrived at Camp Kilmer, N.J. at 19.00 hrs. The entire group was assembled, with full equipment including barracks bags, and marched from the station to the camp. Men were quickly assigned to barracks and work of unloading equipment shipped from Pueblo began under supervision of Lt John J. Tutsock and 2nd Lt David H. Spencer, assistant engineering officer.

13. At the staging area, squadron ground personnel began final training under the direction of 1st Lt Julius Eichenbaum, acting squadron commander. Training included drill, physical training and cross country hikes in combat equipment.

14. Assigned from Fort Dix, N.J. were Cpl Tigner and Pvt F. Smith. Cpls Hofland and Imbriani were also new arrivals.

15/16. Men of the squadron were granted 12 hr passes and because many lived close enough to the camp to travel home in the allotted time, a great number of them visited their families. Most of the men from western, middle-western and southern states saw New York City for the first time. Passes were granted every night until the squadron was alerted for shipment overseas.

17. Wearing fatigue suits, leggings and steel helmets, squadron ground crewmen were transported from Camp Kilmer to Fort Dix for practice firing of their carbines with which they were armed, the 533rd contingent left Camp Kilmer at 20.30 hrs and arrived at Fort Dix at 15.00 hrs. After firing, the men made the return journey to back to Kilmer at 20.30 hrs. Pvt Shurdtt joined the squadron and Cpl Kot to Base HQ, Pueblo.

18/23. During this period there was no change in the organization of the squadron. Final inspections of equipment were made, and men received new equipment for items damaged or lacking. Passes continued to be issued nightly.

24. Pvs Timm and Ashcraft appointed Pfc.

25. Passes were discontinued and all squadron personnel were restricted to the limits of Camp Kilmer. Pvt Winter transferred to 532nd.

26. Men were assembled in full field equipment, including steel helmets and rifles and full pack, and marched to Camp Kilmer station to board the train for New York. Each man carried his "A" barracks bag, the "B" bags having been shipped directly from Pueblo, to the embarkation point.

Movement of the troops was carried out with a minimum of delay and confusion by a system of numbering the men according to rank. The Camp Kilmer band accompanied the 381st men to the station and played until the train departed.

Leaving Camp Kilmer at 09.00 hrs the squadron arrived in Jersey City, N.J. at 13.00 hrs and marched aboard a river ferry to be transported across the Hudson River to where the "Queen Elizabeth" was docked in Manhattan. Boarding the ship, men were given cards for sleeping quarters and meals. Half the men were quartered below and half "bunked" for the night on the port promenade deck.

27. The "Queen Elizabeth" sailed from New York. On this date the squadron's air echelon took off from Newfoundland to fly to Scotland. Airmen had flown from Salina, Kan., to Dow Field, Me., and from there to Newfoundland.

28. The air echelon arrived at Prestwick airfield, Scotland. Ground crewmen aboard the "Queen Elizabeth" alternated in sleeping below decks, this procedure followed throughout the entire voyage. No duties were assigned and men spent their time reading or writing letters, playing cards or dice.

29. The air echelon proceeded from the airfield in Scotland to one at Bovington, north west of London. Meantime the "Queen" was in mid-Atlantic.

30/31. The air echelon landed at Bovington, while the "Queen" completed her uninterrupted journey off the coast of Scotland.

June 1943

533rd Bomb Sq.
381st Bomb Group (H)
WAR DIARY

Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

JUNE 1943

1. Early in the morning the coast of Scotland was sighted and before noon, the "Queen Elizabeth" had entered the Firth of Clyde. Squadron personnel collected barracks bags from below decks, and remained in readiness for disembarkation.

The ship arrived at Gourock, Scotland, late in the afternoon and during the remainder of the day tenders drew alongside to unload the cargo. Men amused themselves conversing with the crews of the tenders and showering them with candy, cigarettes, cigars, oranges and money. Squadron personnel remained aboard ship for another night.

2. Two officers and 73 enlisted men disembarked and left Gourock by train at 18.30. 3. Twelve officers and 200 EM disembarked and left Gourock by train at 07.00 hrs, while those who had left the day before arrived at Ridgewell, in the county of Essex, England, at 13.00 hrs. Halstead was the nearest town, about nine miles away.

4. The second contingent of ground crewmen arrived at Ridgewell at 01.30 hrs, when men received supper at the mess hall and were assigned to quarters. During the day the usual camp duties were begun.

5. Squadron personnel assembled in the Consolidated Mess Hall, with men of the other squadrons to hear a lecture on security.

6/9. No change.

10. Cpls Kurnafil, Lindsay, Osborne, Pruiett, Geary, Klick and Goswick were all appointed Sgt; Sgt Haffner assigned from Station Hospital, Gourrock; Sgt Heist transferred to 532nd; Pvts Dufilho and Weitz to HQ, 1st H.P.B.; Pvt Goswick assigned.

11. Sgt Bilicki reduced in grade to Pvt.

12-18. No change.

19. Pvts Diaz, Brandeis and Maykowski appointed Pfc; Sgt Klick to S/Sgt; Cpl Caldwell reduced to Pvt.

20/21. No change.

22. The first action for the 533rd came today when six of the squadron's planes took part in a diversional raid on Antwerp, in Belgium. Calculated to draw German fighter strength from the main target in the Ruhr, the raid was aimed at the General Motors plant in Antwerp. The pilots taking part were: 1st Lt Robert L. Withers in the lead, with General Hunter and Lt Duggan aboard as observers; others: Lts James H. Alexander, Charles E. Hedin, Inman G. Jobe, Martin L. Shenk and John J. Martin, the latter is missing in action.

MIA crew: 2nd Lt John J. Martin, F/O Robert J. Marsh, 2nd Lt Harry R. Long, 2nd Lt Wallace A. Hoag; T/Sgt James Lantto, Sgt Hugh T. Goswick, Sgt William Geary, S/Sgt John B. Hutchinson, S/Sgt Leonard J. Fornaro, S/Sgt Glenn W. Witts.

Two aircraft, "Little Chuck" piloted by Jobe, and "Linda Mary" by Shenk, were both badly damaged by enemy fire and forced to crash land on the English coast. The tail gunner of Lt Hedin, S/Sgt Arnold B. Lorick, was fatally wounded by a bursting 20mm shell. Flying as a spare with the 532nd, T/Sgt Robert L. Mandell was lost in action.

The crash landings by Jobe and Shenk not only saved their lives, but also those of their crewmen. With two engines knocked out and a third so badly damaged by flak that it threatened to tear loose from the aircraft at any moment, Lt Shenk managed to nurse the ship to the English coast and crash-land at a small flying field.

Lt Jobe's predicament was even worse. With only one engine still functioning he barely made England and was forced to land with his wheels up in a potato field. The skill which Jobe brought his battered craft home is evident in the fact that none of his crew was injured except S/Sgt Kinley W. Lindsay, top turret. Among Shenk's crew, S/Sgt Charles W. Brinton, waist gunner, was severely injured and died two days later at the 12th Evacuation Hospital. There injured in the same crew were: Lt George C. Williams (B), T/Sgt John D. Sinclair (RO), S/Sgt James F. Sloan (TG) and S/Sgt Mitchell LaBuda (WG).

23. The severe pounding taken by the 533rd on their first mission prevented any participation by squadron aircraft on the second mission, the target being a German airfield at Fecamp, France. The following men took part as spares with other squadrons: S/Sgt Stewart McDonald (BTG), S/Sgt Albert Wackerman (BTG), S/Sgt Clifford Marhefke (RWG), and T/Sgt Richard J. Hanna (LWG). None were injured.

Tragedy struck however, on 23 June 1943, when the B-17 42-30024 exploded on the ground while being serviced by the ground crew, and 23 men of the squadron, including an officer and one civilian were killed in the blast. Two other squadron planes were damaged in the explosion, one so badly it had to be scrapped.

Those killed were:

Mr John Hunwick, a British civilian, working on the base

2nd Lt	Paul E. Tull	Hanover	Ind.
T/Sgt	Charles E. Wilton	Richland	Wash.
T/Sgt	Erwin Bohlander	Tlenham	S.D.
S/Sgt	Michael J. Egan	New York	N.Y.

S/Sgt	Elwood R. Harris	Richmond	Va.
S/Sgt	James J. Lintgen	St. Cloud	Minn.
Sgt	Henry Bongiorno	Charleroi	Pa.
Sgt	Dennis L. Collins	Churchville	Va.
Sgt	Christian Langolf	Fort Huron	Mich.
Sgt	Joseph L. Neel	Atlanta	Ga.
Sgt	Joseph J. Kristapovich	Worcester	Mass.
Sgt	Louis Smulovitz	Wilkes Barre	Ia.
Cpl	Roger H. Allen	New Haven	Conn.
Cpl	Charles A. Feeley	Providence	R.I.
Cpl	Milton Foerstal	St Louis	Mo.
Cpl	George Fiamma	Corona	N.Y.
Cpl	Melvin R. Jerkins	Tampa	Fla.
Cpl	James H. King	Pilot	Va.
Cpl	Elmer F. Madden	Pawtucket	R.I.
Cpl	James A. Main	Burton	W. Va.
Cpl	Guy McDuffee	Nashville	Tenn.
Cpl	Joseph Sproha	Wharton	N. J.
Pfc	Robert M. Ashcraft	Mannington	W. Va.

The first explosion took place shortly after 11.00 hrs. It was followed, between 30-40 seconds later, by another blast. In addition to those killed, Pfc Glenn W. Burkland suffered a compound leg fracture. He probably owes his life to the quick thinking and heroism of S/Sgt Francis E. Owens, who dragged him from the danger zone between the first and second explosions.

Eyewitness accounts from men either in the immediate vicinity of the explosion or at other points on the line when the blast occurred were taken by the Public Relations office, and they are quoted below.

S/Sgt Owens had traveled about 25 yards away from the plane after the first explosion when he looked back and saw Pfc Burkland, whose leg had been broken, lying under the wing. Without consideration for himself, he returned at once and dragged Burkland behind a concrete revetment, out of danger, before the second blast went off.

Others quoted below came back on the scene (or first came to the scene) after the second explosion. They de-fused bombs in the danger area and carried the fuses out of the way. They fought fires, and they moved one of the two damaged Fortresses out of reach of further injury. Had there been any other injured besides Pfc Burkland, the prompt appearance of Lts Julius Eichenbaum, George Bannon, W/O Joseph Nutt, and Sgts Robert Miller, Walter Balasa and Francis Owens probably would have resulted in saving more lives.

Reported by Lt George A. Bannon: "I was about 700 yards away in the bomb dump. When I heard the explosion, I started towards the plane. Joe Nutt and myself carried Lt Tull's body (handed out to us by Sgt Miller) away from the plane. We carried the boy with the broken leg (Burkland) out to Creek's car. Ike (Lt Eichenbaum) and I then ran around trying to put out the fire in the damaged plane.

After that they decided they wanted to move the plane. So I took the fuses from the bombs inside. We handed them down to Nutt and an enlisted man as we took them out. I then helped to get people out of the area. When we did all we could, I took off and finished loading up my own plane for the mission."

Lt Julius Eichenbaum (Sqd ordnance officer): "About three minutes before the first explosion I went to 024 (The ship in which the explosion took place) to see how my men were doing. I sent three of them down to get some more ammunition for another squadron, the 535th.

I then went to the ammunition area, about 150 yards from the plane. The first thing I saw was flame and black smoke and then I heard the blast. I jumped into my jeep and told everybody to clear out of the ammunition area and I started towards the plane. I heard another explosion. I saw an MP and told him to keep everybody away from there. I went to 992 (about 30 ft away from 024). I knew it had fused bombs in it. As I cut across, I gave orders to keep everybody clear of the area. I picked up Joe Nutt and Sgt Miller en route.

We rushed over to 992 and we came across Burkland lying about nine feet from the plane, behind a piece of concrete curbing. We started to give him first aid. I ordered him moved out immediately, but somebody hollered, 'He's got a broken leg. You can't move him'. I knew we had to get him away from there, broken leg or no broken leg, because there might be another explosion. Creek brought a board over and said, 'Put him in my car'. At that time somebody suggested looking in the plane for anyone else who might be in there. I, Nutt, Miller and Lt Alexander, pilot of the ship, jumped into the plane. Alexander went up to the nose and I went to the tail.

Alexander then came running out to where I was and said: 'Tull's dead up the nose, Ike. Let's get him out of here.' Miller lifted Tull from the seat and handed him out to Nutt and Bannon. I checked the plane and there was nobody else there. I then took the extinguisher and went to put out fires burning near 992. I used up three extinguishers but couldn't put the damn thing out.

Col. Nazzaro, Col. Fiegel, Lts Bob Withers and Karl Franek came along. I started to de-fuse the bombs. I was handing them Gerry Platz, Sgt Pinter and Joe Nutt. Bannon started to de-fuse some. He was giving them to Franek, Miller, and Balasa, then when we got the fuses out we went to work on the fire again. About that time the Cletrac came around. We hitched 992 to it and Bob Withers got in and we pulled it away."

S/Sgt Francis E. Owens: "I was cleaning guns in Lt Ballinger's ship, which was parked right next to 024. I was standing right by the rear entrance when the first explosion happened. All this stuff was flying through the air. Everyone was running. I started running towards the tail, too. Everything was coming that way, so I started beating it away from there in another direction.

I got about 25 yards away when I saw this fellow under the wing, right by the bomb bay. He (Burkland) had been helping to load bombs on our ship. He was lying under the wing trying to crawl away. I went over, grabbed him by the shoulders and dragged him away and laid him behind a little piece of concrete curbing. We just got there when the second explosion went off. I thought maybe he needed a tourniquet. He wasn't bleeding that bad, though. A little while later some other fellows came along and helped me carry him to the runway where a car was waiting."

S/Sgt William E. Pinter: "I was a little beyond 992, just getting out of a jeep to check the material in the ship when the first explosion took place. There wasn't much time between two explosions. I got on the other side of the jeep when all of the .50 cal. machine gun bullets started going off. Somebody started putting out the fire. They pulled Lt Tull's body out and I helped carry it over to the car. Then I went to the scene of the explosion and helped identify the bodies.

I came back to 992 and Lt Eichenbaum, Lt Bannon, W/O Nutt, Sgt Balasa and I helped de-fuse the bombs. There was a lot of commotion. Everyone was walking round the wreckage. Then I went to the rest of the planes and told them to keep on

loading, but not to fuse the bombs until they were in the planes. We had been at 024 just a few minutes before it blew up. The fusing of the bombs had been completed, so we sent some of the fellows for ammunition for the guns."

T/Sgt Walter Balasa: "I was in the bomb bay of 092. We had just got through putting in the ninth bomb. It was lucky we had the shackles hooked to the rack when the explosion went off. There was a state of confusion. The plane trembled from the blast. We went out of the right side of the plane facing the explosion. There was a big cloud of black smoke. We all started running towards the civilian huts. Two guys passed me like I was standing still. Then the second explosion went off. We waited to see if anything else was going up. W/O Nutt and Sgt Miller went up to the wreck in a jeep and I came up a few minutes later. We started taking the fuses out of the bombs in 992. That's all."

Sgt Robert Miller: "I was standing underneath 024 when Mr Nutt came along and sent me down to 992. I was walking down there, just a little past the gasoline dump, when I felt the rush - then heard the explosion. I started back to 024 and then I hit the concrete when the pieces started flying. About 45 seconds later the second bomb went off. I saw Lt Eichenbaum coming down the road in a jeep. Then I saw somebody waving under the wing of 992. Mr Nutt, Sgt Barnes, Lt Eichenbaum and I went back to 992 and found a boy with an injured leg. I asked if there was anybody in the ship yet and he said there was a lieutenant. We found Lt Tull in the bombardier's compartment. I moved a lot of ammunition boxes and equipment that was blocking the hatchway. I passed Lt Tull down to Mr Nutt, then I went through to see if there was anyone else in the plane.

Pvt Scott and I moved seven bombs that were in front of the ship to the side. About that time Lt Platz and some other bombardier de-fused the bombs we had moved and then went at the ones in the bomb bay. Mr Nutt, Sgt Balasa and I carried the fuses to the side. We got a few men to turn the plane round and pull it away."

W/O Joseph Nutt: "I was standing by the fuselage of 992 talking to Lt Alexander. We were evidently blown under the plane by the blast, because, although we had been standing on the right side before, we picked ourselves up on the left side after the explosion. I was under the impression that somebody helped me get up, but I don't remember that completely. Stuff was falling all around me. I was afraid an engine was going to fall on me. I started to get the hell out of there.

The whole crowd was running. I ran into Lt Eichebaum somewhere. He was in a jeep and wanted to know if I was hurt. I shook myself and found nothing broken. He said 'Let's move that plane (992) before it blows up.' I hopped on the jeep along with the others and we went up to 992. I heard somebody say: 'There is somebody inside.'

Some fellow crawled in the ship. I didn't know who it was but I heard somebody say: 'He's dead. He's dead.' I recognized Sgt Miller and I told him to hand the dead man out to me. He did it. Lt Bannon and I carried the dead man across the runway. I could see for myself he was dead then. Part of his head was blown off. I went back into the ship and Lt Bannon and Lt Eichenbaum were up in the bomb bay pulling out the fuses. He handed some down to me. I almost dropped one because my hands were slick with blood. We carried the fuses out of the danger area. After that we turned the plane around so that the Cletrac could get a hold and tow it off. That's about all."

Lt Gerald M. Platz (ordnance officer): "I picked up Joe Nutt in our jeep and dropped him off at 024. I drove around the ramp to see how things were going (We were getting ready for a mission later in the day). Then I went into my office and had just started to talk to Lt Ruby about getting an intervalometer when the first blast went off. We looked out the window and saw a big cloud of smoke. I was hoping it was the bomb dump because there weren't so many men out there.

I imagine it took about ten seconds to realize what had happened and to get into the jeep with T/Sgt Reiser. I was about 20 ft behind Col Nazzaro's jeep and arrived at the scene simultaneously with the Colonel. The RAF fire truck was there fighting fires. Lt Kohler (Station Medical Officer) was also there. They were putting one man in an ambulance. Next thing, we started getting ready to move 992. I took some fuses out of the bombs lying in front of the plane. Then we started trying to put out a fire around some ammunition boxes lying between 024 and 992.

After the bombs were de-fused and the fires were put out we cleared off the part of the taxi strip necessary to move 992. When the plane had been moved, I got Lt Kohler and told him to take W/O Nutt to the hospital despite the fact that Nutt didn't want to go. I made sure the area was clear, for there were still bombs in the fire path. I gave the MP's a direct order to not allow anyone in the area, not even the photographers. We had a lot of work to do so we had to go back and do it."

The first reaction of the men who were in the area of the explosion was that either the base was being attacked by enemy bombers or that a gas or oil truck had blown up. The explosions were heard for miles around and the towering column of black smoke could be seen from all neighboring villages.

24. No change.

25. For the group's third operational mission, the squadron sent two aircraft, but only one returned safely to base, flown by Lt Hedin. The other in missing in action, containing the squadron operations officer, Capt Hamilton.

MIA crew: 1st Lt Robert J. Schrader, Capt John H. Hamilton Jr, 2nd Lt Edward J Rogers Jr, 2nd Lt Edward J. Samara; T/Sgt William K. Cutting, T/Sgt William A. Yarnell, Sgt Cecil A. Pruiett, S/Sgt Theodore W. Leidecker, Sgt Steve Kurnafil and Sgt Lewis E. Frisbee.

Combat crewmen flying as spares with other squadrons were: Lt H. McDaniel (N) - 532; Lt Keheley (N) - 534th; T/Sgt Klick (ROG) - 534th; S/Sgt Lane (ROG) - 534th; T/Sgt Goucher (ETTG) - 534th (aborted); S/Sgt Molis (BTG) - 532nd; S/Sgt Metcalf (RWG) - 532nd; S/Sgt Owens (LWG) - 534th; S/Sgt Bauscher (LWG) - 534th.

There were no changes in regular squadron duties.

26. This squadron did not take part in the group's fourth mission, the target being a German airfield near Paris.

Flying as spares were the same men as the previous day.

27. No change.

28. Three planes from this squadron took part in a raid on the German submarine locks at St Nazaire, France. Bombs were dropped with damaging effect. The squadron commander Capt Landon C. Hendricks and T/Sgt John P. Kapustka (ETTG) were both slightly wounded aboard the same ship flown by Lt. Withers, the other pilots being: Lts Alexander and Ballinger, but the latter aborted.

Spares were; Lts Turner, Ham, Bradley, all navigators flying with the 532, 534 and 534th respectively; T/Sgt Thomas (ETTG) - 535th; S/Sgt McDonald (BTG) - 532nd.

A new crew was assigned today: 1st Lt Challen P. Atkison, 2nd Lt Murray Dulberger, 2nd Lt Frederick Freiburger, 2nd Lt Julian Marks; T/Sgt Stanley Kasha, T/Sgt John Kapustka, S/Sgts Hubert Goss, John Hyk, Peter Katsarelis, James McGoldrick.

29. Three ships took part in a raid on Tricqueville airfield, France. The mission was declared a sortie but no bombs were dropped, the pilots being: Lts Jobe, Ballinger and Shenk, who all returned safely to base.

No change in squadron personnel reported this date.

30. 2nd Lt Jack Taylor, S-2 officer, was transferred to 1st Bomb Division HQ.

The squadron strength was 41 officers and 291 enlisted men.

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381st Bomb Group (H)
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Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

JULY 1943

1-3. Usual camp duties.

4. Four planes of the 533rd participated in plastering Le Mans, France, under the command of Lt Col Leland G. Fiegel, deputy group commander. The formation left smoke clouds visible for 40 miles in their wake. All ships of the squadron bombed the target successfully. Taking part were Lts Withers, Jobe, Hedin (aborted) and Ballinger who is missing in action.

MIA crew: 1st Lt Olaf Ballinger, 2nd Lt John Carah, 2nd Lt Paul McConnell, 2nd Lt George Williams; T/Sgt Byron Gronstal, T/Sgt John Lane, S/Sgt Albert Wackerman, S/Sgt Harold Bauscher, S/Sgt Francis E. Owens and S/Sgt William Howell.

Spares were: Lt Keheley (N) - 534th; S/Sgt Bardsley (BTG) - 535th.

5. Pfc Merlin H. Hinz reduced to Pvt.

6. No change.

7. Cpls Anthony L. Greco and Floyd W. Gardner; Pfc Theodore L. Lucker and Berys were assigned.

8. The following new combat crewmen were assigned (three crews): Lts Ernest Klein, Harmer L. Jones, Leven B. Ferrin, Louis Gill, Paul Gleichauf, Kenneth E. Robinson, - Anderson, William D. Burroughs, Wilhelmus Dubois, Joseph Doerfler, Harry L. Ingram; T/Sgts: Louis S. Kalmer, Paul V. Steensrud, Edward R. Vaughn, David Pinsky, William T. Brophy; S/Sgts: Jerome Arbiter, Walter Fields, Robert K. Ray, Charles O. Leazenby, George A. Doyle, John M. Vaughn, James A. Wakefield, Ford Thueson, Charles C. McNeil, Michael Shepherd, Harry F. Hard, Walter A. Wisneski and Pvt Alvin H. Sehr.

9. Sgts Raymond J. Bell, John S. Bunworth, Edward J. DeCosmo, Lloyd Howard, Cpl Clyde C. Draa, Pvts Ralph A. Alfaro and Andrew S. Schnitzler assigned to squadron.

10. Clouds effectively hid the target this morning, saving Nazi installations in France from another pounding. Major William W. Ingenhutt led the formation, but engine problems caused him to drop out and Major Conway S. Hall took over. Four of our ships took part, piloted by Lts: Withers, Hedin, Alexander and Shenk, all of who returned safely.

2nd Lt Johnson was transferred to the 535th.

11. Sgts John Crawbuck and Raymond F. Legg were assigned to the squadron.

12. No change.

13. No change.

14. The airfield at Amiens-Glisy, France was the target, when six ships of the squadron took part, the pilots being, Lts: Jobe, Alexander, Shenk, Atkinson, Withers (abort) and Hedin. The latter's aircraft blew up over Rattlesden, Suffolk, en route, six men being killed: Lts Charles Hedin, William Burroughs (CP), S/Sgts Clifford Marhefke (WG), Vivian Thomas (RO), Stewart

McDonald (BTG) and Edward DeCosmo (WG). Seriously injured were: Lts Frank Cappel (B), Donald Hamm (N), S/Sgt Roberts Potts (ETT), but TG Richard Hanna was OK.

15. No change.

16. Assigned was a new crew: 2nd Lts Joseph L. Mangarpan, William D. Butler, Cornelius J. Donovan, Edward J. O'Loughlin; S/Sgts: John W. Johnson, Russell G. Chester, Stanley A. Wright, Harold J. Harkness, Basil H. Johnson and Eugene A. Sabourin.

Pvt Alvin Sehrt appointed Sgt.

17. Cpl Clyde C. Draa and Pvt Ralph A. Alfaro appointed Sgt.

18. Pvt Edmund S. Pestana assigned.

19. No change.

20. 2nd Lt Ronald T. Delaney assigned.

21. Sgt Allen R. Crawbuck transferred to 534th. S/Sgt John M. Willdridge transferred from 534th; Pvts L.J. Arler, J.D. Atchison, John J. Bilicki, William Caldwell, - Davidson, Virgil Dean, - Hancher, Murray Kooperman, Julius J. Martinez, - Scott and Thomas U. Schock appointed Pfc.

22. The following new combat crew was assigned: 2nd Lts Herbert Carqueville, George W. Reese Jr, Carl R. Shutting, John J. Purus; T/Sgt John S. Comer, S/Sgts George M. Balmore, Nicholas J. Abramo, James D. Counce, Carroll W. Wilson, Forrest L. Rogers.

Also assigned were, Sgts Francis R. McGinty, Vincent N. Wandetowski, Elbert K. Bramlett, Pvt Norman P. Johnston.

23. Pvt Haggarty appointed Pfc; Pfc Johnstone transferred in from 1775th Ordnance Co.

24. Today's mission was to Heroya, Sweden, to attack the heavy water installation, six of our aircraft participating led by Major Hall, along with Lts: Alexander, Shenk, Atkinson, McDaniel and F/O Hudson.

Another new crew assigned was: 2nd Lts William A. Cahow, Stanley G. Partons, (no nav), John C. Leverette Jr; T/Sgts Ugo V. Lancia, Woodrow R. Pitts; S/Sgts Hubert L. Green, Ray L. Bechtel, William G. Kettner Jr, John E. Tedesco.

Transferred in were: Pfc Harold M. Silvius from 532nd and Edward Glowacki from 534th, Sgt Howard A. Pope from 534th and Neil J. Bellong from 535th.

25. Hamburg was the mission for today, Lts Withers, McDaniel, Jobe, Atkinson, Alexander and F/O Hudson taking part.

26. Today's mission was again Hamburg, but only one ship participated but five aborted.

Captain Landon B. Hendricks appointed major.

27. No change.

28. Altenbuna was the target for today for six aircraft of the squadron, which were flown by: Lts Klein, Jobe, Atkinson, McDaniel, Alexander and F/O Hudson, the latter two aborting.

Pvts Ben W. Bailey, Frank L. Ciardullo, Henry T. Jozwiak, Virgil R. Huskey, John A. Reetz and Desidiero Sarate appointed Pfc, while Pvt Burward B. Wheeler was transferred to Group HQ.

29. The squadron participated in a raid on Kiel, German, with the pilots being: Lts McDaniel, Jobe, Gleichauf, Atkinson, Klein and F/O Hudson.

Sgt Herman A. Brown and Jessie C. Baze were reduced to Pvts.

30-31. Usual camp duties.

Squadron strength 57 officers and 334 enlisted men.

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Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

AUGUST 1943

1. Cpl Robert J. Harding and Pfc Henry T. Jozwiak were sent to gunnery school.
2. The following were promoted: T/Sgt Koch to M/Sgt; S/Sgts Klein, Lindsay, Minger, Spivak, Walsh, Willdridge to T/Sgts; Sgts Borehardt, Cathcart, DeJong, Kish, Kohler, Miller, Nelson, Ridenour to S/Sgts; Cpls, Adams, Bell, Day, Dubois, Imbriani, Joachim, Lowther, Maupai, Nelson, Nicholas, Powell, Stapp, Speciale, Thompson, Liddell to Sgts; Pfcs Bracken, Caldwell, D'Angelo, Hamon, Lowe, Mann, Reetz, Scott and Taurone to Cpls.
3. 2nd Lt Joseph Doerfler transferred to 534th; 2nd Lt Jack Taylor, Intelligence Officer, transferred to 1st Bomb Wing HQ.
- 4/5. No change.
6. 1st Lt William R. Dendy, Squadron Supply Officer, transferred to Group HQ; Pfc Donovan H. Rupe assigned.
7. No change.
8. T/Sgt Henry A. Klick reduced to Pvt without prejudice.
9. S/Sgt McNeil appointed T/Sgt.
10. Pvts Baze and Brown appointed Pfc.
11. T/Sgt David Pinsky reduced to Pvt, the appointed Sgt.
12. After two weeks without a mission six aircraft of this squadron participated in a mission to bomb an oil installation at Recklinghausen, near Gelsenkirchen, the pilots being: Lts Shenk, Jobe, Alexander, Atkinson, McDaniel and F/O Hudson. They all bombed successfully and returned home safely.
13. Pfc Donovan H. Rupe appointed Sgt (temporary).
14. T/Sgt Walter M. Balasa reduced to Pvt.
15. Today's target was an airfield north of Brussels, which was successfully attacked by eight aircraft of this squadron: Lts Withers, Gleichauf, Shenk, Jobe, Klein, Cahow, Atkinson and F/O Hudson.

16. Again the target was an airfield, this time Le Bourget, north of Paris. Six ships took part: Lts Withers, Shenk, Klein, Gleichauf, Cahow, F/O Hudson who all returned safely.

Cpl Charles P. Waterhouse assigned.

17. Seven ships of this squadron took part in the group's 20th mission, to attack the ball-bearing plant at Schweinfurt. The mission was successfully completed, the pilots being: Lts Withers, Alexander, Shenk, McDaniel, Jobe, Atkinson and Hudson, the latter two missing in action.

MIA crews: Lts Challen P. Atkinson, Murray Dulberger, Fred Freiberger, Julian M. Marks; T/Sgts Richard J. Hanna, Stanley C. Kasha, S/Sgt James C. McGoldrick, Peter A. Katsarelis, Hubert A. Goss, John Hyk.

F/O James C. Hudson, William R. Grant, Ronald T. Delaney, Kenneth E. Robinson; T/Sgts Edward R. Vaughn, David Pinsky, S/Sgts John M. Vaughn, James A. Wakefield, Ford W. Thueson, George A. Doyle.

18. No change.

19. Five crews from this squadron took part in a raid on Gilze-Rijen, using two 532nd and one 535th aircraft. The mission was successfully completed by: Lts Alexander, Gleichauf, Cahow and Klein. The fifth crew was mixed with four men from the 533rd and six from the 535th. Those from this squadron were: 2nd Lts Joseph L. Mangapan (CP) and Edward O'Loughlin (B); T/Sgt Russell Chester (WG) and S/Sgt Eugene A Sabourin (TG).

22. Cpl Pad Hamon Jr, reduced to Pvt.

24. The airfield at Villacoublay, near Paris was the target for today, with just two ships from this squadron taking part, flown by Lts Withers and Gleichauf. The morning's mission was a turn back because of the weather, but a successful attempt was completed in the afternoon. It was a successful mission with no casualties.

Lt Moses Hoppenstein and S/Sgt Vincent Wandetowski flew as spares with the 534th.

26. An attack on Watten, at the French coast was the object of today's mission, when again only two pilots of this unit took part, flown by Lts Cahow and Alexander, the latter on a 534th ship. It proved successful and they returned home safely.

Sgts Robert J. Harding and Henry T. Jozwiak, reduced to Pvt without prejudice; the former now promoted to Cpl.

29. Held by Group HQ, the following officers assigned to this squadron: 1st Lt Delmo L. Ruby and 2nd Lt Eugene Atkins.

30. Five aircraft of this squadron took off for a mission, which proved to be a turnback. The pilots were: Lts Jobe, Shenk, Cahow, Alexander and Gleichauf.

31. The airfield at Amiens-Glisy, France was the object of the mission for five ships of this squadron. The pilots were: Lts Cahow, Alexander, Jobe, Shenk and McDaniel, who all returned safely.

September 1943

533rd Bomb Sq.

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Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

SEPTEMBER 1943

1. The following promotions took place: T/Sgts; Jesse G. Hyten, Sam Spivak, George C. Minger, Thomas F. Walsh Jr to M/Sgt; S/Sgt Martin DeJong to T/Sgt; Sgts William O. Stone, Raymond J. Bell, Wayne K. Eldridge, Alvin H. Sehr, Kenneth K. Bell, John S. Bunworth, Lloyd A. Howard, John F. Liddell to S/Sgts; Cpls William Pioch, Joseph J. Adamczyk, George Y. Muse, Halsey O. Berg, Andrew L. Ingles, Joseph F. Theiser to Sgt; Pfc Charles C. Denning, William B. Pancher Jr, Sylvester A. Nowak, John G. Zimmermann, Irving T. Boorman, Theodore L. Lucker, Henry Maykowski to Cpl.

2. Six planes of this squadron were in the group formation to attack an airfield at Conches, France, but the mission was a turnback after three hours five minutes. Those participating; Lts Withers in the lead with the commander, Major Landon C. Hendricks as his co-pilot; the others, Cahow, Gleichauf, Jobe, Alexander and McDaniel.

3. Six aircraft from this squadron took part in a raid on Romilly airfield, France. Five ships bombed successfully: Lt Withers, with Major Hendricks in the lead, others being: Lts Gleichauf, Alexander Shenk and Cahow; McDaniel, actually flying a 532nd ship, aborted because of personnel difficulties.

The following were sent to Moulford Rest Home: Lts Inman Jobe, Lawrence Potenza, John Anderson, James Bradley; T/Sgts Kinley Lindsay, Francis McGinty, S/Sgt Robert Osborne, Anthony Fox and Arthur Seiber Jr.

4. A new crew was assigned: 2nd Lts Robert R. Parsons, John H. Kels, Charles H. Smith, Thomas J. Cunningham; T/Sgt Walter F. Milligan, S/Sgts Vincent A. Paterno, Vito J. Gerulo, Elburn L. Greene, James J. Embardo, Emery E. Horne.

Also assigned: Cpl Reeder, S/Sgt James D. Black; Cpl Timms assigned from 12th RCD.

5. Lt Cornelius Donovan transferred to 532nd.

6. A factory in Stuttgart, Germany was successfully bombed by five aircraft of this squadron, and all returned safely with no casualties. They were: Lts McDaniel, Cahow, Shenk, Alexander, Gleichauf.

S/Sgt Wandetowski flew with the 535th as spare gunner.

7. Three ships took off to attack an airfield, near Brussels, but Lt Shenk was forced to abort. The other two Lts Alexander and McDaniel successfully bombed and returned to base.

Flying as spares with other squadrons were Lts Franek and Shutting.

2nd Lts Martin L. Healey (Intelligence Officer), William J. McDaniel, Hubert H. McDaniel, David R. Spencer (Asst Engineering Officer) all appointed 1st Lt.

T.Sgt Goucher, S/Sgts Kohler, Molis, Cpl Betanzo, Pfc Ladner returned from D.S. to duty.

9. The Lille-Nord airfield in France was the object of a bombing mission for four ships of this squadron, flown by: Lts Shenk, Cahow, McDaniel, Gleichauf, who all returned safely.

However S/Sgt Nicholas Abramo, a tail gunner with Lt Gleichauf, was slightly wounded in the foot by a flak fragment.

Flying as spare with other squadrons were, Lts Duggan and Turner and Sgt Legg.

10. Pvts Charlton, Marconi and Smith appointed Pfc. Personnel on D.S. at rest home on 3rd Sept, returned to duty.

11. The following have been re-classified: M/Sgt Bigelow from AP Line Chief to AP Inspector; M/Sgts Lanham and Naff from AP Crew Chief to AP Flight Chief; M/Sgt Howard in reverse classification; M/Sgts Hyten, Loch, Minger, Spivak, Walsh; T/Sgts DeJong; S/Sgts Kish, Kohler from AP Engineering Mechanic to AP Crew Chiefs: M/Sgt Peavy- AP Line Chief to AP Crew Chief; S/Sgt Borehardt from Admin. & Tech Clerk to Supply NCO; Sgt Muse from AP Engineering Mechanic to Electrical Specialist. Cpl Ben Neumann assigned.

13. To Southport Rest Home: Lts J. Alexander, H. McDaniel, L. Ferrin, H. Ingram; S/Sgts W. Brophy, J. Johnson, R. Bell, W. Eldridge, E. Metcalf, A. Molis.

S/Sgt James M. Sloan assigned.

14. Pvts Joseph A. Panisiti and Edward Schuitema assigned.

15. After several days off operational missions, the squadron took part in the group's 30th attack on occupied Europe, the designated target being Romilly airfield in France. Six ships participated: Lt Col Nazarro, group commander led with Capt Withers, plus Lts Shenk, Carqueville, Jobe, McDaniel, Cahow.

All ships carried external bomb racks as well as their normal loads in the bomb bay, and bombed successfully except Lt Shenk, who was forced to abort.

A new crew was assigned: 2nd Lts James W. Hartje, Joseph C. Jerome, Edgar D. Norton, Joseph P. Chenault Jr; S/Sgts Eugene W. Caseman, Edward A. Swackhammer, Gerald G. LaPlace, Sgts Edward Czyz, William L. Abbott, Clayton M. Boykin.

16. Six ships of the 533rd took part in an attack on harbor installations at Nantes, France, flown by: Lts Shenk, Jobe, Cahow, Gleichauf, McDaniel and Carqueville. All returned safely, although the latter had three crewmen wounded in action: T/Sgt Walter F. Milligan (ETTG), S/Sgt Vincent A. Paterno (LWG), S/Sgt Emery Horne, (TG).

17. 2nd Lt Charles R. McCarthy - Personnel Officer - appointed 1st Lt; 1st Lt Robert L. Withers appointed Captain.

Pvt Hard transferred to 12th Evac Hospital.

18. A new crew assigned: 2nd Lts Gordon W. Crozier, Sidney B. Van Ness, George A. Hannon, John H. Baxter; S/Sgts Clyde E. Dideum, Gordon W. Giddens, Hubert G. McHaffey, William A. Green, Clifford W. Easley, Walter R. Purnell.

20. 2nd Lts Moses Hoppenstein and Thomas L. Keheley appointed 1st Lt.

22. 1st Lt George T. Kelley - Group Intelligence Officer - lectured 90% of squadron personnel on security. Sgt Rupe reduced to Pvt.

23. An attempt to attack Nantes harbor again, failed when all four ships aborted: Lts Alexander, Shenk, Cahow, Gleichauf.

Flying as spares with other squadrons were: Lts Reese, Gill and Jones, with T/Sgts B. Johnson and Steensrud.

1st Lts Leo K. English and William T. Turner appointed Captain.

26. Four aircraft took part in a mission to attack Beauvy-Tille, France, but no bombs were dropped, however it was considered a sortie for: Lts Cahow, Alexander, Shenk, Jobe. All returned safely with no casualties.

S/Sgt Harold J. Harkness flew as spare gunner with 534th.

T/Sgt Steensrud reduced to Pvt and appointed Sgt.

27. Emden, Germany was the designated target for five ships of this command, who all bombed successfully and returned home safely. They were: Capt Withers in the lead with Major Hendricks, Lts Shenk, Alexander, Cahow, while Jobe was forced to abort. The 532nd squadron borrowed a 533rd ship - 42-29803.

28. T/Sgt Jenkins, Sgts Kaestner and Speciale, reduced to Pvt, appointed Sgts.

29. 2nd Lts Gleichauf, Shutting, Duggan and Purus to Stanbridge Earls Rest home, while their gunners: S/Sgts Comer, Kaputska, Balmore, Willdridge, Counce, Wright went to rest home at Chosley, Berkshire.

The squadron strength at the end of the month was 55 officers and 360 EM.

October 1943

533rd Bomb Sq.
381st Bomb Group (H)
WAR DIARY
Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

OCTOBER 1943

1. Assigned from the 12 RCD are: Sgt John F. Maschmeyer, Cpl Roger W. Martin, Pvts William G. Johnson, Charles T. Cox, Frank C. Wicksizer, Arthur E. Bell, Arthur P. Dickerson.

2. Seven aircraft of this squadron took part in a raid on Emden, German, which was attacked successfully, and all returned safely. The pilots were: Capt Withers; Lts McDaniel, Alexander, Cahow, Gleichauf, Carqueville, Crozier.

One of our aircraft 42-29834 was assigned for an Air-Sea Rescue mission. As no duties were required during the day the assignments was listed in the squadron records as an incomplete mission.

The following promotions took place: T/Sgt DeJong to M/Sgt; S/Sgts Kenneth K. Bell, Kish, Kohler to T/Sgt; Sgts Wandetowski, Thompson to S/Sgt; Cpls Brandeis, Caldwell, Clayton, Garvey, Lucas, Marston, Nowak, Render, Tigner, Waterhouse, Zimmerman to Sgt; Pfc's Arleo, DePriest, Glowacki and Rogers to Cpl.

1st Lt Ruby transferred to CCRC No. 12; Pvt William G. Johnson to 330th Service Squadron.

3. Three ships of this squadron were again assigned on an Air-Sea Rescue mission, 42-29999, 42-29761 and 42-29765. All three performed duties as directed and assignments were recorded as a squadron completed mission. The pilots were: Crozier, Hartje and Gleichauf.

4. Four of our aircraft took part in a raid on Frankfurt, but only one, flown by Lr Hartje was successful. The other pilots: Lts Crozier, Gleichauf and Carqueville aborted.

Ship 42-5878 was assigned Air-Sea Rescue duties, but as duties were not required it was listed as an incomplete mission, for 2nd Lt McDaniel and crew.

5. The following men went to Stanbridge Earls rest home: 1st Lts Martin L. Shenk, Thomas L. Keheley, Moses L. Hoppenstein, 2nd Lt William D. Butler. The gunners: T/Sgts Shirley Goucher, Mitchell LaBuda, S/Sgts George Bardsley, Alvin Sehrt and Walter Wisneski went to Chosley, Berks, rest home.

1st Lt Ernest E. Murray - Engineering Officer - promoted to captain. 2nd Lts William A. Cahow, Herbert Carqueville, Harry L. Ingram, James H. Bradley promoted to 1st Lt.

6. Sgt Paul Steensrud reduced to Pvt.

8. Today the target designated was Bremen in Germany. Taking part were: Lts Alexander, Cahow, Carqueville, Crozier, Gleichauf and Hartje, who is missing in action.

MIA crew: 2nd Lts James W. Hartje, Joseph C. Jerome, Joseph P. Chennault, Edgar D. Norton; S/Sgts Gerald G. LaPlace, Edward Czyz, Arthur J. Seiber Jr, Eugene W. Kaseman, Edward A. Swackhammer, Clayton M. Boykin.

9. Today we lost our commanding officer, Major Landon C. Hendricks, in action on a mission to Anklam, Germany, the greater part of the trip being over the North Sea. Five squadron aircraft took part: Capt Withers, Gleichauf, Crozier, Cahow, McDaniel.

MIA crew: Capt Robert L. Withers, Major Hendricks, Capt William T. Turner, Capt Leo K. English; T/Sgts Charles C. McNeil, John L. Willdridge, S/Sgts Jerome Arbiter, Lloyd A. Howard, Ernest A. O'Hara, 2nd Lt William P. Duggan.

Another of our crews is missing in action, flying with the 535th: 1st Lt Herbert Carqueville, 2nd Lts Robert R. Parsons, Charles H. Smith, Thomas J. Cunningham; T/Sgts John B. Kapustka, Vito J. Gerulo, S/Sgts James J. Embardo, Anthony F. Fox, Elburn L. Greene, Emery M. Horne.

10. Capt Marvin D. Lord assigned temporarily from the 532nd, as squadron commander, succeeding Major Hendricks, MIA yesterday.

11. 2nd Lts George B. Hansen, William G. McElhare, John W. Bruning, William Johnson Jr were assigned. Sgt Maschmeyer reduced to Pvt.

13. The four officers and five EM from rest homes at Stanbridge Earls and Chosley on 5 October, respectively, returned to duty. Today's mission proved to be a turnback.

14. The mission today was a return to the ball-bearing factory at Schweinfurt, when six of our aircraft took part, those pilots participating: Lts Cahow, Crozier. The four remaining ships were flown by our other squadrons, while flying as spares were: Lts Purus (B) - 532nd , Jones (N) - 532nd , Gill (B) - 535th .

Major George G. Shackley, assumed command of squadron, relieving the temporary commander Capt Marvin D. Lord, who was transferred back to the 532nd. Major Shackley succeeded Major Hendricks, MIA .

15. Lts Cahow, Parsons, DuBois and Leverette to rest home at Stanbridge Earls, their gunners: Pitts, Lancia, Kettner, Tedesco, Green and Bechtel to rest home at Chosley, Berks.

16. Pvs Englott, Hamon, Ice and Maxwell promoted to Pfc.

17. Captain Ernest E. Murray appointed as squadron weights and balances officer in addition to his duties as squadron engineering officer; 1st Lt John J. Tutsock, squadron adjutant, names acting squadron supply officer in addition to his regular duties.

18. 1st Lt Robert L. Thayer transferred to Group HQ; 1st Lt Wilbur B. Botzong appointed communications officer, vice Thayer; 1st Lt Lawrence J. Potenza named squadron bombardier; 1st Lt James H. Bradley named as squadron navigator.

19. In addition to his normal duties as squadron ordnance officer, 1st Lt Julius L. Eichenbaum appointed squadron defense officer.

20. Today's mission was to Duren, Germany, for two of our ships flown by Lts Klein and Crozier.

21. Cpls Edward F. Hardisty and Jack D. Harper assigned.

22. Six new combat crewmen assigned: T/Sgt Edward J. Senk, Melvin A. Soderstrom, S/Sgts Frank P. Mitchley, John F. Skrapits, Leburn W. Townley, John E. Miskin.

Sgt Raymond Legg promoted to S/Sgt.

23. Those personnel sent to rest homes on 15 October returned to duty.

24. New crew assigned from AAF Station #112 Bovingdon were: 2nd Lts Eugene Schulz, Howard M. Plemmons, Walter A. Vonnegut, Hayden T. Brown; S/Sgt John Kulwinski, Christopher T. Camp, Charles F. Smith, John T. Farr, Mack Sexton Jr, Robert M. Trapnell.

27. Assigned from 12th RCD were: Sgt William M. Drinkwater, Carroll E. Martin; Cpls Marvin A. Carson, Philip Kushner, Harlow D. Hill, Pvt Howard L. Plumlee.

S/Sgt Oscar K. Brannigan, Paul J. Tolene, Sgt Lee W. Rowland; Cpls Edward F. Fink, Charles E. Ward; Pvt Luther Carter assigned from 330th Service Squadron.

28. Pvt Daniel J. O'Donoghue assigned from 330th Service Group.

29. Sgt Luther B. McRainey reduced to Pvt.

30. Sent to rest homes were: Lts W.J. McDaniel, Gill, Klein; and Sgts Shepherd, Leazenby, Pope, Bunworth, Ray and Fields. Pfc Davidson transferred to 534th

Squadron strength was 55 officers and 360 enlisted men.

November 1943

533rd Bomb Sq.

381st Bomb Group (H)

WAR DIARY

Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

NOVEMBER 1943

1. 2nd Lt O.D. Tully and Sgt Doyle C. McCutcheon assigned.

2. Sgts Arthur Homer and Carleton A. Josephson assigned; Pvt Potts appointed Pfc. 33 EM were re-classified.

3. Today's mission was to Wilhelmshafen for seven aircraft of this squadron, flown by: Lts Alexander, Shenk, Hansen, Butler, Gleichauf, Cahow and Crozier. This mission was special in that P-38s escorted the formation all the way to the target.

T/Sgt Shirley Goucher was injured when he fell out of his top turret and fractured his elbow.

Promotions included: T/Sgt Kenneth K. Bell and Kish to M/Sgt; S/Sgt George Cathcart and Thompson to T/Sgt; Cpls Skirvin and Ward to Sgt; Pfc's Englett, Cooperman, Potts, Rubka to Cpl.

4. 1st Lts James Alexander and Martin Shenk appointed Captain and 2nd Lt Paul Gleichauf to 1st Lt.

5. The designated target for today was Gelsenkirchen for six aircraft of this squadron, the pilots being: Alexander, Crozier, Hansen, Gleichauf, Cahow and Butler. The latter returned with only three crewmen, the others had bailed out and landed safely at West Malling airfield on the south coast, they are: 2nd Lt Anderson; T/Sgt Kinley Lindsay, Maloney, Francis McGinty, S/Sgt Charles Smith. Three other men were slightly wounded: 2nd Lt Hayden Brown (including slight frostbite), S/Sgts Robert Osborne and Harkness.

A new crew was assigned: 2nd Lts Robert P. Deering, Robert R. Williams, David Barer, Paul O. Crabtree; S/Sgt Andrew H. Richards, Sgts Joseph C. Cochran, Loren L. Sanford, Cpl Wallace K. Scott, Pvts Vincent P. Garrity, Wardell H. Horne.

6. Personnel transferred to the 535th were: 2nd Lt O.D. Tully, Inman Jobe, Sgts Doyle McCutcheon, Carleton Josephson and Arthur Homer.

2nd Lt Vonnegut confirmed MIA on previous day's mission.

7. Wesel, Germany, was the designated target for today when three aircraft of this squadron and two from the 534th took part with out pilots: Capts Shenk and Alexander, with Lts Crozier, Gleichauf, Cahow. The complete group's aircraft returned in perfected formation.

Those crewmen sent to rest homes on 30 October returned for duty.

8. Cpl Scott, Pvts Garrity, Horne appointed Sgt and S/Sgt Kulwinski to T/Sgt.

10. 2nd Lt John Carah, previously reported MIA confirmed POW (interned); S/Sgts Byron Gronstal and Lane confirmed POW.

Sgt Rantilla sent to Signal School, at RAF Compton Bassett, in the west country.

11. The following eight officers are attached unassigned for quarters, rations and administration: 2nd Lts Eleuterio Rodriguez, Albert T. Thendall, Davis E. Waller, Edward H. Wallner, Robert N. Weaver, Paul C. Chelf, John F. Mink, Albert F. Monaco plus 48 enlisted men.

Also attached, one 1st Lt, 21 2nd Lts and 24 EM: 1st Lt William J. Thurman Jr; 2nd Lts Mortimer Pudnos, Wilfred R. Perot, Philip E. Palmer, Nicholas N. Nitikin, Matthew J. McEvoy, Roman V. Marziarz, Henry I. Lipsky, John S. Karlac, Dan B. Jordan, Roy L. Jones, Dudley B. Jones, William D. Hearn, Floyd B. Hackleman, Cecil G. Gorby, Francis N. Fridgen, Paul J. Ehmann, Peter M. Delo, Arthur D. Clay, Arturo E. Camosy, Doyle E. Bradford and Jack M. Athean.

12. Sgt Harold C. Todd assigned from 534th, and T/Sgt Edwin R. Myers from 535th.

13. T/Sgt Myers appointed to M/Sgt.

14. M/Sgt Myers transferred back to 535th.

16. A molybdenum plant at Knaben, Norway, was the target for today's mission when six aircraft took part, flown by: Capt Alexander, along with Lts Cahow, Hansen, Crozier, Klein, Schultz.

Seven new crews were assigned: 2nd Lts Paul Chelf, Robert D. Thompson, John F. Mink, Albert F. Monaco; S/Sgts John T. Eylens, Edwin Bosley, Sgts Carl S. Wydra, Asa L. Carl, Paul Fischer and Charles L. Jones.

2nd Lts Wilfred R. Perot, Dudley B. Jones, Robert N. Weaver, William D. Hearn; Sgts O. K. Daniel, Robert J. Hammond, S/Sgt John S. Jerinowski, Cpl Walter H. Turk, Sgt Philip W. Ball and Cpl Thomas H. Graham Jr.

2nd Lts Roman V. Maziarz, Peter M. Delo, Mortimer Pudnos, Arthur D. Clay; S/Sgt Joseph D. Depoti, Sgt Urban A. Jacoboski, S/Sgt Joseph Lacascia, Sgts Arthur J. Barbotti, Walter P. Mender, Jr., and Rober W. Heller.

2nd Lts Matthew J. McEvoy, Nicholas N. Nitikin, Henry I. Lipsky, F/O William H. Ingram; S/Sgt Fred W. Johnson, Sgt Eugene J. Kracium, S/Sgt Arthur T. Loehrer, Sgts Charles C. Wornecker, Jack G. Trueblood and Weldon E. Wittwer.

2nd Lts Francis N. Fridgen, David E. Waller, Paul J. Ehrman, Philip E. Palmer; S/Sgts Robert Brennan, William J. Reilly, Sgts Walter H. Abernathy, Garrett N. Bartle, Lowell E. Slayton and Oliver G. Gaby.

2nd Lts Floyd B. Hackleman, John S. Kariac, Dan D. Jordan, Roy L. Jones; S/Sgt Marvin Powers Jr., Sgt Lyman J. Schafer, S/Sgt Henry A. Berty, Sgts Elmer P. Payne, Charles Kolence and Robert J. Grabowski.

2nd Lts Cecil G. Gorby, William J. Thieman, Edward H. Wallner, Eleutrio C. Rodriguez; S/Sgt Frederick G. Parkins, Sgt Donald F. Pilcher, S/Sgt Frank J. Thau, Sgts Bernard F. Belletiere, William A. Reynolds Jr., and Howard K. Beanblossom.

2nd Lts Doyle E. Bradford, Arturo D. Camosy, Albert J. Trendell, Jack M. Athearn; S/Sgt Hobart P. Peterson, Sgt Lucian Wright, S/Sgt Norman H. Dunin, Sgts Nicholas P. Merletti, Malcolm E. Brandt and Robert L. Modell.

17. S/Sgts Wandetowski, Legg, Harkness and Wilson to rest home at Moulsoford Manor, Chosley, Berks.

19. An Air-Sea Rescue mission was called, with two of our ships and pilots taking part: Lts Schultz and Hansen.

One 1st Lt, 21 2nd Lts and 24 EM (above 11th) assigned to 91st BG, Bassingbourn.

Pvts McMullen and Jozwiak from duty to arrest in quarters; Sgts Campbell and Taurone transferred to 448th Sub-Depot for station mobile defense training.

22. Pvt Anthony J. Goral assigned from 534th and appointed Cpl.

26. A mission to Bremen was called with seven of our pilots participating: Capts Alexander and Shenk, with Lts Klein, Hansen, Cahow, Schultz and Gleichauf. Again, several men in the formation suffered a variety of frostbites.

27. Another new crew assigned was: 2nd Lts Donald E. Nason, Joseph J. Byser, Athan Anagnos, Charles D. Fiery; S/Sgt Buster T. Harrah, Sgts Raymond C. Beus, John R. Lantz, Paul W. Stonich, George A. Whitney and Ralph L. Lab.

December 1943

533rd Bomb Sq.

381st Bomb Group (H)

WAR DIARY

Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

DECEMBER 1943

1. Leverkusen was the designated target for seven of our ships flown by: Capts Alexander and Shenk, with Lts Cahow, Gleichauf, Klein, Hansen, Schultz, while Crozier flew a 532nd ship and crash-landed en route, after six bailed out.

5. The French capital of Paris was the target for today's mission, when seven of our ships took part, flown by Capts Shenk and Alexander, plus Lts Cahow, Schultz, Gleichauf, Hansen and Deering.

7. New crew assigned were: 1st Lt Billy F. Chason, 2nd Lts Henry B. Mickelson, Lawrence D. Walker, Americus J. Gentile; S/Sgt Robert F. Vollbrecht Jr., Sgt Howard J. Greenwood, S/Sgts Curtis W. Hickman, Thomas R. Cobb, Sgts Raymond W. Martin and Steve A. Kudla.

11. The German port of Emden received another visit from the group, nine pilots from this squadron taking part, two borrowing ship from other squadrons. Leading the squadron was Capt Shenk, along with Lts Bill McDaniel, Gleichauf, Klein, Hansen, Perot, Fridgen, McEvoy, Chelf.

13. Bremen was the designated target for today's mission when the squadron sent ten ships, three from other squadrons, when saw Capt Shenk in the lead, with Lt Clore, other pilots were Capt Alexander and Lts Cahow, Klein, McEvoy, Deering, Fridgen, Hansen, Butler and Perot. All returned safely with no casualties.

16. Yet again Bremen was the target for 33 aircraft of this group, the 533rd providing seven pilots: leading was Capt Shenk on his 25th mission, with Lt Fridgen; the others being Capt Alexander, Lts Schultz, Cahow, Klein, McEvoy and Crozier.

20. For the third mission in succession Bremen was the target, this time the squadron sent six aircraft, flown by: Lts Cahow, Gleichauf, Deering, Crozier, Hansen, McEvoy. The commanding officer, Lt Col Nazarro was on a 532nd ship, which had to land at Mildenhall, an RAF base a few miles away.

22. Huge formations of Fortresses assembled today to drop tons of explosives on the industrial centre of Osnabruck. Flak was moderate but German fighters were numerous as the bombers played Go-in-and-out-the-window over the target, while hundreds of American fighters played tag with the Nazi defenders.

Leading the formation was Lt Col Conway Hall, and under his handling the group made an accurate attack, while the P-47s and P-38s held most of the opposition at bay. Directly over the target Col Hall experienced an uncomfortable moment, when two of his engines suddenly went dead. "The RPM dropped to nothing. I couldn't figure out what was wrong. This is no time for playing games, but the next minute they started turning, and there wasn't any further trouble."

Our six pilots were: Lts Gleichauf, Deering, Cahow, Schultz, McEvoy, while Crozier aborted on a 532nd ship.

23. Another crew joined the squadron: 1st Lt George K. Sandman, 2nd Lts Richard W. Coyle, John J. McDonald, Adam A. Mackow; Sgt Oren T. Evans, S/Sgt Harold L. Jernigan, Sgts Neil R. Perry, Casimir C. Palermo, T/Sgt Alfred Nayduck and Sgt William Pruzan.

24. A short trip to the French coast, to hit rocket gun installations at Cocove, was the object of today's mission, the squadron proving eight ships plus two from the 535th.

Col Hall again led the mission, with his pilot being Capt Marvin D. Lord, aboard "Big Time Operator". The formation of 27 ships of the 381st encountered a large amount of flak but saw no enemy fighters. Despite the AA from the ground, one of the squadrons made three runs over the target and two others went over it twice in an effort to strike the aiming point itself.

Lead bombardiers were doubtful concerning results, with the exception of 1st Lt Lawrence J. Potenza, who was of the opinion the target had been hit. "I saw one burst hit right on the button, thick, brown smoke came billowing up as we passed over the target. The rest of the bombs dropped in the target area."

Those pilots taking part were: Lts McDaniel, Gleichauf, Schultz, Perot, Klein, Stuart Hanson, Butler, Fridgen, but George Hansen aborted.

27. A new crew joined today: 2nd Lts Hal Roling, (no C-P), John R. Jackson, Milton Soled; Sgts Asbury M. Thompson Jr., John Jemiolo, William M. Ruark, Othel L. Martin and Robert D. Eggert.

28. Two more joined: 2nd Lts Ned W. Renick, Lloyd S. Ricks, Ray N. Solveson, Nicholas M. Donnatuono; S/Sgt Robert A. Nunn, Sgts Claud F. Caffey, Robert A. Conklin, Victor C. Pillott, Ralph J. Powell, Cpl Richard W. Smith.

2nd Lts Bayard R. Nelson, Carl M. Clark, Leonard M. Obler, Frank M. Cowan; S/Sgts James J. Calderaro, Joseph M. Schwartz; Sgts Clarence S. Emmons, Charles F. Harrington, Harold E. Hepfinger and Johnnie S. Nosal.

30. Huge formations of American "heavies" flew 1090 miles today to smash Ludwigshafen, led by the group commanding officer, Lt Col Joseph J. Nazarro.

The 30 ships which made up the 381st contingent encountered little opposition, but reports indicate that the formation behind were not so fortunate. The lead groups experienced no fighter attacks on the way in although they saw a large number of dog fights taking place in the distance.

Nine ships from this squadron were part of the formation, the pilots participating were: Lts Gleichauf, Butler, Chason, Crozier, Parsons, Nason, Fridgen, Klein and Stewart Hanson. One of our men, radio operator S/Sgt Curtis E. Hickman died of anoxia on the return trip. His body was taken to the 121st Station Hospital at Braintree, a few miles away.

31. To round off the year, there was a very long trip to hit the airfield at Chateau Bernard, near Bordeaux, seven ship of this squadron taking part: Lts Sandman with Major Shackley in the lead, the others being: Lts Nasen, George Hansen, Deering, McEvoy, Larson and Perot.

January 1944

533rd Bomb Sq.
381st Bomb Group (H)
WAR DIARY
Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

JANUARY 1944

1. Many men of the squadron awoke to greet 1944 with furry tongues and throbbing noggins, after sessions in the pubs of Cambridge, Ridgewell and "Yoho" as Great Yeldham is called. Those whose stomachs weren't repelled by the sight of food enjoyed hot cakes, with butter and syrup, for breakfast and a full-course turket dinner at noon.

As on Christmas Day, the wooden mess hall tables were covered with white table cloths, giving the place a more domestic atmosphere. The cloths were not white long, after the men began pouring in however. Always overcrowded mess halls were packed for the special meal on New Year's Day. Coffee spilled on white table cloths, leaving spreading brown stains. Little altars of turkey littered the tables, along with scraps of bread and dabs of butter, the last man had left the mess hall which looked as if a cyclone had struck it. But the meal was good and the men satisfied.

Some 27 enlisted men of the 533rd left on 8-day furloughs. T/Sgt Vincent Garrity was reduced to Pvt.

2. No change.

3. Two officers and one enlisted man left on 8-day furloughs.

4. 1st Lts Dubois, Gleichauf, Purus and S/Sgt I. Johnson, all men who have completed their tour of combat duty were transferred to the casual pool, 12th RCD; and T/Sgt Pitts was transferred to HQ, 1st CCRC, at Station #172 Snettisham, for duty. Two officers left for 8-day furloughs.

Kiel took another battering from Flying Fortresses today, formation after formation of the big bombers roaring over the German port practically without opposition. Observers say the city was like "A sheet of flames" after the Forts had completed their task of destruction. Not a single bomb was wasted. Of the 22 ship sent by the 381st, six were from this squadron: Lts Klein, Sandman, Fridgen, Chason, Butler and Nason.

Parachutes save lives, but today 2nd Lt Adam A. Mackow, of Newark, N.J., saved a parachute. When the B-17 "Hellcat" approached Kiel, the chute of the navigator, 2nd Lt David E. Barer, of Brooklyn, N.Y., unexpectedly blossomed forth and bellied out in the nose section of the plane.

Lt Mackow, bombardier, temporarily left his position and gathered the billowing chute in his arms. He then helped Lt Barer remove his chute and both prepared for "Hellcat's" bomb run over the city. Later, when Lt Mackow had sent his bombs away with the rest of the strong Fortress formation, he tackled the job of re-packing Barer's chute.

"That same thing happened to me twice during my training days," said Mackow, "and I knew how to go about re-packing the chute. It was plenty cold but up there taking your nose in your hands it won't get frostbitten unless you touch metal. When my hands did begin to get cold I put on silk gloves."

Relating how he carefully refolded the chute in the container, Lt Mackow said: "When I finally got it back in - after two hours work - it was packed well enough so that I would not be afraid to use it myself."

In addition to re-packing the chute at 20,000 ft and performing his ordinary duties as bombardier, Lt Mackow overhauled one of his .50 caliber machine guns before the trouble with the parachute began.

"You can say I had a busy day," he said.

5. Favoured by clear weather over France, B-17s hammered Tours today, inflicting heavy damage on the Nazi-held airfield. Bomber crews reported seeing hangars and barracks blown to bits by the bomb bursts and told on huge fires which could be seen from 60 miles away.

There were no enemy fighters or flak during the bomb run and the bombardiers had every opportunity to get set for the job. P-47s covered the Forts through the target areas, after which Spitfires picked up the bombers and escorted them home. Three of our crews participated: Lts Butler, Ferrin and McEvoy, while four of our other ships were loaned by other squadrons.

1st Lt Olaf M. Ballinger, formerly MIA, was transferred from the squadron to the First Air Force, at Mitchell Field, N.Y. Ballinger, a first pilot, was shot down over enemy territory last summer. He made his way back to England with the aid of the French Underground.

Sgts Farr, Sanford, Fischer, Carl, and Horne were promoted S/Sgt.

6. No change.

7. With allied fighters virtually flying formation with them throughout the operation, hundreds of American bombers rode triumphantly to Ludwigshafen today to knock out one of Germany's most important industrial centres. The 381st provided 25 B-17s over the target, seven from this squadron, led by their commander Major George G. Shackley, of Greenwood Lake, N.J.

He flew lead with 1st Lt William J. McDaniel on "Sweet and Lovely"; the composite group was led by Capt Marvin D. Lord, with Lt Bill Ridley, other pilots being: Lts Parsons, Chason, Sandman, Thompson, Hanson (534th ship), Nason (535th ship) and Shultz.

S/Sgt Paterno assigned to the squadron; 2nd Lt Crymes appointed 1st Lt; One enlisted man left on 8-day furlough.

8. An enlisted man returned from an 8-day furlough.

9. Transferred out after completing their tour of duty were: 1st Lts Shutting, Ingram, 2nd Lt Ferrin; T/Sgt Comer and S/Sgt Tedesco. More promotions included: 1st Lt William J. McDaniel to Capt; 2nd Lt Stanley G. Parsons to 1st Lt.

10. Five enlisted men returned from furlough to duty, 22 more left for an 8-day furlough. S/Sgt Hubert Green transferred out after "finishing up."

11. New combat crew assignments included: 2nd Lts Duane Townsend, (no CP) Robert E. Hassletine, (no N); S/Sgts Jarrett Schoepf, William K. Suchy and Sgt James O. Keesling.

Nine ships from this squadron took part in an attack on Oschersleben, however six of the nine failed to return, while the remaining three landed on other bases in England.

MIA crews: 2nd Lts Gordon W. Crozier, Sidney B. Van Ness, George A. Hannon, Albert F. Monaco; T/Sgt Clyde E. Dideum, George Balmore; S/Sgt Robert J. Osborne, Clifford W. Easley, Gordon W. Giddens and Walter R. Purnell.

2nd Lts Wilfred R. Perot, Dudley B. Jones, Robert N. Weaver, Adelbert Faulconer; S/Sgt O. K. Daniels, John S. Jerinowski, Sgts Philip M. Ball, Walter H. Turk, Edwin B. Bosley and Thomas H. Graham.

2nd Lts Ernest M. Klein, Paul C. Chelf, S/Sgt James Counce, 2nd Lt Louis H. Gill; T/Sgt Howard A. Pope, Melvin Soderstrom, S/Sgts Stanley A. Wright, John E. Miskin, Edward Schuitima, John S. Bunworth.

2nd Lts Billy F. Chason, Henry Mikelson, Lawrence D. Walker, Americus Gentile; S/Sgt Robert F. Vollbrecht, Carl S. Hydra, Sgts Raymond W. Martin, Thomas R. Cobb, Howard J. Greenwood and Steve A. Kudla.

2nd Lts Matthew J. McEvoy, Nicholas N. Nitikin, Henry I. Lipsky, F/O William H. Ingram; S/Sgt Fred W. Johnson, Arthur T. Loehrer, Sgts Weldon E. Wittwer, Eugene J. Kracium, S/Sgt Mack Sexton Jr, Sgt Jack G. Trueblood.

2nd Lts Donald E. Nason, Joseph J. Byser, Athan Anagnos, Charles D. Fiery; S/Sgt Buster T. Harrah, Sgts Ralph L. Lab, Raymond C. Beus, Paul W. Stonich, John R. Lantz, George A. Whitney.

Capt McDaniel and four crewmen flew on a weather ship detail - but does not count as a mission!

12. Several new assignments were made today. 2nd Lts Roy F. Bombard, (no CP), (no N), Ray W. Lundgren, Sgts James E. Marbury, Andrew J. Amato and Norton M. Ripperton were transferred from the 532nd; 2nd Lts Charles A. Gilpin, Raymond A. Bull, Earl Sharp, S/Sgts Paul Shenuk, Clarence R. Axelson from AAF Station #112 Bovingdon.

From other squadrons on the base came: 2nd Lts Arthur E. Neeves, William J. Coles, Francis W. Britenbaker, John B. Wierman, Harry Wurzer, Merrill Burton, Henry D. Steele, Robert F. Anderson; S/Sgts Clifford G. Nelson, Perry E. Beach; Sgts Follis D. Bratton, Philip H. Imhof, Daniel Mendez, A.E. Vanderhoof, Kenneth W. Morris and Paul O. Welsh.

1st Lt Ernest Potenza appointed Captain; 11 EM men left on 8-day furlough.

13. No change.

14. Pvt Armand V. Gervais assigned to squadron.

15. 2nd Lt Charles L. Penix and Pfc Philip D. Howard assigned.

16. Two officer left on 8-day furlough.

17. No change.

18. One officer left on 8-day furlough; ten enlisted men took part in a meeting of the station's mobile defense unit.

19. Sgt Eugene O. Kersher, Cpls William T. Short, Lawrence H. Schmidt, Amos Q. Stanley and Russell O. Baynart assigned.

20. Two new crews were assigned: 2nd Lts George K. Svereika, Richard J. Schmidt, Jack E. Goodwin, Robert J. Baker; Sgts Merrill L. Pennypacker, Gerald J. Rutigliano, Louis G. Schultz, Holly A. Stephens, John E. Pick and Henry H. Hedden.

2nd Lts Walter H. Garrett, James R. Settle, William A. Farrell, Leopold L. Flores; Sgts Harold A. Holtz, Peter Hlynsky, Harold F. Lee, Albert C. Seabaugh, John E. Mueller and Peter W. Smith.

Others: 2nd Lt Milton F. Tarr and Edward F. Kerrigan, and Sgts Russell Chadwick, Louis Benecke and William Mills.

21. German installations along the French coast took another pre-invasion pasting from Fortresses of the Eighth Air Force today, encountering virtually no resistance.

Under the personal leadership of the 381st group commander, Lt Col Harry P. Leber, Jr., 36 aircraft of this formation took part in the operation, hitting two targets. Seven ships and crews of the 533rd made up part of the striking force. Two other squadron ships were flown by the 534th, while Lt Ray Solveson flew as a spare navigator with the 532nd.

Col Leber described the mission as a "bombardier's dream."

"We spent an hour and five minutes over the target without anybody trying to stop us. The group averaged six bombings on each of the two targets, and one of our squadrons went over the target ten times."

Flak was meagre and few enemy fighters encountered. All aircraft returned safely and there were no casualties or claims. Leading the squadron was Capt McDaniel with Major Shackley as his co-pilot. Others were Lts Butler, Sandman, Shultz, Fridgen, Parson and Hanson (see below).

If the ship piloted by 1st Lt George B. Hanson is named "Operational Tour", nobody will be surprised. Today the top turret gunner flew his last mission, the co-pilot his first and the navigator got "over the hump" on his 13th. The ship itself was on its first mission.

Finishing up was S/Sgt Basil H. Johnson, from Blair, Wis., who reacted to his last flight by grinning from ear to ear as he talked to interrogators. No. 13 loomed large for 2nd Lt John W. Bruning, the navigator, but he found it almost like a "practice mission."

In the co-pilots seat, 2nd Lt Hal F. Roling, sweated out his first combat action; "Like the undertaker who married a mid-wife, we catch 'em coming and going," Lt Hanson explained.

22. Nine enlisted men left on an 8-day furlough; Sgts Abernathy, Bartle, Evans, Gaby and Slayton promoted to S/Sgts; S/Sgt Townley to T/Sgt; Pfc Klick to Cpl; S/Sgt Paterno reduced to Pvt; S/Sgt Carroll W. Wilson assigned.

23. S/Sgt William C. Newell, formerly MIA, assigned to squadron.

24. Pvt Henry Jozwiak transferred to 535th.

25. No change.

26. 2nd Lts Reese and Fridgen appointed 1st Lt and 1st Lt Bradley to captain.

27. 2nd Lts John J. Kirby, Albert H. Eselun; Sgts Herman C. Burbank, Joseph A. White and Kenneth Mason assigned.

28. 2nd Lt Stanley C. Parsons and S/Sgt Basil H. Johnson, having finished up, were transferred out; assigned were 2nd Lts Ewing S. Watson, George J. Stone; S/Sgts Harry Heep, Harold Rainey, and Sgt William Spier. S/Sgts Bardsley and Howell promoted to T/Sgts; Pvts Steensrud and Short to Pfc.

29. Formation after formation of Fortresses thundered over Frankfurt today, dropping tons of explosives on the important industrial city through a heavy overcast. Squadron commander, Major George Shackley flew in the lead ship "Sweet and Lovely" as pilot for the group commanding officer, Lt Col Leber, ahead of 33 aircraft, eight supplied by the 533rd.

"The sky was black behind us after we passed over Frankfurt," he said, "and the formations behind us must have caught hell."

He estimated about 125 fighters were defending Frankfurt. Most of the attacks were concentrated on groups before and after ours. Participating were: Major Shackley; Lts Clark, Duncan, Deering, Hicks, Sandman, Shultz, Roling, Steel and Butler.

T/Sgt Bardsley, tour completed is transferred out; 2nd Lt Steele to 1st Lt.

30. Under the command of Major John E. Fitzgerald (532nd), 29 aircraft of the group, including ten from the 533rd took part in a searching blow on the important industrial city of Brunswick, only 100 miles from Berlin.

The formation encountered meagre flak, but found about 100 fighters attempting the bar the way to the target. The group lost three ships, two from 533rd.

S/Sgt Harold J. Harkness, ball turret gunner with Lt Butler, finished up today saying "Just nice for a finisher."

Taking part were: Lts Shultz, Roling, Sandman, Duncan, Clark, Ricks, Butler, Steele and Deering, the latter two missing in action.

MIA crews: 2nd Lts Henry D. Steele, James R. Settle, Robert F. Anderson, Leopold L. Flores; Sgt Wilbert E. Eason, S/Sgt Perry E. Beach, Sgts Harold F. Lee, Harold A. Holtz, Peter Hlynsky, Paul O. Welch.

2nd Lts Robert P. Deering, Robert P. Williams, Paul O. Crabtree; S/Sgts Andrew H. Richards, Wardell H. Horne, Sgts Floyd L. Husvar, Lloyd E. Jackson, Wallace K. Scott, Loren L. Sanford.

31. No change.

Squadron strength is 84 officers and 323 enlisted men.

February 1944

533rd Bomb Sq.
381st Bomb Group (H)
WAR DIARY
Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

FEBRUARY 1944

1. A mission scheduled today for Frankfurt was scrubbed. 2nd Lts Johnson and Bruning promoted 1st Lt.

2. Leaving for an 8-day furlough were 27 enlisted men.

3. A parade of heavy bombers ten miles long cracked down on Wilhelmshaven, this morning and dropped hundreds of tons of explosives on the enemy port city with virtually no opposition.

Thirty five aircraft from this group, nine from the 533rd, took part in the operation under the command of Capt Arthur F. Briggs. Unhindered, the heavies made a long bombing run over the target and although results went unobserved because of heavy clouds the crews were of the opinion that the explosives landed right where the flak was coming from. No ship from this squadron were lost and there were no casualties.

S/Sgt William J. Reilly, a radio-man with Lt Fridgen, braved a 40-below-zero gale slashing through the open bomb bay doors of "Homing Pigeon" in the sub-stratosphere over Wilhelmshaven today to "play with fire."

When he discovered that four incendiary bombs had become fouled in their shackles and were left dangling in the bomb bay, after the bombardier had tripped his toggle, Reilly struggled for five minutes to release the dangerous explosives. He

had to work with one hand, holding a large walkround oxygen bottle with the other. But he freed the bombs and "Homing Pigeon" came home OK.

Today's pilots were: Lts Fridgen, Sandman, Shultz, Townsend, Clark, Sharp, Duncan, Roling, and Ricks.

Four officers and five enlisted men left the station for the rest home at Stambridge Earls.

4. There were 1,000 American aircraft over Frankfurt today, and among them were seven from this squadron. For the second consecutive day there was no opposition from the Luftwaffe, with bombing accomplished through heavy undercast and results were unobserved.

Leading the squadron, on his 25th mission was Capt William J. McDaniel, aboard "Sweet and Lovely" with 1st Lt George K. Sandman as his pilot. Others were: Lts Hansen, Clark, Roling, Sharp, Ricks, Fridgen, but Shultz, Butler and Townsend aborted.

"The one thing we saw nothing else but," said McDaniel, "was flak. We flew through it for more that two hours and in spots it was as bad as any flak I had seen."

None of the squadron gunners fired a single shot. All the aircraft returned safely and there were no casualties.

5. Fortresses of the 381st returned to visual bombing today, and given an opportunity to get a good look at their target, the blew the objective to bits. The target was the airfield at St Avord, south of Paris. Lt Col Conway S. Hall led the formation, reporting the explosives "landed right on the button." All the seven ships of the 533rd bombed successfully and returned to base with no casualties.

"The target was nothing but smoke and fire after we got through with it." said Sgt John S. Szabo, tail gunner on "Honey," flown by Lt Duncan. "I watched the smoke pile up for half an hour after we left the target," Szabo continued, "and an hour later the column was even higher than it looked when we were closer to the target."

Participating pilots were: Lts Shultz, Hansen, Roling, Sharp, Ricks, Duncan and Clark.

1st Lt Reese left on an 8-day furlough; Sgt Garvey left to attend personal equipment school.

6. Capt W.J. McDaniel from duty to detached service at 63 Brook St, London, W1.; T/Sgts Hoyle and Stasyszyn assigned to the squadron.

Today the object of the mission was to attack a German airfield at Nancy, when nine of our ships took part. Participating were: Lts Fridgen, Hansen, Shultz, Butler, Ricks, Duncan, Townsend, Clark and Sharp.

7. Capt James Bradley transferred to the casual pool at AAF Station #591 Chorley, Lancs; Capt Ernest E. Murray left today on an 8-day furlough.

8. S/Sgt Vincent M. Wandetowski promoted to T/Sgt.

9. Three combat officers and five of their enlisted men left today to visit rest homes. One EM left an on 8-day furlough. S/Sgt H.F. Miller returned to duty after attending anti-gas school at Rollestone, Wilts; Cpl Bosin returned to duty after attending a specialist school in London.

10. S/Sgt William Howell, formerly listed MIA, escaped and made his way back, was transferred from the squadron to new duties at Mitchell Field, New York; 27 enlisted men returned from furlough to duty.

11. Fortresses hammered Frankfurt again today and left tall columns of smoke billowing up from the important industrial city after the bombing.

Under the command of Lt Col Harry P. Leber, Jr, 29 ship from this group, took part in the operation nine from the 533rd. "We made a good bombing run," Col Leber said, "and from what I could see of the town below I think we did a pretty good job." He reported the bombs of the formation ahead landed south of the city and that ours began dropping in the city center and swept out to the north end.

Squadron participants: Lts Hansen, Butler, Garrett, Sharp, Clark, Ricks, Duncan, Kels and Watson.

Captain W. J. McDaniel returned from DS in London to duty; S/Sgt Charles H. Van Horn assigned today; S/Sgts Harold J. Harkness, Waterhouse and Mitchell LaBuda promoted to T/Sgt; Sgt Muse promoted S/Sgt; T/Sgt Vince Wandetowski transferred to 381st HQ.

12. 2nd Lt Hartman assigned from First Bomb Division HQ; T/Sgt Ernest Klein from duty to DS at a technical school, RAF Kirkham, near Preston, Lancashire.

13. 1st Lt Reese return to duty from furlough; Sgt Garvey returned from 8th AAF school of personal equipment at AAF Station #101 High Wycombe.

14. Eighteen enlisted men left on furlough.

15. A new B-17 was added to the fleet of the squadron today. Its construction was made possible by war funds supplied by the residents of Bermondsey, a district of London, and was christened "Rotherhithe's Revenge."

The christening was accomplished by Councillor E. J. Gibson, of the war loan committee, who broke a bottle of Bermondsey-made ale over the ship nose guns. The rest of his delegation toured the base after the ceremony with Lt Col William J. Reed, ground executive, as their guide, then partook of refreshments at the Red Cross Aeroclub.

2nd Lt Paul J. McConnell, formerly listed as MIA, then escaped and evaded, assigned to the squadron for temporary duty.

16. Sgts Perry, Pruzan, Palermo, Jemiolo, R. Smith, Thompson and Caffey promoted to S/Sgt; 1st Lt Henry W. Bonneau to DS (intelligence meeting) at the Curzon Cinema in London; Pvt Janice is AWOL again.

17. Three combat officers and five combat EM returned from rest homes to duty; Pvt Rupe transferred to 7th Station Comp. Sq.; Capt E.E. Murray from furlough to duty; S/Sgts Reilly and Brennan promoted to T/Sgt; two enlisted men from furlough to duty; Lt Henry Bonneau from DS in London to duty.

18. 2nd Lt Roling promoted to 1st Lt; Sgt Charles Jones promoted to S/Sgt; Sgt Robert J. Mammone assigned to squadron.

19. No change.

20. In an all out effort to smash Germany's warplane production beyond hope of recovery, the greatest fleet of 8th Air Force Fortresses ever assembled bored deep into the Reich today to rain hundreds of tons of explosives on vital factories and assembly plants. The 381st supplied 41 aircraft, 13 of them from the 533rd.

The group operated as two independent units, each of ordinary full strength. Under the command of Lt Col David E. Kunkel and 1st Lt Bill Ridley, the ships struck at Oschersleben and Leipzig respectively. One group bomber was lost, from this squadron, flown by Lt Cogswell, and T/Sgt Edward J. Senk was accidentally killed in action while the bombers were returning over the North Sea.

Lt Ridley said: "We socked the target hard. During the bombing I saw some P-51s tangling with German fighters in the distance, but they never let the Jerries come close."

The squadron pilots participating were: Lts Butler, Hansen, Roling, Ricks, Tarr, Sharp, Duncan, Watson, Shultz, Kels, Svereika (aborted) and Cogswell, who is missing in action.

MIA crew: 1st Lt Kirsh J. Cogswell, 2nd Lts William Borrego, William R. Meehan, Lorenzo Espinosa; S/Sgts Frank O. Urban, Raymond J. Lecesce, Sgts Joseph I. Durnin, John V. Kangas, Charles E. Duncan, Wilfred L. Miller.

21. Led by Col William M. Gross, Fortresses of this group flew deep into lower Germany today to devastate a German airfield north of the Ruhr, a target of opportunity chosen after both the primary and secondary targets were found hidden under solid cloud cover.

"My crews reported excellent results," Col Gross said, "with tight patterns over the entire target, including, workshops, hangars and runways. Flak and fighter opposition were both weak. I think you can say another of their airdromes is missing."

T/Sgt John Sinclair, a radio operator who was wounded on his first mission, completed his 25th with two more wounds. St Sinclair, who holds the Purple Heart and the Silver Star, was nicked in both heels by flying steel fragments from a German 20mm shell, which burst near his gun position over the target. Not seriously injured, he performed his usual duties throughout the flight.

Today's pilots: Lts Sandman, Shultz, Watson, Kels, Townsend, Clark and Ricks.

2nd Lt Solveson from DS at AAF Station #112 Bovingdon to duty.

22. German aircraft production was the target of the group today, who pressed home their third major effort to crush the Luftwaffe at its numerous sources. The group dispatched 31 aircraft, only 12 of which succeeded in rendezvousing with other formations to cross the German coast under the handicap of the "poorest visibility conditions" encountered over the continent in many weeks.

Only two ships of the 533rd took part in the mission and they are missing in action, three others aborted.

The group's contingent, led by Major John E. Fitzgerald Jr, went through to bomb a target of opportunity near Oschersleben after they found their primary completely cloud-covered. Clouds at the Fortresses' altitude lifted just over the German coast and the upper air was immediately clear until Major Fitzgerald's crews were about an hour and a half from their target. Then, as cloud layers began forming again, they were hit by hordes of Nazi fighters which far outnumbered the bombers' P-51 escort.

Today's pilots: Watson, Kels and Clark aborted; Fridgen and Roling are missing in action.

MIA crews: 1st Lt Francis E. Fridgen, 2nd Lts David E. Waller, Paul J. Ehrman, Philip Palmer; T/Sgts William J. Reilly, Robert Brennan, Sgts Garrett M. Bartle, Walter M. Abernathy, Oliver G. Gaby, Lowell E. Slayton.

1st Lt Hal B. Roling, 2nd Lts Raymond A. Bull, John R. Jackson Jr, Milton Soled; S/Sgts John Jemiolo, Ashbury M. Thompson, Sgts William L. Ruark, Othel L. Martin, George W. Day, Robert D. Eggert.

Sgt Render from DS at RAF Technical School No 12, Melksham, Wilts.; 17 enlisted men returned from furlough to duty.

23. Eleven enlisted men left on furlough.

24. Schweinfurt, twice blasted by B-17s last summer and fall, received a tremendous third blow as hundreds of American heavy bombers roared over the important German industrial city to bury it under tons of high explosives and incendiaries.

Major George G. Shackley, 533rd commander, who led his wing on both other occasions, was again in command of this attack, with 30 ships of the group, this time flying on the British subscribed Fortress "Rotherhithe's Revenge", piloted by 1st Lt George K. Sandman.

Enthusiastic over the bombing results, Major Shackley said: "Bombs were slamming down on factories and other targets in the city for at least half an hour. Our own bombing was one of the best. This was one hell of a lot different from my first two Schweinfurt missions."

He referred to the almost complete absence of enemy fighter opposition, which, on former occasions over Schweinfurt, has opposed American bombers relentlessly, in hordes numbering up to 400. "I didn't see one enemy fighter today," Major Shackley added, "and my crew reported seeing less than a dozen, all kept well out by the escort. Schweinfurt's a nice town now. We helped make it that way today."

Completing his tour today on the same ship, was lead bombardier Capt Lawrence J. Potenza, who described the attack as "terrific." Obviously pleased with his last job as a bombardier in this theater of operations, Capt Potenza said: "The bomb run was beautiful. I could see hits from our bombs right in the factory area. Heavy smoke was over the town from bombs dropped by the group ahead of us and fires were everywhere."

1st Lt Thomas D. Sellers, pilot of "Little Duchess" and holder of the DSC, said: "This was the best co-ordinated mission of any of the 20 I have flown. It showed careful, detailed planning. Maj Shackley did a perfect job of leading the wing. Bombing was perfect. The town and target were plastered both by us and the wings ahead."

Participating pilots were: 1st Lt Sandman with Maj Shackley leading, the others being: Lts Townsend, Schindler, Tarr, Ricks, Kels, Clark, Svereika, Duncan and Garrett (who aborted).

25. Looming columns of rolling black smoke were visible up to 200 miles from the target today after Fortresses penetrated south eastern Germany almost to the Alps to strike a crippling blow to the Messerschmitt assembly plant at Augsburg.

Leading the two formations put in the air by this group were 1st Lt John A. Silvernale and Capt Charles G. Wood, ahead of the 28 ships put up, seven from this squadron, bombed the target.

Said lead bombardier 1st Lt Happy Hendryx, "Bombing was very good. We knocked out at least three-quarters of the factory. We had a good formation and made an ideal bomb run, laying our bombs in a tight pattern. All we could see was smoke when we turned to head back."

Two of the group's ship are missing in action. Those 533rd pilots were: Lts Shultz, Svereika, Garrett, Townsend, Tarr, Schindler, Ricks and McIntosh (who aborted).

Cpls Heist, Rogers and Zakal reduced to Pvt.

2nd Lt John H. Baxter dismissed the service, per General Court Martial order No. 7, dated 5 February, effective 24 hrs 24 February per HQ, ETOUSA.

26. Cpl H. Bracken from duty to DS at leighton Park, Reading, Berks. Sgt Alexander from DS at RAF Technical School No 10, Kirkham, near Preston Lancs., to duty; Pvt Janice from AWOL to confinement; Pvt Gervails from duty to AWOL; Major George C. Shackley, squadron commander, left to visit rest home at Stanbridge Earls.

27. A new crew assigned from the 1st Replacement and Training Squadron were: 2nd Lts William E. Helm, Leslie C. Wolbrink, James V. Bonomo, Charles H. Barr; S/Sgts James M. Phillips, Bernard Kane, Sgts Ernest J. Krech, Rutherford B. Clark, Fred Lawson and Lewis H. Trotti.

28. S/Sgt Nicholas J. Abramo, former squadron member who was incapacitated by a flak wound received in action over Germany, rejoined the squadron from 12th RCD Casual Pool; T/Sgt Klein from DS at 10th Technical School, RAF Kirkham, near Preston, Lancs., to duty; S/Sgt Pinter and Cpl Flores transferred to Group HQ; Cpl Bracken from DS to duty.

29. Capt Lawrence J. Potenza, who completed his tour of duty with the recent Schweinfurt mission, was transferred to the Casual Pool, 12th RCD.

The squadron strength is 76 officers and 389 enlisted men.

March 1944

533rd Bomb Sq.

381st Bomb Group (H)

WAR DIARY

Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

MARCH 1944

1. No change.

2. Industrial installations at Frankfurt were attacked by 35 aircraft of the 381st BG under the command of Major Arthur F. Briggs, 11 from the 533rd. The formation found heavy flak in the target area. Enemy fighters were on hand, but their attacks were directed against the formation behind ours. Bombing was accomplished through 10/10th cloud cover, but an excellent bomb run was made good results likely.

One aircraft is missing, Lt Shultz from this squadron, all others returned safely. Those participating: Lts Hansen, Reese, Townsend, Svereika, Garrett, Clark, Tarr, Watson, Schindler, Ricks and Shultz, who is missing in action.

MIA crew: 1st Lt Eugene Shults, 2nd Lts Howard M. Plemmons, Arthur E. Neeves Jr, William D. Hearn; T/Sgts Hubert G. McHaffey, John W. Kulwinski; S/Sgts Robert M. Trapnell, John T. Farr, Nicholas H. Abramo and Charles F. Smith.

3. Nine Fortresses of the 533rd took part in an attack on Oldenburg, with other ships of the group. Two 533rd ships aborted before reaching the target. The remaining seven bombed successfully, but because the target was hidden under complete cloud cover, bombing results could not be observed.

Participating were: Hansen, Stang, Watson, Tarr, Svereika, Clark, Townsend, Garrett and Schindler aborted.

4. Nine ships of this squadron took off this morning to participate in the group attack on industrial targets at Dusseldorf. Three of the squadron's ship turned back because of mechanical difficulties before reaching the target. There were no casualties or claims among those which successfully reached the target.

Taking part were: Lts Hansen, Watson, Schindler, Kels, Svereika, Tarr, and Haushalter, Townsend and Garrett, who all aborted.

5. No change.

6. American heavy bombers, among them nine from the 533rd, paid their first visit to Berlin in force today, battling their way to the target through hundreds of desperately attacking Nazi fighters.

Under the command of Capt Charles G. Wood, of Rock Island, Neb., who was flying his 25th mission, 30 ships of this group took part in the operation, all pouring explosives on Berlin. Few of the bombardiers had a chance to observe results. Enemy

fighters were so thick over the target, that each bomb sight man was too busy at his guns to take time to look below. German planes of all types, many of them firing rocket guns, were all over the sky and through the Fortress formations.

Pilots taking part today were: Lts Watson, Sharp, Svereika, Kels, Tarr, Schindler, Helm and Coyle, who is missing in action.

MIA crew: Lts Richard W. Coyle, John B. Wierman, Robert E. Hassletine, Robert J. Baker; S/Sgts Peter W. Smith, Albert C. Seabaugh, Sgt Daniel Mendoza, S/Sgt Raymond F. Legg, Sgt John E. Mueller, Sgt Louis C. Shultz.

7. No change. A new crew was assigned today: 2nd Lts John E. Wezowicz, Morris T. Henderson, Ralph W. Putman, Clifford W. Collum; S/Sgt Hugh D. Campbell, Sgt Leon C. Nepper, S/Sgt Lester J. LaRiviere, John R. Arndt and Sgt Edgar L. Heaton.

8. Offering overwhelming proof of their recovery from the losses sustained in a similar mission two days before, B-17s returned in great strength to a virtually undefended Berlin, to wipe out an important ball-bearing plant situated in the industrial outskirts of the German capital.

The 381st contributed 21 aircraft, four from this squadron, to the mighty armada which buried another vital link in Germany's cracking war production chain, under an unprecedented weight of high explosives and incendiaries.

Leading the group was Lt Col David L. Kunkel, group operations officer, expressed the reaction of every man who made today's Berlin run when he said that the sky-blackening stream of American bombers "Could have bombed anything in Berlin today without opposition."

Capt Thomas J. Hester, wing bombardier for the day, said: "There were four groups that hit the factory just as we synchronized. My bombs fell right on theirs in one big heap right on top of the target. It was a perfect pattern for the entire wing. The lowest smoke was more than 5,000 ft high before we made the turn."

Free to watch the scene below, thanks to the scores of American fighters which kept the few enemy defenders at a distance, this group's gunners watched the red-bursting incendiaries spread additional fire and destruction through the smoking remains of the factory buildings. All, including veterans of the bombing of Schweinfurt, Anklam and Augsburg, were convinced that the job would rank high among their group's very best.

Today's pilots were: Lts Reese, Ricks, Sharp and Renick.

9. For the second consecutive day, Fortresses heaped devastation upon ruin in gutted Berlin with virtually no opposition, dropping tons of explosives through a heavy overcast which extended from the German coast far beyond the Reich capital. Eight ships from this squadron were part of a 29 strong formation, who bombed the city under the command of 1st Lt George K. Sandman, aboard the British-subscribed "Rotherhithe's Revenge".

"Wings were going over the city at the same time from several different directions," Lt Sandman said, "and bombs were dropped all over Berlin." The lead pilot reported 10/10th cloud cover "all the way" and described flak over Berlin as "moderate". Combat crewmen told of seeing thick layers of black smoke rising through the 15,000-foot undercast nearly half an hour after the bombers had left Berlin. All returned safely.

Participants were: Lts Sandman (lead), Svereika, Clark, Ricks, Schindler, Renick, Helm and Tarr.

10-15. No change.

16. Deep in southern Germany the Fortresses escorted by allied fighters, queued up on industrial targets in Augsburg today with virtually no opposition.

The Fortress crews saw some German fighters but reported that the allied escorts kept the Jerries from reaching the bombers, who made the 1,300 mile round trip almost without incident.

Eight from the 533rd participated in the mission. He said the target was completely covered by clouds, so bombing was done through the overcast. They suffered no enemy fighter attacks, although they were seen over Europe but kept well away by the escort.

Taking part: Lt Sandman, with Col Leber; and Lts Helm, Renick, Tarr, Sharp, Schindler, Watson and Duncan. The latter had quite a tale to tell.

Fire in the cockpit of 42-97454 caused one of the gunners to bail out over France and brought to light a hero in the person of T/Sgt John T. Eylens, engineer and top turret gunner. The fire, probably caused by a short circuit, broke out just under the top turret while the aircraft was just 25 minutes from the French coast on the way back to base. The pilot, 1st Lt Rudolph G. Duncan, pulled the ship out of formation.

Co-pilot 1st Lt Karl Franek, announced the blaze over the interphone and went back to help fight it. The left waist gunner, T/Sgt Yanzek, flying his first mission, evidently mistook the announcement for a bail-out signal, buckled his chute on and "hit the silk."

Sgt Eylens came down from his top turret position and removed his gloves to seize the smoking insulation wires and tear them out. Holding the metal extinguishers in his bare hands in the sub-zero cold, he acquired a touch of frostbite. When the extinguishers left some of the fire still burning, he beat the rest of the flames out with his hands. He was not severely burned.

The fire under control, Lt Duncan pulled the bomber back in formation and completed the journey home without incident.

T/Sgt Carroll W. Wilson, radio operator, who was flying his 25th mission, said: "Eylens did a swell job. He fought the fire for over 15 minutes with his bare hands. I'm sure glad he got it out. This was one mission I especially wouldn't want anything to happen on."

A new crew assigned were: 2nd Lts Ryan Lancaster, Dorance Garner, Wayne Hardwick, Kenneth Cagwin; S/Sgts Herschel Moore, Gordon Lueck, Harry Lutz, Frederick Parker, Llewellyn O'Donnell and Orval Page.

17. No change.

18. Vast formations of B-17s penetrated western Germany almost unopposed today to blast the Nazi aircraft factory and adjoining airfield at Oberpfaffenhofen, near Munich.

Under the command of 1st Lt Wayne E. Schomburg, the 381st put up 30 ships into the air and over the target, to leave their objectives smothered in smoke and flames. Nine ships and eight crews were supplied by the 533rd.

In Lt Schomburg's opinion the mission was highly successful for the 381st. Protected all the way to the target by a "perfect" fighter escort, the bombers went into their bomb run right on schedule under VACU conditions and sent their bombs crashing down on factories, hangars and workshops. All the ships returned safely with no claim or casualty. Flak damage was almost non-existent.

Today's pilots: Lts Sharp, Schindler, Watson, Duncan, Ricks Helm, Svereika and Renick.

19. No change.

20. American heavy bombers were over Germany again today, dropping hundreds of tons of high explosives on the southern tip of the Ruhr. Commanded by Major Arthur F. Briggs, 31 aircraft made up the 381st contingent, eight from the 533rd.

Flak was intense as any of the crews had yet encountered and weather so soupy "We couldn't see our wingmen" failed to stop the Fortresses. Bombing was accomplished through a complete undercast. Results were unobserved.

Many of the group's aircraft made the trip home from Germany alone, flying singly in the soup, and never seeing another plane, enemy or friendly. It was a day for the navigators. Most of the pilots flew all the way on instruments and the safe returns were credited largely to the men who handles the maps and compasses.

The pilots were: Watson, Svereika, Ricks, Duncan, Helm, Renick, McElhare and Schindler.

21. No change.

22. Fortresses had another crack at Berlin today, dropping hundreds of tons of explosives on the Nazi capital without challenge from a single enemy fighter. The 29 aircraft that made up the 381st formation was under the command of Major Osce V. Jones, flying aboard "Georgia Rebel II". Nine ships and eight crews were supplied by the 533rd.

The bombers flew over a 10/10th undercast all the way across Germany. Over Berlin the clouds broke up to some extent, enabling the crews to get a look at their target. Over the target itself, however, there was a solid cloud bank and bombing was carried out by navigational aids. In the opinion of the crews it was a "Perfect mission. Everything went like clockwork," they said. All ships returned safely.

Participating were: Svereika, Tarr, Duncan, Ricks, Helm, Schindler, McElhare and Renick.

23. The Luftwaffe made a token appearance today over Germany where hundreds of Fortresses were again attacking industrial targets. Most of the bomber formations that took part met no enemy fighters throughout the operation. About a dozen Jerries were observed, however, carrying out an attack against a single group of American bombers.

The 32 aircraft making up the 381st's contingent were led by Lt Col David E. Kunkel, Jr, group operations officer, eight ships being supplied by the 533rd.

Col Kunkel said there was a 10/10th overcast over most of Germany, but "We found a hole in the clouds with a nice big factory sitting under it and we let everything we had let go at that." The target is believed to have been the factory town of Ahlen, east of Munster. All ships returned, safe and sound.

Today's pilots: Ricks, Reese, Svereika, Townsend, Helm, McElhare, Schindler and Renick,

24. Weather so thick that it obscured the ground completely and made flying difficult even at altitude failed to prevent American "heavies" from continuing their attack today, dropping hundreds of tons of explosives on industrial targets in south-east Germany.

Under the command of Capt Douglas L. Winter, 23 ships were dispatched by the 381st to take part in the operation, six from the 533rd. He said his formation flew over a solid undercast throughout the mission. A target believed to be Frankfurt was selected for the bombing, but results went unobserved as it was impossible to see below.

Three of the 381st aircraft are missing, but none from this squadron, whose pilots were: Lts Watson, Townsend, Svereika, Renick, McElhare and Wezowicz.

25. No change.

26. Flying Fortresses today returned to the Pas de Calais area of the French coast, taking advantage of perfect visual bombing weather to pound important military installations defender only by enemy flak and rocket batteries.

Operating by squadrons, 24 ships from the 381st laid their high explosives "dead in the target area", according to Capt Douglas L. Winter who led the first of the group's squadrons over the target.

"Our bombs landed about 50 ft from the center of the target area," he said. "Weather was perfect and the bombardiers had plenty of time to get lined up. We made a 90 second bomb run through moderate flak before letting them go."

No fighters were encountered and all ships returned without claims or casualties.

Pilots for today were: Reese, Townsend, Watson, Renick, Lancaster, Wezowicz and Svereika.

Another new crew was assigned: 2nd Lts Arthur J. Bailey, John Anderson, Lloyd Peterson, Alvin Berry; Sgts Dale Moon, Charles Campbell, Walden Forke, William Coleman, Alfred Paoli.

27. Thirty Fortresses of the 381st today cashed in on perfect weather over southern France to devastate installations on both sides of the German-held airfield at St Jean D'Angeley, north-west of Cognac.

Unhampered by flak or fighters, the bombers were able to carry out precision bombing which reduced the hangars and nearby buildings to fiercely-burning wreckage. The group operated in two units, striking at both sides of the field with equally good bombing results. Leader of the group, Lt Col Conway S. Hall, who flew in "Whirlaway", with Capt Winter as his pilot. All ships returned to base safely.

Pilots for this mission were: Lts Svereika, Tarr, Townsend, Watson, McElhare, Renick, Lancaster, Wezowicz and Garrett.

28. Perfect visibility and lack of enemy fighter opposition helped the Fortresses plaster an aircraft factory repair plant on the Rheims-Champagne airfield in France, this afternoon.

Under the command of 22-year-old Capt Karl Franek, 533rd operations officer, 28 aircraft represented the 381st in the operation. Capt Franek flew in the lead ship "Rotherhithe's Revenge" with 1st Lt George K. Sandman as his pilot. It was CAVU over the target.

Capt Franek sad: "There wasn't a cloud in the sky." Several of the ships were damage by AA fire, and two crashed in England after their crews bailed out. The lead ship came back with about 50 flak holes.

Other pilots were: Lts Townsend, Watson, Svereika, Lancaster, McElhare and Helm.

29. Fortresses of the 381st caught their first glimpse of the Lufwaffe in action in many days when an estimated 150 German fighters made a concerted attack on the bomber formation as it swept over Brunswick today.

Leader of the 29 ships, was 533rd commander, Major George G. Shackley, aboard a PFF ship, who reported clear weather at his formation's altitude but said bombing results on Brunswick went unobserved because of intervening 8/10th cloud layers below. Attacking enemy fighters were immediately engaged by escorting allied fighters in violent dogfights after the single pass at the B-17s.

Although preliminary reports show only two men wounded, several of the ships returned to base with heavy battle damage. One of the hardest his was "Honey", of deputy group leader, Major Charles L. Halsey, 535th commander on a 533rd ship. Attacking fighters knocked out "Honey's" right inboard engine and tore up the radio room floor with 20mm cannon shells. No one aboard was injured, and although the pilot was forced to drop behind the formation, the ship came safely home.

Shortly after the engine went dead, a second shell exploded in the flooring directly under the radio-man, S/Sgt Phillip M. Smith, knocking him to the floor. Ground crewmen later traced the course of the shell from its entrance through the right wing, through the flooring to the explosion that destroyed all Sgt Smith's radio equipment, blew up an oxygen bottle behind him and tore a large hole in the wall of his compartment. Apart from a bruised elbow Sgt Smith was unhurt.

Pilots for today were: Lts Tarr, Lancaster, Thomas, McElhare, Helm, Renick and Townsend.

30. A new crew assigned to the squadron today: 2nd Lts Clarence Wainwright, Howard Latton, Harold Dorn, James Counts; Sgts Warren Hage, Lowell Kennedy, Charles Kruger, T. J. Stephens, Charles Tsourous, Floyd Malley.

31. No change.

April 1944

533rd Bomb Sq.
381st Bomb Group (H)
WAR DIARY
Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

APRIL 1944

1-7. No action.

8. The Flying Fortresses were again over Berlin today, paving the way for the imminent invasion by knocking out their air training base at Oldenburg. Although the weather was good there was no enemy air opposition. The only challenge the bomber formation received was from the ground, where large AA batteries put up a heavy field of flak over the target.

The 381st dispatched 29 aircraft, seven from this squadron, the formation under the command of 1st Lt Earl L. Muchway who flew in "Colonel Bub" with 1st Lt Howard N. Kesley as his pilot. Bombing was reported to be good.

Other pilots were: Lts Watson, Wezowicz, Lancaster, Helm, Renick, Ricks and McElhare.

All of our bombers returned home. One ship, its landing gear out of order, circled the field for hours while Lt Col Conway S. Hall, deputy commanding officer, attempted to drop instruments through the Fortress radio hatch to enable the crew to jettison the ball turret for a belly landing. Success was finally achieved and the ship made a successful landing.

A new crews was assigned today, less a navigator: 2nd Lts John Monahan, Kenneth Cea, (no nav), Leland Haas; Sgts John Valinski, Jerry Granlund, Darwin Davis, Loebert Catter and John Bryan.

9. No change.

10. An Eighth Air Force change of pace found the Fortresses over Belgium this morning, hammering away at airfields and important industrial targets in Brussels virtually without opposition.

The contingent of 32 aircraft from the 381st, including seven from the 533rd, was led by Major Arthur F. Briggs, 534th commander, aboard "Sweet Patootie", piloted by 1st Lt Howard Kesley. The formations found good weather until they reached Belgium, then clouds began to build up to such an extent that Brussels was hidden from the bombers.

Major Briggs executed a 360 degree turn and tried it once again. But when the target still remained hidden, the commander turned northward to the airfield at Woensdrecht, on the northern coast. There scattered clouds made visibility difficult, but a hole in the cloud ceiling gave bombardiers a chance to see the aiming point. After a 40-second bombing run, the Fortresses let go the might of their explosives. Bombing results were believed to be good.

The composite group, led by Capt Douglas L. Winter, took its second run over Brussels on a different heading, located an opening in the clouds directly over the briefed target and let its bombs go there. Crew members say they saw the bursts on the factory buildings and on what they believed to be oil refineries across the canal.

Some of our aircraft received considerable flak damage, but there were no casualties. No enemy fighters were seen throughout the mission.

Today's pilots: Lts Ricks, Helm, Wezowicz, Renick, Lancaster, Townsend and Watson.

A new crew today included: 2nd Lt John Monahan,

11. Flying Fortresses penetrated deep into Germany today to attack aircraft factories of increasing importance in the production of FW 190s. Targets of the 381st were Cottbus and Sorau, and both objectives received a severe pounding. In command of the group that hit Cottbus was Major Osce V. Jones, who flew in the lead ship "Georgia Rebel II" with 1st Lt Charles A. Enos as his pilot. His formation fought its way through to the target despite desperate enemy fighter attacks and constant flak.

The contingent that went to Sorau, including eight ships of the 533rd were under the command of 1st Lt George W. Reese, and Lt Ewing S. Watson was his pilot. Little flak and virtually no fighters were encountered by this formation.

Bombing reports for both forces were excellent. Strike photos revealed hits directly on the aiming points and indicate that the targets were severely damaged. Lt Reese reported that his formation "Had an easy day, except for the long haul," and that only one enemy aircraft was sighted "A silver three-engined transport", which was knocked down by 12 P-51s. There were meager flak attacks.

The trip, almost 11 hours long and ranging more than 1,500 miles was one of the longest the crews have ever taken part in. One other squadron ship failed to return.

Unanimous praise for the calibre of the American fighter escort covering the Fortresses of today's mission came from the crewmen of the 533rd ship 42-38194, called "Baboon McGoon", which came home seriously damaged by flak, but safe inside successive tight rings of P-51s, P-38's and P-47's.

Piloted by 2nd Lt Rolland O. Schindler, "Baboon McGoon" was flying along with her formation deep inside Germany when the formation ploughed into a heavy flak barrage. A chance burst knocked out "Baboon's" rudder control, and the big bomber sideslipped nearly 2,000 ft down and out of formation before Lt Schindler succeeded in bringing her under control. In an instant she was covered by half a dozen P-51's, whose pilots started her on the way home. Four left her once, but only to intercept and shoot down a lone Nazi fighter.

P-38's took over from the Mustangs half way back to England and escorted the B-17's well out over the North Sea, where four P-47's picked her up for the last leg of her journey home. The P-47's left their charge over her own field, and while all the crewmen but the pilot and co-pilot assembled in the radio room in case of a crash landing, Lt Schindler, "steering" his rudderless ship with throttles, ailerons and elevators, brought her to a successful landing from which all ten crew walked away unscathed.

Other pilots were: Lts Lancaster, Wezowicz, Helm, Garrett, Townsend, Ricks and Schindler.

12. No change.

13. Schweinfurt, still the center of the ball-bearing production of the German war machine, today underwent its fourth attack of the war from Fortresses, which pounded factories in several parts of the city with tons of high explosives and incendiary bombs.

Leader of the 381st's two formations of 32 bombers was Major Charles L. Halsey, 535th commander, who flew in "Georgia Rebel II" with 1st Lt Charles A. Enos as his pilot. Upon reaching Schweinfurt, 12 ships headed by Capt Carl Franek, 553rd operations officer, split off from the main group and headed for a separate factory target, eight ships from this squadron taking part.

Observers in Capt Franek's group said bombs were in a tight pattern, all landing in the target area. Several gunners reported fires started by their bombs on a large factory building. Both the groups were attacked once by two enemy fighters, which in both instances made one pass through the formations without returning.

The rest of the pilots were: Lts Tarr (with Capt Franek), Schindler Wezowicz, Helm, Bailey, Lancaster, Townsend and Garrett. 14-17. No action.

18. Oranienburg, home of the Heinkel plants and only a dozen miles north of Berlin, was the target for Fortresses today and returning crewmen said it was well hit. There were enough American 'heavies' and allied fighters over Germany to give the men in the B-17s the impression that the attacking force resembled a swarm of locusts over Germany.

Capt Douglas L. Winter, flew as commander of the 28 aircraft of the 381st, six of them from the 533rd. The group suffered no fighter attacks and only meager flak. Fortress crewmen reported they saw at least one enemy aircraft destroyed by the escorting fighters and observers gave the P-51's credit for the kill.

"Just as we got to this place where we were going to bomb," 2nd Lt Lou W. Yank, bombardier on "Princess Pat", "I saw a big Jerry transport trying to take off. It was a six engine job and a big baby. The P-51" spotted it, immediately swooped down on it, and caught it before it was more than 500 ft off the ground. They smashed it flat. I saw it crash less than 300 yards from the take-off field and it blew up with a great explosion when it hit the ground."

Lt Yank, a veteran of 28 missions, is a former football star. He was an outstanding guard for Southern California and after leaving the Trojans, he was a line mainstay for the Hollywood Bears.

Pilots that took part were: Helm, Carroll, Burton, Townsend, Garrett and Ricks.

19. Returning to Germany in great strength, B-17s struck heavily today at the Henschel aircraft works at Eschwege, southeast of Kassel, with good results.

Two contingents of 381st bombers took part comprising 30 aircraft, including eight from the 533rd, took part in the operation under the leadership of Lt Col Conway S. Hall, who flew as combat wing commander.

"There was a hole in the clouds at Eschwege and we got a good look at the target," Col Hall said, "We made a 40-second bombing run. The lead bombardier was able to synchronise perfectly and we let our bombs fall in a wide pattern right on the briefed objective."

Although the contingent led over the target by Col Hall met no fighter attacks, an estimated 50 single and twin-engined German fighters one pass at the group led by 1st Lt Ronald B. Dorrington.

Today's 533rd pilots were: Lts Helm, Carroll, Burton, Lancaster, Wezowicz, Ricks, Garrett and Townsend.

20. A force of 33 B-17s were dispatched by the 381st to attack targets on the French coast, nine of the ships supplied by the 533rd. However, bad weather obscured the targets and the formation - confirming to the Eighth Air Force policy of not discriminate bombing in occupied countries - returned to base without dropping bombs.

Participating were: Lts Watson (with Capt Francis C. Hawkins aboard as Photographer/Observer), Wezowicz, Townsend, Burton, Lancaster, Carroll, Helm, Garrett and Wainwright.

21. Assigned today was another new crew: 1st Lt Salvatore Melomo, 2nd Lts Lee Nelson, George Robinson, Erwin Brown; Sgts Sela Pantazelos, William Gilbertson, Julian Hill, Robert Hittel, James Moorhead and Richard Schneider.

22. Eight ships of the 533rd spearheaded an attack on Hamm today, by 27 bombers of the 381st, led by 1st Lt George W. Reese Jr, with 1st Lt Milton F. Tarr as his pilot of the ship "Honey."

The important marshalling yard at Hamm was already buried under a pall of boiling black smoke from other bombings when the 381st arrived. But the group made an excellent run over the target and dropped their explosives and incendiaries right on the smoke. Returning crewmen told of seeing hundreds of fires starting below, ringing the target with pin-points of orange and yellow light.

Returning from Hamm, the B-17s created an unusual spectacle over home field circling for landings in near darkness of 22.00 hrs. It was one of the latest returns since the 381st began operations last June.

Participating were: Lts Tarr, Bailey, Renick, Wainwright, Lancaster, Helm, Carroll and Wezowicz.

23. There was no action today but another new crew was assigned: 2nd Lts Lee Wilson, John Winter, James Thompson, F/O Richard Kennedy; Sgts Charles McMullen, George Meyers, Clyde Crain, George Cullum, Jesse McGuffin and Robert Pospisill.

24. Hundreds of American heavy bombers attacked targets in south Germany today and left a trail of smoke and flames all over that section of Nazidom. Leading the mission for the 381st was Lt Col George G. Shackley, commander of the 533rd, who provided six aircraft, of the 31 on the operation to blast Erding an airfield about 20 miles northwest of Munich, an aircraft storage depot being the main objective.

The formation found exceptionally clear weather at the target area, made a long bombing run and let its explosives go in an excellent pattern. Observers said the results were "at least good." At Erding the combat wing saw enemy fighters, variously estimated from 20 to 60. But crew members reported the jerries were intercepted and driven off by P-51's before they could attack the bombers.

The pilots were: Ricks, Renick, Burton, Wainwright, Helm and Bailey.

25. Fortresses again attacked the German-held airfield at Metz, in the Saar basin, 20 miles from the German border, this morning, destroying a number of Nazi planes on the ground as well as hangars and other installations.

1st Lt Ronald B. Dorrington acted as commander of the 28 aircraft of the 381st, flying in the lead ship "Dee Marie", piloted by 1st Lt Ralph E. Freese. The crews reported good bombing results, which included seven ships for the 533rd on the mission.

Participating were: Lts Wezowicz, Bailey, Carroll, Garrett, Townsend, Ricks and Lancaster.

26. Continuing an unprecedented series of major air attacks against German targets on the continent, fleets of Fortresses blasted Brunswick today, meeting only weak opposition for the enemy.

The 381st dispatched 35 aircraft under the group commander, Col Harry F. Leber, Jr, who led the combat wing. Bombing was done through 10/10th undercast and results went unobserved. Flak was encountered at the coast going in, at the target and at the coast on coming out. No enemy fighters were seen during the mission.

Lt Col John E. Fitzgerald, Jr, who led the "B" group on "Whirlaway", his pilot being 1st Lt Armour C. Bowen, said: "We dropped enough stuff on Brunswick today to flatten it."

The seven pilots from this squadron were: Lts Helm, Wezowicz, Townsend, Carroll, Burton, Garrett and Lancaster.

27. Five ships of the 533rd were part of a strike force of 381st bombers led to hit Cherbourg by Major Osce V. Jones, who flew in the lead ship with 1st Lt Henry Putek. Since the target was obscured the ship returned to base with their bombs.

Participating were: Lts Burton, Wezowicz, Bailey, Carroll and Wainwright.

28. Sweeping in over France on the heels of a returning RAF night-bombing force, B-17's smashed the German-held St Avord airfield today and left blazing buildings and pitted runways in their wake.

Led by Major Osce V. Jones, with 1st Lt Harold D. Henslin as his pilot, took part in the operation. Eight of the 28 aircraft were supplied by the 533rd. One brief encounter with the Luftwaffe was reported by returning crew members. They told of a short attack by an estimated 25 to 30 enemy fighters, both FW 190's and ME 109's, a few minutes after turning off the bombing run. Only the low squadron was attacked, and the assault was in effective.

Visual bombing was accomplished and the crews were unanimous in their opinion that the results were good. Hangars, barracks and other buildings surrounding the airstrip were hit and set aflame, and bombs left craters across the runways. 533rd bombardier 2nd Lt Nicholas M. Donnatuono, fling in "Lucky Me", said: "We got the first four hangars. I saw the bombs hit them and the hangars simply disappeared. There was a tremendous flash, then all I could see was debris, dust and smoke."

Participating were: Lts Ricks, Nelson, Bailey, Lancaster, Holland, Garrett and Renick.

29. Fortresses were over Berlin again today, dropping their bombs on the German capital through an 8/10th undercast. There were German fighters in the sky, but none of the groups reported great numbers of them. The only concentrated attack was made against a formation of B-24s flying below the Fortress groups.

The 381st supplied 27 aircraft, seven from the 533rd, that participated in the attack under command of Lt Col David E. Kunkel, Jr, who was air commander for the combat wing in today's mission. All 381st ships returned safely, although one landed at another base. Gunners claimed one enemy fighter, hit by a long shot as it was attacking a B-24 formation.

Today's pilots were: Capt Sandman; Lts Townsend, Sharp, Bailey, Carroll, Schindler and Holland.

30. Flying Fortresses penetrated deep into France this morning to hit an airfield near Lyons. The 12-ship formation furnished by the 381st for this mission was under the command of 1st Lt Armour C. Bowen, who was forced to leave the formation just before the target was reached, because of engine trouble. 1st Lt Lloyd S. Ricks, pilot of "Lucky Me", flying as deputy lead, took over and led the formation the rest of the way in and back home.

Lt Ricks reported his crewmen saw no flak throughout the 1,150 mile flight and no enemy fighters. With neither flak nor fighters to bother them, the B-17s made a good bomb run to the target and crewmen said "the results should be good."

The four 533rd pilots were: Lts Ricks, Wainwright, Garrett and Helm.

May 1944

533rd Bomb Sq.

381st Bomb Group (H)

WAR DIARY

Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

MAY 1944

1. The important marshalling yards at Troyes, France, southeast of Paris was the target of 381st Fortresses today, and the 24 big bombers roared over the French city without challenge from the enemy. 1st Lt Armour C. Bowen, was group commander for the operation, with 1st Lt Dale McCrory as his pilot. Lt Bowen reported neither flak nor fighters over the target and only moderate flak at the French coast as the bombers were returning home.

Pilots of the six 533rd ships were: Lts Helm, Holland, Carroll, Schindler, Garrett and Townsend, the latter having 535th Capt Walker aboard as Observer.

2 ~ 5 ?

6. Large numbers of Fortresses filled the skies over Germany's channel wall of defence this morning, wading through intense flak to search in vain for rifts in the solid cloud undercast through which they might drop their bombs on German military installations.

The 381st operated two separate contingents, led respectively by 1st Lt Ralph E. Freese, with 1st Lt Ronald B. Dorrington as his pilot on "Dee Marie", and Capt Seth A. Armstead, aboard "Stage Door Canteen" piloted by 1st Lt George W. Wilson. An aggregate of 35 B-17s, found the entire target area blanketed under clouds. Because of the Eighth Air Force policy of indiscriminate bombing of occupied areas, all ships but one returned to base still loaded. The exception was 1st Lt Roy D. Thompson, who lost an engine to flak aboard "Century Note" and he salvoed his bombs over the Channel.

Nine ships from the 533rd took part, the pilots being: Lts Ricks, Wezowicz, Melemo, Eselun, Wilson, Wainwright, Carroll, Holland and Bailey.

7. Hundreds of Fortresses flew almost unopposed over Berlin this morning to unload their bombs through solid cloud cover in the industrial section of the city. Leading the 381st's contingent of 19 ships was Lt Col Conway S. Hall, group air executive, who flew in a pathfinder, "Dry Gulcher", flown by 2nd Lt Harold C. Blog.

Flak over Berlin was described as "nothing out of the ordinary", and not one Luftwaffe fighter put in an appearance. Highlight of the mission for the group was the unusually good formation flying. Allied fighter escorts of P-47s, P-38s and P-51s was provided throughout the mission. Only four 533rd ships took part.

The pilots were: Lts Holland, Melomo, Carroll and Wilson.

8. Over Berlin again today the Fortresses poured hundreds of tons of bombs on the German capital through a solid undercast. Making up the 381st contingent were 18 ships under the command of 1st Lt George W. Reese, Jr, 20-year-old, squadron operations officer and 20 mission veteran. He flew on an unnamed B-17 with 1st Lt Milton F. Tarr, as his pilot.

Our formation encountered no enemy fighters, but found intense flak at the target. Lt Reese said that although the target was completely covered by clouds "at our altitude weather was good. Old flak bursts built a heavy black cloud in front of the formation, but the Fortresses ploughed through it in a fashion described as "amazing" by Lt Tarr. Despite the flak there was an excellent bombing run.

The 533rd provided seven ships and crews, the pilots being: Lts Tarr, Wilson, Garrett, Wainwright, Lancaster, Schindler and Bailey.

9. Fortresses switched their attack to France today to pour a rain of high explosives on the German-held airfield at St Dizier. The 381st made up of 30 aircraft, were led by the group commanding officer, Col Harry P. Leber, Jr, carried out a ten minute bombing run on their target under perfect precision bombing conditions and without opposition from the enemy.

Col Leber flew on a 533rd ship "Rotherhithe's Revenge" flown by Capt George K. Sandman, reported that the airfield at St Dizier was visible when the Fortresses were still 30 miles from their objective. Except for meagre flak bursts at the French coast, the B-17s encountered no opposition. Returning crewmen told of the magnitude of the blows carried out against German airfields and rail centres. On the return flight Col Leber observed three airfields which had been heavily bombed and covered with towering columns of smoke.

The 533rd commander, Lt Col George G. Shackley, flew in "Dreambaby" flown by 1st Lt Ewing S. Watson, and was deputy commander for the day, in which the squadron supplied six aircraft, all returning safely.

Today's pilots: Capt Sandman; Lts Watson, Bailey, Schindler, Garrett and Wainwright.

10. Usual garrison duties.

11. Thirty-one Fortresses of the 381st this afternoon pounded the marshalling yards and adjoining target area at Brettenbourg, south of the capital of Luxembourg, after finding the primary target in north-western Germany obscured by clouds.

Lt Col David E. Kunkel, Jr, group operations officer, flew as combat wing commander on board "Dee Marie", flown by 1st Lt Howard N. Kesley. Col Kunkel described the haze as very thick and "extending above our altitude" all the way across Germany and the Low Countries.

Between 50 and 60 enemy fighters, mostly ME 109's, made one pass at low elements of the group on the way to the target, but were engaged and driven off by P-51s, part of the vast umbrella of Allied fighters escorting the bombers.

"I didn't see any ME 109's, but I had a good look at about 25 FW 190's," said S/Sgt Charles J. Campbell, top turret gunner in "Dreambaby". "Some of them came to within 200 yards of us, but since they were below us and I'm top turret, I got just one short burst at them."

S/Sgt Harold Jernigan, ball turret on the same ship, already holds credit for one enemy fighter destroyed, and today he made the most of his second chance at an FW 190 during the group's mission to Luxembourg. The Jerry was one of a pack which made a quick pass at the low squadron of the group. "Before we made the bomb run," he told interrogators later, "about 25 FW 190's queued up 1,600 yards ahead of us, played around for a few seconds and then started in fanwise. I set my sights on one and followed him in all the way to about 800 yards, when I pressed the triggers. Nothing happened. Its been a long time since any of us have seen Jerries so close, and I guess I had forgotten to turn my gun switches on."

"I switched on,"he continued, "but by then he was inside 400 yards and coming fast. I gave him nearly 60 rounds, almost steady. Suddenly his right wing exploded and fell off. He dropped down about 200 feet and blew up. I didn't see any chute."

Today's mission marked Sgt Jernigan's first real brush with the Luftwaffe in more than two months. It was his 29th trip over a German target.

Pilots of the 533rd were: Melomo, Wilson, Holland, Sharp, Wezowicz, Monahan, Schindler and Wainwright.

12. Heavy black smoke rose 15,000 ft or more from the synthetic oil plant at Lutzkendorf, Germany, today, after ships from the 381st, heading a combat bomb wing, had finished unloading tons of explosives. The operation was highly successful. The 533rd were on stand down.

13. Striking deep into Germany, 381st aircraft bombed on two targets, believed to be Stalsrund and Stettin, through heavy undercast after primary and secondary targets were hidden by clouds. The group's contingent of 35 aircraft was split into two formations for the mission.

A group of 12 flew with the 1st CBW, led by 1st Lt Ralph E. Freese, whose unit encountered thick haze most of the way to the continent and flew over 8/10th undercast while it was over Europe. Primary and secondary targets were covered and the formation picked a target thought to be Stralsund and dropped its bombs.

Twenty other ships, including those of the 533rd, flew with the composite group under the leadership of Capt Douglas L. Winter, who flew in the lead ship of "Sleepy Time Gal". Headed deeper into enemy territory, the formation turned short when it ran into a cloud front and bombed what was estimated to be Stettin.

All the aircraft returned safely. Only two ships shown, piloted by Lt Townsend and Lt Lancaster.

14. Two new crews were assigned today: 2nd Lts David L. Bredeson, Charles J. Weeks, Francis J. Treanor, James V. Farley; S/Sgts John J. Molloy, Charles N. Gilberts, Sgts Mervin W. Gass, Alexander McCool Jr. and Frank V. Wessel.

2nd Lts Frank R. O'Black, William E. Usher, Ralph H. Sims, John D. Duncan; Sgts Wesley K. Rich, Eugene N. Beck, William Rich, William S. Ramseur, Bernard G. Fridberg and Oliver E. Brown.

15. Notification of the award of the Bronze Star, newest medal authorized by President Roosevelt, to 533rd M/Sgt Joseph J. Kohler, of Cleveland, Ohio, was received today. Sgt Kohler received the decoration for "meritorious achievement" in maintenance of aircraft assigned to him as crew chief.

During the 11 month he has serviced B-17's for combat operations, Sgt Kohler has compiled a remarkable record. Never once has a ship in his charge been forced to turn back because of mechanical failure before reaching its target and bombing successfully. He started his string of consecutive non-abort missions, now totalling 50, with the Fortress "Old Swayback". A picture of that ship appeared in the rear cover of the official Eighth AAF publication "target: Germany". Sgt Kohler groomed "Old Swayback" for two bombing operations before the aircraft was transferred to another base.

Upon receiving a new ship, Sgt Kohler and members of his crew dubbed it "Swayback", and cared for it so well that it made 17 consecutive missions over enemy territory without a premature turnback before being shot down on the 18th.

The majority of the 50 missions credited to Sgt Kohler's aircraft have been completed by his current B-17, "Princess Pat", which has bombed German targets with no mechanical difficulties 32 times. Only recently, he and his men replaced the original four engines, an indication of the thorough servicing the ship has received.

Several times "Princess Pat" has been badly shot up, limping home on one mission with a wing nearly broken from the fuselage. For some reason, Sgt Kohler says, flying in "Princess Pat" has been "mean on co-pilots." Three times flak and fighter shells have shattered the plexi-glass window on the co-pilot's side and the ground crew has replaced it. No one was injured on any of these three occasions.

Sgt Kohler is one of the first crew chiefs in the ETO to be awarded the Bronze Star. In lieu of the medal, he will wear on his uniform a red ribbon with a vertical blue stripe and edges piped in white.

A graduate of AM school at Keesler Field, Miss., and Boeing Specialist School, Seattle, Wash., St Kohler joined the 533rd at Pyote, Texas in January 1943. He was promoted to corporal and made a crew chief at Pueblo, Colo. All subsequent promotions to his present grade of M/Sgt, he received overseas.

Assigned today was another crew: 2nd Lts Thomas H. Weaver, Robert C. Karch, James F. Calhoun, Guy H. Goodman Jr.; S/Sgts Davis H. Sones, Leabert E. Starling, Sgts Leo F. Foley, Walter B. Laveen, Justin D. Turner and Louis A. Williams.

16 thru 18? Check microfilm

19. Hard hitting flak batteries defending Berlin this afternoon failed to divert the Fortresses from their task of renewing the hammering of the industrial targets of the German capital. Lt Col David E. Kunkel, Jr, group operations officer, led the 35 heavies of the 381st over the railroad targets of Berlin, pacing the formation as it unloaded tons of explosives on the tracks, switchblocks and adjoining buildings.

Grim highlights of the operation were the more than five minutes of constant battering from hundreds of enemy flak guns from below. Every returning ship bore battle scars. Three men in the formation were wounded, none seriously.

Typical of the close calls with hurtling flak fragments was that experienced by Sgt Clyde C. Crain, tail gunner in "Dreambaby". Among the heavy bursts which rocked his ship was one which sent metal fragments smashing through the left side of the tail, to ricochet off his helmet and slash the left sleeve of his heated suit and the shirt beneath. He was unhurt.

Today the ship 42-97454, flown by Lt Sharp was shot down, breaking the squadron's record of 34 consecutive missions without loss. The squadron has now completed 49 missions without a single abort.

Pilots for today were: Townsend, Bailey, Reimland, Helm, Holland, Burton, Wilson, Schindler (see below) and Sharp.

MIA crew: 1st Lt Earl Sharp, 2nd Lts Dorance Garner, Wayne T. Hardwick, Francis W. Britenbaker; T/Sgts Jarrett Schoepf, William K. Suchy, S/Sgts Merrill L. Pennypacker, Gerald J. Rutigliano and Follis D. Bratton.

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An American B-17 pilot with a year and a half of combat experience against the Japs in the South Pacific flew his first mission today from England, in the 533rd ship 42-31570, called "Lucky Me."

He is 2nd Lt Frank R. O'Black, veteran of Pearl Harbor, the battle of Midway and the struggle for control of the Solomons. He flew today as co-pilot with 1st Lt Ronald O. Schindler as his pilot. "This was my first mission - to Berlin," said the 25-year-old pilot upon his return, "and it was no picnic. Flak is extremely accurate in this theater and the German pilots are boys to have a lot of respect for."

Lt O'Black enlisted in the AAF on 11 November 1939, and was assigned to the oldest squadron in the air force, the 31st. He was sent directly overseas and given aerial gunnery training within his own squadron at Luke Field, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Before the Japanese sneak attack on 7 December 1941, he flew as a radio operator in B-18's and old B-17 D's, the latter the type of ship he flew in after being transferred from Luke to Hickham Field.

Lt O'Black, describing the devastation at Hickham from the Japanese bombing that fateful day, said that every B-17 on the field was knocked out. He was one of the crew which took off the first American bomber, a B-18, from Hickham after the Pearl Harbor attack.

Over the vast stretches of the Pacific, Lt O'Black flew on anti-submarine and transport patrol. His squadron was shifted from its home base to Midway Island for three days during the great naval battle. Later he flew patrol in the Solomons. For participation in operations at Midway, he and his crew were recommended for the Silver Star.

He returned to the US from Hawaii on October 1942, to begin cadet training. He won his wings and commission at Marfa, Texas, 30 August 1943, and flew overseas in April of this year.

20. Led by the 533rd commander, Lt Col George G. Shackley, 13 Fortresses of the 381st swept across France in clear weather today to bomb the German-held airdrome at Villacoublay, south of Paris, with "excellent results."

Col Shackley flew aboard "Rotherhithe's Revenge", with Capt George K. Sandman as his pilot. He reported a complete absence of enemy fighters, meagre flak at the target and clear visibility all the way. On their way in the crews had a good look at Paris. Visibility was so good that the French capital, crews could make out the Arc de Triomphe as well as the famous Eiffel Tower.

Other 533rd pilots were: Lts Helm, Bailey, Schmidt, Wainwright, Burton and Holland.

22. Flying Fortresses bombed Kiel today without encountering much opposition, when Major Arthur F. Briggs, 534th commander, led the 26 ships of the 381st on the mission. He said: "The weather was pretty good, although there were patchy clouds all the way. We made an excellent bombing run and our stuff fell in a good pattern. The most impressive thing about the mission was the formation. I could see 250 Forts at one time, all in battle array, and it really was an impressive sight."

1st Lt George W. Reese, 533rd operations officer told a similar story. The crews said the American fighter escort was "right on the ball."

All the ships returned home safely, including seven of this squadron.

The pilots were: Lts Watson, Wainwright, Schmidt, Lancaster, Eselun, Monahan and Bailey.

23. Fortresses were again over France and southern Germany today, attacking enemy-held transportation and manufacturing centers as part of the pre-invasion blitz. Col Harry P. Leber, Jr., group commander was combat wing lead, in a pathfinder ship, heading 26 aircraft of the 381st, six of this squadron.

The formation found an almost complete undercast all the way over France. The primary target was completely covered. Going on to the secondary, the Fortresses found a hole and made a second run over the target, believed to be Saarbrücken, to drop their bombs visually. Flak was meagre and the formation had no enemy fighter attacks, thus all our ships returned safely.

Pilots participating were: Lts Helm, Schmidt, Wainwright, Eselun, Reimland and Townsend.

24. The Luftwaffe was up today in attempt to defend Berlin but was unable to stop the large formation of Fortresses from dropping hundreds of tons of bombs on the gutted capital. There was only one brush with the enemy fighters. Lt Col John E. Fitzgerald, 532nd commander, led the 381st contingent of 39 aircraft, eight from this squadron, said the attack occurred just after the heavy bombers had completed the bombing operation and had turned off the target.

"There were 60 to 70 Jerries," Col Fitzgerald said. "They were coming up from underneath. They climbed out ahead of us then turned back and went for us. They actually came in wing-tip to wing-tip, shooting frantically. They smashed into our high squadron hard. There was only one pass. Our escort was only a few seconds behind them and as soon as our fighters appeared on the scene - that was the end of the fight."

Weather was a stumbling block. The bombers flew through dense clouds, thick haze and persistent condensation trails to reach the target area. Over Berlin it cleared somewhat and the crews all had a good look at the city. However the desperate enemy fighter attack was costly, 1st Lt Clarence Wainwright was shot down on 42-31698.

Today's pilots were: Lts Wilson, Schmidt, Lancaster, Helm, Monahan, Melomo and Holland.

MIA crew: 1st Lt Clarence D. Wainwright, 2nd Lts Howard D. Latton, Harold T. Dorn, James H. Counts; T/Sgt Lowell D. Kennedy, S/Sgt Warren K. Haga, Sgts Charles Kruger, T. J. Stephens and Floyd M. Nalley.

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"Stage Door Canteen", the B-17 christened a month ago by Mary Churchill, turned in another spectacular performance today, landing back at base with two parachutes acting as brakes. She was a 535th ship flown by a 533rd crew.

The unusual stopping device was necessary because the big bomber's hydraulic system had been shot out over Berlin, when enemy fighters hit the formation in the course of the attack on the Germany capital earlier today. The Jerries made one pass just as the ships completed the successful bombing. Loss of the hydraulic system was not the only damage the plane suffered. Five 20mm shells smashed into the ship, knocking out #3 engine, the radio compass and the oxygen system from the waist to the tail.

1st Lt Arthur J. Bailey, was unable to feather the #3 prop and it windmilled for the rest of the flight, causing "Canteen" to vibrate wildly. "We thought even more damage had been done," said co-pilot, 2nd Lt John J. Anderson. "The red stuff from the hydraulic system spurted up into the astro-dome, and it looked like blood. We had an idea the boys in the front had been wiped out."

Unable to keep up with the formation, "Canteen" embarked on the grim task of coming home alone. There were thick clouds and haze all over Germany to make the job of navigation difficult. Once the bomber went off course, passing over Bremen, where "We got more flak that we saw at the target." Flak bursts tore about 20 holes in the bomber, but failed to stop it.

With "Stage Door Canteen" hidden from enemy aircraft by the clouds, Lt Bailey gave the command to lighten the ship, and the crew jettisoned everything moveable except the guns and 50 rounds of ammunition for each fighting position. In the radio room, the waist and tail gunners, their oxygen system cut off, existed precariously by passing round three emergency oxygen bottles.

S/Sgt Charles J. Campbell, Jr., the engineer and top turret gunner, was a busy beaver all the way. The ship has lost all of the gas from the #3 engine, and he was constantly transferring fuel from one tank to another to keep the other three engines turning.

Arriving back at home base, Lt Bailey remembered he had read of another bomber's landing with parachutes for brakes. At his command, Sgt Alfred Paoli, the tail gunner, pushed a chute out of the tail trap door, while Sgt Coral C. Highsmith, performed the same stunt from the waist door. With two chutes floating out behind, the bomber stopped neatly three-quarters of the way down the runway and all the crew climbed out unhurt.

In addition to those already mentioned, the crew included 2nd Lt Lloya A. Peterson, navigator; Sgt William F. Coleman, toggler; S/Sgt Dale E. Moon, radio operator; and Sgt Walden W. Forke, ball turret gunner.

It was "Canteen's" 20th mission in a month. The crew averages 16.

25. Led by group commander, Lt Col Harry P. Leber, Jr., the 381st paid another visit to Nancy, France, today. Visibility was good and the Forts made an excellent bombing run. Flak was described as "moderate" and no enemy fighters were seen.

Col Leber flew in a 533rd ship "Rotherhithe's Revenge" with 1st Lt George K. Sandman as his pilot, heading the formation which contained seven aircraft from this squadron.

The other pilots were: Lts Schmidt, Holland, Monahan, Helm, Eselun and Wilson.

26. The following combat crewmen were transferred in from the 534th, Sgts John Dragan, Andrew Williamson, Robert Boyce, Tyke Kauppila and Nicholas Van Weiren.

27. Fortresses struck another blow at Ludwigshafen today with both the Luftwaffe and German ground defences making a desperate effort to stop them. 1st Lt Howard N. Kesley, 534th operations officer, led the 19-ship contingent, reported that the formation "didn't catch any" of the intense flak barrage over Ludwigshafen and that the escorting American fighters kept the Jerries from making any direct attacks on the group.

Dogfights between Allied and German fighters raged all around the formation. However, visibility was good and bombing results were believed to have followed suit. Lt Kesley reported that the aiming point could be seen when the bombers were still 15 miles from their target.

The six pilots of the 533rd participating were: Lts Schmidt, Reimland, Melomo, Schindler, Eselun and Wilson.

28. The 381st group formation included seven from the 533rd, which took off to bomb an airfield near Leipzig and the marshalling yards at Frankfurt today with excellent results.

Major Charles L. Halsey, 535th squadron commander, who led the mission, said the weather was "reasonably good". Finding the primary target obscured by clouds, the bombers went on to an airfield near Leipzig, where they surprised the German defenders and blasted an array of multi-engined bombers on the ground. Seven ships of the 533rd, flying in the high

squadron position, did not bomb, but proceeded under Major Halsey's command to Frankfurt with great accuracy on the marshalling yards.

In command of the 533rd was 1st Lt George W. Reese, Jr., squadron operation officer. Speaking of bombing Frankfurt. Major Halsey said: "In spite of intense flak they made a run on the marshalling yards and from where we were it looked like a beautiful job." All aircraft returned to base, but a tail gunner in another squadron was killed in action and five others wounded.

Our squadron pilots were: Lts Tarr (lead), Melomo, Townsend, Eselun, Wilson, Monahan and Reimland.

Two more new crews were assigned: 2nd Lts Edward W. Palmer, Donald P. McMullen, James H. Mattison, David W. Lane; S/Sgts Thomas F. Zeiler, Jack L. Larkin, Sgts Lewis R. Perrone, Joseph R. Newell Jr, James W. Smiley and Wilbur A. Skroh.

2nd Lt Mark R. Dunkel, F/O Kenneth Roehr, 2nd Lts Frank L. Kelly, Clifford Evans, Jr; S/Sgts William M. Stoll, Aaron R. Kochen, Sgts Raymond DeBoer, Roger L. Beaman, John L. Pillotti and Theodore E. Schmidt.

29. The 381st took a long trip to Posen, Poland, this morning without the benefit of the 533rd; 19 ships made the mission under the command of 1st Lt Dale McCrory, a 532nd squadron pilot.

30. The large Junkers engine plant at Dessau, southwest of Berlin, took a terrific pounding today from B-17's, which fought their way to the objective through enemy fighter attacks and a skyful of flak. Col William M. Gross, combat wing commander, led the Air Division, flying in a 534th ship with a 533rd crew.

He reported persistent enemy fighter attacks for 100 miles in the vicinity of the target. The fighters, estimated at between 40 and 50, made three head-on passes at the bomber formation and sniped at the B-17's from the wings for the rest of the time.

The Jerries were first seen about 40 miles from the target lining up for the attack, their contrails making white patterns high in the sky. They struck just as the Fortresses started on their bombing run, ten M! 109's making the first pass from about 12 o'clock. Two enemy fighters roared through the Fortress pack, one tipping just over and one just under the lead ship's left wing.

"When they came so close," Col Gross said, "it felt like an air bump." A shell struck the batteries in the lead ship and filled the nose and cockpit with smoke. Col Gross called the navigator and bombardier "because I suspected they weren't there any more." Despite the heavy flak, the harrassing fighters and the difficulties created by the smoke, the lead ship made a long, steady bomb run and strike photos show bombs landing right on the aiming point.

Col Gross paid tribute to the work of the leaders, all 533rd squadron men. They included 1st Lt George K. Sandman, his pilot; Capt John W. Bruning, navigator; Capt William H. Johnson, bombardier.

"They never tried to fire a gun during the bombing run," Col Gross said, "In spite of the way the Jerries were swarming all over us. They were there to get bombs on the target and, in spite of Hell, they did."

The fierce enemy fighter attacks exacted their toll, shooting down two 533rd ships, Lts Monahan and Burton.

Participating pilots were: Capt Sandman, Lts Watson, Harding, Reimland, Schmidt, Melomo, Bailey and the two missing in action.

MIA crews: 2nd Lts John J. Monahan, Kenneth C. Cea, Leland M. Haas; T/Sgt William M. Hoyle (toggler); S/Sgt Loebert G. Catter, John Valinski, Jerome D. Granlund, Morris N. Emmanuelson and John B. Bryan, Jr.

1st Lt Merrill O. Burton. 2nd Lts David L. Bredeson, Alvin C. Berry; S/Sgt Robert J. Hammond (toggler); T/Sgt John T. Eylens Jr., S/Sgts James E. Marbry, Ralph J. Powell, Victor C. Pillotti and Sgt Robert Hittel.

31. Flying through heavy clouds the 381st bombed an airfield in Belgium this morning with virtually no enemy opposition. Lt Col John E. Fitzgerald, Jr, 532nd commander, led the contingent of 25 aircraft, seven from the 533rd. Bombing is believed to have been good, and all ships returned safely with no casualties.

Today's pilots were: Lts Reimland, Bailey, Schindler, Eselun, Wilson, Helm and Holland.

During a month of unprecedented operations, the 533rd continued its amazing string of non-aborts, which now totals 59. For 59 missions not one squadron ship has turned back because of mechanical difficulties before reaching its target and bombing successfully. Up till May 19 the squadron had completed 34 mission in a row without loss. One ship was lost on the 19th, one on the 24th and two on the 30th.

Credit for the squadron's outstanding record is largely due to the mechanics who have so well serviced their ships. Their efforts made the long string of non-aborts possible.

Crew chiefs and their records: M/Sgt Joseph J. Kohler, ship #42-97503 Princess Pat, 55 straight; M/Sgt Clarence O. Loch, ship #42-31570 Lucky Me, 54 straight; M/Sgt George C. Minger, ship #42-32025 Dreambaby, 46 straight; M/Sgt Thomas F. Walsh, ship #42-38194 Baboon McGoon, 38 straight; M/Sgt Max J. Moore, ship #42-40007 Honey, 37 straight; M/Sgt Dale E. Cain, ship #43-97560 (no name); M/Sgt Martin DeJong, ship #42-102633 Yardbird, 42 straight; T/Sgt Edgar E. Stapp, ship #44-6095 Fort Worth Gal, 31 straight; M/Sgt Jesse G. Hyten, ship #42-31761 Rotherhithe's Revenge, 33 straight; M/Sgt Sam Spivak, ship #30721 Sweet and Lovely, 27 straight; T/Sgt George W. Cathcart, ship #42-31614 Minnie The Mermaid, 25 straight; M/Sgt John Kish, ship #42-97357 The Railroader, 20 straight; S/Sgt Leslie C. J. Grell, ship #42-97589 (no name), 20 straight; Sgt William Caldwell, ship #42-97882 (no name), 19 straight.

Sgt Merle D. Hunt and S/Sgt Don Law, newly assigned to ships as crew chiefs now have one non-abort mission each.

Completing their tour of missions are the following 29 men: Capt William H. Johnson, 1st Lts Walton D. Carroll, William J. Coles, Nicholas Donnatuono, Walter J. Garrett, Edward L. Kerrigan, John J. McDonald, William B. McElhare, Jack B. Reimland, Lloyd S. Ricks, Richard J. Schmidt, Roy N. Solveson; T/Sgts Walter S. Blake, Claud Caffey, Favian R. Calderon, Oren T. Evans, Neil R. Perry, Paul Schenuk, Michael Murisko, Louis S. Kalmar; S/Sgts John J. Panarese, Casimir C. Palermo, Eugene G. Kirchner, Harold J. Jernigan, Alfred Nayduck, William Pruzan, Richard Smith, James Keesling and Ernest J. Krech.

June 1944

533rd Bomb Sq.
381st Bomb Group (H)
WAR DIARY
Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

JUNE 1944

1. No action.

2. Completing the first "double header" in nearly a year of combat operations, the 381st followed a morning blow at the Pas de Calais area with an early evening attack on the Paliseaux/Massy marshalling yards near Villacoublay, just south of Paris.

The latter target was one of several which participating crewmen observed hit in the Paris outskirts. Today's two missions brought to an even dozen the total number of consecutive operations completed by the group without a single turnback from a target because of mechanical or personnel failure.

Seven ships of the 533rd took part in the morning attack on the Boulogne area of the Pas de Calais, and three took part in the afternoon attack on Paliseaux. No enemy aircraft were encountered and AA fire was meagre on both occasions.

Morning pilots were: Lts Schindler, Holmes, O'Black, Eselun, Townsend and Wolbrink, while after lunch it was: Lts Holland, Wilson and Wezowicz.

3. No ships of the 533rd took part in the attack on Boulogne today, six of the 534th made up part of the formation.

Another new crew was assigned: 1st Lt Beverley Lessenger, 2nd Lts William Wetzel, Albert Singer, Emil Pane; Sgts Richard Shields, Walter Gordon, Walter Stein, William Keaveney, John Brady and Herbert Weir.

4. For the third consecutive day, aircraft of the 381st added to the mounting intensity of the attack on the invasion coast, dropping tons of explosives on targets in the Pas de Calais, near Bologne. Twelve ship of the group took part, half of them from the 533rd, all returning safely.

Group leader for the day was Capt Karl Franek, 533rd operations officer, riding aboard a PFF ship. Crewmen with him agreed that today's operation - the fourth in three days, and the 381st's 14th consecutive without a abort - was "As near perfect as they come in this business." No enemy fighters or flak was seen.

Today's pilots: Lts Melomo, Henderson, O'Black, Holland, Holmes and Wolbrink.

5. Thirty nine aircraft of the 381st, including ten of the 533rd, led by Lt Col John E. Fitzgerald, Jr, 532nd commander, blasted a tactical target at Tailleville, France, today. A 10/10th cloud cover hid the English Channel from the bombers as they flew towards the French coast, but the clouds broke over the Continent and the target was observed from 70 miles away.

An excellent bombing run was carried out, the aircraft being unhampered by flak. Results are believed to be good. No enemy fighters were seen during the entire flight, and all our ships returned safely without casualties.

Squadron pilots were: Lts Eselun, Tarr, Wolbrink, Wilson, Holland, O'Black, Holmes, Townsend, Schindler and Bailey.

6. D-DAY. All squadron ground personnel were awakened during the early hours of the morning and rushed to the line, armed with carbines, to act as guards before the take-off of the bombers for the D-Day mission.

Minutes before Allied troops begun the invasion of the Continent this morning of D-Day, a strong force of 381st bombers - among them eight of the 533rd - poured tons of bombs on enemy shore defenses in Normandy. The bombers were escorted by enormous forces of Allied fighters. There were more allied aircraft taking part in this operation than had ever been put in the air before at one time.

Under the command of Lt Col Conway S. Hall, 36 ships of the 381st took part in the first bombing mission of the day, timed to precede the Allied invasion by a few minutes. The history-making events were completely hidden from the bombers by clouds. Formation after formation made its way to one of the various objectives and dropped bombs. None reported flak and none saw enemy fighters.

Today's pilots were: Lts Watson, Henderson, Bailey, Eselun, Helm, Holmes, O'Black, Schindler, Wilson. Three other squadron ships hit Caen, later in the day, flown by: Lts Lancaster, Holland and Wolbrink.

7. Seven crews of the 533rd participated in an attack on the Kerlin/Bastard airdrome in France this afternoon, while three more ships of this squadron were flown by others. The mission was uneventful.

Pilots for the operation were: Lts Eselun, Melomo, Anderson, Wolbrink, Wezowicz, O'Black and Bailey.

New crews still arrive: 2nd Lts Harry Carroll, Jack Pearson, Charles Freeman, William Greene; Sgts Sidney Feldman, Robert Moore, William Gildemeister, Ronald Herman, Robert Hilt and Cpl Adelbert Wszolek.

2nd Lt Edward Huber, David Gardner, Paul Schirmeyer, Harold Asay; Sgts Stanley Elstad, Charles Polito, Philip Griffiee, James Vaughn, Marvin Walters and Frederick Johnston.

8. Again smashing the Nazi transportation system in France, nine ships of this squadron were part of the 381st formation of 36 aircraft which bombed a steel railway bridge six miles west of Tours today. Results were reported to be excellent. Flak at the target was meagre and no enemy fighters were encountered.

Participating were: Capt Sandman and Lt Col Shackley leading: Lts Bailey, Wilson, Holland, Lancaster, Tarr, Henderson, Wolbrink and O'Black.

9. No action.

10. Returning to the job of cracking enemy defences of West Wall points, north of the Normandy beachhead, 22 aircraft of the 381st, including six from this squadron, this morning participated in a large-scale attack on Nazi military installations at the coastal town of Hardelet, south of Boulogne.

Although 10/10th undercast prevented observation of bombing results, returning crewmen said their heavy explosives went down in close formation as scheduled. Well escorted by American fighters, the ships made the entire trip without sighting an enemy plane. No flak was met at the target.

Squadron pilots were: Lts Henderson, Wezowicz, Anderson, Bailey, Holmes and Eselun.

11. Led by Capt Seth A. Armstead, 18 aircraft of the 381st including seven from the 533rd, took part in a heavy attack on the airdrome at Beaumont-le-Roger, north east of the Normandy battle zone today. American fighters escorted the bombers which met only the most meagre and inaccurate flak and no enemy fighters at all in the course of the operation. Haze and undercast forced bombardiers to work on instrument technique, and bombing result are as yet undetermined.

Taking part were: Lts Holland, Henderson, Wilson, Lancaster, O'Black, Winter and Anderson.

Another squadron arrived today: 1st Lt Leon O'Dell, 2nd Lts John Cochran, Nelson Rekos, Peter Kowalski; Sgts Jerry Delligatti, Barnie Dyson, Richard Henry, William Bursaw, Joseph Caglione and Henry Harris.

12. Under the leadership of Major Arthur F. Briggs, 534th commander, the 381st contingent containing nine 533rd aircraft took part in an attack on the airfield at Lille/Nord, France, today. Bombing was reported as "good". Flak was meagre and no enemy aircraft encountered, thus all bombers returned safely.

Those in participation were: Lts Watson, Palmer, Dunkel, Holland, Nelson, Anderson, Holmes, Wilson and Wezowicz.

13. Under the command of 1st Lt George W. Reese, Jr, 533rd operation officer, the 381st formation, with nine from this squadron, struck at the airdrome and Melun/Villaroche, France, today. Visual bombing was accomplished, and returning crewmen reported seeing many bomb bursts among the hangars and dispersal areas. Flak at the target was meagre and no enemy fighters were met. All our ships returned safely to base with no casualties.

Today's pilots were: Lancaster, Dunkel, Anderson, Palmer, Wilson, Holland, Henderson and Tarr (see following story).

A severely crippled Flying Fortress, 43-37737, returning from today's bombing operation against the airfield at Melun, southeast of Paris, narrowly avoided a pick-a-back landing atop a sister ship and spun neatly to a halt on the grass beside the runway.

The bomber, piloted by 1st Lt Milton F. Tarr, carrying 1st Lts George W. Reese, Jr, who acted as group commander for this mission, had been hit by flak near the French coast on its way back from the target. In a few brief moments just about everything possible happened to the Fortress. The #2 engine was knocked out of commission and its prop left windmilling. The #1 engine went out a second later, the oxygen supply was cut off and the left wheel came seeping out of its sheath.

"A piece of flak came flying into the nose," Lt Reese said, "and went skimming past the seat of the navigator's pants. Another piece went through the cockpit, and a second later, there wasn't an instrument left in working order."

With two engines out on the same side and one prop windmilling, without instruments, with landing gear damaged, and (as the pilot discovered later) with the landing flaps "knocked silly", the pilot and co-pilot brought their ship home. The radio was non-operational, so contact could not be made with the control tower for the landing, so the ship could make only one pass at the runway because it would not be possible to regain altitude.

That accounts for the fact that it started to come in on the runway while another ship was making its landing. The two men in the cockpit fought the controls with great strength and skill, managing to turn the cripple Fort off to the side of the runway and groundloop beautifully on the grass to keep the ship from running into parked aircraft. The #2 prop fell off as the landing was made and and smashed into the bottom of the fuselage, part of one side and took off a piece of the stabilizer. But the entire crew walked away from the ship.

The Fortress, a new bomber tentatively called "Second Year" in honour of the Group's combat anniversary on 22 June, was pounced on by its ground crew immediately after the landing and is expected to fly again in a few days.

14. Fresh crews continue to be assigned: 2nd Lts John Fenton, Robert Irwin, Wilbur Stoltz, F/O Willis Griggs; Sgts William Chin, Phillip Nichols, George Wiggins, Robert Staubitz, Walter Miller and Walter Gunn.

2nd Lt Roger La Pierre, William Jones, Arnold Gittelmann, Herbert Higginbotham; Sgts David Harris, Loren Wilcox, Joseph Paskewich, Harold Dyer, Frank Zajac and William Weems.

15. Under the command of Lt Col David E. Kukel, group operations officer, bombers of the 381st, including 11 from the 533rd, smashed at the airfield of Bordeaux/Merignac, France. Heavy flak was encountered in the target area, but no enemy fighters were seen throughout the whole operation. Bombing results were believed to be "good."

Today's pilots were: Lts Watson, Anderson, Wilson, Dunkel, Eselun, O'Black, Wezowicz, Bailey, Tarr, Palmer and Henderson.

16-17. No action, but another crew joined the squadron: 2nd Lts Frederick Masterson, William Bigham, Howard Kronick, Richard Maskin; Sgts William Rump, William Huber, John Hlavcak, Everett Coates, Rafael Esquada and Cpl Jack Norman.

18. Heavy barrage flak, broken cloud and an all-out enemy attempt at smoke-screening today failed to prevent the 381st, operating in Wing strength with 52 aircraft, from striking hard at oil refineries in Hamburg.

In addition to representing a chance of pace from short-haul thrusts at airdomes and rail targets in France that occupied the 381st for the first couple of weeks of this month, today's assault on Hamburg marked the group's first attack on that city since 25 July 1943, at a time when combined USAAF-RAF blows had virtually obliterated the city.

Combat wing leader, who paced three full sized units of the 381st to visual bombing, was squadron commander, Lt Col George G. Shackley, aboard a PFF ship. Group leaders of other squadrons led the other two units making up the Wing.

No enemy fighters were encountered, but veteran crewmen said that flak at Hamburg was as heavy as they'd ever seen it. Weather conditions prevented accurate observation of bombing results. All our 52 bombers returned to base without claim or casualty. For the 39th consecutive time no bomber returned early for any reason. Every one dropped its load.

Pilots for the 533rd were: Lts Wezowicz, O'Black, Wilson, Lancaster, Biley, Lessenger, Dunkel, Anderson, Palmer, Henderson, Wolbrink, Eselun and Nelson.

19. Despite dense concentrations of AA fire, 51 aircraft of the 381st, under the leadership of Lt Col Conway S. Hall, bombed airfields at Merignac and Cazaux, France, today with excellent results.

AA fire at Merignac was "heavy", but at Cazaux only "meagre". No enemy fighters were seen through the operation. Three ships from the group were shot down, but all 12 of the 533rd returned safely.

Pilots participating were: Lts Watson, Dunkel, Nelson, Holland, Lessenger, Bailey, Palmer, Anderson, Wezowicz, Winter, Holmes and Wilson.

20. Back at their job of strategic bombing, Fortresses were in their element over Hamburg today, smashing oil refinery objectives along to dock fronts despite a curtain of AA fire.

The aircraft acquired a bumper amount of flak holes, the crews were battered - but nothing could stop them. Take the 533rd ship "The Railroader" for example: "We could see the target from 40 to 50 miles away," said the navigator, 2nd Lt Albert I. Singer. "There were columns of smoke towering up from it, and as we came up on it we saw it absolutely covered by flak. They just filled the sky with the stuff."

The big bombers embarked on a long, straight and level bombing run, nevertheless. Flak bursts slammed into "The Railroader", and the pilot 1st Lt Beverley Lessenger was severely wounded in both knees. He slumped down on the stick. A flak burst broke the glass in the goggles of the navigator. The co-pilot and ball turret gunner sustained bruises.

2nd Lt William R. Wetzel, the co-pilot, pried the pilot from the controls with one arm and flew the rest of the bombing run with his other arm. Bombs were away in a cloud and the crew reported they "were right in there."

The bombing run completed, Sgt Walter S. Gordon, engineer and top turret gunner, and the bombardier, 2nd Lt Emil Pane, removed the pilot to the floor near the escaped hatch and the bombardier administered first aid while the engineer assumed the pilot's seat and performed co-pilot's duties for the trip home. There was no further trouble and "The Railroader" made it without difficulty despite the fact that it had collected more than 100 flak holes. With the exception of the pilot, the crew walked away from the airplane.

Also on the crew were: Sgt John P. Brady - tail gunner; Sgt Walter Stein and Sgt Richard V. Shields - waist gunners; Sgt Herbert Weir - ball turret gunner.

The 381st were led into action by Capt Karl Franek, squadron operations officer, however one of our ships is missing in action.

Today's pilots were: Lts Bailey, Winter, Henderson, Lessenger, Palmer, O'Black, Carroll, Lancaster, Holmes, Eselun and Dunkel, the latter missing in action.

MIA crew: 1st Lt Mark R. Dunkel, 2nd Lts Kenneth Roehr, Frank L. Kelly, Clifford Evans Jr; S/Sgts Aaron R. Kochel, William M. Stoll, Sgts John L. Pillotti, Theodore E. Schmidt and Roger L. Beaman.

21. Berlin felt the weight of Fortress bombs today for the first time since the invasion begun, huge formations of the four-engined bombers roaring over the German capital in the attack. The ships fought their way to the target through enemy fighters and flak to perform a bombing job which the jubilant crews called "the best pasting Berlin ever got."

Major Charles L. Halsey, 535th commander, served as combat wing leader for the operation. He said that bombing was accomplished visually. The aircraft faced no difficulty until they began to approach the target area. , There, flying off to the left was a large formation of "60 to 80 planes", which Major Halsey thought at first must be Fortresses until he took another look. They turned out to be enemy fighters.

The fight began in a few minutes. "It was a battle royal," said Major Halsey, "and came in high, level and from both sides at the same time. The duel lasted 25 minutes. It looked as if we got plenty of them, too."

The ship flown by 2nd Lt Frank O'Black, "Yardbird", took a direct attack from a swarm of ME 210's, estimated to be over 60 or more. "They came in just once, all around us, and peeled off," said Lt O'Black. "They didn't make a second pass at our ship."

The fighters left the formation a few minutes before the bomb run, and then the flak came. There was plenty of it. The B-17s were considerably battered by flak. Four had their hydraulic systems shot out over the target and had to make landings back at base without brakes. Of these, two, remembering the Stars and Stripes stories, put out parachutes on the runways and stopped mostly in good time.

Nine ships from this squadron took part, the pilots being: Lts O'Black, Holmes, Wilson, Henderson, Palmer, Carroll, Bailey (missing in action), Winter (see story below) and Lancaster (see story below).

MIA crew: 1st Lt Arthur J. Bailey, 2nd Lts Robert W. Irwin, Lloyd A. Peterson, Erwin M. Brown; T/Sgt Charles C. Campbell, Jr., S/Sgt John J. Molloy, S/Sgts Walden W. Forke, Coral C. Highsmith and Alfred Paoli.

Hit in the jaw by a piece of flak while his ship "Marsha Sue" was beginning its bomb run, flown by Lt Winter, over Berlin this morning, 2nd Lt Peter Kowalski, bombardier, clung to consciousness just long enough to get his explosives away and close to bomb doors.

Given first aid by navigator 2nd Lt Nelson Rekos, the bombardier wanted to know one thing - What happened to the bombs? Assured that he had got them off and closed the doors, he settled back to sweat out the ride home.

The flak burst which hit Kowalski also smashed into the plane's hydraulic system, and when "Marsha Sue" returned to base she was forced to land without brakes. Kowalski didn't see the landing, but it was a thriller, 2nd Lt John Winter, the pilot, bringing her in with three parachutes billowing out from the waist windows and tail to act as brakes. "Marsha Sue" stopped neatly on the grass after turning off the runway and Kowalski was rushed to hospital.

Meanwhile, aboard 1st Lt Ryan Lancaster's ship, the unnamed 43-37561, a chunk of flak nearly an inch thick tore through the plexi-glass nose over Berlin today, sliced through the bombardier's switches like a razor and smashed into the chest of the navigator, knocking him unconscious.

1st Lt Kenneth Cagwin, bombardier, had been preparing to release bombs just as the monster piece of flak struck him, gashing his head. "I was dazed for a minute," he said, "but I managed to reach the salvo switch and got the bombs away."

Navigator 1st Lt Charles Gilpin, who was knocked to the floor, recovered his senses within a few minutes and performed usual duties on the return flight. In 29 missions it was the fourth time Lt Gilpin had been hit by flak, each time in the chest, and on all four occasions he escaped death because of his flak suit.

22. Six aircraft of the 533rd took part in the 381st's operation directed against the switch and power stations in Abbeville, France. Flak was meagre over the target and no enemy fighters were encountered. Crewmen described bombing results as excellent, and all ships returned safely.

Our pilots were: Lts Nelson, Holland, Carroll, Wezowicz, Palmer and Wilson.

A new crew assigned were: 2nd Lts Joseph Pearce, Dale Winsor, Eugene Wiesser, Morton Yolofsky; Sgts Bruce Bentley, Charles Bowman, Robert Wakerley, Glen Studebaker, Joseph Marshall and Robert Harper.

23. Led by 1st Lt George W. Reese, Jr, aboard a PFF ship, 533rd operations officer, led the 381st contingent, including six of the 533rd, attacked pilotless plane launching sites in the Pas de Calais this morning. Flak at the target was moderate and no enemy aircraft were encountered, but bombing was done on instruments.

Pilots from this squadron were: Lts Winter, Henderson, Holmes, O'Dell, Holland and Usher.

24. Thirty five aircraft of the 381st, including nine from the 533rd, attacked the steel railway bridge over the Loire river west of Tours, France, today. Flak was negligible and bombing results are reported to be good.

All 533rd ships returned safely, flown by: Lts Henderson, Winters, O'Dell, Usher, Wilson, Palmer, O'Black, Nelson and Carroll.

25. Under the leadership of Capt George K. Sandman, aboard "Dee Marie" of the 534th, the 381st, including nine from the 533rd, took part in an attack on the airdrome at Toulouse, France. Bombing results were reported to range from "fair" to "poor". Over the target itself, the ships were met with meagre, inaccurate flak, while no enemy aircraft were seen throughout the operation. All ships returned safely.

Participating were: Lts Tarr, with Capt Sandman, Wilson, Winter, Usher, O'Black, O'Dell, Nelson, LaPierre and Palmer.

26. No action.

27. Another combat crew assigned were: 2nd Lts Mitchell Rolin, Oscar Gills, Franklin Ross, Robert Lane; Sgts Warren Conklin, Nile Greathouse, Theodore Matthews, Anthony Ferrara, John Diedrich and Charles Brown.

28. Nine bombers of the 533rd participated in an attack on a bridge at Fismes, near Rheims, France. The 381st mission was led by Major Arthur F. Briggs, 534th commander, but the target was missed. The bombers encountered little flak and no enemy fighters.

Unfortunately, Sgt William F. Bursaw, tail gunner with Lt O'Dell was killed in action, other pilots being: Lts Henderson, Wilson, Huber, Carroll, Anderson, Wezowicz, LaPierre and Winters.

Two assignments were 1st Lt Charles Eager from the 534th and 2nd Lt William Bonar from the 532nd.

29. Seven 533rd aircraft took off this morning with other bombers of the 381st to attack military objectives at Leipzig, Germany. However bad weather interfered with assembly and the mission was recalled.

30. More combat men assigned were: 2nd Lts Dona LaCouture, Morton Tolchinsky, no nav, Irvinf Taxel; Sgts Donald Kirkpatrick, James McKeene, Edward Donahue, Wilmer Myers, (only one WG) and Robert Meek.

31. A mission planned for Allach, near Munich, was scrubbed.

July 1944

533rd Bomb Sq.

381st Bomb Group (H)

WAR DIARY

Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

JULY 1944

1. The first morning of the month dawned wet and miserable, while heavy grey clouds made a complete overcast. Rain drizzled down intermittently throughout the day.

Major Marvin D. Lord, on temporary duty with this squadron was transferred to the 91st Bomb Group; Capt Milton F. Tarr was notified his promotion from 1st Lt became effective from 25 June.

2. Men at this station had their first close-up view of a robot bomb today when it passed over the base early in the afternoon. The bomb landed in a wheatfield near Clare, three or four miles from the base. No one was hurt and no damage was caused by the explosion.

It was overcast, with heavy humidity, this morning. Clouds began breaking up at noon and during the afternoon and evening there was occasional sunshine.

No operational alert was called; Seven combat officers left for the 12th RCD casual pool; 1st Lt Chester Hartman was on detached service.

3. Weather was grey and humid again today. At about 8am there were slight signs that the skies might clear but a complete overcast had set in by 9am. There were short gusts of rain throughout the day, thus no operational alert was called. At about 10.00 hrs a red alert signal was given that a buzz bomb was approaching the base, but it crashed so far away that the explosion could not be heard.

Captain John W. Bruning was assigned to the 1st CBW on detached service for 30 days; Sgt Herson was reduced to Pvt; S/Sgt Robert K. Ray was assigned to the squadron from Station #172 Snettisham.

4. Bright and clear, the anniversary of America's Independence Day proved an excellent day for bombing. Seven ships of the 533rd took part in the 381st attack on the La Riche Airfield, near Tours, France. Flak was light and no enemy fighters were encountered. Bombing results are believed to be good.

Our squadron bombers were under the command of Capt Milton F. Tarr and Capt Karl Franek who flew in the lead ship, the others being: Lts Anderson, O'Dell, Palmer, Wilson, Huber and Masterson. All returned safely with no casualties.

5. Sloppy weather prevented any operation. A heavy overcast filled the sky through most of the day, clearing a little as the evening drew near.

6. Robot bomb bases at Rely, France, were pounded by our bombers today, nine from the 533rd taking part in the attack, when little opposition was encountered. Flak was light and the Luftwaffe again failed to put in an appearance.

Capt Karl Franek commanded the squadron's force again today, flying in the ship piloted by 1st Lt John E. Wezowicz. Other pilots were: Lts Palmer, Masterson, Pearce, Nelson, Huber, Wilson, O'Dell and O'Black.

S/Sgt Robert K. Ray on temporary duty, not to exceed 60 days at 12th RCD casual pool; Cpl Hugh Bracken from duty to detached service in London; Pfc Baze promoted to Cpl, effective 1 July.

7. Taking off in driving rain, 11 ships of the 533rd participated with other squadrons of the 381st under the leadership of the station commander, Lt Col Harry P. Leber, to attack the Eral Works at Leipzig, Germany. Because of the heavy overcast bombing results were unobserved. There were no losses or casualties, and the sun was shining brightly when the bombers landed back at base.

Pilots for today were: Lts Winters, LaPierre, Huber, Pearce, Carroll, Nelson, Masterson, Palmer, O'Black, Usher and Henderson.

2nd Lt Irving Taxel and Cpl Hugh Bracken returned to duty from detached service in London.

8. Six aircraft of the 533rd participated today in an attack on robot-plane bases at Coubronne, Rely, France. Bad weather and heavy contrails made aiming difficult, but results are believed to be good. Light flak and no enemy opposition was encountered.

The 533rd ships were flown by: Lts Wezowicz, with Capt Tarr as lead, Palmer, Wilson, Henderson, Pearce and O'Dell.

1st Lt Dean P. Lawson and Sgt Samuel Johnson were assigned from 1st Bomb Division HQ; S/Sgt Trotti, a gunner who has finished his tour, was released from duty today and attached to the 1142nd MP Co., as a member of the alert detachment; T/Sgt Walker, also a former gunner, was released from the 1142nd MP Co., alert detachment and transferred.

9. Today six of our aircraft and six from the 534th took part in an attack on St Omer airfield, France. The 12-plane formation of the 381st was led by Capt Milton F. Tarr of this squadron; bad weather hampered the operation and bombing results have yet to be ascertained. Moderate flak was encountered and no enemy aircraft were seen.

Other 533rd pilots were: Lts Henderson, O'Dell, Palmer, Pearce and Wilson.

Capt Paul A. Snyeri was assigned today from 1st Bomb Division HQ; 1st Lt Charles Eager was transferred from this squadron to the 534th; and 2nd Lt Guy H. Goodman, Jr, was transferred from the 534th.

A new crew assigned was: 2nd Lts John W. Berkley, Robert W. Baker, August F. Kaemper, Anthony Stancampiano; S/Sgts Thomas J. Hammer, Hector G. Tencich, Sgts James P. Morgan, Frank K. Gunderson, Kenneth D. Lingbloom and William Goudekot.

10. Cloudiness, with alternate sunshine and rain, characterized the morning. By mid-afternoon the skies had almost completely cleared, but the mission called for Etaples, France, was scrubbed.

The following promotions and transfers were: Capt Henry Bonneau left for detached service in London; S/Sgts Gilberts, Lawson, Shields, Calderon, Schwartz and Gordon to T/Sgts; Sgts Brady, Perrone, Davis, Rich and Weir to S/Sgts; S/Sgt Black re-classified from 911 to 663; 1st Lt Hartman returned to duty from detached service at Station #112 Bovingdon; T/Sgt Klein returned to duty from detached service at RAF Kirkham, near Preston, Lancs; S/Sgt Shepherd returned to duty from the casual pool at 12th RCD, Lancashire; 2nd Lt Speck to 1st Lt.

11. An attack on Munich was carried out today over 10/10th cloud cover by the Eighth AF, when 18 ships of the 381st took part, but none from the 533rd.

Capt Henry W. Bonneau to duty from detached service in London.

12. Munich was blasted again today, 36 aircraft of the 381st taking part in the operation, ten from this squadron taking part. Lt Col Conway S. Hall, group air executive was leader, flying in a 533rd ship 42-97771-J, with Capt Carl M. Clark as his pilot. Bombing was carried out through a heavy, grey undercast by PFF. Flak was moderate but accurate, no enemy aircraft were encountered had we had no losses. A second mission planned for Fresnoy, France, was scrubbed.

Apart from Capt Clark, our pilots were: Lts O'Black, Weaver, LaPierre, Usher, Winter, O'Dell, Melomo, Pearce and Masterson.

Captain John Tutsock returned to duty today from detached service at the anti-gas school at Rolleston, near Salisbury; T/Sgt Lutz and S/Sgt O'Donnell left on a 7-day furlough; Pvt Paterno was promoted Pfc.

13. Another attack was carried out today against Munich. Shortly before 07.00 hrs a 534th ship lost the use of two engines shortly after take off, crashed on the LNER railroad tracks half a mile south of gate #2 and exploded. Three 500lb bombs went up in the explosion, demolishing the aircraft and killing all but the pilot and co-pilot, Lts Houston and Scruggs, who had been thrown clear.

Ten bombers from this squadron took part in the operation, which was successful despite a 9/10th undercast and heavy flak. No fighters were encountered and all returned safely.

Today's pilots were: Lts Weaver, Carroll, LaPierre, Fenton, Pearce, O'Dell, Masterson, O'Black, Winter and Huber.

Pvts Westendorf and Bliss left for the air gunnery school at Station #172 Snettisham.

14. Weather was fair and clear at dawn, but clouds began to appear at 10am and from noon until darkness the base was completely overcast. A mission planned for Merseburg, Germany, was scrubbed.

Promoted from 2nd Lt to 1st Lt today were: Calhoun, Farley, Nelson, Palmer, Robinson, Sims, Thompson, Usher and Winter; 1st Lt Calhoun, 2nd Lts Weaver and Heineman and F/O Kennedy left for rest home, as did S/Sgt Williams.

A new combat crew arrived today: 2nd Lts George Stevens, Frederick Hollendorfer, Raymond Wieloszynski, Otto Daye; Sgts Salvador Saporito, Richard Sullivan, Frank Porter, Leland Graham, Roy Capshaw and Antonio Berardi.

S/Sgt Huber and Sgt Harris were reduced to Pvt; Sgt Johnson was transferred to the 91st BG, Bassingbourn; T/Sgts Tarling and Sones, S/Sgts Turner, Valente and Gass left for detached service at Spetchley Park (? Bletchley ?).

15. Inclement weather prevented operations again today; 2nd Lt Duncan left for detached service at 1st Bomb Division; Transferred to the 12th RCD Casual Pool, at Station #591 Washington Hall, Lancs., today, were: 1st Lts Gilpin, Holland, Holmes and Speck.

16. Ten bombers of the 533rd took part today in another attack on Munich, with Capt Karl Franek in charge. Heavy contrails and dense undercaste made use of PFF bombing necessary. Flak was again heavy, but no enemy fighters were seen.

Our pilots for today were: Lts Wezowicz, Nelson, Hunber, Usher, Pearce, Fenton, Rolin, Masterson and Carroll.

17. Bad weather again prevented operations today. Lts Winter, Thompson, Cagwin and Wilson were transferred to the casual pool at 12th RCD.

Three new crews were assigned today from the 8th AF Replacement Depot, Station #594, Jefferson Hall, Staffordshire: 2nd Lts Guy D. Ogle, Harry L. Goetz Jr., Roy E. Boyle, Frank L. Deborger; Sgts William L. Greenburg, Joseph F. Timmins, Howard H. Hazen, Paul L. Grim, Edward H. Eble and Dale E. Williams.

2nd Lts Kenneth L. Orcutt, George F. Graebener, Corydon W. Coombs, Harry L. Delaplane, Jr; Sgts Thomas M. Guilfoyle, Francis X. Hrehocik, Cpls Angelo J. DeMarco, Marshall N. Collins, Ralph E. Kennedy and Henry L. Johnson.

2nd Lts Joseph H. Steinwinter, Francis J. Strein, John E. Crowley, Joseph J. Delmarmol; Cpls John L. Lemon, Daniel A. Adair, Morrill W. Lurrey, William G. Hiney and Jackie J. Nichols.

18. Ten bombers of the 533rd took part today in an attack on the German experimental station at Peenemunde, on the Baltic Sea. Europe was completely cloud covered, except for a few small breaks at Peenemunde itself. The formation met moderate, inaccurate flak, but the ship piloted by Lt O'Black is missing in action, believed to have landed safely in Sweden.

MIA crew: 1st Lt Frank R. O'Black, 2nd Lts Robert C. Karch, Francis J. Treanor, Herbert Higginbotham; T/Sgt Eugene N. Beck; S/Sgts Wesley K. Rich, Oliver E. Brown, Bernard G. Fridberg and Sgt William Rich.

F/O Kennedy was commissioned a 2nd Lt today by S.O. #189; T/Sgt Lutz and S/Sgt O'Donnell returned to duty from furlough; T/Sgt Pantazelos reduced to Pvt.

19. Today nine ships of this squadron took part in bombing a German training base at Lechfeld. The attack was carried out in clear weather, allowing visual bombing and good results were achieved. No fighters were met and flak was only encountered in the target area.

Captain George K. Sandman led the formation with Capt Clark as his pilot. Other pilots were; Capt Tarr, Lts Nelson, Palmer, O'Dell, Usher, Fenton, Pearson and Huber.

Two new crews were assigned: 1st Lt John Proctor, 2nd Lts James Grey, Sidney Gordon, Alfred Guidotti; Sgts William Boyington, Charles Janis, Walter L. Doremus, Dewitt Fontanet, Harry Hoover and Frank Mizer.

2nd Lts Nelson Schein, Lawrence Hales, Douglas Greaves, John Evans; Sgts Earle Bassett, Travis Groft, William Dangerfield, John Keffer, Chester Peters and Robert Tyler.

Capt Henry Bonneau left for London on detached service; 2nd Lt Wetzel left for detached service at the 302nd Dispensary, Station #101 High Wycombe; T/Sgt Meyers left for a seven-day furlough.

20. An attack in perfect weather was carried out today against an enemy aircraft engine factory at Dessau, Germany. Bombing results were good. Flak at the target was heavy but no enemy aircraft encountered.

Capt Karl Franek led the nine 533rd ship with Capt Milton F. Tarr as his pilot, who completed his tour of operations as did T/Sgt Lester J. Lariviere, flying in the same ship. Other pilots were: Lts Pearce, Nelson, LaCouture, Pearson, LaPierre, Masterson, Huber and Rolin.

T/Sgt Burbank left on furlough.

21. Col Harry Leber, 381st commander, led the group's formation to Schweinfurt, the fifth attack carried out against this city from this base. Weather was good and bombing results appeared to be excellent. Flak at the target was heavy but no enemy fighters appeared to defend the much-bombed Schweinfurt. There were no losses.

Participating for the nine 533rd ships were: Lts Carroll, Nelson, Palmer, Masterson, Rolin, Pearce, LaCouture, O'Dell and Huber.

Promotion to 1st Lt was confirmed for 2nd Lt Carroll.

22. Grey clouds overhung the base today, accompanied by chilly winds and intermittent rain. No operations were scheduled. Promotion for 2nd Lt James H. Mattison to 1st Lt was announced; Capt Bonneau returned from detached service in London.

23. Bad weather forced another stand down today. Rain fell at regular intervals throughout the day. S/Sgts Darwin J. Davis, John Dragan and Philip P. Griffiee were transferred to the 381st BG today; Sgt Wakerley reduced to Pvt; Sgts Van Wieren and Rump were promoted to S/Sgts.

24. A mission in support of a breakout drive to be launched by American troops in the Cherbourg peninsula was carried out against St Lo, France today by bombers of the 381st, some 54 aircraft took part in the operation and none were lost. Bombing was done by 14,000 ft, visually low for B-17s.

The 533rd contributed 13 aircraft under the leadership of Capt Kark Franek, who flew with Lt Sal Melomo, the others being: Lts Fenton, LaPierre, Usher, Carroll, Pearce, Palmer, O'Dell, Weaver, Stevens, LaCouture, Pearson and Rolin.

T/Sgt Nunn and S/Sgts Conklin, Jones and Carl who had been on temporary duty at the 12th RCD, returned to the squadron for duty; Sgt DeBoer, Paskewicz and Skroh were transferred to the 323rd Bomb Group, a Ninth AF outfit at Earls Colne, about 15 miles away, just through Halstead, Essex Co.

24. A mission planned for Berlin today, was scrubbed.

Pvts Westerndorf and Bliss, who left to attend the air gunnery school at Station #172 Snettisham, returned today for duty; Pvt Michel, who has been on detached service at 1st Bomb Division HQ, was transferred today to HQ & HQ Squadron, 1st BD.

26. A mission planned for Munich today was scrubbed. Meantime from the 12th RCD came another combat crew: 2nd Lts Joseph D. Nelson, Charles R. Prenatt, Donald K. Adams, William P. Rudisill; Sgts Minor W. Stowe, Paul E. Parkes, Cpls Shelby W. Cook, Leo V. Krainz, Harold A. Mourning and Robert J. Sharp.

A rash of re-classifications hit the squadron today; from 056 to 055 were Cpls McManus and McCarron; Re-classified from 521 to 590 were: Pvts Bilderbeck, Dean, McMullen, Manfre; Pfc's Ice, Johnston, Smith and Marconi; from 682 to 685 were: Sgts Franklin and Weirich.

27. No mission today.

28. A mission was carried out today against the synthetic oil plant at Merseburg, Germany. A solid undercast made PFF bombing necessary. Flak at the target was moderate and no enemy fighters were seen.

Nine ships of the 533rd took part, the pilots being: Lts Nelson, Carroll, Weaver, Masterson, O'Dell, Fenton, Usher, Pearce and Stevens.

Sgt DuBois and Cpl DePriest left for detached service at Greenham Common, Berks.; T/Sgt Meyers returned from furlough; the following left on detached service: Lts Palmer, Lane, Bonar, Mattison; T/Sgts Larkin, Zeiler; S/Sgts Clark, Newell, Perrone and Smiley.

Promoted from Cpl to Sgt were: Boyington, Dangerfield, Fontanet, Hoover, Keffer, Mizer, Peters, Taylor, Collins, Adair, DiMarco, Hiney, Johnson, Kennedy, Lemon, Lurrey and Nicholas; Sgts to S/Sgts: Delligatti, Elsted, Vaughn, Dyson and Harris; S/Sgt to T/Sgt: Black.

Re-classifications included: Sgt Martin from 553 to 958; M/Sgts Howard and LeFaive, T/Sgt Stapp from 752 to 750; Sgt Rantilla, Cpl Orgel and Pvt Pestana from 755 to 756; S/Sgt Stern, Cpl Lucker and Pfc Borys from 807 to 805; 1st Sgt Burns from 585 to 502; M/Sgt Bell, S/Sgts Black, Miller and Nelson from 663 to 911.

29. Cloudy weather and heavy smoke pot haze made PFF bombing technique necessary again today at Merseburg. Ten squadron bombers took part in the operation and all returned safely, the pilots being: Lts LaPierre, Pearce, Weaver, Stevens, Masterson, Huber, Pearson, Berkley, Fenton and LaCouture.

Sgt Paul E. Schenk and Pvt Allen J. Mayeaux joined the squadron today; T/Sgt James E. Black was transferred to Lincoln AAB, Nebraska; The group presidential citation came through today.

30. Bad weather prevented an operation today. Captains Clark and Tarr were transferred to the 12th RCD casual pool, Lancashire; WOJG Joseph Nutt left for detached service; 2nd Lt Gittleman returned from detached service at Station #112 Bovingdon.

31. An attack was carried out today on the BMW aero motor works at Allach, Germany. Clouds towering up to 27,000 ft hampered the operation, while solid undercast held all the way across Germany to the target, where several holes were found. A quick change from PFF to visual bombing technique was made and good results were achieved. Flak at the target was only moderate and no enemy fighters were encountered.

Participating today were: Lts Melomo, Nelson, Carroll, Rolin, LaCouture, McMullen, Pearce, Stevens and Person (who is missing in action).

MIA crew: 2nd Lts Jack B. Pearson, Joe L. Proctor, Alfred H. Guidotti, Sidney H. Gordon; Sgts Dewitt Fontanet, William E. Boyington, Harold M. Hoover, Frank S. Mizer and Charles G. Janis.

Sgt Erich E. Wegner was assigned today.

August 1944

533rd Bomb Sq.
381st Bomb Group (H)
WAR DIARY
Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

AUGUST 1944

1. Though our crews were briefed this morning at 06.00 hrs, chill mist and drizzling rain prevented take off until 11.00 hrs. During the late morning the mist cleared and the rain stopped.

Including ten of the 533rd, 37 ships of the 381st took off for an attack on the airfields at Muelan/Villaroche and Etampes/Mondesare, France. Flak was negligible and bombing results went unobserved. No enemy fighters were encountered and all the formation returned safely.

Today's 533rd pilots were: Lts Nelson, Huber, Masterson, Fenton, Berkley, O'Dell, Cochran, Lang, Usher and Carroll.

T/Sgt Walner was transferred to the 532nd; Pvts Bliss and Westendorf, both aerial gunners, were promoted to Sgts; S/Sgt Francis Miller left on a seven-day furlough; Sgt DuBois and Cpl DePriest returned from detached service; S/Sgt Holloway and Cpl Russell Miller were re-classified from 813 to 041; Pfc Marshall Miller from 521 to 590.

Two new crews were assigned: 2nd Lts Burton Kinney, Robert Beckman, Robert Holmes, Samuel Reisman; Sgts Allen Ulrich, Kamesuka Itokara, Sylvan Sciumbato, John Bormida, John Garden and Walter Godbey.

2nd Lt Ernest Germano, F/O Charles Carpenter, 2nd Lts Richard Tierney, Edward Spaniol; Sgts John King, William Shelley, Cloyde Goodey, Joseph Rapp, Alexander Donaldson and Cpl Harold Siders.

2. If the God of Mainz decided to make today the gloomiest in the ETO for the 381st, he succeeded. Low-hanging misty clouds and rain which alternately drizzled and poured prevent aerial activity today. Even the sparrows were grounded, sitting disconsolately in the shelter of haystacks.

As ever, work on the line continued!

3. Led by Lt Col Conway S. Hall, 37 aircraft of the 381st attacked the vast marshalling yards at Mulhouse, France, today. Nine ships from the 533rd took part.

A 30-second bomb run was carried out over 8/10th clouds by visual sighting. Effects of the bombing could not be discerned because of cloud conditions. The bombers encountered no flak or enemy fighters during the trip, except near Antwerp, Belgium, on the way back. The Luftwaffe were completely absent, although one 535th ship was lost through unexpected flak.

533rd pilots were: Lts Renick, Melomo, Huber, Masterson, Orcutt, Weaver, LaCouture, Cochran and Berkley.

The following 2nd Lts, were notified today of their promotion to 1st Lts: Huber, Fenton, Masterson, Pearce, Rolin and Weaver.

T/Sgt Phillips and S/Sgt Kircher left on 7-day furloughs.

4. Peenemunde, the German experimental station on the Baltic coast, where the robot bomb was developed and where it is believed research on the threatened V-2 weapon is being carried out, was rocked today by bombs from 37 aircraft of the 381st, nine 533rd taking part.

Station commander, Col Harry P. Leber, Jr., led the group flying in the PFF ship "Sunkist Special", with Capt Douglas L. Winter as his pilot. Major William G. Fullick, group bombardier, paced the formation through a 90-second bomb run, and bombing results are believed to be good. The formation met moderate but accurate flak, but all returned safely with no casualties.

Shortly after take-off this morning, a 532nd ship assigned to the deputy lead position, caught fire and crashed near Wethersfield, Essex Co., a few miles from the base. Most of the delayed action bomb load exploded, but there was only one casualty, the tail gunner, S/Sgt Harold F. Norris, whose body was found in the wreckage. All the others, including Capt Francis Hawkins, group photographic officer, parachuted to safety.

Today's pilots were: Renick, O'Dell, Cochran, LaPierre, Rolin, LaCouture, Fenton, Pearce and Orcutt.

S/Sgts Lewis Perrone and Smiley returned to duty from detached service.

5. With Capt George K. Sandman, 533rd commander, leading, nine ship from this squadron made up part of the 37-strong force of the 381st bombers which struck at underground oil stores at Nienburg, Germany. Bombing was good and crewmen at the rear of the formation reported seeing large clouds of black smoke arising from the target. No enemy fighters were seen and no flak encountered in the target area. Light flak was directed at the formation when it was coming in over the German coast, but all the ships returned safely.

Today's other pilots were: Lts Masterson, LaPierre, Huber, Rolin, Berkley, Weavers, Stevens and Melomo.

Two more crews joined the squadron today: 2nd Lts Edward Carr, Ellis Richard, Eugene Nelson, Hugh Treadwell; Sgts Albert Hines, Rudy Staszko, Cpls William Collins, Glen Lamp, Davis Phillips and Robert Whittaker.

2nd Lts Robert Gotthardt, Rodney Layton, Edgar Scoones, Robert Stephens; Cpl Donald Ellingham, Sgt Howard Norman, Cpls Edward Bailey, David Baird, Richard Bishop and Pfc Leonard Fahnestock.

The following officers and enlisted men left for detached service at the school at RAF Kirkham, Lancs., Lts Melomo, Lane, Palmer, Freeman; T/Sgt Gilbertson, S/Sgts Hill, Moorehead and Beneko.

The following combat men who have completed their tours of duty are released from the squadron and attached to the 1142nd M.P. Co. alert unit: T/Sgts Schwartz, Lawson, S/Sgts Arndt, Hepfinger, Kircher and Parker.

Other personnel movements include: 2nd Lt Richard, Cpls Bishop and Baird were assigned to the squadron; 1st Lt Botzong promoted to captain; seven officers and 16 EM left for a rest home today; T/Sgts Smith and Szabo, who have been on temporary duty at the 12th RCD returned to duty; S/Sgts Chin and Wilcox promoted to T/Sgt; Sgts Diedrich, Capshaw, Caglione and Dyer promoted to S/Sgt; Cpls Cook, Krainz, Mourning and Sharp promoted to Sgt; S/Sgts Dillon and Miller left for a 7-day furloughs; Sgt Day was placed on temporary duty with the 15th Air Force for 30 days training.

6. Ten B-17s of the 533rd were part of a force of 37 aircraft of the 381st which hit an aircraft plant at Brandenburg today. The group formation was led by Major Arthur F. Briggs, 534th commander.

The aircraft circled Berlin on the way to the target but no enemy ships were encountered throughout the trip. Some crewmen told of seeing dogfights between Allied and German fighters far away from the path of the bombers. Bombing, carried out by visual sighting, it is believed to be excellent. No ships from this squadron were lost.

7. Some 51 bombers of the 381st attacked two targets in France, today, oil storage dumps at St Florentine, under the command of 1st Lt George W. Reese, who acted a leader for the formation dispatched to St Florentin, where bombing was reported to be good. However that was surpassed by the bombing at Bourron-Malott, where hits were reported directly on the MPI.

Though directed at separate targets, the operation counted as one mission as both formations took off together and flew most of the way as one force, neither of whom saw any Luftwaffe.

The pilots were: Lts LaPierre, Bigham, Tolchinsky, Masterson, Schein, LaCouture, Weaver, Bonar and Fenton.

8. Giving direct approach support to British and Canadian troops deadlocked with the Germans at Caen, 37 bombers of the 381st plastered the enemy lines from an altitude of only 14,000 ft. Heavy, tracking flak rocked the formation for more than 20 minutes and caused a 535th ship to make a forced landing in France behind the Allied lines.

Nine bombers of the 533rd participated, flown by: Lts LaPierre, Schein, Stevens, Carroll, Bigham, McMullen, Pearce, Jones and Tolchinsky.

2nd Lts LaPierre, Bonar, Goodman, Greene, Kennedy, Schirmeyer and LaCouture were promoted to 1st Lt today; 1st Lt Calhoun was transferred to the 532nd; S/Sgts Miller and Emmons rejoined the squadron after release from the 1142nd M.P. Co. alert detachment.

9. The center of Saarbrücken, Germany, was bombed today by 27 ships of the 381st, as a target of opportunity after thickening weather prevented the formation from reaching its original target. They were led by Lt Col David E. Kunkel, group operations officer. Flak was heavy over the target and although all ships returned safely, battle damage was the worst in several weeks.

533rd pilots included: Lts Carroll, Rolin, Weaver, Bonar, LaCouture and Gardner.

Captain Ralston, squadron medical officer, left for the rest home; 2nd Lt Weeks was transferred to the 534th and Pfc Herman A. Brown transferred to the 858th BS, 492nd BG at Harrington.

Promotions: 2nd Lts Pane and Singer to 1st Lts; T/Sgt Stapp to M/Sgt; S/Sgt Larson to T/Sgt and Cpl Siders to Sgt.

10. Today was a stand down. Many of our ships are non-operational due to heavy flak damage, and this will give the sheet metal men chance to catch up.

T/Sgt James M. Phillips and S/Sgt Kircher left on a 7-day furlough; Cpls Gardner, Griffith and Greco were re-classified from 749 to 747; Capt Franek was transferred to the 12th RCD casual pool and Sgt Beradi was reduced to Pvt by Court Martial Order #18.

11. August began to resemble a summer month today. Clear, cloudless skies and hot sunshine made even the most reluctant skeptics admit that England is not always cold, damp and gloomy.

At 13.30 hrs 36 bombers of the 381st took off to blast German installations and fortifications at Brest, where the entrapped enemy garrison has been fiercely resisting American attempts to take the city. With perfect visibility bombardiers were able to sight their way accurately to the target and dropped a heavy concentration of bombs across the MPI. Flak was light at the target and no enemy fighters were encountered.

Nine 533rd ships took part, flown by: Lts LaPierre, Fenton, Pearce, Orcutt, Schein, Bigham, Stevens, Ogle and Steinwinter.

12. Despite continuation of yesterday's excellent weather no mission was planned.

Returning from rest homes to duty were: 1st Lt Pane and 2nd Lt Farley; T/Sgts Gordon, Shields and Nepper; S/Sgts Weir, Brady and Sgts Keaveney and Stein.

The following were promoted to Sgt today: Cpls Collins, Lamp, Phillips, Whittaker, Ellingham, Bailey, Bishop, Baird and Pfc Fahnestock; 1st Lt Kennedy and S/Sgt Leazenby were transferred to the 12th RCD casual pool.

These men returned from detached service with the 1142nd M.P. Co, alert detachment: T/Sgt Kane and S/Sgts Kircher, Heaton, O'Donnell and Keesling.

13. Trapped Germans in the Falaise Gap were being pounded incessantly today by Allied aircraft of all types. The 381st provided 36 ships, eight from the 533rd, took part in the action by blasting a major road junction near Rouen, France, with Capt George K. Sandman, 533rd commander, leading.

Flak at the target was rough today, but no enemy aircraft were seen. However an unlucky burst of flak killed 2nd Lt W.B. Haines, 535th navigator and wounded the same ship's engineer. This squadron suffered no casualties.

Capt Sandman reported good bombing results. He flew in the ship piloted by 1st Lt Nelson; other pilots were: Lts Pearce, Gardner, Tolchinsky, Bigham, Huber, Berkley and Windsor.

The following men, who have finished their tours of duty, were transferred to the 12th RCD casual pool: 1st Lt Weaver; T/Sgt Kane, S/Sgts Keesling, Miller, O'Donnell, Heaton and Kircher.

S/Sgt Lester D. Stone, Sgt Harry Orser, Cpl Albert S. Enger and Pfc Gerald Punches joined the squadron today.

Two new crews were assigned today, both minus navigator and bombardier: 2nd Lts Benjamin H. Long, Howard J. Anderson; S/Sgts Clifford T. Owens, Oscar G. Knowles, Sgts Charles P. Engle, Joseph R. Logalbo, Cpls Ward A. Freeman and Frank N. Williams.

2nd Lts Robert J. Roush, Frederick L. Crouse; T/Sgts Irving Schlom, Philip H. Brown, Sgts Arthur P. Hafner, Joseph W. Demski, Richard E. Davis and Charles J. Banta.

14. The 381st put up 37 Fortresses today to bomb the Metz/Frescaty airfield in France. The formation was led by Lt Col Charles L. Halsey 535th commander. Visibility at the target was perfect, bombardiers being able to discern the target from 20 miles away, and they dropped their explosives in a tightly concentrated pattern across landing strips and hangars.

There was no flak at the target and no enemy aircraft around. Nine bombers from the 533rd took part, flown by: Lts Carroll, Steinwinter, Orcutt, LaCouture, Schein, Windsor, Huber, Rolin and Ogle.

Captain John J. Tutsock, adjutant of the 533rd since Pyote training days, was transferred today to Group HQ, where he will serve as assistant S-4 officer. 1st Lt Martin Healey, Jr., was appointed to succeed him as 533rd adjutant. Lt Healey has been serving as an intelligent officer at Group HQ.

2nd Lt Stoltz was sent to the radio navigation Gee school at Station #112 Bovingdon.

S/Sgt Bennett and Sgt Alexander returned to duty from training at RAF Kirkham; six EM and four officers left for rest home.

15. Thirty-seven bombers of the 381st continued their hot pace for the month today by pasting the Ostheim airdrome just south of Cologne in the Ruhr Valley. Heavy flak pounded the formation throughout the bombing run and battle damage was severe. The group was led by Lt Col Conway S. Hall, Group Air Executive.

Visibility was good and Col Hall reported "excellent" bombing. The target had been hit by two wings before our ships arrived. No enemy fighters were seen throughout the operation and our fighter escort was on an area basis.

Nine 533rd ships took part, flown by: Lts Fenton, O'Dell, Tolchinsky, Carroll, Bonar, Gardner, LaCouture, Bigham and Huber.

Promotions: 2nd Lts Cochran, Rekos and Berkley to 1st Lt; S/Sgts Bentley, Bowman, Rump and Nicholas to T/Sgt; Sgts Harper, Weems, Esquada, Keaveney and Zajac to S/Sgt.

S/Sgt Dillon was transferred the 12th RCD casual pool.

16. Eight bombers from the 533rd were part of the force of 36 of the 381st which struck an assembly plant at Halle, Germany, today. The weather was exceptionally clear at the target and the bombers carried out an "Excellent" bombing run, reported by Lt Col John E. Fitzgerald, Jr., 532nd commander, who led the group.

Our formation suffered no enemy fighter attacks and flak at the target was moderate. However, about 20 FW190's swept down on the combat wing behind our's as we approached the target, knocking down four or five ships before our own fighters drove them off. Col Fitzgerald reported seeing eight targets in Germany hard hit and smoking from separate attacks carried out by the Eighth Air Force today. All our bombers returned safely.

533rd pilots were: McMullen, Orcutt, Steinwinter, Schein, Ogle, Rolin, Masterson and Fenton.

1st Lt W.E. Usher was transferred today to the 482nd BG Bassingbourn; and 1st Lt Lee A. Nelson to the 12th RCD casual pool.

The following combat men, their tours completed were temporarily assigned to the 1142nd MP Co. alert detachment: T/Sgt Moore, S/Sgts Lueck, McGuffin and Valente; S/Sgt Hepfinger and Arndt returned from detachment at the same unit.

17. Foul weather settled over Ridgewell again today, forcing a stand down. Cpl Albert S. Enger was transferred to 1st Bomb Division HQ; 2nd Lt Gardner left for rest home.

18. Weather continued to prevent operations. The sky is grey and overcast, with high winds and intermittent rain. Capt Ralston, squadron medical officer returned to duty today from the rest home; Pvt McMullen entered the klink again today at 08.00 hrs.

19. Stand down again today as the weather refuses to co-operate. It is getting to be a habit! Four officers and six combat EM left for rest home.

20. Instead of smiling skies we continue to have dripping clouds. If we consider the English lovers of the fireside, here's the reason why! Our planes are again landlocked. Pfc James Wentworth was promoted Cpl.

21. Brother, we've had it! The fins on our planes out on the line are really beginning to resemble fish now, with this continual rain. No end of it is in sight yet and no operations.

Capt George K. Sandman promoted to Major; 2nd Lt McMullen to 1st Lt; S/Sgt Maupi and Cpl Frazee re-classified from 862 to 754; T/Sgt Moon transferred to 12th RCD casual pool; Cpl Wentworth to 8th Composite Command HQ, at Station #113 Cheddington; Sgts King and Saporito transferred to 86th BS.

S/Sgt Julius Stern left on detached service for London today to participate in a French language broadcast. He lived in France for many years; Pfc Maxwell returned to duty from detached service at Station #572, Melchbourne Park, Beds., five officers and eight EM left for the rest home.

22. Weather continues to prevent operations. Today, however, the clouds broke open several times and we saw a little sunshine. Maybe tomorrow we'll be ready for ops again.

The following men were released from 1142nd MP Co. alert detachment to duty: T/Sgts Moore, Lawson and Schwartz; S/Sgts Lueck, McGuffin, Valente, Parker, Trotti and Sgt Barnes; T/Sgt McMullen and S/Sgt McGuffin left on 7-day furloughs.

24. Breaking the long occupational lull, Major George K. Sandman, 533rd commander, led 37 ships of the 381st to attack and armaments factory near Weimar, Germany. The factory designated as the target is believed to be producing components of the Nazi V-2 rocket bomb. Weather was poor over England but clear most of the way in over the continent, Major Sandman reported.

In spite of this, bombardiers were able to sight visually and dropped a tight pattern of bombs on the objective. Flak was meagre, but one gunner was slightly wounded.

Pilots for the nine 533rd ships were: Lts Nelson, with Capt Sandman, LaCouture, Bonar, Berkley, Cochran, O'Dell, Gotthardt, Orcutt and Masterson.

S/Sgt Joseph J. White was reduced to Pvt.

25. A Focke-Wulf assembly plant at Neubrandenberg, Germany, was the target of a formation consisting of 37 aircraft of the 381st dispatched today, taking off at 13.30 hrs. Neubrandenberg is north of Berlin near Anklam, and the target itself is situated at the edge of a wood, giving it effective concealment from aerial observation.

The group was led by Capt Douglas L. Winters, who reported flak was meagre and no enemy aircraft were encountered. Bombardiers believed our pattern was not concentrated on the MPI, and results termed as "Fair".

This squadron put up ten aircraft, the pilots being: Lts Masterson, Gotthardt, Pearce, Rolin, Kinney, Tolchinsky, Gills, Cochran, Berkley and Ogle.

S/Sgt Stern returned to duty from detached service in London; Pvt Cox is listed as AWOL.

26. Heavy ground mist delayed take off today until 09.00 hrs, when the 37 aircraft of the 381st took part in a strong Eighth Air Force attack on Gelsenkirchen, in the Ruhr Valley. Flak, as usual in this section, was heavy, but the group came through without losses. Despite broken clouds, visual bombing was accomplished. The lead bombardier dropped his explosives on the smoke rising from the bombing done by wings ahead. No enemy fighters were seen.

Nine aircraft from the 533rd participated, the pilots being: Lts Berkley, Gardner, Windsor, Germano, Orcutt, Bonar, O'Dell, LaCouture and Fenton.

A new combat crew was assigned today: 2nd Lts Henry B. Riza, Albert D. Miller, Harvey G. McLaughlin, James F. Barrett; Sgts Paul H. Williams, Chester J. Wolski, Cpls Joseph J. Charkowski, William C. Sprouse, Myers J. Barker and Pvt Lydell A. Hayes.

Re-classifications include: Pvt Harris from 611 to 590; Pvts Garrity and Huber from 748 to 747; Pvt White from 612 to 911; Pvt Laveen from 612 to 070.

Pvt Cox returned to duty from AWOL.

27. This morning 37 ships of the 381st took off to bomb factory targets in Berlin, with Lt Col John E. Fitzgerald, Jr., 532nd commander, leading the formation. Bad weather forced the formation to turn back short of Berlin and seek a target of opportunity. Emden was chosen as the target and bombs were dropped by instruments. Flak at the target was unusually heavy and caused major battle damage to some of the group's ships. One ship returned to base with one man killed and four wounded. No enemy fighters were encountered.

Pilots for the nine 533rd ships that took part were: Lts Masterson, Jones, Pearce, Gills, Cochran, Tolchinsky, O'Dell, Gotthardt and Gardner.

Today 2nd Lts Asay, Gittleman, Gardner, Jones, Orcutt and Steinwinter were promoted to 1st Lt; Sgt Joseph McCullough joined the squadron today; Sgt Deaton was re-classified from 612 to 938.

28. Sluggish grey clouds and steady rain prevented any operation today. T/Sgt Szabo and S/Sgt Jones were transferred to the 12th RCD casual pool; 2nd Lt Tolchinsky was promoted to 1st Lt.

29. It is raining again today and the sky filled with low-hanging clouds. An operational mission had been expected today because of playing Taps last night over the tannoy, almost a sure sign that something is being planned for morning. (No mission planned however!)

W/O Joseph Nutt reported to duty today from detached service at RAF Kirkham; 1st Lt Sims and Sgt Day returned to duty today after 30 days training with the 15th Air Force; Capt William I. Carpenter, 2nd Lt John E. Marks and Pfc Manuel G. Loya were assigned this date.

Four officers and six EM left for rest home, from which 1st Lt Gardner has returned.

30. Early today, it appeared that the weather would prevent a mission again, in spite of the playing of Taps last night. No operational alert was called until 09.00 hrs. There were heavy grey clouds in the sky and drizzled intermittently until almost noon.

Briefing was held at 11.00 hrs and at 12.30 hrs a force of 37 bombers of the 381st took off under the leadership of Lt Col Conway S. Hall to bomb Kiel, Germany. The formation bombed through 10/10th undercast by means of instruments and results were unobserved. Flak at the target was moderate. One airman was slightly wounded in the forehead by a shell fragment. Main targets for the attack were along the harbor front - docks, warehouses, and U-boat assembly plants.

Among the reports: Working severed propeller and throttle control cables with his hands in the cramped nose compartment of "Fort Worth Gal", a 533rd ship, top turret gunner S/Sgt Nile E. Greathouse, became an unofficial "third pilot" on today's mission to Kiel.

During the bombing run over the German port city, "Forth Worth Gal" was struck by a vicious burst of flak which severed the throttle and prop control cables, frayed the aileron cables, and knocked out the oxygen system used by the pilot, navigator and engineer. The bomber fell out of formation and dropped 6,000 ft before the pilot, 1st Lt Mitchell A. Rolin, could pull it back to level flight.

Throttles gone, the pilot had no means of regulating speed until S/Sgt Greathouse left his turret and crawled into the nose beneath the co-pilot's seat to work the snapped cables with his hands. Coached by the pilot over the interphone, the top turret gunner handled the throttle controls perfectly and the bomber crawled back to England at 130 mph.

"To show you the job Greathouse did, though," Lt Rolin said later, "We still beat the rest of the formation home."

The following men were re-classified: T/Sgt Cathcart from 685 to 750; Sgt Martin from 958 to 685; Pvt Whittington from 870 to 901; Pfc Dean and Smith from 590 to 901 and Pvt Bilderbeck from 590 to 835.

31. Weather was fair today, with broken cumulus cloud, but no mission was carried out; Capt Botzong was transeferred to 381st HQ; Four officers and six EM returned to duty from rest home.

September 1944

533rd Bomb Sq.
381st Bomb Group (H)
WAR DIARY
Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

SEPTEMBER 1944

1. Ten Fortresses of the 533rd took off this morning to attack the chemical works at Ludwigshafen, but they were recalled by the Division air commander because of poor weather when reaching France.

A new combat crew joined the squadron today: 2nd Lts Joseph F. Nolan, Donald F. Urban, John A. Conklin, Arthur S. Carter; Cpls Robert S. Redmond, John Howard, George W. Whitesell, John A. Hoene, Joseph F. Phelan and Claudie H. Wyatt.

Leaving for the Furzedown House, Station #563, Worcs., rest home today were: 1st Lts LaPierre, Gittleman, Robinson and Jones; S/Sgt McCool and Sgt Imhof left for Keythorpe Hall, Station #566, Leics.

Thirty EM left on 7-day furloughs; All men of the station were warned today to observe the retreat ceremony.

2. Despite day-long drizzling rain, Bing Crosby and his troupe of entertainers staged a two hour show this afternoon, in Hangar #1, attracting thousands of American and Allied servicemen and civilians. The show was the first of a program of events tying in with the ARC Aeroclub's anniversary and the "home stretch" in the Victory Squadron War Bond Drive.

Tonight a mammoth dance will be staged in a hangar at Great Yeldham, at the back of the railroad station, where two bands will offer continuous music for dancing. By popular vote, a "beauty queen" will be chosen from among British servicewomen attending the dance. The winner will christen a new Flying Fortress called "Smashing Time" on Sunday afternoon at a ceremony on the line. The name used for the christening was submitted by S/Sgt George A. Ranger, of the 533rd, who won himself a 48 hr pass for his efforts.

The Eighth Air Force war bond drive came to an end today. By a last minute spurt, the 533rd led all other 381st squadrons in bond purchases. They bought \$32,875 worth of bonds, more than \$10,000 above the established goal of \$22,000.

3. Ten bombers of the 533rd took part in an attack on the synthetic oil refineries at Ludwigshafen today. The target was covered in 10/10th cloud and crewmen were unable to observe results of their bombing. Moderate but accurate flak was encountered in the target area, but there was no enemy fighter opposition. All ships returned home safely.

The Fortress "Smashing Time" was christened this afternoon on the line by blond, beautiful Pvt Cynthia Burville, of the A.T.S., who was chosen as beauty queen at last night's dance at Great Yeldham.

1st Lt Cowan was promoted to captain and 2nd Lt Schein to 1st Lt.

4. Non operational. No change in squadron status was noted in the morning reports.

5. Announcement of the promotion of the following 533rd officers from 2nd to 1st Lt was made in the Daily Bulletin today: William S. Bigham Jr., Eugene P. Weisser, Morton Yolofsky, Howard H. Kronick and Dale P. Windsor.

There was no mission today and the usual garrison duties were carried out.

6. Two missions planned for today were scrubbed. The first one called was an attack on Genshagen, near Berlin, the other was to have been Bremen.

Pvt Marcos Ortiz, 7th Station Complement Squadron was found guilty at a General Court Martial of an attempt to stab Pfc Paul J. Simmons, 533rd. Ortiz was dishonorably discharged and sentenced to two years hard labor.

The following Sgts were promoted to S/Sgt: Bassett, Berkowitz, Grim, Groft, Gildermeister, Imhof, Matthews, Miller, Myers, Staubitz and Wiggins.

Seven officers and 79 EM were transferred to the 8th AFRD, Station #594, Jefferson Hall, Staffordshire; one officer and one EM left on 7-day furloughs.

7. Non-operational. The following officers and EM were assigned today: 2nd Lts Gordon Johnson, Gaetano DeVito, William Pettitt, Thomas Schilling, Miles Baldwin; S/Sgts Walter Chas, Jack Poole, William Brown, Jack Callan; Sgts Jack Scott, Adolph Butler, V. Gatzeneir, Jack House; Cpls Thomas Schmidt, Joseph Morin, John Patrick and Paul Schmidt.

8. Nine 533rd ships took part in an attack on Ludwigshafen today, but again results went unobserved because of heavy cloud over the target. Flak was moderate to intense, but no enemy aircraft were encountered.

Sgt Norman left for rest home at Walhampton House, Station #558, Hants.; 1st Lts Masterson, Bigham and Kronick left for rest home at Moulsoford Manor, Station #511, Berks.; thirty EM returned to the station after completing furloughs.

9. Thirteen 533rd ships took part in an attack today on targets at Baden-Baden, however 10/10th cloud cover made observation of bombing impossible. Again our ships met no opposition, but flak was reported as moderate. One 533rd enlisted man, Sgt Robert J. Sharp was seriously wounded.

1st Lts Renick and Nelson were promoted captain; S/Sgts Imhof and McCool returned to duty from rest home.

10. Today six ships from this squadron took part in attack on Gaggenau, Germany. Bombing results were reported as excellent. Flak was meagre and no enemy aircraft were encountered, however one of our aircraft is missing in action, 44-6095, flown by Lt Germano.

MIA crew: 2nd Lts Ernest Germano, James M. Grey, Edward Spaniol, Richard Tierney; Sgt Harry Siders, S/Sgts William Shelley, John S. Diedrich, Sgts Cloyde R. Goody and Alexander Donaldson.

Promotions include: S/Sgt McKeone to T/Sgt; Sgts to S/Sgts: Coats, Sharp and Pospisill. Returning from the rest home are: 1st Lts Gittleman, LaPierre and Jones, while the following NCOs made the opposite trip: S/Sgts Conklin, Greathouse and Kirkpatrick.

Pvt Halbach to attend packing and crating school at Station #547 Abbots Ripton; T/Sgt William J. Yanek, formerly missing in action, was transferred today to Mitchell Field, NY.

11. Ten 533rd aircraft participated in an attack on oil storage depots at Merseburg today. Combat crewmen reported observing bomb burst clusters in the target area. Flak was moderate and fairly accurate but no enemy fighters encountered.

Pfc Pekala was today transferred to the 881st Chemical Company on the base, in exchange for Pfc Raymond Dougan; also transferred was S/Sgt Mason to the 8th AFRD. The following were promoted to Sgts: Charkowski, Sprouse, Barker and Hayes.

12. The 533rd put nine bombers in the air for today's mission to Brux, Czechoslovakia. Bombing results were unobserved. No enemy fighters were encountered and flak was moderate, however Sgt Lydell A. Hayes was killed in action.

1st Lt Robinson returned from the rest home today; one officer and one EM returned from furlough, while 37 EM left on furlough.

13. Non-operational. No change.

14. A mission scheduled for Genshagen, Berlin, today was scrubbed. 1st Lt William L. Bonar was transferred to 12th RCD; The following were promoted Sgt: Hafner, Hoene, Howard, Phelan, Redmond, Whitesell and Wyatt.

15. Non-operational. S/Sgt William G. Stone and Sgt Frank W. Porter were reduced in rank to Pvt.

16. A mission scheduled for Eindhoven, Holland, was scrubbed. Sgts Barker and Charnowski, 533rd combat gunners seriously wounded in action, are undergoing treatment at the 217th General Hospital, near Paris.

Pfc Halbach returned from packing and crating school, at Station #547 Abbots Ripton.

17. Eleven 533rd bombers took part in an attack on enemy tank concentrations and gun emplacements near Eindhoven, Holland, today. The attack was in direct support of American and Allied troops advancing in this sector. Bombing results were reported to be excellent. The bombers met no flak or fighter opposition.

Promotions: S/Sgts Capshaw, Hammer and Tencich to T/Sgts; Sgts Brown, Ellingham, Ferrera, Goudekot, Graham, Hiney, Meek, Morgan, Norman, Parks, Stowe and Sullivan to S/Sgt.

18. Lt Col George G. Shackley, 533rd commander returned today after a rest furlough in the United States, thus relieving Major George K. Sandman, who stood in during the interim. Also returning to duty are Capt Watson and 1st Lt Stone.

Captain Bruning, who has been on detached service with the 1st Combat wing, is now transferred to 8th AFRD, along with Lts Carroll, Greene and Mattison; T/Sgts Nunn and Smith, and S/Sgts Conklin and Garl also went to the 8th AFRD.

19. Under the command of Lt Col David E. Kunkle, Jr., group operations officer, nine 533rd aircraft were part of the striking force which blasted the marshalling yards at Hamm, Germany, today. He flew in 44-8010, piloted by 1st Lt R.C. LaPierre. No enemy fighters were encountered and flak in the target area was moderate.

1st Lt Gilvary left on a 7-day furlough; 37 EM returned from furlough.

20. A mission to Kiel, German was cancelled. No change.

21. Ten bombers of the 533rd took part in an attack on Mainz, Germany today. Bombing results were unobserved. Flak in the target area was meagre to moderate, and no aircraft opposition encountered.

All organisations were ordered today to conduct a two hour per week course of practical training in military courtesy and discipline; 31 enlisted men left on a 7-day furlough.

22. Nine Fortresses of the 533rd took part in today's raid on Kassel, Germany. Bombing was by PFF and results were unobserved. Combat men reported meagre to moderate flak and total absence of fighter opposition.

The following 2nd Lts were promoted to 1st Lts: Gills, Kampfer, Lane, Ross and Stancampiano; Sgt Hardy left for detached service at Station #102 Alconbury; 1st Lt Stewart left on furlough.

23. Non-operational. Three EM left on furlough; 2nd Lt Wetzel transferred to 12th RCD casual pool.

24. Non-operational. T/Sgt Carl Staats and John E. Barnes left the squadron to return to the United States; Pvt Jones returned from furlough.

25. Marshalling yards at Frankfurt, Germany, were the target for nine bombers of the 533rd, when bombing was done by PFF and results unobserved while flak was moderate to intense, but no enemy fighters were encountered. However one of our ships, flown by Lt Gills in missing in action.

MIA crew: 1st Lt Oscar W. Gills, 2nd Lts Charles Prenatt, Donald K. Adams, William Rudisill; S/Sgts Paul E. Parks, Minor H. Stowe, Sgts Shelby W. Cook, Leo V. Krainz and Harold A. Mourning.

2nd Lt Baker was promoted to 1st Lt; other promotions: from Sgt to S/Sgt: Doremus, Guilfoyle, Hines, Norman and Staszko; 1st Lt John D. Cochran transferred to 27th Air Transport Group HQ; one enlisted man left on furlough and another returned.

26. Nine squadron Fortresses participated in today's attack on Osnabruck, Germany. Bombing results were reported as good. Flak in the target area was meagre to moderate and no enemy fighters were seen.

First Sgt Tom Burns left on 7-day furlough today, as did Sgt Nubilo; S/Sgt John T. Farr, formerly missing in action, was re-assigned to the squadron from HQ, UK base; All men of the squadron had their gas masks checked today at the gas chamber.

27. The 533rd dispatched ten bombers for an attack on Cologne, but because of heavy cloud bombing was unobserved. No air opposition was met while meagre of moderate flak was encountered in the target area.

A new crew was assigned today: 2nd Lts Samuel Goldwin, Alfred Reynolds, Robert H. Anderson, Stuart G. Newman; S/Sgt Marcus J. Tremble, Sgt Frank B. Clements, Cpls Jack L. Bressie, Ralph G. Engleman, Robert J. Gilbert and Robert J. Gonnering.

Sgt Keffer, seriously wounded in action, is under treatment at the 8th British Hospital, Brussels, Belgium; Major George K. Sandman left the station to return to the United States for a rest furlough; five EM and five officers left for rest home, while S/Sgt Harper return to duty from a rest home.

28. Nine 533rd bombers took part in an attack on Magdeburg, Germany, where bombing was accomplished by PFF and results unobserved. No fighter opposition was met and flak was terms meagre.

1st Lt Larson was transferred to the 634th BS today; 31 EM returned from furlough.

29. Non-operational. 2nd Lt Leon Wagner was transferred from the 7th Station Complement Squadron; three EM returned from furloughs.

30. Non-operational. Another new crew joined us: 2nd Lts William K. Privett, Robert F. Coates, Charles A. Tryka, D. P. Morgan; Cpls John H. Andrews, Miles G. Bruner, Guadelupe Duran, Keith D. Halstead, Herbert Lovenson and John H. Orrall.

Four officers and four EM transferred to the 70th RD, Station #594, Jefferson Hall, Staffordshire.

October 1944

533rd Bomb Sq.

381st Bomb Group (H)

WAR DIARY

Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

OCTOBER 1944

1. Non-operational. An unusually dark night brought more buzz-bombs over the field. One was shot down by a fighter and another exploded near Birdbrook, a couple of miles away. Men at the station were given a "blow-by-blow" account of the action over the tannoy, were told the position of the robots and the fact that a fighter was attacking one. The flash of mid-air explosion was observed fully two minutes before the sound reached here.

1st Lt Stewart returned to duty from leave.

2. Nine 533rd Bombs were scheduled to fly today in a mission to Kassel, Germany, but a collision on the line between the ships piloted by Lts Schein and Bigham left only seven operational. Briefed to attack an ordnance plant north of Kassel, "Mickey" operators found their primary covered by 10/10th cloud, so bombs were dropped on the centre of the city. Flak was meagre and no fighters seen.

The lead navigator got off course on the route out and the formation crossed heavily-defended sectors of the Ruhr, meeting stiff flak. All ships and crews, however, arrived home safely. Squadron pilots participating were: Lts Jones, McMullen, Berkley, Steinwinter, Baker, Huber and Nolan.

2nd Lt Adrian G. Lemon was assigned; W/O Joe Nutt and Sgt Smith left on furlough and Cpl Bracken returned; the following EM were transferred to the 381st BG: Cpl Denning and Pfc Atchison, Byrd and Miller.

3. Last night was clear and we had no buzz-bombs. Seems as if they are now being released only on the darkest nights to prevent destruction in the air by fighters or flak.

Today was a stand down. Rumors are circulating that upon completion of the 200th mission a beer party to end all such parties will be held. Nothing official in this yet, however.

S/Sgts Brown and Matthews left for the rest home; S/Sgt Farr, formerly MIA, was transferred to the 70th RD Casual Pool, Station #509 Stone, Staffs., as was 1st Lt Arnold G. Gittleman; 1st Lt Wegrzyn left on furlough, as did 46 EM, while 1st Sgt Burns and Sgt DeNubilo returned.

4. A mission to Cologne today was scrubbed.

5. Lt Col George G. Shackley, squadron commander, led the group in a successful attack on Cologne today without loss. The objective was covered with heavy clouds and bombing results were unobserved. Flak at the target was moderate and no enemy fighters were encountered.

Col Shackley flew in the PFF ship, 44-8024, with 1st Lt LaPierre as his pilot, the others being: Lts Berkley, Huber, Steinwinter, Orcutt, Long, Bigham and Nolan.

6. A last resort target at Stralsund was bombed by the 381st today after fighter weather-scouts reported the primary at Stettin was covered by 10/10th clouds. The group formation and the Air Division was led by Lt Col Leber, 381st CO, who flew on a 535th PFF ship.

Bombs were dropped on a bridge near a power station on the river. Flak was meagre and no air opposition encountered. Today's pilots were: Lts Pearce, Carpenter, Steinwinter, Roush, Kinney, McMullen, Baker, Orcutt, Bigham and Nolan.

The following Cpls were promoted to Sgt: Andrews, Duran, Lovenson, Bruner, Halstead and Orrall; Pfc Scanlon promoted to Cpl.

7. The 381st attacked Zwickau today. The combat wing was led by Lt Col David E. Kunkle, Jr., group operations officer, who flew on the 532nd PFF ship 44-8010. No fighters were seen and flak at the target was meagre.

Today's pilots were: Lts Pearce, Jones, Huber, Long, Nolan, Bigham, Orcutt, Roush and Baker.

However it was later revealed that Lt Baker's ship was hit by a jet-propelled fighter and the TG S/Sgt Marion O. McIlman bailed out over enemy territory, but the badly damaged ship limped home. They duly arrived back just right for a rest home reservation previously arranged!

Assigned today were 1st Lt Purvis W. Runyan and 2nd Lt John C. Barron; S/Sgt Hardesty returned from DS at Station #102 Alconbury; Cpl Masseroll left for DS at Burtonwood Repair Depot, Warrington, Lancs.

8. A mission scheduled for Brux, Czechoslovakia today was scrubbed.

Tommy Trinder, England's most popular radio comedian, and a group of British stage actors and actresses gave a two hour show this afternoon on No. 2 hangar. In spite of bad weather, a large crowd of GI's and English civilians turned out to view the performance.

A buzz-bomb crashed in Little Yeldham last night, causing minor damage to the village church. The only casualty was a woman shock victim, although the concussion of the blast rocked the buildings on the field.

2nd Lt Stevens and Sgt Drumm left for DS at Station #102 Alconbury; promotions including 1st Lt Robinson to captain; 2nd Lts to 1st Lts were: Taxel, Gotthardt and Wieloszynski.

9. Schweinfurt was the target today, but apparently the important German city is not as well defended as it was last year. PFF bombing through solid undercast was carried out and flak at the target was meagre. No enemy fighters were seen but the biggest obstacle to overcome by our bombers was the dirty weather, however all returned home safely.

Our pilots were: Jones, Kinney, Gotthardt, Huber, Roush, Winsor, Carr, Gardner and Long.

Though today's was the group's 200th mission, official words now says that no celebration of the event will be held to include a beer brawl. Such celebrations at other bases raised too much hell in general and Division has banned the one planned for Ridgewell. Dances will be held, however, at the Yeldham hangar and the Officers Club.

W/O Joe Nutt returned from furlough, as did Sgt Smith.

10. The mission to Bremen was scrubbed in spite of the fact that today is one of the clearest we've had this fall.

Four officers and 11 EM left for rest home, two EM on furlough while 46 EM returned to duty. Cpl Roger W. Martin was transferred to 2912th DTC, in confinement.

11. Today is a stand down. No change in squadron was entered on morning report.

12. The mission to Cologne was scrubbed. Two more buzz-bombs passed over the field last night, but neither crashed near the base.

Mr Maury Maverick, former Mayor of San Antonio an ex-congressman from Texas, visited the base today. He is now vice-president of the War Production Board. During his stay here, he christened a new Fortress, "The Alamo", in honor of the famous Texas citadel. He spoke this evening to officers and enlisted men at the Aeroclub.

1st Lt LaPierre was promoted to captain; 24 EM left on furlough.

13. Heavy fog this morning forced the scrubbing of a mission to Cologne. No change in the squadron was entered in the morning reports.

14. The much-scrubbed mission to Cologne was carried out today at last. Lt Col George G. Shackley, squadron commander led the formation and a five-group task force over the target, the city's marshalling yards. PFF bombing through 9/10th clouds was carried out and results were unobserved. Flak in the target area was from moderate to heavy, and no enemy aircraft were seen, and no ships were lost.

S/Sgts Harold Rainey and William L. Spier were transferred to the Zone of the Interior; S/Sgt Stabitz returned to duty from rest home; Sgt Drumm returned to duty from DS at Station #102 Alconbury.

15. Cologne was bombed again today, with the Forts in greater strength than yesterday. PFF bombing technique was employed again today, with unobserved results. Flak was moderate to heavy but no enemy fighters seen.

The ten 533rd ships taking part were flown by: Lts Gotthardt, Nolan, Roush, Orcutt, Bigham, Hollendorfer, Steinwinter, Johnson, McMullen and Winsor. Lt Jones flew the squadron weather ship, No 043.

No change was entered in the morning reports.

16. Fog and rain prevent any operation today. The following officers and EM were transferred to the 70th RD casual pool: 1st Lt N. P. Rekos, T/Sgts M. J. Walters, J. C. Vaughn and S/Sgt E. L Elstad; other scheduled to leave for the 70th RD are: 1st Lt G. H. Goodman, T.Sgt W. S. Gordon, S/Sgt F.W Johnson.

17. Fortresses struck at Cologne again today. The 381st formation was led by Major Isaac Taylor, 535th commander. Bombing was unobserved, flak moderate and no fighters seen, but all ships returned safely, the pilots being: LaCouture, Steinwinter, Nolan, Carr, Kinney, Hollendorfer, Bigham, Riza and Tolchinsky.

No change in squadron according to morning reports.

18. Heavy rain last night, followed by mist and overcast today, forced the scrubbing of a mission to Kassel.

Four combat officers and seven EM returned to duty from the rest home; S/Sgts Grim and Berkowitz were promoted to T/Sgts; the following Sgts were upgraded to S/Sgts: Deaton, Engle, Hrehocik, Logalbo, Redmond and Wyatt; Capt Henry Bonneau left for DS, at Audley St, London; Pvt Joseph J. White was re-classified and transferred to the Zone of the Interior.

19. Nine 533rd Fortresses took part in an attack on Mannheim today. Bombing was by PFF, flak light and no fighters encountered, so all ships returned safely. They were flown by: Lts Jones, Rolin, Steinwinter, Long, Bigham, Johnson, Winsor, Roush and Hollendorfer.

28 EM returned to duty from furlough; Cpl Messeroll returned to duty from DS at Burtonwood Repair Depot, Warrington, Lancs.; Sgt Ed Nelson and Pvt Panchez left for DS at Station #102 Alconbury; Capt Bonneau returned to duty from DS in London.

20. It was a stand down today. 1st Lt Martin Healey, squadron executive officer, was detailed to verify accounts of the station finance officer; the following S/Sgts were promoted to T/Sgts: Hiney, Tyler, Guilfoyle, Norman and Ulrich; Sgt Williams promoted to S/Sgt.

21. Non-operational again. The base 200th mission dance was held tonight in Yeldham hangar. Music, food and beer were good, but the supply of women fell well short of demand. The officers' 200th mission dance will be held tomorrow night at the Officers Club.

22. Non-operational. No change.

23. Non-operational. The following combat men were transferred to the 70th RD: Capts R. G. LaPierre, George H. Robinson; 1st Lts D. P. McMullen, D. J. Gardner, Sgt C. A. Polito.

24. The mission planned for Ludwigshafen was scrubbed. Four combat officers and five enlisted men left for rest home; 20 EM left on furlough; 2nd Lt Robert E. Bryson assigned this squadron from 532nd.

25. The 533rd put up nine bombers in the air for today's attack on Hamburg, but one borrowed from the 532nd, which carried Lt Col George G. Shackley, 533rd commander and formation leader. Bombing was carried out by PFF technique and results were unobserved. Heavy flak met the ships on bombs away, but no enemy fighters were seen.

Today's pilots were: Lts Watson, Nolan, Carr, Rolin, Kinney, Long, Tolchinsky, Roush and Baker.

Three EM and one officer returned from rest home.

26. Ten 533rd bombers flew on an uneventful mission to Bielefeld, flown by: Lts Orcutt, Tolchinsky, Johnson, Winsor, Rolin, Riza, Hollendorfer, Kinney, Nolan and Bigham.

27. The mission to Mannheim was scrubbed after briefing because of bad weather. Four combat officers and five EM left for rest home; 2nd Lt Long promoted to 1st Lt; 1st Lt Stone left for DS at Grosvenor Sq, London.

A new crew joined the squadron today: 2nd Lts Kenneth R. Schmalz, Archie E. Nichols, Jerry Pasek; T/Sgt Lawrence Levington, Cpls George F. Conery, Francis Bergemeister, Gerald R. Schmitt, Harlan C. Van Over and Joseph P. Welsh.

28. Commander of the 535th, Major Isaac Taylor led the group today on a visual attack on the marshalling yards at Munster, during which flak knocked out equipment on the "Mickey" ship, and visual bombing through heavy, unbroken cloud was carried out.

The 533rd put up nine ships, one borrowed from the 532nd . Flak was moderate in the target area, but accurate, nevertheless all ships returned safely. Our pilots were: Lts Carr, Long, Riza, Roush, Gotthardt, Bigham, Baker, Jones and Johnson.

1st Lt Kronick was transferred to 70th RD; Capt Sayer left for DS at RAF Kirkham, Lancs., Cpls Morin and Schnitt were promoted to Sgt and Sgt Keffer was reduced in grade to Pvt and removed from flying status; The following me returned from internment in Sweden: 2nd Lt Robert Karch, Sgts Walden Forke, Coral Highsmith, William Rich, John Molloy, Alfred Paoli; 1st Lt Frank O'Black returned to squadron after reported as missing in action.

29. Non-operational again today. Pvt McMullen set some sort of record today by having his name entered five times in morning report. T/Sgt Greathouse left for DS at Station #102 Alconbury; Sgt Freeman listed as seriously wounded in action and S/Sgt Doremus as slightly wounded.

30. Nine crews of the 533rd, one in a 534th ship, took part in today's attack on the marshalling yards at Hamm. Bombing was by PFF, flak at the target was moderate and no enemy fighters seen. Today's pilots were: Lts Johnson, Roush, LaCouture, Kinney, Baker, Berkley, Hollendorfer, Goldin and Winsor.

2nd Lt Harmer L. Jones was assigned and Sgt Kellner promoted S/Sgt.

31. A stand down order came through last night. Weather today is cold and rainy with little prospect of a break.

1st Lt Stone returned to duty from DS in London; 2nd Lt H. L. Delaplane and S/Sgt F. S. Gunderson and listed as missing in action; four officers and three EM left for rest home while 19 EM returned from furlough and one left on furlough; 1st Lt H. E. Asay and T/Sgt R. R. Moore transferred to 70th RD.

November 1944

533rd Bomb Sq.

381st Bomb Group (H)

WAR DIARY

Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

NOVEMBER 1944

1. The month began with a stand down for the group. Four combat officers and five EM left for rest home; 2nd Lts Day, Graebener and Stultz promoted to 1st Lts; other promotions: S/Sgts to T/Sgts: Ellingham, Groft, Hines, Itokazu, Knowles, Owens, Schlom and Staszko; Sgts to S/Sgts: Adair, Carden, Collins, Dangerfield, Freeman, Morin, Phillips and Whitaker; Cpl George Harris to Sgt; S/Sgt Kellner was re-classified from 901 to 505 and Cpl Hill from 060 to 405.

The following were released from the squadron and sent to 70th RD casual pool for return to the States: T/Sgts Alphonse T. Molis, Harry Hoop Jr., Louis S. Kalmar; S/Sgts Casimir G. Palermo, Andrew J. Amato, Walter E. Fields and John J. Panarese. All had completed their combat tours.

2. One of the greatest air duels between the Luftwaffe and the Eighth Air Force took place today, but the 381st were idle, having a stand down. News reports say that 208 German fighters were destroyed by American bomber gunners and fighters today. Main target of the bomber attack was a synthetic oil plant at Merseburg. The weather was clear and warm.

Sgt Nelson and Pfc PUNCHES returned to duty from DS at Station #102 Alconbury; Four combat officers and five EM returned from rest home and 23 ground EM left on furloughs.

3. Chill, drizzling rain this morning forced a scrub on a mission to Hamburg. No noteworthy events took place during the day.

4. Nine 533rd aircraft took part in a PFF attack on Hamburg today, with CO Col Harry P. Leber, Jr. flying in the lead ship of the Air Division, Capt Ewing S. Watson as his pilot. Flak at the target was heavy but inaccurate, while bombing results were unobserved due to 10/10th cloud. No opposition was encountered and all ships returned safely.

Our pilots today were: Lts Rolin, Tolchinsky, Nolan, Bigham, Hollendorfer, Johnson, Goldin and Long.

Two new crews were assigned today: 2nd Lts Erich F. Ruf, Carl J. Oppenheim, Stanley Stanowicz; T/Sgts Marvin J. Powell, George D. Quick, Lawrence S. Russolino, S/Sgts Roy E. Henthorn, Stanley H. Miskovsky and David B. Wallace.

2nd Lts Paul J. Illig, Harvey B. Riga; Sgt Gordon K. Garcia, Cpls Patrick M. Keenan, George Carmichael, Joseph J. Francis and John J. Roach Jr.

5. The 533rd put up ten bombers, one borrowed from the 532nd, for today's attack on the marshalling yards at Frankfurt. Briefed for a PFF job and visually; lead elements used the instrument process, but low and high squadrons bombed visually when large holes opened in the clouds just above the target. Crews reported large fires and thick clouds of smoke, flak at the target ranged from moderate to accurate, but no enemy aircraft seen.

Our pilots today were: Lts Orcutt, Roush, Bigham, Berkley, Winsor, Kinney, Steinwinter, Nelson, Long and Goldin.

F/O Noel R. Corder was assigned today; S/Sgt Nick Van Weiren was transferred to the 70th RD casual pool; Capt Smyeri returned to duty from DS at RAF Kirkham, and T/Sgt Beard left for DS at the same place.

6. Nine bombers and crews of the 533rd took part in an attack on oil refineries at Hamburg. Capt Jim Tyson, 535th operations officer, led the formation. Weather was excellent until the formation approached the target, when a 6/10th cumulus cloud cover built up.

The lead ship bombed PFF, as briefed, but the rest of the group bombed off the lead ship's wingman, a ship forced to salvo its bombs after being hit by flak. Results were unobserved. Flak at the target was moderate, but accurate and a 535th ship was knocked down. No enemy fighters were encountered while our bombers were protected by a powerful escort.

Today's pilots were: Lts Roush, Nelson, Nolan, Tolchinsky, Winsor, Long, Kinney, Rolin and Fenton.

T/Sgt Greathouse returned to duty from DS and Station #102 Alconbury, and Sgt Nicholas left for DS at the same place; S/Sgt Charles S. Tsouros was transferred to the 70th RD casual pool.

7. Today was non-operational for the group. 1st William R. Jones, having completed his tour of operations, was transferred to the 70th RD casual pool; S/Sgt Nelson returned to duty from DS at the Burtonwood Repair Depot.

8. There was no combat operation again today, but the group took part in a practice mission; F/O Griggs was commissioned a 2nd Lt.

9. Nine 533rd planes and crews took part in today's tactical bombing mission in support of General Patton's Third Army at Ouvre-Chesny/Nord, in France. Bombing was by PFF through an 8/10th undercast. The targets were enemy heavy gun

batteries and fortifications. Flak at the target was meagre and inaccurate and no enemy fighters seen. Allied fighter escort was very strong. We lent one of our ships to the 535th.

Pilots participating were: Lts Masterson, Bigham, Nolan, Gotthardt, Carr, Nelson, Roush, Long and Riza.

"Blythe Spirit", Noel Coward's smash London stage hit, was performed here twice today by the original cast. Weather was cold and windy, with occasional breaks in the clouds and spots of sunlight.

S/Sgt Doremus was promoted to T/Sgt; Sgts to S/Sgts: Bailey, Davis, Hafner, Nichols, Sprouse and Whitesell; Cpls to Sgts: Bergemeister, Conery, Schmidt, Walsh, Carmichael, Francis, Keenan and Roach.

Four officers and three EM returned to duty from the rest home; T/Sgt William P. Chin, who has completed his tour, was transferred to 70th RD casual pool; 1st Lt Pearce left for the rest home and 22 EM returned from furlough.

10. Col Leber led the group again today, aboard a 532nd ship with Capt Ewing Watson as his pilot. The mission was an PFF attack on Cologne carried out in the face of moderate flak. Bombing results were unobserved. Eight 533rd ships took part.

A 535th bombardier, 1st Lt Leroy Drummond was killed today, when a bomb fell on the nose of his ship from one above. It failed to explode but crushed the unfortunate airman.

Back at base Cpl John J. Corley, 533rd ground crew was killed early this morning when he was hit by a truck on the perimeter track. Corley was walking to chow when the accident took place.

Pilots participating were: Lts Steinwinter, Riza, Rolin, Johnson, Goldin, Gotthardt, Carr and Privett.

11. Weather was overcast this morning and no mission took place. Armistice Day was quietly observed here today, with the majority of me wearing imitation red poppies sold by British Legionaires.

Four combat officers and five EM returned to duty from the rest home; four other officers made the opposite trip; Sgts Marston and Paez left on furlough; Pfc's Diffendorfer and Davis were promoted to Cpl and Sgt Reich to S/Sgt.

12. No operation was carried out today. Pvt Richard Sims was assigned to the squadron.

13. Non-operational. The following men, having completed their tour of operations were transferred to the 70th RD casual pool: T/Sgts George Meyers, Charles W. Gilberts; S/Sgts George L. Cullum, Walter J. Doremus, Frank V. Wessell, Rafuede and Sgt Charnowski. Pfc Dougan left on furlough.

14. Non-operational. 2nd Lt Treadwell left for TD with the 15th Air Force at Foggia, in Italy. The following are promoted from 2nd Lt to 1st Lt: Carr, Evans, Hilmes, Hollendorfer, Kinney, Riseman, Roush and Scoones.

15. Non-operational again. Sgt Nichols returned to duty from DS at Station #120; Four combat officers and five EM left for rest home.

16. Ten squadron bombers took part in today's tactical mission in support of General Simpson's Ninth US Army. The formation bombed from seven to 20 miles ahead of our lines in the Duren-Eschweiler area, near Aachen. The explosives were dropped by PFF through a heavy undercast, flak was meagre and all ships came home safely with only slight battle damage.

Today's pilots were: Lts Privett, Orcutt, Nelson, Long, Steinwinter, Tolchinsky, Hollendorfer, Johnson, Goldin and Nolan.

Convicted by special court-martial, Pvt Gustavo D. McMullen was sentenced to be confined to hard labor here for six months and to forfeit \$25.33 a month for a like period.

Sgts Martson and Paez returned to duty from furlough; Sgt Louis A. Porter was assigned to the squadron; 1st Lt Fred Masterson, 1st Lt William Bigham and S/Sgt Donald C. Herman, having completed their tours of duty, were transferred to the 70th RD casual pool; Capt Henry Bonneau left for DS at Audley St, London.

17. Rain started falling about midnight last night and continued through to morning. A stand down was called for the group.

18. There was more rain this morning accompanied by another stand down order, then weather cleared somewhat during the afternoon.

The following were promoted to captain: 1st Lts John A. Fenton, Purvis W. Runyan; five officers and five EM returned to duty from the rest home; Capt Bonneau returned to duty from DC in London; Pfc Dougan went on furlough; M/Sgt Bell left for DS at RAF Kirkham.

19. Non-operational. Weather was clear at dawn, but by 17.00 hrs a cloud front had appeared and light rain fell.

T/Sgt Beard returned from DS at RAF Kirkham; T/Sgt William S. Rump, on completion of his tour, was transferred to 70th RD casual pool; Capt Bonneau left on furlough.

20. Non-operational. Weather was fair but the group remained on stand down. Cpl George Kovel was assigned to the squadron.

21. Nine crews and eight ships of this squadron took part in a PFF attack on the synthetic oil plants at Merseburg, the formation led by 535th CO, Major Ike Taylor.

Weather was good until the Forts were about 75 miles from the objective, then high cumulus clouds made formation flying difficult and the bomb run was considered satisfactory. Bombing results could not be observed, flak was moderate but accurate. One 535th gunner was slightly wounded.

Pilots for today were: Lts LaCouture, Winsor, Kinney, Rolin, Long, Baker, Roush, Nolan and Carr.

Cpl Gene Kelly returned to duty from furlough, as did 22 EM; Capt Purvis Runyan was transferred to 70th RD casual pool.

22. Non-operational again today. Call for donations of "C" type blood was announced today over the tannoy. Donors, all of them ground men, received do'nuts, coffee and whisky for one, in exchange for one pint of blood. Lt Healey, 533rd exec., and his clerks battled all day long getting men to hospital for blood donation. The result of their efforts was that the 533rd and 535th tied for top honors in number of donors.

Cpl Lazzareni left on furlough; four officers and five EM left for rest home.

23. Non-operational. No change.

24. T/Sgts Bentley and Bowman left for TD on the continent; three EM left on furlough; four officers and five EM returned to duty from rest home; some officers, formerly listed as MIA are assigned to the 70th RD casual pool, and attached to this squadron on TD not to exceed ten days.

25. The target for today was the I. G. Farbenindustrie oil plant at Merseburg, when nine 533rd ships and crews took part in the operation, under the command of Capt Ned Renick, 533rd operations officer. Bombing was by PFF and the final target was the secondary objective. Flak was heavy but inaccurate.

The pilots were: Lts Berkley, Carr, Roush, Privett, Kinney, Tolchinsky, Goldin, Riza and Johnson.

The following men are listed as missing in action. 1st Lt Dale P. Winsor, 2nd Lt William G. Pettitt, S/Sgts Daniel A. Adair, Everett P. Coats and Robert H. Harper; the following men formerly reported MIA, are returned to duty and attached to the 70th RD: 1st Lts Gene Weisser, Morton Yolofsky, 2nd Lts Francis Treanor, Herbert Higginbotham, S/Sgts Oliver Brown and

Wesley Rich; 13 ground EM left on furlough; 1st Lt John T. Wegrsyn transferred to 532nd ; 2nd Lt Elbert W. Hiller was assigned from Station #102 Alconbury; Pvt James Bilderbeck was re-classified from 835 to 405.

26. Fine, clear weather with plenty of sunshine gave promise of visual bombing today as the group took off for an attack on a railroad viaduct near Altenbecken, north-east of Paderborn on the northern border of the Ruhr Valley. Group C.O. Col Harry P. Leber, led the mission, with Capt Ewing S. Watson as his pilot.

According to Col Leber, weather over Germany was clear until the Fortresses neared the objective. Then heavy cloud covered the target, and Major William Fullick, group bombardier, was forced to resort to instruments. He described the results as "poor". Flak was meagre at the target.

Other pilots on this mission were: Lts Nelson, Coombs, Pearce, Goldin, Baker, Gotthardt, Steinwiner and Rolin.

The men reported as MIA yesterday returned to duty; T/Sgts Bentley and Bowman returned from TD on the continent.

27. Drizzling rain this morning was accompanied by a stand down order. Lt Riza and crew reported MIA two days ago and in London and will return to the station today.

Pvt James Bilderbeck was released from the squadron and transferred to 381st HQ; Sgt Bernard Fridberg, formerly MIA, is assigned to 70th RD and attached to this squadron for a period not to exceed ten days; S/Sgt Robert J. Sharp was transferred to the Army Hospital Plant, APO 204; the following men, formerly of this squadron, were released today: 1st Lts Arthur Bailey, 2nd Lts Francis J. Treanor, Herbert Higginbotham, Robert H. Irwin, S/Sgts Wesley Rich, Oliver Brown.

28. Non-operational again today. Two officers and three EM left for rest home; those men formerly interned in Sweden and returned recently are assigned to the 70th RD and attached to this squadron for a period not to exceed ten days, Capt Bonneau and S/Sgt Toole returned to duty from furlough.

29. Our group led the Air Division to a 10/10th PFF bombing job on the oil refineries at Misburg today. Ten crews took part, one flying a 535th ship. Flak for our formation was light. Bombing results could not be observed and no enemy fighters seen.

Participating were: Lts Orcutt, Steinwinter, Pearce, Baker, Privett, Johnson, Carr, Coombs, Nelson and Goldin.

30. Eight 533rd ships and nine crews took part on an oil storage depot at Zeitz, a small city near Merseburg. The lead was taken over by the 533rd with Capt John A. Fenton after Major Ike Taylor 535th commander was forced to turn back 15 minutes before reaching the target. Bombing was PFF and results were not observed. Flak was heavy, but all our ships returned safely. News reports say that 56 American bombers were lost to flak today.

The pilots were: Berkley, Nolan, Privett, Tolchinsky, Riza, Goldin, Pearce, Baker and Coombs.

Three officers and five EM left for rest home today; Sgt Reader left for TD at RAF Melksham, Wilts., S/Sgts Robert G. Hilt, Theodore H. Matthews, Bernard Fridberg and T/Sgt Philip Nichols left the squadron for the 70th RD casual pool; 2nd Lts Kowalski and Nelson were promoted to 1st Lts; W/O j.g. Joe Nutt, was commissioned 2nd Lt today.

December 1944

533rd Bomb Sq.
381st Bomb Group (H)

WAR DIARY
Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

DECEMBER 1944

1. A non-operational day. A Congressional War Investigation Committee, including the beautiful Connecticut Representative, Claire Booth Luce, toured the base today prior to leaving for France.

Four officers and five EM left for rest home; two EM left on furlough and 16 ground men returned.

2. No mission was scheduled for today. Sgt Nelson was re-classified from 682 to 852; Sgt Nicholas from 862 to 860; Pvt Porter from 612 to 911 and Pvt Keffer from 611 to 590. Three ground crew men left on furlough; S/Sgt French E. Lewis was transferred to the 47th Station Complement Squadron, Station #161.

3. No operation was scheduled for today. The cigarette famine, which has driven ground enlisted men here to smoking Woodbines, Players and Craven "A", will be eased tomorrow when sales begin in the P.X. Combat men will be allowed seven packs per week; all others, five packs.

Sgt James M. Garvey was sent to the 70th RD casual pool, Station #594, Jefferson Hall, Staffordshire.

4. Nine ships of the 533rd, under command of Capt Ned Renick, squadron operations officer, took part in today's attack on Soest. Bombs were dropped through 10/10th cloud cover on railway sidings. There was no flak and no enemy fighters seen. Flying weather for the mission was good.

Our pilots were: Lts LaCouture, Winsor, Coombs, Roush, Hollendorfer, Nolan, Orcutt, Long and Tolchinsky.

One of our ships #560, piloted by 2nd Lt J H. Nolan is believed to have landed in France. The rest of his crew are: 2nd Lts Donald F. Urban, John A. Conklin, A S. Carter; S/Sgts Charles H. Wyatt, R S. Redmond, J E. Whitesell, Sgts J Howard and J. F. Phelan.

Sales of cigarettes began today in the P.X. The following combat men, on TD with the 533rd, went sent the 70th RD for further orders: 1st Lt O'Black; 2nd Lt Karch; S/Sgts Forke, Highsmith, Rich, Molloy and Paoli; two ground EM left on furlough; 1st Lt Franklin L. Ross was transferred to 70th RD casual pool; 2nd Lt Stevens left for DS at the rest home.

5. No operation scheduled for today. Lt Nolan and his crew reported safe in France.

6. Weather was clear today until 14.00 hrs when columns of grey clouds began rolling in across the sky. There was a heavy frost last night and mist remained in low areas until almost noon.

No mission was scheduled so the group flew a practice mission.

Two new crews were assigned: 2nd Lts Robert Fawcett, Raymond Aron, Clarence Farr, Archie Bredeson; Sgts Marvin Elsberry, Edward Palmer, Edward Litoget, Erwin Salomon and Clarence Kessler.

2nd Lts Dale Sutherland, Alfred Kember, Milton Jakovec, Victor Milroy; Sgts John Thrush, Lloyd Shelton, Walter Ahl, Roland Kinzel and Robert Hinders.

Five combat EM returned to duty from rest home; Sgt Roy Minnick assigned; T/Sgts Warren T. Conklin and William M. Mills transferred to 70th RD casual pool; 1st Lt Martin L. Healey, 533rd executive officer was promoted to captain as was Dona Lacouture, one of the squadron lead pilots; other promotions include: S/Sgts Brown, Redmond, Callan and Wyatt to T/Sgt; Sgts Gatzmeier, Howard, Phelan and Scott to S/Sgt; two combat men left for DS.

7. This third anniversary of Pearl Harbor, and the weather was alternatively clear and overcast, thus a mission scheduled for today was scrubbed.

8. A stand down was received last night. Heavy frost covered the ground this morning and the sky was overcast. Light rain fell during the afternoon.

A general ground alert was sounded at the station at 14.15 hrs today. All station defence personnel, including the 533rd units, fell in with full equipment.

Three combat officers and five EM returned to duty from rest home, and one combat officer made the return trip; two ground EM returned from furlough while another left; Sgt Hender returned to duty from DS.

9. Nine bombers of the 533rd took part in today's attack on the marshalling yards in the Unterturkheim district of Stuttgart. Lt Col Harry P. Leber, Jr., the 381st commander led the formation, in a 533rd ship 44-8175, flown by Capt Ewing S. Watson.

The weather was bad from the German border to the target, but a last minute break in the clouds permitted a visual bomb run. One ball turret gunner reported a good concentration on the target; flak was heavy and six ships of the formation reported major battle damage. One 535th ship force landed in France.

Today's other pilots were: Lts Baker, Tolchinsky, Pearce, Kinney, Privett, Goldin, Roush and Riza.

M/Sgt Jesse Hyten, a ground crew chief, having not returned on time from pass, is believed to be one of the American soldiers killed when a V-Bomb struck a pub near Selfridge's Store, London. Sgt Broslawsky returned to duty from DS; four ground EM returned from furlough.

10. Light frost covered the ground this morning. Weather was clear, cold and windless. The scheduled mission was scrubbed at 09.00 hrs.

M/Sgt Jesse Hyten has been reported sick at the 150th Station Hospital, doing away with the rumor he was killed by a V-Bomb in London; so far the squadron has suffered no casualties from either V-1 or V-2; S/Sgt Philip H. Imhof was transferred from the squadron to the 70th RD.

11. Ten squadron bombers took part in today's attack on a railroadbridge spanning the river between Ludwigshafen and Mannheim. On take off at 06.30 hrs the weather was clear, damp and cold.

There were 1,600 heavy bombers over Germany today, the largest number to attack the Reich in one day. The majority attacking targets in the Ruhr Valley. The 381st formation found a 10/10th cloud cover at the target and bombing was carried out by instruments. Flak was meagre but accurate; no enemy fighters were seen, but a 532nd ship was lost in action.

Pilots for today were: Lts Steinwinter, Winsor, Baker, Kinney, Hollendorfer, Coombs, Goldin, Carr, Schmalz and Privett.

Pfs Steensrud left for DS at the 311th Signal Co., Station #103; 1st Lt Eugene P. Weisser was transferred to the 70th RD casual pool; Two ground EM returned from furlough.

12. For the group's 223rd mission, an attack was made on the synthetic oil plants at Merseburg. The original target was Ludwigshafen, but bad weather forced Capt Tyson, lead pilot, to order the attack on a secondary target.

Two 533rd ships, #059 piloted by Lt Ruf, and #986, piloted by Lt Orcutt had a minor collision as the formation approached the continent. Lt Ruf's rudder was sheared off, while damage to Lt Orcutt's is unknown. Both aircraft landed at Brussels, in Belgium.

Capt Tyson led the 37 ships on the mission, two aborting. Weather was clear over Europe until the primary was reached, when undercast formed at 10/10th cover. An excellent PFF bombing run was then carried out on Merseburg. Ceiling was down to 1,000 ft by the time the Forts dropped down from high altitude, but the formation held together in good shape and landing at the home field began around 16.45 hrs.

Participating were: Lts Fenton, Schmalz, Goldin, Illig, Riza, Ruff, Orcutt, Privett and Johnson.

Two combat officers and five EM left for rest home; one officer returned from same while two ground EM left on furlough.

13. A stand down was received late last night. Weather this morning was cold at misty, with intermittent rain squalls. Shortly before noon the heaviest fog of the season rolled over the base, and thickened to a "pea-souper" by nightfall. Due to weather conditions the Liberty Run for tonight was cancelled.

14. The first squadron casualty from V-Bombs was reported this morning: st Orrall a 533rd gunner, was moderately wounded. Another stand down today. Fog has cleared, but the sky in lead-colored and rain is threatened.

Two ground EM went on furlough; 2nd Lt Willis W. Griggs transferred to 70th RD casual pool; S/Sgt Kellner returned to duty from the Mine & Booby Trap School, and RAF West Kirby.

15. Weather was clear at dawn, but the sky was filled with grey clouds, when the 37 ships of the group took off under the leadership of Lt Col John E. Fitzgerald, Jr. The 533rd ship 44-8010, lead aircraft of the low squadron, piloted by Capt Ned Renick, aborted.

"Weather was bad most of the way," said Col Fitzgerald, "and 10/10th cover over the target caused us to choose the secondary, marshalling yards at Kassel. We bombed by instruments. Flak was meagre and inaccurate. We saw no enemy plans. Allied fighter escort was very powerful."

The following officers and EM were ordered on TD on the Continent: 1st Lts Graebener, Oppenheim, Orcutt, Ruff, Barron and Stanowicz; T/Sgts Berkowitz, Grim, Powell, Quick, Russolino; S/Sgts Henthorn, Johnson, Meek, Miskovsky, Sullivan, Wallace and Williams.

1st Lt Treadwell returned after DS with the 15th Air Force, Foggia, Italy; three ground EM left on furlough, and one returned; promotions included: Sgt to S/Sgt: Nicholas, Drum, Babin, Caldwell, Hunt and Joachim; Cpl to Sgt: Oviatt, Chamberlain, Trevisani. Short, Timm and Messeroll.

Captain Paul A. Smyer ordered to Laredo, Texas, for TD at the Flexible Gunnery School there; T/Sgt Niles Greathouse and S/Sgt Everett Coats transferred to 70th RD casual pool; Pfc Steensrud placed on DS at Station #103 for an indefinite period.

16. Bad news for ground crew men, the base cloaked in gloom today. No more furloughs will be granted at only three months intervals. Men must wait at least six months between furloughs in the future. This measure was reported necessary because of a shortage of ground men on the line.

Weather was warm today, with heavy moisture in the air, and rain began falling about noon. No combat operation scheduled.

The following EM were promoted from Cpl to Sgt: Kinzel, Litoget, Palmer, Salomon, Shelton and Thrash; one combat officer left for rest home.

17. No mission was scheduled for today, which has been warm, with low-hanging clouds. The following promotions were announced: S/Sgts to T/Sgts: Chas, meek, Poole, Hrehocik and Williams; Sgts to S/Sgts: Bressie, Bruner, Butler, Clements, Gilbert, Halstead, Hoene, House, Patrick, Schmidt and Schnidt; Cpls to Sgt: Ahl, Elsberry, Hinders and Kessler.

18. Marshalling yards at Cologne were the target for a formation of 37 bombers of the 381st, nine from the 533rd. Again the CO, Col Harry Leber led, with Capt Ewing S. Watson as his pilot.

The ships bombed from 31,000 ft, a PFF run over 10/10th cloud cover. Crewmen reported seeing only four bursts of flak and no enemy fighters. There were five aborts, our formation was the only one in the wing to hit the target.

Pilots taking part were: Lts Schmalz, Kinney, Illig, Long, Baker, Pearce, Ruf and Orcutt.

2nd Lts Beckham, Coombs, Greaves, Gstrein, Johnson, Layton, Marks, Nolan, Schilling, Stephens and Stevens were promoted 1st Lt; 1st Lt Dale P. Winsor was transferred to 70th RD casual pool.

19. Visibility was not over 25 yards this morning at dawn. Thick fog, hugging the ground, forced operations to scrub a mission.

Lt Hamory and a group of enlisted men, who were returning from London to catch the Liberty Run at Chelmsford, missed the trucks because the train was late in heavy fog and arrived at Chelmsford almost simultaneously with a V-2 rocket. The rocket demolished the Hoffman factory in the city. The 381st men, including several of the 533rd, rushed to the scene and spent the rest of the night helping victims of the disaster.

Four combat officers and five EM left for the rest home; Sgt Hofland left for DS at Station #111.

20. Pea soup this morning, with chilly rain. A scheduled mission was scrubbed about 08.00 hrs, after the crews had been awakened and fed.

Pfc Steensrud, on DS with the 8th Service Command, was ordered to report to the CO, 401st Signal Co., on the Continent for an indefinite period; 1st Lt Irving Taxel was transferred to the 70th RD casual pool; two ground EM returned from furlough.

21. Non-operational today. Weather was misty and chilly. A fine drizzle began about 07.00 hrs and lasted throughout the day. Six combat EM left for the rest home and two officers returned; S/Sgt Jack W. Norman was transferred to 70th RD casual pool; T/Sgt Waterhouse left for DS at Station #102 Alconbury; Capt Bonneau left on DS at London; Capts E. Murray and McCarthy, 1st Lt Wagner left on furlough and four EM returned.

Promotions included: 2nd Lts Bryson and Wagner to 1st Lt; Sgts Comery, Engelman, Schmidt, Duran and Lovenson to S/Sgt.

22. Non-operational. Fog closed in on the base again today. Ground visibility is limited to less than 50 yards.

The base Christmas party for children in the vicinity of the base was held this afternoon in the Red Cross Aeroclub. More than 350 children attended the party, which was a big success, despite the weather.

Sgt J.W. Demski, 533rd gunner, was tried by summary court-martial, sentenced to be restricted to the base for one month, reduced to private and forfeit \$15.00 of his pay for one month. Two ground EM left on furlough.

23. Two distant explosions about 07.05 and 07.10 hrs were followed at 08.00 hrs by a red alert and passage of a buzz-bomb from the northeast over the eastern edge of the base. A fighter was attacking to robot as it passed from sight.

Sgt Marston left on DS in London to take photographs of the wedding of S/Sgt George A. Ranger, 533rd operations clerk; 1st Lt Leyton left on DS in London to participate in a broadcast; Capt Bonneau returned from DS in London.

24. This was the first clear morning since the 18th. Col Harry P. Leber, Jr., 381st commander, led the entire First Division today in an attack on German supply lines at Ettinghausen and Kirch Gons. The Eighth Air Force carried out its greatest operation to date, putting 2,000 bombers in the air, escorted by 900 fighters; 13 bombers were supplied by the 533rd.

Weather for the mission was the best, VACU everywhere. Col Leber headed "A" Combat Wing, which an outstanding job on the landing ground at Ettinghausen, bombing visually. Only one bomb was seen to explode outside the tight pattern concentrated on the target.

"C" Combat Wing included one squadron from the 91st BG, the 533rd (High) and one squadron from the 398th BG. This wing attacked a similar landing field at Kirch Gons. Flak was moderate but inaccurate half an hour from the bomb run. There was no flak and no enemy fighter opposition encountered. One ship of the 381st aborted out of the 51 which took off.

Today's pilots were: Lts Fenton, Privett, Berkley, Goldin, Long, Kinney, Steinwinter, Schmalz, Carr, Ruf, Riza, Beckman and Leyton.

An unusual situation arose when the ships returned. Heavy fog had closed in tight over Nuthampstead, Bassingbourn, Polebrook and Grafton Underwood. Fog was so bad at Polebrook that trucks could not be sent here for their crews, which had not been back to base since the 18th - nearly a week. Some 74 "visitors" landed here without difficulty in addition to the 50 ships of the 381st. Planes were parked everywhere, wing-tip to wing-tip on the cross-runway in front of the tower and briefing block. This meant a heavy burden of extra work for almost all our ground crew personnel. The visiting crews had to be fed, transported to barracks, and their aircraft required morning pre-flight and loading in addition to our own.

1st Lt Robert W. Baker was transferred to 70th RD casual pool; Sgt Marston returned to duty from DS in London.

25. The fog-bank which was west of us last night moved early this morning. Heavy ground frost had whitened the fields and hills giving us a "phoney" White Christmas. The mission scheduled for today was scrubbed after our armament and ordnance men had loaded 149 ships. No rest for the weary! Now the poor guys have to unload all the ships again. For most of the rest of the ground personnel, Christmas is a day off.

Free beer for G.I.s at the theatre, the P.X. and the WAAF Site from 14.30 to 16.30 hrs. The officers' club is open this afternoon to top three graders. Capt Murray and Lt Wagner returned from furlough; Sgt Hofland returned from DS at Station #111.

26. Today is Boxing Day the Limeys tell us. It's also hangover day. Weather this morning was clear and cold, with the ground covered with thick frost. No mission was scheduled.

Planes which landed here Christmas Eve began taking off at 11.00 hrs, and the last was not airborne until more than an hour later. Sgt Nicholas left for DS at Station #102 Alconbury.

27. No operation was scheduled today, which is just as well, for heavy fog rooled in last night but cleared early this morning. Weather is very cold. Water in pipes and toilet bowls in latrines was frozen. Poor visibility cancelled the Liberty Run.

Capt Martin L. Healey, Jr., 533rd executive officer, was appointed safety officer; four combat officers and five EM returned from the rest home while one officer left for same; 1st Lt Morton Tolchinsky was transferred to the 70th RD casual pool; Pvt McCormick promoted to Pfc.

28. The sky was clear, but misty, and weather again very cold this morning. Ships took off at 09.45 hrs for an attack on Ludendorf bridge over the River Rhine at Remagen. Nine bombers of the 533rd were part of the 381st's 36 strong formation, which was led by Lt Col Arthur F. Briggs, 534th commander. Major William E. Fullick, group bombardier, carried out a G.H. bomb run over 10/10th clouds. There was no flak or fighters.

Our pilots were: Capt LaCouture, Lts Long, Privett, Pearce, Schmalz, Hales, Hollendorfer, Illig and Johnson.

Five ground EM returned from furloughs and one officer returned; four combat officers and five EM left for the rest home; Major Joseph Krieger, Jr., was assigned to the squadron today; T/Sgt Roy C. Capshaw was transferred to 70th RD casual pool.

29. Weather was cold and clear this morning. Mission was briefed at 05.35 hrs but scrubbed soon after.

Major George K. Sandman was transferred to the 532nd on return from the States; S/Sgt Robert P. Staubitz and T/Sgt Donald E. Kirkpatrick were transferred to the 70th RD casual pool; 2nd Lt Riza was promoted 1st Lt; one officer and one EM returned from the rest home.

30. Cloud front moved in about 22.00 hrs last night, obscuring a brilliant three-quarter moon. Dawn found the sky solid with low-hanging clouds. Light rain started falling at 08.15 hrs, time of take off. Bad weather persisted until noon.

This group put up 37 ships, nine supplied by the 533rd. The formation was led by Lt Col George G. Shackley, 533rd commander, who called it "a routine mission," with Capt Ewing S. Watson as his pilot. The weather was bad most of the way and the ships met a 10/10th cloud cover at the target, Bischofsheim. Bombing was by instruments. There was no flak or fighters, and all ships returned safely.

Other pilots participating were: Capt LaCouture, Lts Goldin, Hollendorfer, Orcutt, Nolan, Kinney, Nelson and Illig.

Capt John A. Fenton was transferred to the 70th RD casual pool.

31. Another "routine" mission for the group today, this time to Prum, Germany. A formation of 36 ships attacked the target, ten supplied by the 533rd. Lt Col Conway S. Hall was in the lead, the target bombed by instruments. There was no flak about and no enemy fighters encountered. This was mission 229 for the group and marked the ninth consecutive day that AAF heavies have been over Germany.

The pilots for today were: Lts Schmalz, Steinwinter, Beckman, Privett, Orcutt, Nelson, Layton, Carr, Kinney and Long.

Two dances were held on the base tonight, one for enlisted men at the Aeroclub, and one at the Officers' Club. The P.X. beer parlour stayed open until midnight.

January 1945

533rd Bomb Sq.

381st Bomb Group (H)

WAR DIARY

Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

JANUARY 1945

1. New Year's Day dawned clear and cold, and a mission was scheduled, the brief visual target being the aircraft plant at Magdeburg. The secondary PFF target was Kassel.

Nine ships of the 533rd took off in brilliant moonlight at 07.30 hrs for the operation, with Major Ike Taylor, 535th CO and formation leader of the 37 bombers. When the formation reached Magdeburg, they found the city covered with 10/10th clouds. The High and Low squadrons became separated from the lead over Magdeburg, and Capt Ned Renick, 533rd operations officer, assumed command for a PFF bombing attack on Kassel.

Major Taylor's squadron went on to Koblenz, where a visual bomb run was carried out. At Kassel the 533rd met intense, accurate flak and 1st Lt Peter Kowalski, bombardier, received a penetrating wound of the right leg.

All 533rd ships returned safely, although two ships from other squadrons were shot down. Battle damage to our aircraft was heavy.

The beginning of the New Year was observed quietly on the base. Turkey was served in the mess hall at noon.

2. Ten aircraft of the 533rd took part in a visual bombing of a railway junction at Gerolstein, Germany. The 532nd commander, Lt Col John E. Fitzgerald, Jr., was group leader for the mission with 37 aircraft participating. The weather was good for flying, and it was CAVU at the objective. No enemy planes were seen and flak was very meagre.

1st Lts Morton Yolofsky and Joseph J. Pearce left today for the 70th RD casual pool. Both had completed their tours of duty.

3. For the group's 232nd mission, a PFF attack on Cologne today, the squadron furnished seven out of the group's 37 aircraft. Capt Ewing S. Watson was to have been the leader, but he had to abort soon after take-off, and Capt Abraham of the 534th took over. All the ships returned home safely, landing in the rain.

Promotions were announced: 1st Lts Lundgren and Stone to captain; 2nd Lts Nelson and Treadwell to 1st Lt; F/O Carpenter to 2nd Lt. 1st Lt Robert D. Lane transferred to 70th RD casual pool, his tour over; S/Sgt Hecher left on 7-day furlough.

4. The weather was clear and cold today, but no mission scheduled.

The following promotions for enlisted men were: S/Sgts Bressie, Gatzemeier, Pospisill, Bruner, Halstead and Eble to T/Sgt; Sgts Andrews, Garcia, Francis, Orrall and Reash to S/Sgt.

S/Sgts George Wiggins and Richard L. Schneider left for 70th RD casual pool, both completed their tours; they were joined by T/Sgt James E. McKeene.

5. Heimbach, Germany, was the target for today, and ten bombers of the 533rd made up part of the 37-strong formation, led by Capt William E. Cronin, assistant group operations officer. One 533rd ship, piloted by Lt Smith, aborted.

The weather was clear over the continent to within four miles of the M.P.I. There was 10/10th cloud and bombing was done by instruments. There were no enemy fighters or flak.

Five officers and five EM men returned from a rest home; T/Sgt Bruce O. Bentley, who has completed his tour, left for 70th RD casual pool; F/O Corder returned to duty from DS at Station #102 Alconbury.

6. The 533rd furnished ten ships and crews for another attack on Cologne today. Col Leber led the 37 group aircraft on this mission. Weather at the target was bad, and the bomb run was carried out by instruments. The bombers met no opposition and flak was moderate, and all returned safely.

A V-2 rocket bomb explosion rocked the station at about 23.00 hrs. It was reported to have landed near Halstead (Looking up from my keyboard I can easily see where it came down in the field opposite, about 200 yards away - Dave Osborne, group historian/microfilm transcriber!). Shortly after the explosion, "Taps" was played over the Tannoy, indicating a stand-down for tomorrow.

The following officers and EM, their tours completed, were transferred to the 70th RD casual pool: 1st Lts Ray Wieleszynski, Otto W. Daye and S/Sgt Walter S. Miller. Sgts Kessler and Salomon left for DS at Station #113 Cheddington.

The following EM were promoted from Pvt to Pfc: Bell, Carter, Garrity, Glowacki, Goral, Hins, Jones, Ketterhagen, Kosier, Ladner, Mayeux, Perrielle, Postana, Plumlee, Silvious, Whittington and Zakal.

7. The sky was alternately clear and overcast today. At 15.00 hrs snow began falling. No mission was scheduled.

Major Joseph Krieger was appointed squadron operations officer today; Capt Dona J. LaCouture, 1st Lt Anthony Stancampiano and S/Sgt Richard Sullivan left today for the 70th RD casual pool, all having completed their tours of duty.

8. Major George K. Sandman was group leader today for a force of 37 bombers on an attack on a bridge at Alzey, Germany. Eight ships of the 533rd took part in the mission. The formation found a high 10/10th undercast all the way, and bombing was

carried out by instruments. Results were unobserved. There was no flak or enemy fighters around. All our bombers came back safely, although two landed away from base.

The following combat EM, tours completed, left today for the 70th RD casual pool: T/Sgts Edward H. Eble, Robert E. Meek, S/Sgts Anthony Ferrara, Wilmer T. Myers and Charles H. Brown.

Three new crews were assigned today: 2nd Lts Philip Saccomano, Robert Prestcott, Ricard Moreau; Sgt Harold Homburg, George Lingor, Marion Pancake, Thomas Porter, John Shelby and Thomas Tucker.

2nd Lt Frederick Hacker, Carl Wheeler, John McKenna; Sgt Harvey Abbott, Dennis Baker, Frederick Benson, Francis Ellers, Joseph Mancuso and Floyd Miller.

2nd Lt John Oldsman, Burton Lee, Abraham Sultan; Sgt Rollan Cobb, John Fulton, Edward Genet, John Jacobs, Harold Snyder and Edward Toth.

9. Light snowfall last night and this morning covered the icy roads, making travel on the base hazardous. There is a stand down today.

10. Taking off in a snowstorm, 37 bombers of the 381st, including 10 from the 533rd, headed for Ostheim, Germany, this morning to bomb the airfield there. The formation was under the command of Lt Col George G. Shackley, squadron CO, but he was forced to leave to formation and make an emergency landing at Ghent, in Belgium.

The high squadron took over the lead, and the 533rd ships - originally the lead - became the high squadron. At the target, a visual bomb run was attempted, but clouds interfered and instrument technique was used. After the run, the 533rd ships separated from the rest of the formation and bombed using their own Gee-H ship, piloted by Lt Roush.

Moderate, accurate flak was encountered at the target, and Lt Roush was forced to make a landing on the continent. He came down at Ghent, the same field as Col Shackley, on the way in. S/Sgt Arthur P. Hafner, Roush's tail gunner, was hit by flak in the right leg just below the knee and suffered a traumatic amputation of the leg. He was rushed to the 77th British General Hospital, near Ghent, for treatment. The 533rd had another casualty, S/Sgt Jack Nichols received a moderate perforating wound of the right leg.

11. The day dawned clear and cold, with more than an inch of drifted snow blanketing the base. Roads were hard packed with snow and ice, and extremely slippery. A Tannoy announcement warned vehicle drivers to drive with extreme caution. No mission was scheduled.

1st Lt August F. Kampfer and T/Sgt Charles T. Bowman were transferred to the 70th RD casual pool; four officers and six EM left for rest home; two combat EM returned from rest home.

12. Rain early this morning turned the snow into slush and made the hard-packed ice on the roads even more slippery than yesterday. No mission was scheduled.

The following promotions were notified: 1st Lt Berkley to captain; 2nd Lts Crouse, Conklin and Hale to 1st Lt. Having completed his tour, 1st Lt George F. Graebner left today for the 70th RD casual pool.

13. Weather this morning was cold and damp, with a heavy overcast. The ground was still partially frozen. Snow has all disappeared, but ice still covers the edges of the runways. A heavy explosion was heard here at 07.15 hrs, the cause of which has not been explained.

The group put up 37 aircraft, 11 from the 533rd, for a mission to attack a bridge at Germersheim, Germany, under the leadership of Major Douglas Winter. Weather was bad at take off, cleared to 4/10th over the continent, but there was a

10/10th patch at our objective. The 381st bombed using Gee-H equipment, and rear element gunners said they saw some of our explosives get the bridge.

Flak was meagre, but accurate, and there were no enemy aircraft, while one of our ships, flown by Lt Fawcett, landed away from base.

T/Sgt Waterhouse and S/Sgt Dunn left today for TD with the 91st Bomb Group at Bassingbourn.

14. Ten bombers of the 533rd were part of the 381st formation which took off to bomb a bridge at Cologne, led by Major Ike Taylor, 535th CO. Weather at the target was VACU, and an excellent bombing job was carried out. Strike photos show a smoke pattern covering the centre of the bridge. Flak was moderate and accurate at the target, and one 535th ship was shot down. All our ships returned safely with no casualties.

1st Lt Wilbur H. Stoltz was transferred to 70th RD casual pool today.

15. A mission to Regensburg, Germany, was scrubbed.

A new 533rd Fortress was christened "Fort Lansing Emancipator" by screen star Mary Brian at a ceremony this afternoon on the base. Jack Parker, radio commentator for the Lansing, Mich., radio station, appeared on the base with a BBC sound truck to make a recording of the ceremony. An all-Lansing crew, with Capt Ned Renick, 533rd operations officer, as pilot, participated in making recordings for broadcast at Lansing.

The following new crew was assigned today: 2nd Lts Henry M. Cline, Stanton Hoefler, Charles E. Mann, F/O Raymond M. Oxley; Cpls Joseph H. Biglin, John H. Bunker, Raymond E. Wilbur, Charles Boatright and Bernard J. King, Jr.

16. A mission intended for Lutzendorf (primary) and Berlin (secondary) was scrubbed at the station this morning. Weather was poor today and the liberty runs cancelled when heavy fog rolled over the base in mid-afternoon.

S/Sgt Nicholas left today for 30 days DS with the 91st BG at Bassingbourn.

17. The 381st put 37 bombers in the air for a PFF attack on marshalling yards at Paderborn, near Kassel, today. Nine of them assigned from the 533rd. There were no aborts, losses, fighters or flak - making the mission strictly routine.

Sgt Adamczyk left for TD with the 91st BG at Bassingbourn; S/Sgt Stone left for DS at Station #102 Alconbury, to study the Gee-H equipment; Capt Ned Renick left for London to participate in a radio broadcast.

The following combat Cps are promoted to Sgts: Abbott, Baker, Benson, Cobb, Ellers, Fulton, Gonet, Hamburg, Jacobs, Lingor, Mancuse, Miller, Pancake, Porter, Shelby, Snyder, Toth and Tucker.

18. The mission intended for Mannheim today was scrubbed. The sky is cloudy, wind strong and warm this morning.

S/Sgt Schmidt returned from rest home while four combat officers and five EM made the opposite journey; Capt Renick returned from TD in London and Sgt Adamczyk from TD at Alconbury.

19. It was a bitter cold morning, with a 50 mph gale whistling around buildings on the base, the sky completely overcast and a stand-down was received,

A Tannoy announcement says that electricity will be off in most of the living sites throughout the morning. The gale had wrecked high tension lines off base.

Lt Fred Hollendorfer was transferred to the 70th RD casual pool; four officers and five EM left for rest home; S/Sgt Robert H. Harper left on a 7-day furlough.

20. Captain Ewing S. Watson, led the group's contingent of 37 bombers, 10 from the 533rd - in today's attack on Ludwigshafen. Weather was so bad that no one who flew the mission saw the ground while over the continent. Bombing was done by PFF and GH equipment. No enemy fighters were seen and there was little flak. All ships returned home safely.

S/Sgt William Goudek, tour completed, left for the 70th RD casual pool; S/Sgt John Korka left on 7-day furlough and Pfc Manuel Loya was reduced to pvt for inefficiency.

21. Col Harry P. Leber, Jr., 381st commander, finished his tour with today's mission to Aschaffenburg, Germany, and was presented with the Silver Star by Brig Gen William M. Gross, combat wing commander, at a ceremony at interrogation. The target was attacked by instruments today, with 11 ships of the 533rd making up part of the striking force.

A 533rd ship flown by 2nd Lt Coates was reported MIA, but fortunately all the crew returned a few days later.

Promotions were announced today for 2nd Lts John E. Crowley, Samuel Goldin and William K. Privett to 1st Lts; 2nd Lt Jackovec left for TD with the 91st BG at Bassingbourn.

22. A stand down order was received last night. There was light snow this morning and all is quiet on the base.

23. A second stand down order in a row was received today. Snow fell again this morning and once more the base is blanketed in white.

Tours completed, the following are transferred to the 70th RD casual pool; 1st Lt Kenneth J. Orcutt, T/Sgt Alvin Berkowitz, S/Sgts Charles F. Engle, Joseph Logalbo and Walter B. Godbey.

The following were re-classified: Pfc Panches from 862 to 852; Pfc Ice from 590 to 901 and Pfc Mayeux from 055 to 901.

24. For the third successive day the group has a stand down. Bad weather has again forced cancellation of liberty runs tonight.

1st Lt Corydon W. Coombs, tour completed, left for 70th RD casual pool; Pvt Russell C. Snow was assigned today; S/Sgt Charles H. Nicholas returned from DS with the 91st BG at Bassingbourn; S/Sgt Robert H. Harper returned from furlough and F/O Charles F. Carpenter was commissioned a 2nd Lt.

25. A heavy frost, similar to that at Christmas, covers the entire base. The group is sweating out its fourth successive stand down order today, and the field is still hemmed in by fog. Again there will be no liberty runs tonight.

1st Lt John D. Evans, T/Sgt Hester G. Tencich and S/Sgt Robert S. Whitaker, all combat tour veterans, left for 70th RD casual pool.

26. A fifth stand down for today. The heavy fog refuses to lift, light snow fell this morning and it is very cold.

Capt Henry W. Bonneau, squadron S-2 officer, left for London on TD to attend a POW meeting; the following tour completed men, 1st Lts Leon Wagner and Douglas Greaves, left for the 70th RD casual pool.

Promotions included: S/Sgt George F. Comery to T/Sgt; Cpls Biglin, Boatright, Bunker, King, Panches and Wilbur to Sgt; Pvt Demski to Cpl.

27. A mission intended for Bremen was scrubbed this morning. The weather continues to be our worst enemy.

S/Sgt John J. Korka left of furlough; T/Sgts Charles T. Waterhouse and Russell M. Drum returned from TD with the 91st BG Bassingbourn; four combat officers returned to duty from the rest home; Capt Henry Bonneau returned to duty from DS in London; T/Sgt Oscar G. Knowles and 1st Lt Benjamin Long, tour veterans, left for 70th RD casual pool.

28. Some snow fell last night and weather continued cold this morning, but 38 bombers of the 381st, ten from the 533rd, took off at 08.45 hrs under the command of Major Ike Taylor, 535th CO, to attack Gutersloh, a last resort target.

Again the Major's PFF, GH and all radio equipment "went out" and he was forced to relinquish the lead to Capt Carpenter, 533rd pilot, who picked the target. Flak was moderate and accurate as the formation went over Cologne, but there was none at Gutersloh.

A visual bomb run was carried out and results are believed to be good. Two 535th ships aborted, but the remaining 36 bombed successfully and all returned safely with no casualties.

Robert Armstrong, Joseph J. DelMarmol, Gastano DeVito and Adrian G. Lemon were promoted from 2nd to 1st Lt; Capt Renick, 533rd operations officer, who has completed his second tour here, left today for the 70th RD casual pool; five combat EM left for the rest home.

29. Ten Fortresses of the 533rd took part in today's GH bombing attack on a marshalling yard at Niederlahnstein, Germany, under the command of Major George K. Sandman. Snow and freezing temperatures persisted as the ships took off this morning at 07.30 hrs. The formation met meagre, inaccurate flak at the target and no enemy aircraft were seen. Fighter support was excellent, and all our ships came home safely.

In response to a demand for infantry volunteers to replace heavy losses on the Western Front, the following men have been released from the squadron to report to the 12th Replacement Depot, Reinforcement Command: Sgt N. W. Alexander, Pvts Walter M. Balasa, Charles T. Cox, Manuel G. Loya, G. D. McMullen and Harry W. Rogers.

30. No mission was scheduled for today, following the heaviest snowfall of the winter last night. Approximately four inches of snow fell during the night leaving the base blanketed in deep drifts. A drizzling rain started at 04.30 hrs., which froze as it hit, making roads so treacherously icy that the use of bicycles has been forbidden by Tannoy announcement.

31. A mission for Berlin (primary) or Misburg (secondary) was scrubbed this morning. Weather turned warmer and there was intermittent rain until noon, turning yesterday's heavy snow into pools of slush.

Two new crews were assigned: Lts Richard Eagle, Nick Floramo, James Garrahan; Cpls Lester Chaney, Joseph Moriarty, James Powell, Carl Robinson and William Wideman.

Lts David Jones, Gilbert Shrank, F/O Albert Skrobles; Sgt Lewis Weaks, Cpls Bert Davis, Robert Moore, Raymond Pussler and Erwin Schwartzman.

1st Lt Joseph DelMarmol, who has finished up, left today for the 70th RD casual pool; F/O John McKenna left for DS at Station #102 Alconbury, to study radar navigation and bombardiering.

Primary duty of Capt Martin L. Healey, Jr., was changed from adjutant (2110) to administration officer (2120); Capt Charles R. McCarthy from adjutant (2110) to military personnel officer (2200); 1st Lt Gail S. Brewer from mess, supply and transportation officer (4113) to general supply officer (4000); 1st Lt Robert E. Bryson from communications officer (0200) to communications training officer (2520) and F/O Noel R. Corder from navigator (1034) to radar navigator-bombardier (1038).

February 1945

533rd Bomb Sq.
381st Bomb Group (H)

WAR DIARY
Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

FEBRUARY 1945

1. The first day of February dawned bright and clear with a moderate wind sweeping the field. Take off time for the group's 244th mission was set for 07.45 hrs, and 37 ships were dispatched, with one spare. The 533rd provided ten ships.

There was one abort, Lt Kuhns of the 535th, who salvoed the bombs in the Channel and returned to the field with two engines out; 42-32102 lost another engine as it came in to land, and the pilot made a crash landing in the 533rd engineering area, knocking down two crew chief's huts and completely wrecking the airplane. No one was hurt.

The 381st led the entire Eighth Air Force today, with Major Douglas Winter, 534th CO, in command. The group had trouble in getting assembled this morning, having to climb away over a high cloud front. Major Winter said weather was bad all the way to and from the target. The formation attacked the marshalling yards at Mannheim, dropping bombs by instruments through 10/10th clouds.

The mission marked the first time "Micro-H" bombing technique has been employed by the 381st. Flak at the target was light and inaccurate and battle damage to ships was extremely light. No enemy aircraft were encountered.

Pfc Camp returned to duty from DS at the RAF school at Yatesbury.

2. The sky was overcast this morning, with low-hanging grey clouds. A mission to Berlin as primary and Dresden as secondary was scrubbed.

Five combat officers and five EM left today for the rest home; T.Sgt William G. Hiney and S/Sgt David A. Phillips were transferred to the 70th RD casual pool.

3. One thousand Flying Fortresses rocked refugee-packed Berlin today with 2,500 tons of high explosives. Ten ships of the 533rd made up a fraction of the total striking force, altogether the 381st put up 36 for the mission, with Capt McNeill of the 532nd in command.

Flying weather was good, but Europe was covered by an almost complete overcast all the way to Berlin. At the city however, bombardiers found weather conditions CAVU, and a visual bomb run was carried out. Our's was the 12th Group to attack the Tempelhof marshalling yards, and strike photos show that our bombs hit to the right of the assigned MPI. Flak at the target was moderate but extremely accurate. One man was slightly wounded in the 534th and one 532nd ship is MIA. The formation returned to the field 40 minutes early.

T/Sgts Travis J. Groft, Earle L. Bassett and S/Sgt William D. Dangerfield were transferred to the 70th RD casual pool.

4. The weather turned cold and rainy after the return of the bombers yesterday, and a stand down was ordered at 23.00 hrs last night. There were high winds this morning, with low-hanging grey clouds.

The following were promoted from 2nd to 1st Lt: Howard J. Anderson, Miles P. Baldwin, Albert P. Miller, Stuart G. Newman and Kenneth R. Schmalz. EM promotions include: Sgt Raymond T. Timms to S/Sgt; Cpl Woodrow W. Englett to Sgt and Pfc Phil D. Howard to Cpl.

Transferred to the 70th RD casual pool today were: 1st Lts Joseph Steinwinter, Francis J. Gstrein, Samuel J. Weisman.

5. Heavy rain about 03.00 hrs was followed by overcast sky at 3,000 ft and the mission scheduled for 07.30 hrs take off, was scrubbed. Crews had been already called and were waiting on the line. The intended target was Munich.

Men at the base heard heavy explosions during the night of what are believed to be V-2 rockets. Searchlights in surrounding areas were busy throughout the night.

T/Sgt Albert R. Ulrich, S/Sgts John K. Cardon, John Bormida were transferred to the 70th RD casual pool; S/Sgt George A. Runger was reduced to Pvt.

6. Briefed to attack Lutzkendorf visually, a force of 35 aircraft of the group were unable to do so today, were ordered not to attack the secondary and finally dropped their bombs on Ohrdruf, Germany, a highway junction 10 miles south of Gotha. Two bombers attacked Steinbeck. Nine 533rd ships took part, with Capt Ewing S. Watson, of the 533rd, as group commander. One of our ships, piloted by Lt Crouse landed at another base.

A shake-up in base commands resulted in many important transfers and some re-assignments within the squadron today. Lt Col George G. Shackley, 533rd CO for more than a year, goes to Group HQ, and appointed Air Executive. The new squadron CO is Capt Ewing S. Watson. Major Joseph Kreiger, Jr., was transferred to the 535th, and 1st Lt James V. Farley, also went to Group HQ, as group bombardier.

Two new crews were assigned today: 2nd Lts John E. Blankenship, Arthur H. McKee, Lewis R. Severance, Jr., Melvin R. Raskin; Cpls Darwin A. Babcock, Weldon H. Brudlos, Charles E. Hall, John H. Hitchens and James C. Neal.

2nd Lts Alonzo W. Goodwin, Arthur McImberg, Charles H. Miller, Andrew Dudak; T/Sgt Joe H. Bethea, Cpls James F. Gibson, Stanley R. Bishop, Robert C. Halden and Albert H. Rufe.

7. Our ships took off about 09.20 hrs this morning, with Osterfeld, Germany, as the intended target. Extremely poor weather conditions were encountered as the formation neared Germany, and a recall was ordered. The planes landed at home field at 13.30 hrs. One 532nd ship became separated from the formation and did not receive the recall, and bombed Essen alone.

1st Lt Robert T. Hilmes was transferred to the 70th RD casual pool.

8. A mission planned for Wesel, Germany was scrubbed because of bad weather.

Pfc Charles W. Neiz was assigned today, transferred from the 535th, as was Cpl Richard L. Mayfield from the 534th, while Cpl Albert S. Enser was transferred to the 535th. Three combat men were transferred to the 70th RD casual pool; T/Sgt Paul L. Grim, S/Sgts Henry L. Johnson and Dale E. Williams.

9. Thirty seven bombers of the 381st attacked a motor road viaduct at Arnsberg, south east of Dusseldorf. Capt Bill Cronin of the 534th led the formation. Breaks in the clouds on the way over were reported, but the target area itself was completely covered. Clouds at Arnsberg were higher than briefed, and the bombers were actually in them at "bombs away". There was no flak at the target and no enemy aircraft.

The following two officers, 1st Lts Robert W. Beckman and George F. Stevens, were released today and transferred to the 5th Emergency Rescue Squadron, at Station #365, Halesworth, in Suffolk; Sgt William T. Short left for DS at Burtonwood Repair Depot.

10. A mission planned for Kassel today was scrubbed.

Four combat officers and five EM left for rest homes; 1st Lt Thomas Schilling was transferred to 70th RD casual pool.

11. Yet again the mission was scrubbed, the intended target being Munster.

Capt John W. Berkley and 1st Lt Burton H. Kinney left for 14 days TD with the 5th Strategic Air Depot Airstrip, at Station B-53, on the Continent.

12. A chill drizzle was falling this morning when a stand down was declared. Weather cleared shortly before noon, and the sun shone throughout the afternoon.

The following promotions were announced today: 2nd Lts Arthur S. Carter, D. P. Morgan and Jerry Pasek to 1st Lt; S/Sgts Joseph J. Francis and John W. Roach to T/Sgt; Sgts Marvin C. Elsbury, Edward G. Palmer and John R. Thrash to S/Sgts; Cpls Bertram M. Davis, Robert C. Moore, Raymond Pussler, Erwin J. Schwartzman, Lester E. Chaney, Joseph P. Moriarty, James D. Powell, Carl A. Robinson and William D. Wideman to Sgts.

The following were re-classified: S/Sgt John N. Liddell from 502 to 631; Pfc John J. Bilicki from 405 to 631.

1st Lt Howard J. Anderson was transferred to the 70th RD casual pool.

Two new combat crews were assigned today: 2nd Lts Robert E. Peyton, Marvin Rasmussen, William Blackwood, Marvin E. Nagel; Cpls Glenn E. Erwin, William G. Gardiner, James W. Howell, Daniel A. Josephson and Gilbert A. Tennant.

2nd Lts Morris W. Roettger, Benton W. Clifford, Lucian DiVincenzo, Albert Nigra; Cpls Harold M. Evans, Joseph D. Ginsburg, Harold E. Hoover, Willard J. Howard and Lawrence E. Stuart.

13. A very heavy double explosion was heard on the base about 04.00 hrs this morning. Cause is unknown.

Three red-red flares from the control tower announced the scrubbing of a mission shortly before 07.00 hrs today. "A" target was to be Kassel, and "B", Dresden.

Lt Col Harry P. Leber, Jr., former base commander, left today for the United States. Lt Col Conway S. Hall is the new group commander.

1st Lt John E. Crowley, T/Sgt Thomas J. Hammer and S/sgt Leland D. Graham left for the 70th RD casual pool; four combat officers and five EM left for rest homes.

14. The 381st received a Valentine Day card today - one which it was not expecting. What started to be an unsuccessful mission later proved to be the most successful ever carried out by the 381st, whose 37 ships took off at 08.30 hrs, briefed to attack Kassel, with Dresden as the secondary.

The entire First Air Division, led by Lt Col Ensign, went off course at Munster, where flak was moderate to intense. The 381st lost the rest of the Division in contrails and cirrus clouds shortly afterward. Capt Jim Tyson, flying lead ship with the 535th, did not dare go off course and off time to Dresden, the secondary target scheduled for a split-second timing attacks by a great number of bombers.

The only choice left open for the 381st was a target of opportunity. Fortunately, Capt Palenik, the lead bombardier, spotted a large industrial plant through a break in the clouds near Brux, Czechoslovakia, and was able to synchronize on it. Strike photos later showed direct hits on and around the plant, which proved to be the vital Sudetenland Ische Treibst Offenwerke, a synthetic oil factory and a long-time high priority target for the Eighth Air Force. A force of 25 bombers attacked the oil plant, while 12 others of the 381st bombed marshalling yards at Pilsen, through 10/10th clouds.

Eighteen of our aircraft landed away from base, 13 on the continent. The 533rd ships took part in the attack on Brux. Two of the squadron's ship landed in Brussels and one in France, but all landed safely at base later.

Today's pilots were: Lts Roush, Carr, Nolan, Coates, Sutherland, Illig, Hacker, Goldin and Riza.

The following re-classifications were announced: Capt Martin L. Healey, Jr., from 2110 to 2120; Capt Charles R. McCarthy from 2110 to 2200; 1st Lt Gail S. Brewer from 4113 to 4000; 1st Lt Robert E. Bryson from 0200 to 2520.

Capt John W. Berkley and 1st Lt Burton H. Kinney were released today and transferred to the 327th Station Complement Squadron, at Station B-53, on the Continent, where they have been serving several days on temporary duty.

15. Twenty two bombers of the 381st attacked the city of Dresden today, bombing by instruments through 10/10th cloud. Seven ships of the 533rd took part, one flown by Capt Carpenter, low squadron leader, aborted and jettisoned bombs in the Channel.

Weather today was good for flying, although there was a solid undercast at the target itself. No flak was met at the target, but there was meagre and inaccurate flak over a wide area near Brux. No enemy aircraft were seen.

Pilots participating were: Capt W.F. Carpenter, Lts Schein, Crouse, Goldin, Saccomano, Fawcett, Sutherland, Urban and Illig. T/Sgt Martin G. Klein returned from DS at No. 10 technical training school.

16. Lt Col George G. Shackley, flying in a 533rd ship, with Lt Gotthardt as his pilot, commanded 36 bombers of the 381st in an attack on an oil plant, fuel dump, marshalling yard and steel works in Langendreer, Germany today.

Altogether, 23 bombers dropped their loads with good results, on the yards, and the other 13 hit targets of opportunity in Langendreer. Strike photos show hits on an oil or ammunition dump on the south bank of a canal north of the MPI. A tremendous flash and a huge column of white smoke shows clearly in the pictures.

Flak at the target was intense and fairly accurate, lasting about seven minutes. Eight of the 533rd's nine ships suffered major battle damage, but there were no casualties and all returned safely to base.

Taking part today were: Lts Gotthardt, Schein, Nelson, Richard, Urban, Hacker, C.H. Carpenter, Sutherland and Saccomano. No change within the squadron was listed in morning reports.

17. A 21-bomber mission to Mannheim was recalled about 11.15 hrs, the planes returning to our hazed-over field about noon. The day was damp, misty and chilly with poor visibility. No change listed in morning reports.

18. Non-operational. An order for two of the group's GH aircraft to join another outfit for a mission was cancelled.

Order transferring Capt John W. Berkley and 1st Lt Burton E. Kinney to the 327th Station Complement Squadron was rescinded today; the officers returned to duty with the squadron. Capt Charles R. McCarthy left for DS on London for a 6-day course in Army Information Education.

19. Capt Carpenter and Lt Privett of the 533rd led 37 bombers of the 381st to an attack on the Moesch-Benzin synthetic oil plant at Dortmund today. The bombs were dropped by instruments through 10/10th cloud. Three 533rd ships suffered minor battle damage: #761, #560, and #977. Take-off was at 10.30 hrs and return to base was 16.30 hrs. However 13 aircraft from the 398th BG, Nuthampsted landed at this base with bad ground haze at the time and a flare path was lighted.

Pilots today were: Lts Privett, Fawcett, Sutherland, Pettitt, Reynolds, Richard, Oldsman, Illig and Hacker.

1st Lts Arthur G. Carter, Edward C. Carr and John A. Conklin, Jr., were released today to the 70th RD casual pool.

20. Weather was mild and spring-like this morning, with a high overcast clearing about 08.00 hrs. Major Bordner of the 534th, led 36 of the group's aircraft to an attack on the railroad station at Nurnberg, Germany, the 252nd mission for the 381st.

Bombing was carried out through 10/10th cloud and results were unobserved. Flak at the target was moderate and inaccurate, generally bursting behind our formation. Ten bombers from the 533rd took part in the operation, all returning safely without casualties.

Participating pilots were: Lts Riza, Nelson, Sutherland, Saccomano, Pettitt, Reynolds, Cline, Oldsman, Illig and Hacker.

The following EM were promoted to from Sgt to S/Sgt: Joseph J. Macuso, John W. Shelby, Joseph P. Walsh, Harvey W. Abbott, Edward A. Gonet, Edward B. Litogot, Louis A. Porter, Harold K. Snyder and Edward J. Toth.

21. There was a light frost this morning, with some fog and mists over low ground. The sky was bright and clear, when 37 aircraft took off at 07.15 hrs for the 253rd mission, a PFF attack on the Nurnberg marshalling yards, Major Taylor, 535th leading the formation which included seven bombers of the 533rd.

Flak was meagre and inaccurate, behind our formation at the target. No enemy aircraft were seen and the bombers received close support all the way from strong formations of P-51s. All our planes returned safely with no casualties.

Our pilots were: Hales, Nolan, Crouse, Goldin, Pettitt, Reynolds, Cline, Oldsman and Saccomano.

T/Sgts Thomas M. Guilfoyle and William J. Collins were transferred to the 70th RD casual pool; Capt John W. Berkley and 1st Lt Burton H. Kinney returned to Air Depot Airstrip B-53, on the Continent for 14 days TD; the following were promoted to Sgt: Joseph W. Demski and Russell C. Snow; four combat officers and six EM returned from rest homes.

22. Despite wet, misty weather this morning, 37 bombers of the 381st took off for two separate attacks on marshalling yards at Kobbelitz and Klotze, Germany. The primary target, the Gardelegen marshalling yards north of Magdeburg, was missed when our group was diverted from course by the traffic pattern interference of another outfit.

Dog-fights were seen in front of our formation in the target area, but there was no flak. Bombing results were adjudged to be fair to good in both cases, especially since the bombers released their explosives from the extremely low level of 12,000 ft. The nine bombers of the 533rd took part in the attack on Klotze.

Today's pilots were: Lts Roush, Fawcett, Riza, Goldin, Coates, Nichols, Reynolds, Saccamano and Urban.

Pvts Ernest Reil and Henry A. Harris were listed as AWOL at 12.00 and 17.00 hrs today; Capt Henry W. Bonneau left for TD in London; six combat EM and one officer left for rest homes today; T/Sgt Jack E. Callan was released and sent to 70th RD casual pool.

23. Led by Lt Roush, nine bombers of the 533rd were part of a force of 12 which attacked marshalling yards at Adelsburg, Germany today, while the main force of 25 bombers of the group attacked marshalling yards at Meiningen. A complete undercast blocked vision all the way in and precluded an attack on the primary target, the yards at Hof, Germany.

The group sought a target of opportunity and found Meiningen, where the lead and high squadrons bombed the marshalling yards with good results. The low squadron, which included the 533rd, failed to recognize the run at Meiningen, made a 360 degree turn and bombed the yards at Adelsburg with only fair results. Flak was only meagre, no enemy aircraft seen, thus all our ships returned home safely to base.

Our pilots participating today were: Lts Schmalz, Nolan, Riza, Coates, Pettitt, Nichols, C. H. Carpenter, Urban and Goldin.

The following EM left today for assignment to the 12th Re-inforcement Command as more infantry material: Cpls Hugh J. Lazzeroni and Virgil E. Smothers; Pfc's Virgil R. Huskey, Albert M. Dolfen, Harry F. Hard; Pvts John B. Keffer, Armand V. Gervais and Sgt Harry Orser; T/Sgt Albert D. Hines was released to the 70th RD casual pool.

24. A cool, frosty and clear morning today, with the sun rising above light mists about 08.30 hrs. The Hamburg docks constituted the primary target for a force of 35 of the 381st, but 10/10th undercast at the target forced the formation to bomb the city proper. The mission was uneventful. Flak at the target was meagre and inaccurate and no enemy fighters were seen. The group was led by Capt Ed McNeill of the 532nd.

Taking part today were: Lts Roush, Nolan, Crouse, Illig, C.H. Carpenter, Jones, Cline, Coates and Eagle.

Cpl Edward G. Barrett was assigned today from the 70th RD casual pool; S/Sgts Harry L. Deaton and William Gildermeister returned from DS ay No 10 technical training school; 1st Lt Miles P. Baldwin was released at sent to 70th RD casual pool; T/Sgt Robert E. Tyler left on furlough; Pvt Ernest Riel returned to duty from AWOL.

25. An exceptionally satisfactory bombing job was accomplished today when the 533rd, 534th and 535th attacked visually the marshalling yards at Munich. The 533rd put 12 ships up for the mission, the formation made up of 37 ships of the 381st. One of our ships, 44-6478 W, piloted by Lt Paul Illig, landed at Woodbridge, Suffolk, after running short of gas. He immediately refuelled and return to home base. Another ship landed at Woodbridge and a third in Belgium.

Capt Cronin, group operations officer, was air commander for the operation, with Lt Privett as his pilot. The ground was visible going over but completely covered by clouds on the way back. Jerry's smokepots at the target worked to our advantage in two ways: wind blew the smoke away from the yards and gave us a perfect pick-up point on the target; smoke interfered with the German AA until after we had bombed. Flak was moderate and accurate after bombs away, but our group suffered no losses. According to Capt Cronin, our bombs: "walked right across the tracks."

Today's pilots were: Lts Privett, Nolan, Reynolds, Pettitt, Goldin, Jones, C. H. Carpenter, Illig and Coates.

The day at the base was overcast and windy, growing slightly warmer in the afternoon. No changes in the 533rd were listed in morning reports.

Anna Neagle and other British movie stars were at the base today for a celebration on the line honoring completion of 100 missions by "Stage Door Canteen" a 535th Fortress. Brig Gen William M. Gross, First Combat Wing C.O., was a guest of honor at the ceremony.

26. Weather this morning reminded squadron personnel that Spring is just around the corner. The day dawned clear, with scattered clouds and a moderate, warm wind.

At 07.45 hrs 37 bombers of the 381st took off to attack Berlin, ten of them supplied by the 533rd, which flew spare. The formation was commanded by Major Douglas Winter, 534th CO, who led the group over increasingly thick undercast to the target. A PFF bombing job through 10/10th clouds was carried out and results were unobserved.

The "spot jammer" technique against enemy anti-aircraft radar apparently works usually well. One SJ operator reported stopping 32 separate "leaks" over Berlin. There were no enemy aircraft either seen or reported and our P-51 escort was very strong. More than 3,000 tons of bombs hit Berlin from Eighth Air Force heavies today, the attack being made in greater force than the devastating Feb. 3 attack. All ships returned safely save one, which landed on the Continent.

Our pilots were: Lts Riza, Reynolds, Urban, Goldin, Pettitt, Goodwin, Saccomano, C.H. Carpenter, Nichols and Illig.

From one through a dozen distant rocket blasts were heard and felt throughout the early morning hours.

Capt Louis G. Ralston, squadron physician, left for two days TD in London; Capt Charles R. McCarthy returned from DS in London; Sgt Joseph W. Demski was transferred to the 70th RD casual pool; Pvt Henry A. Harris returned to duty from AWOL; S/Sgt Chester J. Wolski was re-classified from 611 to 748, and Pfc Harry Carter from 055 to 835.

27. Ten bombers of the 533rd took part with other squadrons in a PFF attack on the marshalling yards at Leipzig. Flak was meagre for the 381st, although there were heavy barrages over the city before and after our bomb run. Flying weather and bombing formation were good today, and satisfactory results are believed to have been achieved. All our ships returned safely with no casualties.

Today's pilots taking part were: Lts Illig, Crouse, Urban, Saccomano, Goldin, Coates, Nichols, Goodwin, Oldsman and Pettitt.

The following promotions were announced today, from Cpl to Sgt: Darwin A. Babcock, Stanley R. Bishop, Weldon H. Brudlos, Glenn E. Erwin, Harold N. Evans, William G. Gardiner, James E. Gibson, Joseph D. Ginsberg; Charles E. Hall, John H. Hitchens, Robert C. Holden, Harold E. Hoover, Willard J. Howard, James N. Howell, Dan A. Josephson, James G. Neale, Sr., Albert H. Rufo, Lawrence R. Stuart and Gilbert A. Tennent.

From Sgt to S/Sgt: Joseph H. Biglin, Thomas A. Tucker and John W. Bunker; from S/Sgt to T/Sgt: Marvin C. Elsberry, Edward C. Palmer, Lloyd L. Shelton and John Thrash.

F/O John S. McKenna returned from TD at Station #102 Alconbury; Cpl Joseph Giointo, Jr., was released from assignment with the 495th Fighter Training Group, Station #113 Cheddington, and assigned to the 533rd; the following were sent to the 70th RD casual pool: 1st Lts Ellis E. Richard, Nelson G. Schein and Lawrence E. Hales.

28. The group received a stand down order last night, giving crews a well-earned rest after nine missions on nine consecutive days.

1st Lt Joe D. Nelson was transferred to the 364th Fighter Group; 1st Lts James E. Barrett and Albert D. Miller were sent to the 70th RD casual pool; Capt Louis G. Ralston, on TD at Station #101, was placed on 7-days TD at the rest home in Southport; 2nd Lt Jakovec returned from DS with the 91st BG, Bassingbourn; Cpl Garnett G. Swallow was reduced to Pvt today for inefficiency.

Three new crews were assigned today: 2nd Lts Robert E. Jankowiak, Phillip R. Roche, William D. Garrett, Herbert W. Levenson; Cpls Paul L. Berger, Stanley E. Beschta, John W. Hensley, James E. McGrath and Oscar J. Moberg.

2nd Lts Wilbur J. Larson, Leonard S. Rau, F/O Robert A. Mason; Cpls Edwin J. Etter(toggler), Robert D. Hayes, William E. Olsen, John V. McCarthy, Eugene G. Sprowls and John H. Sweesy.

2nd Lts Ralph A. Nowicki, Walter Dell'Oro, William L. McCullough; T/Sgt Charles A. Brown (toggler), Cpls Archie E. Christie, Raymond P. English, Francis M. Esser, Leslie McNamire and James E. Walsh.

Also Cpls Jack C. House and T/Sgt William D. Brown.

Total strength of the squadron on the last day of the month was 11 field officers and captains, 34 1st Lts, 57 2nd Lts, 10 F/Os and 437 enlisted men.

March 1945

533rd Bomb Sq.

381st Bomb Group (H)

WAR DIARY

Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

MARCH 1945

1. With Capt Ewing S. Watson, 533rd CO, leading, the 37 ships of the 381st attacked marshalling yards at Stuttgart, without loss of aircraft, including nine from the 533rd. Weather was 6/10th most of the way, with 10/10th cover at the target. The formation strated a "Mickey" run, but shortly before the target was reached, the bombardier in the lead ship made a visual

correction. Lead, high and low squadrons then dropped their explosives by "mickey". Flak was meagre and no enemy fighters were encountered.

A top turret gunner in the 532nd bailed out over friendly territory on the way back to base when an engine fire alarmed him. Turning off the target, the bombers ran into a clear spot and crewmen were able to see back under the cloud shelf over the target. Tail gunners said they saw bombs bursting across the marshalling yards, although the main pattern was slightly off.

Today's pilots were: Lts Privett, Fawcett, Pettitt, Oldsman, Saccomano, Cline, Goodwin, Eagle and Blankenship.

S/Sgts John A. Hoene and George E. Whitesell were released today and transferred to the 70th RD casual pool.

2. Led by Capt Tyson, group training officer, a force of 381st bombers, nine from the 533rd, took off this morning to attack Chemnitz. From the English Channel the cloud cover was from 2/10th to 4/10th. At the target itself there was a complete cloud cover, with scattered breaks. Bombing was carried out by instruments with results unobserved. Flak was negligible and no enemy aircraft seen.

Pilots today were: Lts Schmalz, Cline, Jones, Saccomano, Reynolds, Eagle, Oldsman, Goodwin and C. H. Carpenter (see below).

A lone Flying Fortress, the 533rd squadron's symbolically named "RAFAAF", bombed Cologne with a formation of RAF Lancasters. The ship, piloted by 2nd Lt Charles H. Carpenter, of Mobile, Ala., was an accidental member of the RAF formation. Carpenter had originally taken off for today's Eighth Air Force mission in another bomber, but returned to his base to get a new Fortress when his plane developed mechanical difficulties.

En route for the second time, and five minutes behind his formation, he searched the skies for the bomber stream. Far ahead he saw what he described as "a great blob of ships", so he "poured the coal on", and caught up with them. They turned out to be Lancasters, but it was then too late to seek out the 381st formation and Carpenter elected to "give the English a hand".

There was "all kinds of flak" at Cologne, in the words of 2nd Lt Sidney J. Silcock, the navigator. He described red, white and black bursts, as well as "a new kind of phosphorus flak that made an explosion as big as a house." The Fortress took its turn on the target with the rest of the bombers and the crew said the bombardier "laid them right in there".

"After all", said carpenter, "daylight bombing's our speciality so we couldn't let those Lancaster boys beat us at it!"

Coming back from the mission, the Lancasters spotted their added starter and proceeded to make the Fortress welcome in their own way. They sent challenges through the air, fired flares at "RAFAAF", and two of the Lancasters even flew formation across the Channel with the American bomber.

S/Sgts Martin G. Klein and Sidney Feldman were released and assigned to the 70th RD casual pool; two EM left on furlough.

3. Although 1,200 U.S. heavy bombers attacked Germany today, the 381st was on a stand down. The day was clear, cold and windy. A practice mission was held in the afternoon.

One combat officer and six EM left for rest homes and one EM went on furlough; the following were released and transferred to the 70th RD casual pool: 1st Lt Robert Anderson, T/Sgts Walter Doremus, Robert Pospisill and S/Sgt James P. Morgan.

Two new crews were assigned; 2nd Lts Richard Van Sant, Walter F. Scott, F/O William L. Moore, 2nd Lt Isadore Grzeskiewicz; Cpls Jerry E. Eshoo, Calvin D. Harper, Norman R. Pentecost, Leon K. Wolfe Jr. and Pvt Rudy J. Grafton.

2nd Lts Vernon W. Ashby, Harold E. Smith, F/O Joseph Cervone, 2nd Lt Malcolm C. Hanrahan; Cpls Donald R. Block, Raymond A. Kuehn, Harker P. Miley, Frank S. Newman and Kenneth C. York.

Pvts Ernest R. Dickerson, Frank J. Schmitt also joined the squadron.

4. A red alert was sounded on the base at 01.00 hrs when a piloted enemy aircraft was reported in the vicinity. The plane strafed the 486th BG Fortress base at Sudbury, Suffolk, using 20mm shells, but no attack was made on this base.

A tank factory at Ulm, Germany, was the target for today for 37 ships of the 381st, nine from the 533rd. Major Ike Taylor, of the 535th, was air commander for the operation. Weather was poor and there was a 10/10th cloud cover all the way to the target, where the formation was forced to resort to an instrument technique for bombing. Biggest difficulty was contrails, which were the worst encountered in months. No flak and no fighters were seen.

Pilots for today were: Lts Sutherland, Fawcett, Coates, Eagle, Nichols, Jones, Oldsman, Hacker and Cline.

Another red alert was sounded on the base shortly after 20.00 hrs. Enemy intruders were heard, and later, muffled explosions in the distance. The all-clear sounded at 21.00 hrs.

Capt Jim P. Leach was released from Group HQ and transferred to the 533rd; Sgt Andrew L. Ingles and Cpl Hugh J. Bracken Jr., left for TD with the Army Information Education Staff in London.

5. Led by Lt Col George G. Shackley, group Air Exec., 37 bombers of the 381st attacked Chemnitz today, dropping bombs by instrument sighting. Briefed target for the mission was Ruhland, which was to be attacked visually. Finding Ruhland completely covered by cloud, Col Shackley took the formation to Chemnitz, but results were unobserved. There was no flak over Chemnitz, but a heavy barrage was met while the bombers were passing Brux, Czechoslovakia. Two crews landed in France.

Pilots today: Lts Sutherland, Nichols, Reynolds, Saccomano, Eagle, Cline, Jones, Blankenship and Hacker.

Capt John W. Berkley and 1st Lt Burton H. Kinney returned from TD with the 5th Strategic Air Depot; four combat officers and seven combat EM left for the rest home; Sgt William T. Short returned to duty from a technical training school.

Promotions announced: Sgt Floyd E. Horton to S/Sgt; Cpl Pete P. Diaz to Sgt and Pfc's Edward G. Bailey and Frank L. Ciardullo to Cpl.

6. A stand down for today was received late last night.

The following combat officers were assigned to the 70th RD casual pool: 1st Lts Robert O. Stephens, Joseph H. Nolan, Henry H. Riza and Edgar C. Scoones.

S/Sgt Robert H. Harper was re-classified from 611 to 612 and S/Sgt Gerald R. Schmidt from 612 to 748.

7. Another stand down was received for today. Weather this morning was cloudy with good ground visibility but a low ceiling.

1st Lt Robert J. Roush left for TD with the 482nd BG at Alconbury; 2nd Lts Charles H. Carpenter and Sidney J. Silcock left for London to participate in a radio broadcast relating the story of their bombing Cologne with a RAF Lancaster formation; one EM went on furlough.

8. Under the command of Capt Edwin Bryce, of the 533rd, 37 bombers of the 381st took off this morning to attack the synthetic oil plant at Huls, Germany. There was one abort, a 534th ship, the 533rd supplied nine ships and crews.

Capt Bryce said the mission was "very successful" in spite of bad weather, which hampered the bombers all the way. Bombing was carried out by instrument technique through 10/10th clouds and results were unobserved. Flak was meagre to inaccurate at the target and no enemy fighters seen.

Participating were: Lts Sutherland, Crouse, Nichols, Jones, Cline, Oldsman, Goodwin, Blankenship and Eagle.

T/Sgt Joseph W. Sullivan was assigned today; Sgt Douglas G. Oviatt left for DS at the Burtonwood Repair Depot; Cpt Louis G. Ralston, squadron medical officer, returned from rest home.

9. Capt Scarborough of the 535th led a force of 381st bombers including ten of the 533rd, to an attack on the marshalling yards at Kassel today. Flak was meagre at the target and no enemy fighters met. Bombing was carried out through 10/10th cloud cover, and results, though unobserved are believed to be good. All ships returned safely with no casualties.

Taking part were: Lts Reynolds, Coates, Pettitt, Eagle, Goodwin, Roettger, Blankenship, Nichols, Urban and Cline

2nd Lts Charles H. Carpenter and Sidney J. Silcock returned to duty from DS in London; one EM left on furlough and two returned.

Tours completed, the following men were transferred to the 70th RD casual pool: T/Sgts Marcus J. Tremble, Claudio M. Wyatt, Francis Hrehocik, Jack L. Bressie, Clifford T. Owens, S/Sgt Clifford T. Owens, Chester J. Wolski and 1st Lt Samuel Goldin.

Promotions announced today were: S/Sgts to T/Sgts: Francis G. Ellers and Joseph J. Mancuso; Cpls to Sgts: Paul L. Berger, Charles A. Brown, Raymond R. English, Edward J. Etter, John W. Hensley, Stanley E. Beschta, Archie E. Christie, Francis M. Esser, Robert D. Hayes, John V. McCarthy, Eugene G. Sprowls, Leslie McNamire, William F. Olson and John H. Sweesy.

10. Nine bombers and crews of this squadron took part in today's GH bombing of railway yards at Sinsen, Germany. Due to thick cloud, results were unobserved. All aircraft returned safely with no casualties.

Our pilots were: Lts Fawcett, C. H. Carpenter, Coates, Peyton, Roettger, Urban, Blankenship, Goodwin and Hacker.

11. Flak was intense over Bremen today, but inaccurate for the 381st, as the group, including 10 ships and crews of the 533rd, attacked marshalling yards, the secondary target. Cloud cover was 10/10th all the way in and out and bombing results were unobserved. Flak was heavy but not damaging to our group. We met no hostiles.

Today's pilots were: Lts Coates, Nichols, Saccomano, Urban, Blankenship, Peyton, Goodwin, Pettitt, Roettger and Hacker.

2nd Lt William B. Paulus and Pfc Edward O. McPherson were assigned to the squadron today; Pfc Vincent P. Garrity and Luther B. McRainey left for TD at Greenham Common, Berks., F/O Charles Tryka left for TD with 8th Air Force HQ; Sgt Andrew L. Ingles and Cpl Hugh J. Bracken left for TD in London.

Promotions included: Pfc Edmund S. Pestana and Arthur E. Noll to Cpl; Sgt Marlan C. Van Over, S/Sgt Adolph Butler were re-classified from 611 to 748; T/Sgt Paul S. Williams and Pfc Pad Hamon, Jr. were transferred to the 70th RD casual pool.

12. Capt Tyson of the 535th, led the group to an uneventful attack on marshalling yards at Dillenburg, where the squadrons bombed individually, using Gee-H method, through a 10/10th undercast. There was no flak and no enemy fighters seen. Nine bombers for the 533rd took part, and with the rest of the group, all returned home safely.

Pvt Henry A. Harris was given a special court martial at this station today, resulting in a sentence of four months hard labor and a forfeiture of \$18.75 for a like period. Six EM left on furlough.

Today's pilots were: Lts Goodwin, Nicholls, Roettger, Crouse, Blankenship, Pettitt, Oldsman, Urban and Saccomano.

13. The group received a stand down order today. F/O Charles Tryka returned from TD at 8th Air Force HQ; Pvs Luther McRainey and Vincent P. Garrity returned from TD at Greenham Common, Berks.; S/Sgt Harry E. Deston and William Gildemeister returned from TD at the technical training school at RAF Kirkham, Lancs., Capt Louis G. Ralston left on furlough.

14. A single-track railway and a bridge at Vlotho was the target for a force of 36 bombers of the 381st today, nine from the 533rd took part in the attack. Cloud cover was solid 10/10th all the way and bombing results were unobserved.

Participating today were: Lts Sutherland, Crouse, Illig, Cline, Nichols, Jones, Eagle, Oldsman and Saccomano.

The following promotions were announced: S/Sgts to T/Sgts - Donald B. Butler and Gerald R. Schmit; from Cpl to Sgt: Donald R. Block, Jerry E. Eshoo, Calvin D. Harper, Raymond A. Kuehn, Harker F. Miley, Frank S. Newman, Norman E. Pentecost, Leon K. Wolfe, Jr., Kenneth C. York and Rudy J. Grafton.

The following were re-classified from 860 to 853: T/Sgt Charles P. Waterhouse; S/Sgts Ed. F. Hardisty, Charles H. Nicholas and Sgt Jack D. Larper. Sgt Robert J. Gonnering from 611 to 748.

2nd Lt Charles Carpenter left for TD in London to participate in a radio broadcast; three combat officers and seven EM left for a rest home; Pfc Milford H. Jones returned from DS in Manchester; 1st Lt Adrian G. Lemon left for DS at Station #102 Alconbury.

15. As "Tail-end Charlie" of the entire Eighth Air Force on the mission, 37 bombers of the 381st unloaded their bombs on Oranienburg. Flying weather was clear, ground haze prominent and smoke of previous bombings extremely dense at the target. Flak at the target was very accurate, wounding two 533rd men and killing another. All bombers returned safely. Nine 533rd ships took part in this attack.

Today's pilots were: Lts Fawcett, Oldsman, Nowicki, Eagle, Blankenship, Cline, Saccomano, Peyton and Carpenter (see below).

At 210 mph, late today, a 533rd ship #561 slammed down on to an RAF emergency landing field. The undercarriage collapsed and the entire tail section snapped off and two engine fires broke out as both great chunks of wreckage screamed along the broad cement runway.

British ambulances and crash crews got the situation in hand as the survivors of a 4 ½ hr solo flight over Germany and France, climbed from the smashed bomber. On top of the cockpit the bomber's pilot, 2nd Lt Charles H. Carpenter, coolly wound up the most gruelling and dramatic experience of his 34-mission combat career with a roll-call of his crewmen as they left the wreck.

Twenty-two year old Carpenter and his co-pilot, F/O Albert F. Gemblar, had nursed a veritable "flying-wing" all the way home after a German flak shell exploding in the bomber's waist half an hour after bombs away at Oranienburg had destroyed all control cables to the rudder and stabilizers.

The waist-gunner, S/Sgt Walter J. Ahl, was killed instantly by shrapnel and concussion that knocked out the radio equipment, ripped away 15 feet of the right side of the fuselage and tore half a dozen holes, two and three feet in diameter, in the opposite side. Broken ends of oxygen lines and electrical wiring were everywhere and the tail wheel was jammed up in its well with the hydraulic strut punctured.

The slip stream roaring through the unprotected fuselage sucked out the tail gunner's parachute and the plane's own spare bail-out gear. Sgt Robert F. Kinzel, climbed out of his ball turret to discover that shrapnel and ripped his and the dead waist gunner's chutes in a hundred places.

Both the tail gunner, Sgt Robert L. Hinders and the radio man, S/Sgt Lloyd L. Shelton, were stunned by the force of the explosion and both were treated for temporary shock by Gemblar and bombardier, 2nd Lt Charles A. Mann. Lt Carpenter began easing his airborne wreck, with only wing ailerons and throttles for control, over the course that brought them to England in evening darkness, alone and hours behind its formation.

Engineer T/Sgt John R. Thrash, shot rocket flares to attract attention on the ground when 2nd Lt Louis R. Severance, figured they were over the blacked-out emergency base. They had actually passed the field when the responding ground lights went on, but Carpenter, using the engines to negotiate a wide, flat turn, came around for what he knew was his lone chance on an approach.

Thrash suffered a head cut in the high-speed landing, when Carpenter at the last minute used full throttle to override the plane's sudden tendency to stall and pancake in. British doctors treated Thrash on the spot and sent Hinder off for a night in a nearby American Field Hospital. Before letting the rest of the crew go, their hosts insisted upon serving them a dinner including fresh eggs and plenty of whisky-laden tea. All eight survivors are to return to duty soon.

T/Sgt Kamosuke Itokazu was today transferred to the 70th RD casual pool; four combat officers and five EM left for rest homes; M/Sgt Maury Wright, S/Sgt James Pearson, Sgts Robert Welsh and Robert D. Hubbard. was assigned to the squadron today.

16. A mission scheduled for Bohlen, Germany was scrubbed this morning.

17. In weather worse than briefed, with solid 10/10th cloud undercast all the way, and hampered by persistent contrails, 37 bombers of the 381st, ten from the 533rd, attacked the Karl Zeiss instrument plant at Jena, Germany, and the synthetic oil plant at Bohlen. Seven 533rd ships hit Jena, and three others dropped their explosives on Bohlen. In both cases bombing was by instruments and results unobserved. Flak was moderate and inaccurate at the target and no enemy fighters were encountered.

Our pilots for today were: Lts Jones, Cline, Saccomano, Oldsman, Hacker, Blankenship, Peyton, Jankowiak, Roettger and Goodwin.

F/O John J. McKenna was re-classified from 1034 to 1038.

18. Major Joseph Krieger, 535th operations officer, led the group to Berlin today, for an attack on the Schlosshaus railroad station through 4/10th undercast. Results of the bombing were undetermined.

Flying weather was good until the formation came within 50 miles of Berlin, when a 4/10th undercast began building up. Flak at the target varied from moderate to intense, and everyone agreed that all of it was accurate. Enemy fighters were reported in the area, but none seen by our crewmen. Our P-51 escort was excellent. Nine 533rd ships took part safely.

Today our pilots were: Lts Schmalz, Illig, Jones, Larson, Roettger, Peyton, Cline, Janowiak and Eagle.

1st Lt William Gilvary was transferred from this squadron to the 535th; Sgt Edward W. Smith was released and transferred to the 4207th Hospital Plant; two men left on furlough.

19. Briefed to attack flak battery installations at Plauen, bombers of the 381st, including nine of the 533rd, dropped explosives by PFF technique on the city of Plauen itself. Flak was meagre and inaccurate. All our planes returned safely with no casualties.

Pilots participating today were: Privett, Nichols, Saccomano, Peyton, Roettger, Coates, Jankowiak, Larson and Jones.

Capt Ralston and five EM returned from furlough.

20. The group received a stand down today. Promotions included: S/Sgts to T/Sgts: Edward A. Gonet, Edward J. Toth and George Lingor; from Sgt to S/Sgt: Weldon H. Brudlos, James F. Gibson, Robert Gonnering, James J. Neale, Raymond B. Wilbur, Bertram Davis, Joseph B. Ginsberg, Harold E. Hoover and Carl A. Robinson; Cpl Harlow Hill was re-classified from 405 to 611.

The following were released and sent the 70th RD casual pool: Capt John W. Berkley, 1st Lts Burton H. Kinney, D. P. Morgan, Gaetano S. DeVito and Rodney Leyton; S/Sgt Robert R. Warner, T/Sgts Howard Norman, Adolph B. Butler, Irving Schlom, Donald J. Ellingham and Robert S. Redmond.

21. The 381st attacked the Salzbergen airfield at Rheine today with a force of 37 aircraft, eight from the 533rd. Weather was clear at the target with considerable ground haze. Flak was meagre and did not begin until after lead and low squadrons had

unloaded. Strike photos show hits on the aiming point with an excellent bomb pattern in the target area, while no enemy aircraft appeared. There were no losses.

The pilots who participated today were: Lts Fawcett, Nicholls, Saccamano, Pettitt, Roettger, Blankenship, Nowicki, Jankowiak and Larson.

F/O Charles Tryka left for TD at Eighth Air Force HQ on London for an indefinite period; 2nd Lt Joseph Nutt left for TD at the technical training school at RAF Kirkham, Lancs.; 2nd Lt Woodrow W. Holden was assigned to the squadron.

22. Military installations at Feldhausen, in the Ruhr, provided the target for an attack today by 37 bombers of the 381st, nine from the 533rd. Clear weather made an excellent visual bomb run possible, despite ground haze and smoke from previous bombings. Flak was moderate but accurate and a 533rd bomber, 44-8175 was shot down, with Capt Gotthardt, flying as group leader.

Today's pilots: Lts Fawcett (Missing in Action), Nichols, Saccamano, Pettitt, Roettger, Blankenship, Nowicki, Jankowiak and Larson.

MIA crew: 2nd Lt Robert Fawcett, Capt Robert J. Gotthardt, Capt George J. Stone, 1st Lt Peter Kowalski; S/Sgt Joseph H. Biglin, T/Sgt Lawrence A. Russelino, 2nd Lt Elbert Hiller (mickey op), Sgt Stanley H. Biskop, 2nd Lt Charles Banotai (GH-534th) and 2nd Lt Walter F. Scott (TG).

Four EM left on furlough, and the following were re-classified from 611 to 612: Sgts George A. Carmichael, Harold A. Carpenter and David T. Baird.

23. Thirty seven bombers of the 381st bombed the marshalling yards at Coesfeld, Germany, ten 533rd ships taking part. Without enemy opposition and sided by perfect weather and visibility, bombardiers laid their explosives dead on the target, and all came home safely.

Today's pilots were: Lts Nichols, Jankowiak, Oldsman, Eagle, Illig, Nowicki, Roettger, Larson, Blankenship and Peyton.

1st Lts Stuart G. Newman, Fred L. Crouse, Dale P. Morgan, Gaetano S. DeVito and S/Sgt Robert H. Harper were transferred to the 70th RD casual pool.

24. Today will be a memorable date in the history of this war. More than 1,300 gliders this morning carried 40,000 paratroops and airborne infantry across the Rhine in the area around Rees and Wesel in beginning the last great push to capture Berlin. A steady stream of gliders, towed by Dakots and Stirlings, soared over the base early this morning. Two missions, in indirect support of the gigantic air invasion, were carried out by the 381st today.

On the first, Capt Tyson, of the 535th, led the group to a perfect-weather bombing attack on the landing strip of Furstenau, Germany. Nine ships were provided by the 533rd. Strike photos show an excellent concentration of bombs on the target. Flak was meagre and inaccurate, but cost the 533rd another ship and crew; Ship 44-6478, piloted by Lt Jankowiak, was shot down.

Participants today were: (first mission) Lts Schmalz, Nowicki, Jones, Van Sant, Eagle, Blankenship, Roettger, Larson and Jankowiak (missing in action); (Second mission) C.H. Carpenter, Peyton and Ashby.

MIA crew: 2nd Lts Robert E. Jankowiak, Philip R. Roche, William D. Garrett, Herbert H. Levenson; S/Sgts James E. McGrath, Oscar J. Moberg, Sgts John W. Hensley, Paul L. Berger and Stanley E. Beschta.

On the second mission an attack on the main crossroads of the landing ground at Twente, Holland, three 533rd ships took part. Capt Palenick, lead bombardier, said there was ground haze at Twente, but that did not prevent him from dropping his

bombs square on the target. Altogether, 12 group ships took part in the second mission. There was no enemy opposition on this attack and our P-51 escort was excellent.

Sgt Ernest J. Weirich left for TD at Station #582 Warton, Lancs.; three combat EM returned from the rest home and one from furlough; 1st Lt John Griffth was sent to the 70th RD casual pool; Harlow D. Hill was promoted from Cpl to Sgt; four combat officers and six EM left for rest homes.

25. Planes took off this morning shortly after 06.00 hrs for a mission to Zeitz, Germany, but were recalled within a hour.

Three ground EM returned from furlough; T/Sgts Adolph B. Butler, Irvin Schlom, Robert S. Redmond and Robert E. Tyler were released and transferred to the 70th RD casual pool. The following were assigned to the squadron today: Sgt Milton Siegel, Cpl Leonard F. Gawron, T/5 Chester J. Dziedzic and Pvt Richard P. Lynch. S/Sgt Kenneth V. Lowther left for TD at Station #102 Alconbury.

The following were re-classified from 611 to 612: S/Sgts Paul W. Schmidt, John L. Patrick, Joseph F. Phelan, John Howard, Ward A. Freeman, Leonard Fahnestock, Richard E. Davis, Edward B. Bailey, Daniel A. Adair, Herbert Levenson, Guadalupe Duran and Sgt Patrick Keenan.

26. Very bad weather conditions, with cloud and haze obscuring flying and visibility both in and out, disrupted the group's attack on Zeitz. A cloud bank completely covered the synthetic oil plant, the primary target, and this, plus a heavy flak barrage, led one crewman to describe conditions as "cumulo-bango".

The nine 533rd ships bombed here, while the lead and high squadrons went on to Plauen after the lead ship lost its bombsight to flak while circling Zeitz. One 53rd ship, #42-97882, piloted by Lt Van Sant, was forced to land in France because of a shortage of gas.

2nd Lt Joseph Nutt returned from DS; the following Cpls were assigned to the squadron today: Hubert C. Johnson and James R. Collins; T/Sgts Keith D. Halstead and Miles C. Bruner were released and transferred to the 70th RD casual pool.

27. A steady drizzle and overcast skies prevented a mission this morning intended for Fulda, Germany.

Promotions included: S/Sgt John W. Bunker to T/Sgt; Sgts George F. Carmichael, Harold A. Carpenter, William C. Gardiner, John W. Hitchens, William J. Howard, James W. Nowell, James E. McGrath, Oscar J. Moberg, Joseph P. Moriarty, Gilbert A. Tennet and William D. Wideman to S/Sgts.

28. Nine bombers of the 533rd were part of the 381st force which attacked Berlin today. Bombs were dropped through 10/10th cloud cover and results could not be observed. Flak was meagre and inaccurate over the city and no enemy fighters appeared. There were no losses.

1st Lt Kenneth Schmalz left for London to participate in a radio broadcast; three EM left on furlough; four combat officers and five EM left for rest homes; Sgt Francis Bergemeister was re-classified from 611 to 612 and Sgt Allen J. Smith from 275 to 405.

29. The group received a stand down order for today.

30. Heavy accurate flak was met after the bomb run at Bremen today, and one 535th ship was shot down. The formation, including nine aircraft from the 533rd, approached the target down a cloud-free "alley", had perfect visibility and did an excellent bombing job. Explosives were dropped in a tight pattern on the Besschwinag submarine and shipbuilding yards.

Today pilots were: Lts Privett, Eagle, Nichols, Riga, Saccomano, Aron, Hacker, Schrank and Nowicki.

31. Marshalling yards at Halle were attacked through 10/10th clouds today by H2X. Weather was good for flying but clouds covered the ground all the way in and out. Flak was meagre and inaccurate and no enemy aircraft encountered. Nine 533rd bombers took part, the complete formation returning safely.

S/Sgt Lester D. Stone was released and transferred to the 534th, Sgt Howard E. Day making the opposite move; S/Sgt David T. Baird was released and transferred to the 70th RD casual pool.

Squadron strength was 100 officers and 429 enlisted men.

April 1945

533rd Bomb Sq.
381st Bomb Group (H)
WAR DIARY
Submitted by Pvt John Haggerty

APRIL 1945

1. Easter Sunday and April Fool's day coincided, the weather today being intermittently rainy, with heavy, dark overcast. The Group was non-operational.

T/Sgt Philip H. Brown was placed in confinement; Sgt Douglas T. Oviatt, returned to duty from DS at 21st Training School.

2. Group aircraft took off early today for a mission against a target in Denmark. Bad weather forced a recall when our planes were over the North Sea and they returned to base at 19.10 hrs, only half an hour before the briefed time of return. The mission was not credited.

3. Two mission planned for today were scrubbed. The first was to be an attack on Kaltenkirchen, Germany; the second at Deldering, Denmark.

Three new crews were assigned today: 2nd Lt George E. Salmi, F/Os Michael C. Sewall, Ernest W. Grindstaff, 2nd Lt Leland D. Deaner; Sgts James R. Cunningham, Virgil H. Reynolds, Cpls Wilfred J. Monohan, James N. Van Markstyn and Sgt Albert W. Sargent.

2nd Lts Leslie J. Lynes, Charles Simon III, F/O Welton L. Davis, 2nd Lt Howard W. Tunstall; Sgts Theodore E. Moore, William M. Peters, Cpls Constantine P. Lowe, William Rash and T/Sgt Merle A. Putnam.

2nd Lt Robert R. Hoffman, Donald B. Fletcher, Gerald B. Robins, S/Sgt Harvey W. Smith (togglor); Cpls Donald M. Bailey, Clifford L. Eshelby, Marcus G. James, Richard H. Judd, James K. Moore; F/O Welton L. Davis, 2nd Lt Howard W. Tunstall and Sgt Theodore E. Moore.

Sgts George A. Harris and Edwin L. Nelson were promoted S/Sgts; Sgt Peter B. Imbriani left for radio broadcast in London on two days TD; 1st Lts Stuart G. Newman and Fred L. Crouse; T/Sgts Robert E. Tyler, Miles C. Bruner and Keith D. Halstead transferred to 70th RD casual pool.

4. Ten 533rd ships took part in today's attack on a landing strip at Hoya, Germany, T/Sgt Jack C. Poole was slightly wounded in action. The bombardiers attacked visually through 8/10th clouds, dropping 150 pound GPs with very good results. Flak was meagre, but accurate, tracking our bombers just after bombs away.

Leaving for 7-day furloughs are 16 EM.

5. Neither flak nor fighters defended the target for the group's 284th mission, an ordnance depot at Grafenwohr, Germany, today when 5 ½ thousand pounds of bombs were dropped by the group's 37 aircraft on the target. Results were unobserved the attack being made through 2/10th clouds.

Captain Scarborough of the 535th led the mission after Major Bordner's (534th) H2X equipment failed. All the ships returned safely with no casualties.

6. The group was non-operational. 1st Lt Donald F. Urban was transferred to the 70th RD casual pool; S/Sgt Weldon H. Brudlos left for two days TD in London to participate in a radio broadcast; six combat officers and five EM left for rest homes; four ground crewmen left on furloughs.

7. Nine squadron bombers and crews took part in today's group attack by 37 aircraft on the jet-plane base at Kohlenbissen, Germany, with good results. Enemy fighters were reported in the vicinity of the target, but none attacked our formation. Combat men reported that only two flak guns were firing at the 381st bombers as they passed over Kohlenbissen, returning the base safely and no casualties.

The following was released today to the 70th RD casual pool: 1st Lt Eugene L. Nelson; eight combat EM were re-classified from 611 to 612; 1st Lt Robert R. Roush left on TD with the 482nd BG at Alconbury.

8. Again today the 533rd put nine bombers in the air for the group's attack on the marshalling yards at Stendahl, Germany. Strike photos showed that our bombs missed the objective which was bombed by instruments through 8/10th cloud cover. Flak was meagre, but accurate and a 533rd gunner, Sgt John W. McCarthy was seriously wounded, but all ship returned home.

T/Sgt Gerald R. Schmit was transferred to 70th RD casual pool.

9. For the group's 287th mission, an attack on an airfield at Oberpfaffenhofen, saw the 533rd put up ten ships and crews. Flying weather was perfect virtually all the way over and bombardiers made a visual run on the target. The main impact of the 381st group's bombs was directly on the east-west runway of the field. Flak, meagre and accurate, was met at Munich.

Although briefing was held this morning at 06.00, take off was delayed until noon. Fog hung over the field until lunchtime, when the day brightened and the temperature rose sharply.

The following promotions were announced: from 2nd to 1st Lt, William G. Pettitt, Archie E. Nichols, and Gordon M. Johnson from 1st Lt to captain.

Another new crew was assigned today: 2nd Lts Ray C. Depew, Edwin J. Cessnun, 1st Lt Cecil F. Clemmons, 2nd Lt Stephen P. Hicks; Cpls Claud E. Hill, Wesley M. Kelley, Justin McCarthy, Pvts Robert B. Cox and Eli J. Rosenman.

10. During today's attack on Oranienburg, the Luftwaffe made a token appearance but the 37 bombers of the 381st sustained no attacks. Between 30 and 40 ME109s and FW 190's appeared in the Berlin area, plus six or eight ME262's jet-propelled fighters. Nine 533rd ship participated, al the complet formation came home safely.

Only one fighter came through our formation, a jet plane which tore through the bomber stream from front to rear during the bomb run. All others were engaged by our Mustang escort in dog-fights a great distance from the bombers.

The following were released to the 70th RD casual pool: S/Sgts Edward B. Bailey, Joseph F. Phelan, Paul W. Schmidt, Ward A. Freeman, Daniel A. Adair and John L. Patrick.

11. Bad weather over France cleared to perfect visibility at the target today and bombardiers visually unloaded their bombs on an oil storage depot at Freiham, seven miles south-west of Munich. Nine aircraft from the 533rd took part, and the formation returned safely. Our P-51 Mustang escort was perfect and there was only moderate flak at the target. Two 535th aircraft collided in mid-air on the return flight but both managed to make it back.

Nineteen EM returned from furloughs today; 1st Lts Jerry Pasek and Kenneth P. Schmalz left for the 70th RD casual pool; Sgt Ed Krouse left for a 15-day course in radar maintenance at RAF Cranwell, Lincs.

12. A mission intended for Beyreuth, Germany today was scrubbed.

The following promotions were announced:- from S/Sgt to T/Sgt: Weldon H. Brudlos, Carl A. Robinson, James G. Noale, Joseph P. Moriarty, Joseph D. Ginsberg and William G. Gardiner.

From Sgt to S/Sgt: John V. McCarthy, Charles A. Brown, Fred W. Benson, Harold H. Hamburg, Robert G. Moore, Robert D. Hayes, Thomas M. Porter, Dennis A. Baker and Marion B. Pancake.

From Cpl to Sgt: Marcus G. James Jr., Richard H. Judd, James E. Moore, William D. Rash, Constantine P. Lowe, Donald M. Bailey, James M. Van Merkestyn, Clifford L. Eshelby and Wilfred J. Monohan.

S/Sgts Leonard L. Fahnestock and Robert J. Gonnering were released to the 70th RD casual pool; five EM were re-classified from 611 to 612; five officers and five EM left for rest homes while four ground EM left on furloughs.

13. Perfect weather conditions made today's raid on the marshalling yards at Neumunster an excellent job. Bombardiers had plenty of time to synchronize and the group's bombs smacked right on the target. Ten 533rd ships and crews took part, and the whole formation returned OK. Flak burst behind our ships but no damage was sustained.

The following combat men left for the 70th RD casual pool: T/Sgts Lester J. LaRiviere, Victor C. Gatzmeier, S/Sgts William C. Sprouse, Herbert G. Lovenson and Richard H. Davis.

The midnight news broadcast announced the sudden death of President Roosevelt, from cerebral hemorrhage, at Warm Springs, Georgia. The news shocked all the men of the squadron and many at first thought it could not be true and would later be denied. The feeling of great personal loss was universal.

A 30-day period of mourning will be observed for the late President. Station colors will fly at half mast and all social activities will be suspended for a month. The 533rd squadron party, scheduled for tonight, will not be held.

Six squadron men were released for transfer to the Infantry: Pfc's Preston Graybill, Allen J. Mayeux, Herbert W. Kosier, Charles A. Teige, Pvt's Ernest P. Reil and Henry A. Harris, who was released from the guardhouse, the unexecuted part of his sentence remitted.

Captain Charles R. McCarthy left for 4-days DS at Station #551 Lymington, Hants., two EM returned from furloughs; 2nd Lts Clarence C. Farr, Archie E. Bredeson and Philip R. Saccomano promoted to 1st Lt.

14. Having received a stand down order last night, the group was non-operational.

Pfc Wriston A. Thompson was assigned to the squadron today from the 7th Station Complement Sq.; T/Sgts Joseph J. Francis and George D. Quick were assigned to the 70th RD casual pool; two EM left on furlough and one returned; two combat officers left for rest home; F/O Welton L. Davis left for TD with the 482nd BG at Alconbury.

15. The group now has 291 missions and the feeling is growing that we may not reach 300 before the end of the war. The 291st was completed today when 37 of our bombers led the First Combat Wing to a perfect attack on gun emplacements before Bordeaux, one of the last pockets of German resistance along the French coast.

The exact target for the mission was Soulac-sur-Mer, and the bombardiers reported ideal weather conditions and a total lack of enemy opposition. Strike photos show concentrated bursts by 1,000 and 2,000 pound bombs directly on the aiming point and MPI. French warships, standing just off the coast, started a terrific bombardment of Bordeaux just after our ships turned off the bomb run. All nine of the 533rd returned safely.

Men of the squadron joined with others of the group in a brief memorial service for President Roosevelt before the control tower at 16.30 hrs today.

The following left for the 70th RD casual pool: 1st Lts Robert E. Coates, Hugh W. Treadwell, William G. Pettitt and 2nd Lt Alfred J. Reynolds.

Pfc Paul Steensrud returned to duty from DS with the 311th Signal Co., at Station #103 Brampton Grange, 1st AD HQ; 2nd Lt William B. Paulus left for TD at Station #121 Bassingbourn, to study H2X maintenance.

16. Today nine bombers of the 533rd took part in the group's attack on the railway bridge at Regensburg, Germany. Although the weather was good and there were no enemy fighter attacks, our bombs fell short. Moderate flak burst behind our formation, which was protected by a strong escort of P-51s.

The Fortress flown by Lt Fink, 534th, was forced down near Mannheim with engine trouble but all our squadron arrived home safely.

The following 2nd Lts were promoted to 1st Lt: Raymond J. Aron, John E. Blankenship, Alonzo W. Goodwin Jr., Paul J. Illig, Harley B. Riga, Phillip R. Saccomano, John M Oldsman and Dale E. Sutherland.

17. With the 381st leading the entire Eighth Air Force, nine bombers of the 533rd participated in an attack on railways sheds at the lower end of the Dresden marshalling yards. For the second successive time, bombing results were poor, the pattern again bursting short of the objective.

Flak was meagre and caused little damage, while enemy fighters were reported in the vicinity and most attacked the 91st BG and the 398th BG. Weather over Germany was very cloudy, making heavy going for the pilots, but all came back to base OK.

Capt Charles R. McCarthy returned from DS and was transferred to Group HQ. He is group personnel officer.

18. Despite sunny, summery weather, the group was non-operational today, having received a stand down last night. A practice mission was flown.

Another group of men left to join the infantry today: Sgts John J. Brooks, Refugio J. Paez, Pfc Francis Smith, Edward L. Maxwell and Pvt Thomas F. McQuaid.

19. A strong cross-wind, causing drift greater than the 30-degrees correctable by the bombsight, sabotaged today's mission, the group's 294th. Only the 533rd and 535th were able to drop their bombs on the marshalling yards at Elsterwerda, as briefed, with unobserved results. The lead squadron unloaded on Falkenburg with excellent results, though it was a fourth choice objective. Our nine bombers attacked Elsterwerda and all returned safely.

Tours completed, the following left for 70th RD casual pool; 1st Lt Robert J. Roush, S/Sgts John Howard, John H. Andrews, Guadalupe Duran and Harlan C. VanOver.

Two EM returned from furloughs and one left; Sgt James E. Welsh was reduced in rank to Pvt; four officers and six EM left for rest homes.

20. Because yesterday's mission was so poorly handled, every ranking officer, with the exception of Lt Col Shackley and Capt Cronin, were ordered on today's mission by Lt Col Conway Hall, group CO, who led the group personally.

Weather was good and the bombers laid their explosives right on the target, the railway junction at Brandenburg, sighting visually. We saw no enemy fighters and flak was meagre, but accurate. The 533rd put up 11 aircraft and ten crews, and all returned safely.

T/Sgt Phillip H. Brown returned to duty from confinement; six EM returned from furlough.

21. For an attack on the marshalling yards at Munich today, the 533rd put up nine bombers for the group formation which dropped explosives by instruments through 10/10th clouds and results were unobserved. There was no opposition and all ships returned with no casualties.

Six officers and seven EM returned to duty from rest homes today.

22. Weather today was cold, wet and windy. There was no mission scheduled. Many men of the squadron saw and enjoyed the London stage production "Love In Idleness", starring Lynn Fontaine and Alfred Lunt, which was presented at the old station theatre.

Five EM returned from furlough.

23. The ground received another stand down order last night and was non-operational today. Not much left in Germany to bomb, and it seems more and more certain that we won't make 300 missions, now on 296.

Operations were notified early this morning that a 534th Fortress, carrying 32 men to Belfast, N. Ireland, for furloughs and leaves, crashed on the Isle of Man killing all passengers and crew. Three men of the 533rd, including the squadron tech supply department head, T/Sgt Joe Gray, T/Sgt Joseph W. Sullivan and Cpl Edward G. Bailey, were killed.

Four EM returned to duty from furloughs.

24. Captain Ewing S. Watson, 533rd commanding officer was promoted to major today. Five combat crewmen, tours completed were transferred to the 70th RD casual pool today.

25. On the group's 297th mission today, an attack on an industrial objective at Pilsen, Czechoslovakia, only two of the formation of 37 bombers released their bomb loads. Weather was very bad, and flak in the vicinity of the target was heavy. The 533rd put up seven ships and crews for the mission and all came home OK.

Three EM left today on furloughs. Russell C. Now, convicted on summary court martial, was reduced to Pvt and ordered to forfeit \$30 of his pay for one month. He is to be confined to base for three months.

26. Non-operational today, a stand down order having been received last night. Russian and American troops linked up today on the Elbe River, leaving still less German territory for our bombers to attack.

Captain George W. Porter, group intelligence photo interpreter, was released from HQ and assigned to the 533rd today.

27. Intermittent rain all day demonstrated why another stand down order was received last night, and the group was idle again today.

The following 2nd Lts were promoted to 1st Lts: Richard Moreau and Abe L. Sultan; 1st Lt Archie E. Nichols, tour completed, was transferred to the 70th RD casual pool.

28. Another stand down. Five EM returned from furloughs; S/Sgt Robert D. Hayes promoted to T/Sgt; Sgts Darwin A. Babcock, Robert L. Hinders, Charles E. Hall and Harker P. Miley to S/Sgts; T/Sgt George F. Comery, tour completed, was

transferred to 70th RD casual pool; T/Sgt John J. Roach, Jr., was released today and transferred to HQ, 302nd Air Transport Wing, in Paris, France.

29. So far as the 381st Bomb Group is concerned, the war appears to be over. Another stand down was received last night and indications are that we've flown our last combat mission. That leaves our total on 297.

Capt Henry W. Bonneau, long No. 1 squadron intelligence officer, was released today and assigned to HQ, U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey; Major Benjamin P. Vickery Jr., assigned from the 532nd today; S/Sgt Don Law, a crew chief, was reduced to Pvt for negligence and inefficiency.

Pfc Anthony Goral, unit equipment clerk, was transferred to the 94th Air Depot Group; Pfc Charles W. Neisz left for two weeks TD at Station #158 Sudbury, Staffs., to study cletrac maintenance.

30. With 15 missions completed this month, the group received another stand down today, despite good flying weather. War must be very near the end.

The squadron strength is now 89 officers and 402 enlisted men.