

RADIO TO CREW

by

John H. Anderson

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DEDICATION

As radio operator on a B-17 crew I salute the other members of the crew:

Pilot--Robert M. Rowe from Plaistow, New Hampshire now living in Newton, New Hampshire and spending his winters in Ft. Pierce, Florida.

Copilot--Robert S. Stewart from Richmond, Virginia now living in Newport News, Virginia

Navigator--Frederick H. Sanborn also from New Hampshire, last address in St. Petersburg, Florida. The crew often called him Chase.

Bombardier--Walter G. Collins formerly of Miami, Florida now deceased.

Engineer and Top Turret Gunner--August W. Maurer formerly of Lake Nebagamon, Wisconsin now residing in Loveland, Colorado.

Ball Turret Gunner--Donald L. Nelson from Minneapolis, Minnesota now living in North Pole, Alaska.

Assistant Engineer and Waist Gunner--George T. Crowder from Selma, Alabama now deceased. Because he was the oldest we called him Pop.

Waist Gunner--Robert J. McIntyre from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. I have been unable to locate Mac who was the youngest on the crew.

Tail Gunner--Ernest Crawford of Cotton Plant, Arkansas now living in Los Angeles, California.

Radio Opeerator--John H. Anderson from Kansas City, Missouri now living in Mexico Beach, Florida.

MISSIONS PERFORMED BY ROWE'S CREW

<u>Number</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Ship</u>	<u>Altitude</u>	<u>Results</u>
1	Cape Griz Nez, France	6/4	Old 66	23,000	missed the target
2	Cape Griz Nez, France	6/5	Sweetheart	19,900	poor
3	Caen, France (D-Day)	6/6	Gremlin Gus II	15,000	not indicated
4	railroad bridge at Nantes, France	6/7	Jake's Jerks	?	good
5	Berck-sur-Mer, France	6/10		23,000	not indicated
	Beauvoir, France	6/15	Sweetheart		#1 engine out-aborted
6	Bremen, Germany	6/18		25,900	not indicated
7	Cognac, France	6/19		27-29,000	did not drop bombs
	another mission later in day	scrubbed at briefing			
8	Magdeberg, Germany	6/20	Old 66	25,300	shacked the target
9	Ruhland, Germany	6/21	Girl of My Dreams	20,000	"shack"
10	Drohobycz, Poland	6/26	Y873		unknown
11	Beziers, France	7/5		?	unknown
12	Mantes-Gassicourt, France	7/8	N559		railroad bridge
	Munich	7/13			scheduled abortion
13	Southern France	7/14	M123	[very low]	dropped supplies to Marquis
14	Munich-Stuttgart, Germany	7/16	prob M123	24,100	10/10th clouds PFF
15	Houpeville or Maulaunoy, France	7/17	434	23,000	excellent results on pilotless aircraft install.
16	Kiel, Germany [Kluth as pilot]	7/18	Little Donna	25,300	unknown
17	Schweinfurt, Germany	7/19	098	25,000	many bombs missed the MPI
	Wetzler, Germany	7/20			scheduled abortion
	practice mission 3 hrs.	7/22			
	practice mission 3½ hrs	7/23			
18	St. Lo area	7/24	Q289	18,000	only wing in 8th AF to drop bombs
				16,000	tight pattern covering target
19	St. Lo area	7/25	098	13,000	mission scrubbed
				28,600	mission scrubbed
20	Stuttgart, Germany	7/25	098		PFF method
21	Merseburg, Germany	7/27	098	24,000	black smoke in target area
	Merseburg, Germany	7/28	098	26,000	indicated direct hits
22	Mery-sur-Oise	7/29			excellent results
		8/2		22,900	mission scrubbed
		8/3			poor results
23	Hamburg, Germany	8/4		26,000	excellent results
24	Berlin, Germany [Kluth-pilot]	8/6	098	25,000	excellent results
	(M123 is Girl of My Dreams and K098 is Little Donna)				

INTRODUCTION

Before I start:

It is 1990 and for quite some time I have been thinking of writing up my war experiences so I could share them with my crew members and my children. I am sure my children have heard bits and pieces, and my wife has probably heard the story of my being shot down so many times she could tell it herself. However, the urge to put it down on paper has been growing. So, to satisfy this urge I shall try to recount the events of my army experience with the emphasis upon my crew training and combat experience. I kept a diary from 1933 through 1952, but the early years were lost when I moved away from Athens, Georgia. The 1944 diary was kept by the army after I was shot down but returned to me after I got back to the states. I transferred the notes I wrote in Germany which were still readable to the 1944 diary. The first part of the notes of 1945 were almost unreadable, and I never did anything with them. My mother saved my letters, and when I get to it I shall read them and incorporate pertinent material into this story. Trying to decipher all my notes may be a problem. A group of letters from the kin of my crew members to my mother is also available. This should prove to be an interesting journey to try and recall events not mentioned anywhere but still a part of my memory. Even if no one reads this I shall enjoy the reminiscences and, I hope, put on record the events of one combat crew in the great war known as World War II almost a half century ago.

After I finished:

Now it is 1991 and arrangements for a reunion of the crew are being made for August in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. The 388th Bomb Group Association holds an annual get-together, and while I have considered going I never have. I did not know about this organization until Maurer sent me information about it after I retired to Florida. I became a life member and have enjoyed the informative newsletter which comes out about four times each year.

This narrative has become a longer project than I expected. While I was at it I wrote up my experiences as a POW, but that will have to wait for another time. Another organization, made up of members of Stalag Luft IV, started recently and perhaps I can have that story ready for some future meeting with them.

This story involves the activities of one crew from the middle of January, 1944 through August 6, 1944. That is less than eight months, but a lot did happen. I have finally got it down on paper. Now if I can get it reproduced for my crew and my children I shall have accomplished my goal.

Chapter 1

Background

Since this narrative takes place in 1944 I shall precede it with a short summary of my life which began in 1922. I was born on December 16th at 2920 East 30th Street in Kansas City, Missouri where I lived until my induction into the army. My father was a hardware merchant with his store at 31st and Prospect, the Anchor Hardware #5. He moved the store to 31st and Montgall some time in the early thirties. The family included my father, John Henry, my mother, Ethel, and my older sister Vivian, born in 1919. Before I entered school my mother taught me to sing, and I evidently learned a number of hymns and carols which I sang for my church, the Linwood Methodist Church. Dr. William Stidger, who later became a rather famous writer, was pastor, and he let me sing over the radio, station WOQ, just before Christmas when our Wednesday night services were broadcast. My picture was put in the paper, and my dad kept a scrapbook of letters and telephone messages that were sent about my singing. A thousand copies of my picture were made and sent out upon request. I received the title of "The Christmas spirit of 1927".

Benton School was just a block away and I entered in the middle of the school year but skipped a half grade in upper first grade so was a bit younger than my classmates. I remember well alumnus Walt Disney coming to Benton while I was in the second grade (probably in 1929), and he showed everyone in assembly how he drew Mickey Mouse out of circles.

I got to meet him many years later when he returned to Benton for a visit. When he started making feature length films he arranged for the student body of Benton to see the film at a downtown theater. I had graduated before then.

In third grade I took about a year of piano lessons from Mrs. Shoemaker. When she insisted that I practice the Hanon exercises I prevailed on my mother to let me quit (much to my regret later). I took up the clarinet in fourth grade and later played in the band in high school. At church I sang with the Bobby Watkins Memorial Boys' Choir under Mr. Forest Shoemaker. I sang in the chorus in junior high and the youth choir at church in high school. In 1935 I graduated from Benton and from Central Junior High in 1936. During my senior year at Central High I took a course in Harmony and graduated in 1939 at the age of 16.

In October 1989 the Central High class of 1939 held their 50th year reunion at the Marriott in Overland Park, Kansas. I attended and felt privileged to lead the singing of the Alma Mater at the banquet. Central High is still in existence, but plans are made to replace it with a larger school. Over 600 students were in my class and 96 plus 18 of other classes attended the reunion, most of them with their spouses. It was the first reunion for this class.

Both of my parents and my sister attended Kansas State in Manhattan and I expected I would too, but I took some voice lessons at the Conservatory of Music of Kansas City and they, the people at the Conservatory, convinced me to

go there for my college education. I worked under an NYA (National Youth Administration) program and cleaned one floor of the building every day for \$15 a month to help pay expenses. Living at home saved money also. The Conservatory, located in the Armour home, was at 35th and Walnut, and I often walked the 35 blocks. The alternative was to take a street car on 31st and transfer at Main Street. Many times I raced a street car from Main to Benton Boulevard and sometimes won the race.

In my junior year a student government was formed and I was elected president. By my senior year (1942) most of the boys had gone to war. The draft age had been reduced to 20 and was going to be lowered to 19. I was 19 and could see that I would probably get drafted before the school year was over. Junior College had moved out to 39th Street, and I enrolled for three courses there: American History, World History, and Economics. Since I had received advanced placement in music theory because of the high school course in Harmony I was able to take more advanced theory courses my senior year. I enrolled in 17 hours credit at the Conservatory, 11 hours at Junior College, did some student teaching twice a week at an elementary school, directed the church choir at the Friends Church, and worked at the airport on weekends. I got the job as Clearance Officer at Ong Airport the summer of 1942 with the hope it might defer me until I graduated. As luck

would have it I had to report for my physical on my twentieth birthday, and my draft notice came ordering me to report on January 15, 1943. I went to my draft board and asked for an extension of time so I could complete my studies. When they found out my field of study was music they said it was not necessary for national defense. They did allow me two more weeks to finish the semester, so I was inducted January 30, 1943 at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas.

During the seven days I was given to wind up my affairs I sang and played piano on a recital, had a special graduation ceremony just for me (I received the degree Bachelor of Music in Public School Music.), had a fraternity dance at which we had to invite soldiers since only five boys remained in school, and it felt like I had completed a chapter in my life. I was glad my busy senior year was over and that I had enough credits to graduate. Many of my Conservatory friends wrote to me in the service.

On February 6th I reported back to Ft. Leavenworth. About a week later we were bused to Kansas City and put on a train going west into Kansas at sunset. Just before I went to sleep I could see by the car licences that we were still in Kansas. Our destination must be California. Imagine my surprise when I woke up in Arkansas. The train stopped at Memphis and left going into Mississippi and then Alabama. The destination must be Florida. Another surprise: the train pulled into Chattanooga. Later, I got a railroad map so I could see where and how I was going.

Eventually, the train went to Atlanta and on to St. Petersburg, Florida. My group was placed in a hotel downtown, and we learned we were in the Air Corps. When I had been interviewed the fact that I could play a number of instruments made my first choice the band. Since I had worked at an airport the Air Corps was second choice. The interviewer felt sure I would end up in a band. Evidently, the second choice won out.

For over a week we took a battery of tests to show what skills we had. The food was excellent and I tried to eat everything including vegetables I did not like. We were not allowed to go out by ourselves. One day I felt sick and the officer told me to walk to a doctor's office a few blocks away. I stopped and bought a hamburger on the way and immediately felt better.

In 1985 I went back to St. Petersburg and located the hotel. The area had changed and the building was now a rest home. Many times I had run up and down six flights of stairs to join a formation in front of the hotel. We were not allowed to use the elevators. When all the tests were over we were transported to a place a few miles north of town called Tent City. We lived eight to a tent and we started basic training.

Tent City left a lot to be desired. It had only been in existence about three weeks, and I understand that it was closed about four weeks after I left for being unhealthful. At night it got so cold I would sleep with all my clothes on. Up before dawn breakfast was served under the lights, but you ate mostly in

the dark. The food was unappetizing and no salt was available. I remember the sweet, green liquid served for many of the meals. We marched out to the drill field as it got light and had drill, calisthenics, and lectures. Back for lunch by which time you had to shed most of the clothes because it was so hot. Afternoons were spent like the mornings and dinner was just like lunch. To get into the PX you had to wait in line for over an hour and no food was available. After three weeks we were allowed a pass to go into town. A street car ran every half hour. I went to town once, got a good meal, and went to a movie. Luckily, I got on the last street car coming back which had fellows hanging on the outside. Back to camp after midnight it was hard to find the right tent. I decided it was not worth the effort.

One day I woke up with a sore throat. I tried to get some salt but none was available. By evening it was worse, so I went on sick call. It was raining and the line was about a block long. I finally got to see the doctor around 8 o'clock. He examined my throat and said, "Naso-pharyngitis, send to hospital." I didn't know what that was but I figured I could get some salt at the hospital. An hour later two ambulances arrived to take 12 men to the hospital at McDill Field. When we arrived we were told that beds were only available for six, so the six worst cases were taken. The ambulance driver heard that Drew Field had a hospital, so he decided to go there. Unfortunately, he got lost and we rode all over Florida looking for the base. Around 2:30 A.M. we arrived and after forms were filled out I

was sent to a ward where the bed had sheets. The attendant gave me a glass of orange juice which was the best I had ever had. Early the next morning a nurse came in and announced that the doctor was sick and would not be in. When she got to me she said, "Stay in bed and rest. The doctor will see you tomorrow." So I did as she said. The same thing happened the next three days. I took some salt and my throat got better. Finally, the doctor came and found nothing wrong with me, so I was placed in a recuperation ward for 24 hours. I got a pass to walk around the base. It was a nice day, and I certainly enjoyed seeing a real army base. Since I did not have a uniform I could not leave the base. The next day a truck arrived from Tent City with about twenty fellows for the hospital. I was the only one going back.

A few days later I was marching in the field when a messenger came and told me to report to a certain tent. There I was given a telegram from our doctor in Kansas City that said my father had suffered a heart attack and was in St. Joseph's Hospital. An emergency ten-day furlough was arranged, and the Red Cross loaned me enough money to make the trip. I found my father doing pretty well. He enjoyed listening to my experiences, especially about my hospital stay. It was hard to leave when the time came, but I had to report back. While I was gone my group did a series of drills involving carrying a rifle. I never carried a rifle in my army career.

My test scores showed that I had passed everything. I had my choice of schools. When I inquired about the band I was told

I would have to be assigned to a base first. I seriously thought of going to mechanics school since I knew practically nothing about mechanics. The interviewer said that musicians usually did well in radio school, so I finally made that my choice. It was nice to have basic training behind me and to be able to wear some insignia. Before long I was promoted to PFC.

A train took a group of us to Chicago and then west to Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Radio school was a twenty-week course with four hours of instruction and 2 two-hour sessions of code a day. I was in Class 44 and was on the night shift going to school from midnight to 8 A.M. I found it interesting but had trouble with code. We started tests at four words a minute with 16 words per minute necessary for graduation. We had one day off a week. After one day of the third week I received another notice that I was needed at home. Another emergency furlough was arranged, and when I got to the hospital and kissed my dad he uttered my name and that was the last knowledgeable thing he said. He died the day after Easter at the age of 59. Mother went with me back to Sioux Falls since a family day had been arranged at the base. From there she went to visit my sister who was working on her master's at Iowa State at Ames.

One of the mistakes I made was attending class the first night I returned. Now in Class 46 I attended the same lecture I had heard before I left. I had trouble staying awake and the substitute teacher gave me a bad mark for the day. This kept me from graduating with honors many weeks later. I also had my flying physical exam the next morning, and since my blood

the gun but stand behind it. The sound can be deafening.

Only one night were we allowed a pass to go to town. I attended a concert by Larry Adler, harmonica player. I never got to any of the casinos.

For the fifth week we were sent to Indian Pass and started to fly in B-17's. I may have got a headache but I did not get air sick which pleased me very much. I made the best score in my group shooting from the top turret. Thanksgiving came that week and we had a nice turkey dinner. I remember pulling guard duty one cold night at Indian Pass.

Upon graduation at gunnery school we were promoted to the rank of sergeant. I was never a corporal. A 15-day furlough was granted. We were to report to Salt Lake City on December 24th. I remember that the train was crowded, and I had to stand almost all the way across the state of Kansas getting back to Kansas City.

When I got home I wrote a letter to my commanding officer requesting a 3-day extension to my furlough so that I could be home for Christmas. Just as we sat down for our Christmas dinner on December 22nd a telegram arrived stating that my extension was granted. I did not have to leave until Christmas afternoon. We had another Christmas dinner that day.

Many of the fellows in my group had requested an extension but I was the only one who received it. Most of them sent telegrams. I guess it was the letter that did it.

At Salt Lake it took me two days to qualify on the pistol range. I spent New Year's Eve in town.

pressure was too low I did not pass.

Eventually, code became easier. I got hung up on 12 wpm for quite awhile. A new radio set was introduced into the curriculum about the 14th week. Half the class (A through M) took the training and the other half (N through Z) skipped it. The Instructor read the sheet of instructions the first session and then told stories for the rest of the week. On the final exam we were tested on the set and the entire class failed. We were placed in Class 54 and had to repeat a few weeks. By final exam time the set had been dropped from the curriculum in typical army fashion. I still had not passed 16 wpm in code, but I took the test for 20, 18, and 16 wpm and passed 18.

The next-to-last week we spent out in the field and were not allowed on base. One night I decided to cross the airport to get on base and that was rather exciting, trying to avoid being seen tranversing the airport. I think I had a milk shake and then went back. That week I had my first airplane ride in the army. I was a passenger on a Piper Cub and tried to write down some code coming in on radio. I got air sick which concerned me because I wanted to fly if possible. I passed the physical except for low blood pressure.

From Sioux Falls a train took some of us to gunnery school at Las Vegas, Nevada. It was a six-week course. The first week we worked on a .30-calibre machine gun. It was on a .50-calibre machine gun the second week. For the final exam that week we had to assemble it blindfolded. The third week we went to the malfunction range. I learned never to stand beside

Chapter 2

1944 Begins

On the 2nd I got paid \$39.03. All during my PFC days at Sioux Falls and Las Vegas I got \$54.00 a month. Of that \$6.50 went for insurance, \$18.50 went for a savings bond, and after my father died I sent \$22.00 home. Thus I never did have much money to spend. It was nice to now have a little more cash. On the 3rd I was transferred to Kearns, Utah and it snowed all day. On the 5th I had five fillings made at the dental clinic. That night I went to the service club and ate a big steak dinner. Then I got two malts and pie ala mode.

My buddies had already started the refresher courses so they told me what to expect. I breezed through the tests and the code and graduated on the 7th, much quicker than any of my friends. On the 9th I was sent back to the air base at Salt Lake City. Three days were spent on the range firing machine guns.

From here on the underlined material is taken directly from my diary. I have eliminated most of the material which is not pertinent to this story.

January 15--Put on the alert which is all right with me. Met mechanic assigned to my crew. Nice fellow I think. Going to Ardmore. Got list of crew. If my recollection is correct this must have been Nelson.

Sunday, 16--not much all day. Had turkey for dinner. Had physical exam but it wasn't much.

17--Left to shipping center. Met copilot, 2 more mechanics and armorer. Seems like a good crew. Got on pullman car. Finally pulled out. Tiresome traveling. Sleeping in upper berth.

This was Stewart and probably Crawford and Crowder. The armorer was McIntyre.

18--Still travelling. Stopped at Salida to stretch our legs. Got magazines and cookies from USO at Pueblo. Back in Central war time.

19--Finally arrived (Ardmore, Oklahoma) around 11:00. Assigned to barracks 321. Nice arrangement at mess hall. Had three shots and a vaccination. Warmer down here.

20--Woke us up at 6:00. Went to breakfast and to hear lecture about oxygen equipment. Went to PX and had milk shake, 3 today. Went to theater and saw sex movie and lecture. Also a film on the Articles of War. Had clothing inspection. Copilot came over and talked to crew.

I did not record it but I recall the first time I met Rowe. He came to our barracks and introduced himself. He was 6'4" tall and made a good impression.

21--Stayed in bed until 9:15. Had 10:00 formation. Got milk shake with August Maurer, the 1st engineer. Nice weather.

22--Up at 7:45. Had roll call at 8:40. Went to briefing which took 'til 11:15. Sat around barracks. Saw pilot and asked about passes. Got one in orderly room. Took shower and went to town. Ate with McIntyre, armorer. Went to dance at auditorium.

Sunday, 23--Attended radio school all day. Took about 12 tests on everything about radio.

24--Went to school again. Had to take two more shots.

25--Ate breakfast for a change. Went to school and took code

and listened to lectures. Have 20-word code speed now. Went to show and saw "Gung Ho", about the marines. Went to mess hall with Don Nelson. Ate breakfast after midnight.

26--We didn't do much in class. Had talks on security and procedure. Signed payroll.

27--The crew had the day off. I had to go to school as usual. Had 2 vanilla milk shakes. Heard 3-hour lecture on liason set. Had chicken for lunch and lemon pie. Played cards with fellows.

28--Had lectures on trouble-shooting. Crew flew in morning.

Among the papers I still have is my flight record. Rowe let me borrow his flight record, and I listed the discrepancies between the two records. On January 25th he flew for 4:45 but, evidently, the crew did not fly. On the 28th he has listed 4:30 day, :30 night. My flight record lists no flying until February. Since I mention it in my diary I should have credit for the flight. It may be that we took off thirty minutes before dawn.

29--Finished tests and got out at noon. Ate dinner with Nelson. Went to town at 8:30. Went to dance at auditorium. Girls from Denton, Texas (TSCW) played in orchestra and put on program. Got back to camp at 1:00.

Sunday, 30--Stayed in bed until 12:30. Ate chicken dinner. Had good supper. Went to church. Heard Chaplain Phillips. Copilot there.

31--Went to school again. Got results of some of our tests. I made 2 on all they gave the grades of. Exchanged my winter flying

clothes. Went down to operations on the line. Went through plane looking at radio equipment.

Rowe flew five hours but crew did not fly. We were designated as Crew #2525, Section C, Flight 11.

February 1--Got up at 4:30. Ate breakfast and stood formation at 5:10. Went down to briefing and helped pick up parachutes. Took off at 7:00. Listened to liason receiver. Enjoyed the flight. Engine #1 started to smoke so we landed and changed ships. Listened to compass up in nose. Went to armament school for 2 hours.

Rowe's log reads: B-17F 4:15

My flight record has 2:00 and 2:15

2--Formation at 5:10. Went down to operations but we were standby crew and got the morning off.

3--Slept rather late. Had formation at 11:40. Went to pistol range at noon. Got 56%. Saw movie on first aid. Went to calisthenics. Went down to operations. Our crew didn't get ship until late. Saw movie on German planes. Finally did fly. Operated radio. Flew over Dallas and Fort Worth. Got back at 1:15. Ate breakfast.

Rowe's log reads: B-17E 3:20

Mine concurs at 3:20.

4--Formation at 12:40. Cleaned parts of gun and saw movie on aircraft identification. Had calisthenics. Played some with baseball. Flying again. Didn't take off until 9:00. Had instructor with me. I checked out OK. Made six contacts in two hours. One engine stopped on us so we landed early. Enjoyed the trip.

Ate breakfast.

Rowe's log: B-17E Ft. Worth. Texas 2:45

Same amount of time on mine.

5--Got oxygen mask after formation at 12:40. Went to line armament shop and cleaned guns. Took calisthenics. Most of crew at dentist.

6--Up early but no flying on account of no ships. Had radio briefing. Saw pictures on hand-to-hand combat. Went to .22 range. Did pretty well.

7--Up at 4:30. Ate breakfast and went to briefing. No ships so we got to come back to the barracks. Slept 'til about noon. Had two hours on position firing. Went to lecture by colonel.

8--Didn't get up 'til noon. Went to matinee with Crawford. Saw "Miracle of Morgan's Creek", a good comedy. Was going to town but changed my mind. Ate breakfast at 12:30 with Maurer and Nelson.

9--Ate big lunch. Turned in parachute and got oxygen mask fitted. Formation at 11:40. Had two hours on guns. Flying again. Weather closed down so we only flew for an hour and a half. Transmitter off calibrations and I didn't find it out for an hour.

Rowe's log: B-17F local 2:10

2:10 on mine also.

10--Two more hours of gunnery. Got paid \$30.75. Got cold and windy. Had radio briefing. Watched movies. Came back at 10:00.

Sat around talking for a couple of hours. Mess hall caught fire. Had fun watching it. Almost got pies after it was put out. Went to another mess hall and ate dinner.

11--Saw intelligence movie. Interesting. Gunnery exam. Open house on post. Alot of people looking at everything. Flight 11 had pictures taken for book. Looked at exhibits. Went to show with crew. Saw "The Flying Seebees". Exchanged upper for lower bunk with Crowder.

These were the pictures for the classbook. Since Sanborn is not included he must have joined the crew after this date. The pilots must have navigated on the flying up to then. Lt. Collins is listed as navigator but this is a mistake since he was our bombardier. Unfortunately, our crew never did have their picture taken together.

12--Up early. Went down to fly but didn't because bombardier wasn't there. Corrected a facility chart. [I have no idea what that is now.] Saw another movie. Stayed there until 11:45. Ate at mess hall behind barracks. Heard lecture by wing commander in RAF on position flying. Went to turret school for little over an hour.

Sunday, 13--Got up at 12:25. Swept and mopped the floor. Ate in a hurry and went to show. Saw "Madame Curie". Good picture. Rained and sleeted. Went to chapel. I played organ. Ate breakfast with crew. Past 1:30.

14--Formation at 11:40. Went to carbine range. Almost missed bus. Had PT. Went down to fly at 6:30. No ships. Corrected facility charts again. Got checked out in turrets. Saw movies. Our crew got ship at 11:00. Command set not working right and then I messed it up. We didn't fly. Ate breakfast. What a day! Nelson was drunk in afternoon and pilot bawled him out. Crawford left early and came back to sleep.

15--Had G.I. party. Cleaned barracks good. 12:40 formation. Had lecture on carbine rifle and then field stripped the gun. Had P.T. Went to show after hurried dinner. Saw "Lifeboat". Clear day rather cold.

16--Went to briefing. As usual no flying. Saw movies and corrected facility sheet. Got told off by the tactical officer for being late at carbine range. Pilot had to stay with me.

As I recall this incident I missed roll call at a formation because I waited for mail call. The mail clerk would read off the letters alphabetically, so I got my mail and then hurried to the formation. The tactical officer thought at first I had missed the formation and dressed me down for being AWOL. When I proved that I had attended he spent about five minutes on the matter of being prompt. His English was poor but he was right. I should have been on time. After we walked out Rowe asked me if I had had enough of a reprimand and I said I had. Having my pilot there was more embarrassing than the lecture I received.

Got pass and went to town. Got ride in truck to Ft. Worth. I drove part way. Truck driver, Mr. Dalton, invited me to his house.

Ate dinner there.

One of the girls I knew at the Conservatory, Geneva Davis, lived in Ft. Worth. After dinner at Mr. Dalton's house he let me use the phone to call all the Davises in the phone book. After about thirty calls some man said that Geneva had gone to Houston on a visit. I never did know if that was the person I knew as I have never seen her since then.

He drove me to town. Went to service club. Stayed there all night.

18--Stayed in bed until 1:00. Walked around the city. Got six rides in going to Dallas. Almost went to Denton but changed my mind. Went to show. Saw "His Butler's Sister". Good entertainment. Went to bus station. 3 of my crew members drunk. Got back to base at 5:15. Ate breakfast. Cold today without overcoat.

19--Formation at 11:40. Line armament shop for an hour. I cleaned guns. Went to chapel. Practiced organ. Went to P.T. Had meeting with crew. We were assigned to fly to K.C. but the weather was bad so we just stayed in ship for an hour. Saw a couple of good movies about the war. Left at 10:00.

This was a mission with great expectation. I figured if we could take off the weather might close down and we would have to land in Kansas City. It came close to happening but not close enough. It would have been fun to show K.C. to the crew.

Sunday, 20--Had physical inspection and yellow fever shot. Cleaned some more guns and heard lecture on identification of ships at sea. Listened to radio. We finally flew bombing

mission but quit early. Didn't drop bombs. Door came off ball turret. Radio net messed up. Cleaned briefing room. Ate breakfast.

Rowe's log lists B-17F local 3:45 and my flight record concurs.

21--Cleaned barracks and latrine. Formation at 12:40. Lectures on guns (oil buffer group and cover group). Had P.T. Ate and went to show with crew. Saw "Jane Eyre". Good picture but seemed to lack something.

22--Up early to fly but didn't get off the ground until 8:00.

I contacted AACS station twice. I feel like an operator now. Heard medical lecture and then had test on position firing. Left for Oklahoma City but after walking a couple of miles and it was getting dark I reversed directions and got a ride [back] to Ardmore. Went to show. Saw "Bomber's Moon". A poor picture. Back to bed in barracks at 11:30.

Rowe's log reads B-17F local 4:50 as does my flight record.

23--Crowder woke me up at 9:30. Had milk shake and went to town. Got round trip bus ticket to Oklahoma City. Inexpensive. Wrote home from there. Played ping pong with sailor at USO. A cadet came in and introduced me to June Porter and his wife. We went to the Rainbow Room and danced and drank. Went upstairs to the Beacon Club. Quite exclusive. Followed police car to a murder. Took bus back arriving at 4:30.

One of the distinguishing marks about combat crew members was the bright red patch they were allowed to wear on the left front of their uniform under their wings. It was this patch

which caused the cadet to speak to me. He needed a date for his wife's girlfriend. I may have been to a nightclub before but it was the first time I had ever taken a drink. Oklahoma had a law against buying drinks but patrons were allowed to bring a bottle in a sack. The Rainbow Room was near the top of some tall building and the cadet knew there was gambling up on the next floor, so he made arrangements for us to go up. As I recall there were slot machines there and we played a few times. The evening was quite an experience for me but I really did not feel comfortable. I must admit it had more action than my nights in Fort Worth and Dallas.

24--Sleepy. Had roll call at 11:40. Went to gunnery class on maintenance. Went to dentist with part of crew. Got two teeth filled. Got back for part of radio class. Went down to fly but ships didn't come in until 8:00. They had to replace liason set so we didn't take off until 11:10. Rough flying. Started raining. Too much static to get into net. Got QDM. Ate breakfast.

Rowe's log: B-17F local 2:00 (night)

My flight record has 1:15 on the 24th and 0:45 on the 25th.

25--Formation at 11:10. Went down to fly but pilot had cold and couldn't go on high altitude mission so we didn't get plane 'til late. Taxied out and taxied back. No flying as usual. I wonder if we will ever get all our time in. Went to PX and show with Crawford and Nelson. Saw "Standing Room Only". Good comedy.

26--Slept late in morning. Went to show with Crawford and Nelson. Saw "Hey, Rookie". Punk. Went to town at 9:00. Stopped in at

dance but didn't dance. Went to show and saw "Hers to Hold".
A fairly good picture. Came back to camp. Had to stand on bus.
Sunday, 27--Up at 6:45. Three hours of radio. Went to fly but
ceiling was too low. Saw movies. Started raining. Went to
chapel. Played for services. Played organ with lieutenant,
nice time.

28--Formation at 11:40. Had code and blinkers and lecture on
Q signals. Cleaned guns. Had PT achievement test--66 sit-ups.
Flying again. Easy tonight. 16 contacts in four hours. Sort
of rough. Ate breakfast.

Rowe's log: local 4:40 (night) Same on my FR.

29--Our crew was standby for high altitude gunnery mission. Did
get a ship and go on a bombing mission at 9000 ft. Got 9 con-
tacts in little over two hours. Tired. Flying is quite tire-
some. Ate big dinner. Went to show with Crawford. Saw
"Phantom Lady". Good thriller.

Rowe's log: B-17F local 3:00 Same on my FR

March 1--Formation at 7:10. Took code for awhile. Got paid \$123.15.
That's a lot. Went to dentist with crew. Major checked my
teeth and all OK. Went on long bombing mission. Flew in for-
mation. Had radio hatch open. I about froze. Flew at 9000 ft.
over Little Rock and Tulsa. Didn't have to transmit. Went to
show with Nelson and Crowder. Saw "Frisco Kid". I'm going to
have to stop going to so many shows.

Rowe's log: B-17F Little Rock, Ark., Muscogee, Okla. 5:10

Formation 13 ships. My flight record says 5:10 also. Muscogee and Tulsa are about 40 miles apart. Maybe we flew over both.

2--Down at briefing room at 6:30. Standby crew again. Saw war movie for the second time. Had PT at 2:00. Went to show and saw "Broadway Rhythm" with Crawford.

3--Had PT at 10:00. Played ping pong with Sanborn, the navigator. I beat him. Went down to fly but out crew didn't get a ship. Rained. Got malt with Crawford. Went to USO camp show. Heard two singers, a piano player, Miss Iturbi, and a dancer. Got milk shake with Maurer.

4--Up early. Only four crews flew. We were supposed to go to high altitude but bad weather. Flew formation at 2500. Cold even there. It got rough and I got sick. Felt better after we landed. Laid around barracks during afternoon. Went to town at about 8:00 with Maurer. Went to show. Saw "Claudia". Got a big steak. Stopped at dance for awhile. Tired as usual.

Rowe's log: B-17F local 5:40 formation 4 ships

My flight record has 5:40 but wrong date of March 5th.

Sunday, 5--Went to church service. First time in the morning service since I've been in Ardmore. Had good dinner. Standby crew so we didn't fly. Had talk about radio logs. Went to organ recital at chapel. Heard Lt. Cass.

6--Up early for morning flight. Our crew excused. Got pass to Tulsa. Went to town at 8:15 and got round trip bus ticket to K.C. Rode with Paul Smith as far as Oklahoma City. Went to Katz Drug store and USO. Rode on after five hours there. Ate at Tonkawa.

Changed buses again at Wichita. One hour layover.

7--Arrived in K.C. at 8:00. Nobody at station so I called home. Vivian and Mother at train station. I took street car there to see them. Ate breakfast at home. Took Vivian to work. Stopped by school. Saw alot of people. (Ate lunch with Mother at Bluebird Cafeteria.) Ate pot luck dinner at Criterion [Sunday School class] dinner. Went to USO and got two tickets and one box seat ticket for philharmonic concert. Heard Beethoven's 4th and a Mozart violin concerto. Also a number by Gardner Read and Romeo and Juliet Overture. Got hamburgers and went to bus station. Bus left at 11:55. I had stay of 16 hours [in K.C.]. I guess it was worth while.

A pass was only supposed to be good for 200 miles so I got the pass for Tulsa which was just about the limit. M.P.'s checked the train stations, so I took a bus and had no trouble. I remember giving up my seat on the street car for an old lady. If our mission to K.C. had not been cancelled we might have landed in K.C. on Feb. 19th and I would not have felt the need to go home. It was a full day and a memorable one.

8--Changed buses at Wichita and Oklahoma City. Got back to base at 6:15. Formation at 6:40. Down to briefing room. Saw movies. Our crew didn't fly as usual. The tech sergeant said I was a good operator. Quite tired. Ate breakfast.

9--Got up at 10:30 for inspection for mumps. Cleaned barracks and the major didn't like it so we cleaned it again. Met Nelson's wife at PX. All the combat crews restricted to barracks. Went

to briefing again but no flying. Saw some good movies on the infantry. Ate breakfast with crew.

10--Cleaned latrine. Got another typhus shot. As usual went down to fly but ceiling was too low. Stayed in radio shack for awhile. Saw some more movies. Getting tiresome. Ate breakfast.

11--Put new doors on barracks. Woke me up. Went on gunnery mission. I fired from waist gun. The instructor pilot was very unhappy about our crew. We weren't on the ball. Went to show with Crawford. Saw "The Curse of the Cat People" and "My Best Gal". The first not bad but the second sort of smelled.

Rowe's log: B-17F local 1:55 Air to ground gunnery.

My FR lists 2:00. I wonder who was piloting the plane the last five minutes.

Sunday, 12--Early flight. Rode 1½ hours and landed due to weather. After two hours went up again. I didn't do so good. Went to chapel with Crawford. Good service.

Rowe's log: B-17F local 3:10. My flight record only lists 2:10.

13--Woke us up early for inspection which they didn't have. Went to PT. Went over obstacle course. Didn't have time to eat lunch. Went down to fly. Went on high altitude mission. Command transmitter out--later liason transmitter didn't work. Got pretty cold. Flew with hatch off. Ate dinner after 8:00 P.M. Went to PX and got black cow with Maurer.

Rowe's log: B-17F local 5:35 Formation 2 ships. My flight record records no more flights in March.

14--On early mission but weather never opened up. Saw movies on first aid in planes. Had physical inspection. Went to show with part of crew. Saw "Bridge of San Luis Rea". Good picture. Had long talks about everything.

15--Stayed in bed until 10:30. Started raining and rained all day. Walked down to briefing room in rain. Didn't have to stay. Got wet. Went to show as usual. Saw "Stage Door Canteen" for the second time. Will probably fly tomorrow.

16--Early mission but as usual--the ceiling was too low. Corrected a facility chart. The crew went out to the ship and had a talk. Practiced ditching. 35 seconds it took us. Crowder's wife coming to town. Half the crew went to hear lecture on venereal disease. Ate in a hurry and went to show. Saw "Tender Comrade". Worthwhile seeing. Went to town. Got pineapple soda. Stopped at USO.

17--Had captain sign pass to go to Denton. Stopped by chapel and saw chaplain. Ate and went to town. Hitchhiked to Denton. Rode to Gainesville with a funny guy who was trying to divorce his wife. After arriving in Denton I walked over and visited Jean Glass. Jean Glass was another of my Conservatory classmates. The school at Denton had been the Texas State College of Women but became North Texas State. I'm not sure which it was in 1944. She took me around the campus of her college. Went to a recital at her school. A fellow fraternity member played the organ. Good recital. Walked uptown and ate again. Took her home and then got myself a room. Nice bed.

18--Got up at 9:00. Wandered around town. Called Jean up and went to see her again. Ate at the cafe in the school. Nice meal. Came back on bus. Lt. Collins and Lt. Sanborn on bus. Rained. Went down to briefing room. Saw part of movie. Got released early. Had fights with Maurer. Fun.

Sunday, 19--Woke up at 8:00. Cold. Snowed some today. Met Bill Pope at PX and went to town. Went to First Orthodox Baptist Church and SS. Nice people there. Sang in choir. Ate dinner in town and went to show. Saw "Around the World". Went to briefing but got let go early. Went to show with Maurer. Saw "The Purple Heart". Good movie.

20--Briefing at 6:00. Took off at 8:00. Flew over Amarillo and Hutchison and landed at Delhart, Texas. Our crew had case of coke and sandwiches. Just like a picnic. Took off again and flew at 16,000 back to Ardmore. Ten hours of flying altogether. I made two AACCS contacts. Pilot used liason as command set. Tired. Ate and talked. Had milk shake at PX.

Rowe"s log: B-17F Amarillo, Tex., Hutchinson, Kan., Delhart, Tex. 10:00 formation 3 ships

21--Formation at 12:10. Didn't get up much before then. Raining. Saw movie. Had another fun fight with Maurer. Didn't get much done today. Still owe 23 letters.

This is the second time I mention a fun fight with Maurer. I cannot recall what it was all about but it was evidently fun.

22--Got up early in order to fly. Was down at briefing room at

6:00. Came back to barracks and slept all morning. Went back at 11:30. Dismissed until 2:00. Ate and talked with Nelson and Maurer at PX. Started crew on learning code. Through at 5:00.

We thought it would be a good idea for the crew to learn Morse code. As near as I can recall Crawford continued working on it longer than anyone else.

23--Started ground school again. Had Jam Handy and five hours of communications. Had an hour on ditching procedure. Went to show. Took Maurer and Mac. Saw "See Here, Private Hargrove". C section had formation. Went on 24-hour alert. Surprise! Saw Crowder's wife. Crew was processed at 2:00. Got pair of gloves and overcoat. Signed statement of charges for pair of socks. To bed after 5:00.

24--Up at 10:00. Went down to fly. Was to go in formation but our ship was grounded. Got another and went on high altitude bombing mission. Only dropped two bombs. Bombardier not feeling good. My pants and helmet were misplaced so I had to hold my oxygen mask in place. Went to PX with Maurer.

Imagine this happening in combat!

Rowe's log: B-17F local 3:45 high alt bombing

25--Early mission. Almost didn't get ship. Flew altitude formation over Shreveport, La. 32nd state [I have been in]. Rough riding. Wore me out. Went to lecture on malaria. Started fire in stove. Cooler.

Rowe's log: B-17F Shreveport, La., Monroe, La. 5:15

Sunday, 26--On gunnery mission. I fired from left waist and tail. Rough flying especially one big dip. Tired. Went to PT. Played volley ball. Went to chapel. Heard Chaplain Phillips. Wind blowing.

The big dip came while I was on my knees in the tail. I was glad I did not have to ride there all the time. The radio room was more stable.

Rowe's log: B-17F local, air to ground gunnery & instrument calibration 4:45

27--Slept 'til after 11:00. Had formation for clean up at 1:00. Policed area and raked ground. Down to briefing. We were the only crew that didn't fly. Stayed around 'til 11:00. Cleaned briefing room. Ate breakfast with crew.

28--Raining when we got up. Went to briefing. No flying. Saw movies. Went down to communications officer to see about statement of charges for throat mike. Went to show with Crawford. Saw "Chip off the old Block". Fun. Wind blowing hard.

One incident remains in my mind and I have thought of it a number of times. We were often flying rather lengthy missions and occasionally a gunner would come into the radio room and stretch out and take a nap. I recall one time when McIntyre did this, and we suddenly hit an air pocket. I looked over at him and he was a foot and a half off the floor and still sleeping. I knew he would get a big bang out of waking up.

As I reread this it does seem that our crew did not fly very often during our time at Ardmore. Out of the 82 days we

were at this station we only flew on 24 days, about 29% of the days. We were together alot during those days, but as I look back now we had almost a minimum amount of training in the air. We did fly six of the last eight days of March and this was more similar to what we came to expect when we got to combat.

29--Captain woke us up at 10:30 and told us there was a formation at 11:00. Later he told us to go straight to briefing so we got to eat. Only Crawford and I were the only enlisted men out of our crew there. We went on high altitude mission in formation. Got alot of contacts. Ate and went to USO at theater. Nice flying today.

Rowe's log: B-17G Bryant, Tex., Beaumont, Tex. 5:45

30--Went to supply to sign statement of charges but they advised me to get a report of survey. That will save me about \$30.00. Got new coveralls and hat. Coveralls too big so I traded with Zima [radio operator on crew 24]. Got report signed. Flew at high altitude again in formation. Good ride. Went to show. Saw "Lady in the Dark". Technicolor.

Rowe's log: B-17F 5:05

31--Just in time to get paid. Got \$90.25. Not bad. Got a couple of milk shakes. Told us at formation that we would be parade tomorrow. Stopped in to see chaplain. Only five on our crew went with three others. Flying again over Houston. I used command and talked to other planes. Good day on radio. Cold at high altitudes. Went to town with Crawford and got steaks. Back after 12:00.

Rowe's log: B-17F Houston, Tex. 5:30

In adding up the hours I flew which are not on my flight record I find I should have an additional 45:40 for the month of March in addition to the 15:00 listed. However, on the April listing I find that 45:45 was listed for the previous month, but it was not added to the total. I know it must have been hard to keep track of flying time for everybody.

April 1--On formal parade for general. Went down to fly second period. Sat around in briefing room. Two crews didn't fly and we were one of them. Gave some code to Crawford and Sanborn. Bill Pope came over. Went to PX and walking on the line. Got caught in the rain.

Sunday, 2--Woke us up early but it was raining and I didn't think we would fly. When they said we would I was too sleepy. Told them I was going on sick call. Actually did go. Went to town with Bill Pope. Late in getting to Baptist Church. Ate at Oasis. Back to base for PT. Went to show with Maurer. Saw "The Heavenly Body". Late again.

Maybe an explanation is due for my behaviour on this date. I remember that I was really tired and just wanted to sleep. I had been in the army for over a year, and I knew I needed to cover myself whenever a formation is missed. I reported to sick call and was probably given an aspirin. I expect a more realistic reason for not going to work was that it was Sunday which I always felt should be a day of rest. One time as a boy I was honored in church for having attended Sunday School for twelve years without

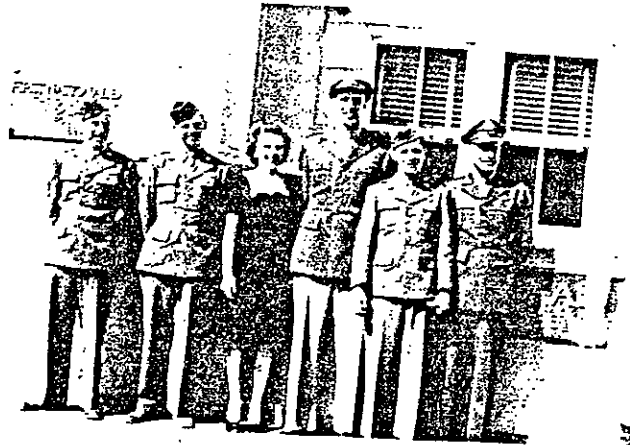
an absence. I expect my record actually extended for a few more years. It thus seemed proper to attend church on Sunday. That is not always possible in the army, although I believe I did attend church quite often, or at least as often as I could. Some things are more important than attending church. Perhaps I had not learned that then.

3--All day trip. Left early and flew to Galveston. Landed and ate lunch. Went on gunnery mission firing air to air. I fired right waist. Got five AACS contacts. Stopped again at Galveston. Went through a B-24. Arrived back after dark. Quite tired.

Rowe's log: B-17F Galveston, Tex. 10:55 high altitude gunnery. My flight record: 10:55.

4--Slept a little later this morning. Went before tact. officer for missing formation Sunday. [Since I had reported to sick call I was excused.] Went to supply and got pants, oxygen mask and 2 helmets in place of the ones that were stolen. That's better than signing a statement of charges. Got mask fitted. Went to town. Saw Lt. Rowe and his wife. Had picture taken with her. Saw Nelson and Maurer. Had picture taken with Rowe and Stewart. Bought some socks and a tie. Ate dinner and went to show. Saw "Moon over Burma". Had a good time in town. Came back fairly early.

5--Started ground school again. Had five hours of communications, one of aircraft rec and one of position firing. Don't learn much at school. Went to PT. Physical fitness test again. Ate and went to town with Nelson and Crawford. Saw "Escort Girl".



On the back of the first picture Rowe has written:
"Taken in Ardmore, Okla. April 1944 Johnny and some girl he
picked up. (It happens to be my wife, and I had to keep an
eye on them 'cause she went for his long eye-lashes.)"

The second photo is taken in front of the First National
Bank in Ardmore. From left to right--Sgt. Anderson, Sgt.
Maurer, Mrs. Rowe, Lt. Rowe, Sgt. Nelson, and Lt. Stewart.

Not much of a picture. Went to USO and had records made to send home and to school. Came back on bus. May be last time I'm in town.

6--Ground school in the morning. Had chemical warfare. Learned about incendiary bombs. Part of an hour on radio. Went down to briefing room. Got ship 890Z to go on bombing mission. Took them over an hour to get plane ready. After getting to 20,000 one engine went out. Came back to field but it was closed. Told to land anyway. Landed crosswind and almost cracked up. Went off runway. Good pilot. Minimum amount of damage done. Went to show with Nelson and McIntyre. Saw "Cover Girl". Good picture. After 1:00.

The date in Rowe's log is wrong. Nothing is listed on April 6th but on April 7th, when we did not fly, is listed: B-17F local 2:25. No record of flying on my flight record.

After this mission I believe the crew had much more confidence in our pilot. We had to assume emergency positions for the landing, and when we all walked away from the landing I think we all felt more secure in the knowledge that we had an outstanding pilot.

7--7:40 formation. Went to ground school for two hours and then they called it off. Had two milk shakes. Had captain talk to radio men about complaints. Went into town and was picked up at USO by Mr. & Mrs. Crawford. [They are the parents of Halcomb Crawford, nicknamed "Chow", who was a classmate of mine at the Conservatory.] Spent the evening talking. An enjoyable time.

Came back at 11:30. Nelson, Maurer, and McIntyre came in drunk. What a crew! Made alot of noise. Ate breakfast. 8--Another formation at 7:40. Were told about leaving. Got packed and got bags out on the street. Helped load trucks with officers' bags. Got clearance papers filled out. Got package of candy from home. Cleaners didn't have my uniform so I had to go in town and get it. Used Bill Pope's pass. Went to dance at auditorium after going to show and seeing "The Phantom of the Opera" again. Danced with girl I met at church. Nice girl.

Easter Sunday, 9--Up at 5:00. Turned in bedding. Went over to see Bill Pope. Formation at 7:00. Got on train and left. It has been a nice stay here and I liked the camp. Played games with Maurer. Ate two meals on train. Stopped at Eldorado, Kan. awhile ago. Wish I could have gone to church today.

My father died the day after Easter in 1943 and in 1944 I am sure he was on my mind.

Thus ends this phase of training. I believe the crew had become a more effective team in the last few days at Ardmore. Training was slow at first, but in the last couple of weeks we had more intense guidance and practice and were better able to concentrate on the tasks at hand. Training was not over; we had training even after we had flown some missions. But this was an end to the first phase of our training as a unit.

Chapter Three

Enroute to Combat

Ten men had trained together for almost three months. Next we are sent to the staging area in Nebraska and thence to the east coast and overseas. This period of time takes less than two months.

April 10--Still on train. Uncomfortable sleeping. Finally arrived at Kearney, Nebraska. Raining. Got assigned to barracks and ate lunch. Went to war room and had lectures on what we were to do here. Talked about our pay. Went to signal office and telephoned home. Put call in at 7:30 and finally talked to Mother at 10:15. She thinks she is coming to see me.

11--Up after 8:00. Picked up baggage and went to processing. Made out will and turned in alot of clothes. Got two new pairs of shoes, flying boots, 6 pairs of socks, flashlight, mosquito net, oxygen mask and wrist watch. Went through all my records. Had to stencil clothes. Ate lunch after 3:00. Started packing but didn't get much done. Went to town with most of crew and met Vivian and Mother at hotel. Introduced five of the crew to them. Went to USO. Played ping pong and danced with Vivian. Talked. Walked home with them. Cold out. Snowing this morning but melted in afternoon. Heard Maurer and Nelson bringing McIntyre in.

12--Tired. Went to radio school and had review. After lunch I just checked in and then assorted some of my stuff. Went to war room for some more lectures and films. Ate and went to town

with Crawford and Musolf [engineer on Crew 26]. Met folks at hotel again. Introduced Rowe and Stewart to them. Ate dinner at hotel. Went to USO. Played ping pong with Vivian. Talked. Lady at USO took us riding around the town. Brought me out to the base. I got them inside to take me to barracks. Said good-bye to Vivian.

The people who worked at the USO were always nice to us soldiers. They did their part for the war effort. I remember that gas was rationed, so the ride was a nice gesture on the part of a stranger.

13--Went to see films but didn't stay awake all the time. Called Mother and had her come out to the base. Went to service club and spent all day talking with her. Ate at civilian mess hall. Went to hear lectures on prisoners of war and escaping from Germany. Went to town with Mother and met Mrs. Yarnell. Went down to train station and talked. Rained. Came back on bus. Tired. Will be the last time I will see Mother for a long time.

I have a vague recollection of the lecture about prisoners of war. The army tried to prepare us for any eventuality.

14--Physical inspection in morning. Signed payroll. Went to lecture at 1:00 on a little bit of everything. Ate at service club. Went to show with Crowder. Saw "Knickerbocher Holiday". A very poor show. Raining. Played cards with fellows.

15--Stayed in bed until noon. Ate at service club. Went to show with Nelson and Crowder. Saw "Crash Dive". Better. Went

to town with Maurer and Nelson. Ate a steak supper. Went to
USO. Danced with Deloras. Went to show. Saw "Passage to Mar-
seilles". Came back to base at 2:30. I wonder when we are
leaving.

Sunday, 16--Went to church. Sat with Lt. Sanborn. Went to town
with Maurer. Ate dinner with Ray and Mildred, his friends. Came
back early.

17--Got paid \$10.00. Bought 10 pks. of gum and box of candy.
Went to talk about what we were to do tomorrow. Ate at service
club as usual. Finished packing.

It had rained almost constantly. The group ahead of us had been assigned their planes but couldn't take off due to the bad weather. With another group coming in they had to get rid of us. I had looked forward to flying across the ocean but it was not to be. Our crew never really had a plane all to ourselves.

18--Got rid of baggage and bedding. Went to service club. Wrote
home. Got on train at noon. Headed east. Sleeper with three
decks. A little rougher riding but nicer sleeping. Played cards
with crew all afternoon. Went to bed at 9:00 somewhere in Iowa.

My mother saved all my letters for the next year. I'll include the portions which seem to be of interest now.

April 18, 1944

Two other groups are going with us. They didn't get to go into town once while they were here. Our group has been here the longest of any combat men here now.

We were able to buy one box of 24 candy bars so I bought a box of Powerhouses. Maurer and Crawford got Hersheys, but I have

two big bars of Hershey. Also bought ten packs of gum which is the limit. I'll be well supplied for awhile.

We loaded all our bags on the truck this morning so now we just have to wait until noon. We will eat lunch before we go. I'm at the service club now waiting for the PX to open at 9:00. I want to get a haircut before I leave.

We had a big snow here yesterday so it is quite wet out today. Every time we move the weather is bad.

I went into town for the last time Sunday evening. Maurer and I ate with another sergeant and his girl friend at the Rainbow Cafe. We couldn't find much doing in town so we came back early.

The PX had some film for sale the other day with a limit of one roll to each person. I got two with Nelson's help and I may want you to send the camera to me after I get across. They don't allow you to take a camera but it can be sent to you. We still havn't got a picture of the crew yet.

19--Did nothing but play cards all day long. Had good meals. Took a nap. Went to bed early again. Went through Chicago and went to bed in Ohio.

20--Woke up in Maryland after going through Pittsburgh. Went through Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Philadelphia, Wilmington, and part of Trenton. Played cards and read same as yesterday. Arrived at Camp Kilmer in New Jersey after 7:30. Had to have physical inspection. Ate big dinner. Went after sheets. It seems like a big camp.

21--Woke up around 7:30. Laid all equipment out on bed and had inspection. Turned in a bunch of stuff. Got gas mask and had it fitted in gas chamber. Went to PX and had pint of ice cream with Crawford. Ate dinner. Rained. Had lecture on security. Got quartermaster supply again. I certainly have alot of stuff.

22--Had final quartermaster inspection. Went to PX warehouse and got knife and gun. Got new flying trousers. Had practice on escaping from a sinking ship. Heard lecture on lifeboats. Went with officers, Lt. Stewart and Lt. Sanborn, and got pair of low cut shoes. Finished packing. Wrote home. Mac and Addison [gunner on crew 24] got in fight. Ate ice cream this evening. May be last for awhile.

April 22, 1944

I don't have time to write much and even if I did I couldn't say much. I'll write again next week and make up for this time. I'll use V-mail next time.

The noon meal was good today. Almost every meal is pretty good. I wouldn't mind if they kept that up all the time. I went to the PX and had a pint of ice cream this evening. My engineer is mail clerk and since he is leaving soon I'll quit now. Don't you worry because I'm OK and never felt better in my life.

[Note enclosed: Please send me a box of candy. with my signature and serial number.]

Sunday, 23--Put pack on my back. Went to chapel service with Crawford. Too late to eat dinner. Raining. Went by train

and ferry to boat Arowa. Got doughnuts and candy bars before embarking. Got bunk which I guess is about the best on the boat.

Getting on board the English boat we probably looked like infantrymen. There was a group of infantry soldiers on board with us and they seemed like a rough bunch of guys. I remember hearing them say how much they disliked their commanding officer.

24--What a day! Woke up at 6:00 first. Got up at 7:15. Ate breakfast, all we had was half a loaf of bread. Tug boat pulled us out a ways. Started on trip. I was first one to get dizzy. Feel best when lying down. Had a couple of emergency drills. Wandered around boat some. Wish I were on dry land. I hate this rocking.

25--Boat rocked more than ever. I didn't get up for breakfast. Had to go on deck for inspection at 10:00. Stayed there for 2½ hours then came back and got rid of everything inside me. Got up and ate an orange and half a potato at 5:00. Washed mess kit out upstairs. Tired of lying on bunk but that is better than being up. Not quite so hot here this afternoon. Foggy outside at noon. I'm a landlubber. The sooner this is over the better I will like it.

26--Felt better today. Ate some for breakfast and went up on deck at 10:00. Sunned myself for awhile. Took a nap during afternoon. Ate a bigger supper. Only two meals a day. Talked to one of the boat crew members. Played cards with my crew. Not much to do. I'm sure catching up on my sack time. I hope the sea is calm again tomorrow.

27--Another good day. They got us up at 7:00. Lost an hour during the night or gained one depending on how you look at it. Didn't eat any breakfast. Stayed on deck for about three hours. Colder today. Played cards and took a nap during afternoon. Ate big dinner. Played some more cards. To bed at 10:30. Getting used to boat riding.

28--Didn't eat much for breakfast. Ate alot of cookies. Had drill at 10:00. Played cards rest of morning. Took a nap in afternoon. Didn't sleep much but did alot of thinking. What will I do when I come back? I had better start making plans. Ate big dinner. Went upon deck and stood by rail and talked with Maurer. Read some. Gain an hour at midnight tonight so we must be halfway.

29--Same old thing. Didn't eat breakfast. Went up on deck and played cards with McIntyre and Lt. Sanborn. Started sprinkling so had to quit. Came back inside and played awhile. Dinner nothing out of the ordinary. Got picked for detail tomorrow morning after almost missing it by acting asleep. Read. Sunday, 30--Had egg for breakfast. Went to church service with Maurer. Only two songs and two prayers. Like the major told me today while looking at New Testaments, "I ought to have one of those but not now. I'm too busy." Read. Had good dinner. Wrote home. Let Addison read my New Testament. Nice day today. Feel good.

[April 30, 1944] V-mail postmarked May 15th

Time passes so slowly here on the boat that I thought I

would write now instead of waiting 'til I got across. The voyage has been very pleasant so far although I was seasick at first. I'm used to it now and feel like a regular veteran. On board here we only get two meals a day but that suffices for now. I've been getting a lot of sleep and so far have been lucky in getting out of all the working details. We have Pepsi-colas, candy bars and cookies from the PX on the ship so I'm getting along all right. They hand out cigarettes every day and today we got a candy bar. The Red Cross has coffee and doughnuts for us before we got on the ship. This morning I went to the church service on board. There was a big crowd there. I guess you ought to get this around Mother's Day so I hope you have a good dinner and a good day.

May 1--Poor breakfast. The dinner meal is the only good meal. Went on deck. Rather cloudy today. Played cards on deck with fellows. Slept some during afternoon. Played cards after dinner. Don't get much accomplished. I wish I had something good to read. The water has been calm today. What a life!

As I recall the eggs we had for breakfast were usually green which made them unappetising. The ocean voyage was boring.

2--Again I ate no breakfast. After boat drill I helped clean the latrine. I washed the floors. Had calisthenics in afternoon. Played cards with Crawford after dinner. Was latrine guard from 7 to 10. Tiresome. Getting colder and windier.

3--The day passed about the same as usual. I went after break-

fast and then only ate one egg. Washed the pans afterwards.
Colder out today. Got Red Cross packet with alot of things in
it. Read most of a murder mystery. Must be getting close to
our destination. I havn't seen a woman for a long time. I
hope they have some good ones in England.

4--The sea was much rougher today. After breakfast I was on
detail cleaning up our compartment. Talked with Lt. Stewart
for quite awhile. Crawford got me a cup of tea. Took a nap.
Got up for dinner. Went up on deck with Crowder. The boat is
really rocking and rolling. I'm surprised I'm not sick. The
sea is quite rough.

Some of the crew members were on the detail of helping
serve the officers tea in the afternoon. They would sneak out
with some cookies which were about the best things we had to eat.

5--Sighted Ireland today. Looked good. The sea was calmer.
Cold weather. Read most of afternoon. After dinner I went
out on deck with Crawford. Saw the sunset over the hills of
Ireland. Part of Scotland was visible too. The journey is
just about over. It hasn't been so bad but it was longer than
I thought it would be. Set [clocks] up an hour last night and
one more tonight.

It was comforting to see land again. Once during the
voyage it was reported that a sub was sighted. We kept watch
but never saw it. Some of the smaller boats in our convoy would
go completely under the waves and then pop back up. It was
fascinating to watch them.

6--Arrived at last at Liverpool, England. Got in around 1:45 P.M. Band of bagpipers and brass band played. Enjoyed watching from deck. Disembarked at 3:30. Got on train and went to replacement center I think near Stone. The countryside is certainly nice. I like England better than I thought I would. Ate some "K" rations. Have nice sleeping quarters. Had talk with crew members about dogs and animals. The people have treated us fine so far.

Sunday, 7--Up for reveille. Ate breakfast and went with crew to church but we were too late. Read. After dinner had lengthy argument about the English and their policies. Went to orientation lecture and movie. After supper went to evening devotional service. Went to social center. Read. Played organ awhile. Wrote home. Full moon tonight. Very nice.

The movie featured Burgess Meredith and told us how to get along with the English. We did not believe what he said about women accosting us as we went to London. We thought it was a big joke, but it turned out to be accurate. We also had a pamphlet to read which was interesting. I think the army did a lot to indoctrinate us into the ways of the British.

Last letter continued:

I'll be thinking about you. I'll write as often as I can when I arrive.

P.S. The crew and I have bunks instead of the hammocks most of them have. The officers sleep in hammocks except Lt. Rowe. He couldn't make it. We have good beds.

[My recollection is that the bunks were stacked five high, little space]

May 7, 1944 postmarked May 10th

It seems like a long time since I wrote you on the boat so I will write again now that I have finally arrived here in England. On the boat we couldn't write much, and we still are restricted quite a bit, so I can't tell where I am exactly. But of course England isn't very big being about the size of Iowa. The nicest part of this country so far is the pretty countryside. Almost every field is fenced in by a row of bushes or trees or hedges and everything is so green. You can't imagine it until you see it. The trains have the funniest looking cars, especially the freight trains. The cars are real small, and it looks like a toy train from a distance. We have seen a couple charcoal trucks, Bobby (English policeman), and alot of bicycles. Everybody must ride bicycles here. So far the people have been very friendly. I havn't been out of camp yet. We arn't stationed permanently yet but probably will be in a few days. Where we are now is the nicest place we've ever had in the army. There are four to a room and the building is quite nice. We get plenty to eat, and they have a movie every night so things are quite nice here. I imagine we go to school from here.

When we arrived by boat there was a brass band there to welcome us. Also a group of bagpipe players. They were all women, the first we've seen for a long time. They don't quite look the same as the ones at home.

8--Up for reveille. Didn't do much during the morning. Walked around outside. Had physical inspection. Got some more gas protective clothes. Watched planes buzz the camp. Went to social center. Read. Was to be on baggage detail at 12:30. Listened to radio until one truck came around 2:30. Ate breakfast with fellows from 15th air force, then went home because baggage wasn't due 'til morning. Full moon very beautiful.

I remember the buzzing by a P-40 which flew about 15 feet above the ground. I'm not sure what was the reason, but it certainly looked dangerous. I think the pilot was just showing off.

9--Got to stay in bed until 9:15. Rest of the fellows went on a hike. Read. Went to calisthenics. Played baseball. Got money changed into English currency. Sent cablegram home. Got pass and went out with Maurer and Schwenk. Met Davis and Perry. Walked by pub. Met a nice girl and I had a good time. Did alot of walking. Came back at 10:45. Still light. Stopped at one pub and looked in. I sort of like it here but too much walking.

The girl was in the service, I believe she was a Wren, and she gave us a good insight into a typical English woman. In our instructive pamphlet, which we showed her, it said not to use the word "bloody". We asked her about this, and she said it was not as bad as it was made out to be.

10--Up for reveille. Went to PX and got weekly rations. Most of crew on KP. Read. Went to movies on aircraft recognition. Skipped formation about gas masks. Took a nap and almost missed

dinner. Had alot to eat. Went to midweek service at chapel.
Only another fellow, chaplain and myself there. Played cards
for awhile. I won but I'm not much of a card player.
11--Was put on headquarters detail. Took down chairs, swept and
mopped the floor and put the chairs back with Zima [radio opera-
tor on crew 24]. After lunch I practiced on the organ awhile.
Did the same detail again. Wrote home. Went to dance at theater.
Alot of girls there but they don't compare with the American
girls. I danced with a couple of them which wasn't so bad, but
they are different from what I am used to. Talked with Maurer
and Nelson from 11 to 1.

May 11, 1944 V-mail postmarked May 19th

As yet I have not been moved from my first [censored] but
it shouldn't be long until I am sent to [censored]. Meanwhile
I have been enjoying myself doing not much of anything. I got
a pass last Monday night and with four other fellows [went] to
see what England was like. There doesn't seem to be a straight
road anywhere and no way to travel for us except walking so we
started out. We passed a girl on a bicycle so we stopped her
and started asking questions. We walked around with her the
rest of the evening. She told us alot about England and we told
her all about America. I rode her bike awhile. She is a Wren
which is the English equivalent to our Wave. She had to be in
at 9:30 so we decided to come home then too. We had walked for
four hours and it was getting tiresome. On the way back every-
body we would meet would greet us by saying "Good night". It

sounded funny at first but they say it like we do "Good evening". We stopped at one pub but it was just closing. The room inside wasn't any bigger than our dining room. We got back after ten and it was still light out. I was on a baggage detail one night at 12:30 for some new fellows coming in but the baggage never came. I ate a big breakfast of pancakes which were the best I ever had in the army and went to bed at 3:00. My whole crew except me were on KP [censored]. I sent a cablegram this week. You should have it soon. The pound notes don't fit my pocketbook. Almost [censored] is rationed anyway.

The censor struck out four words. I'm not sure of the first word but I think the other three were: school, Wednesday, and everything. Now it can be told.

12--Arose about 4:30. Tired as usual. Got packed and set to go. The other five went by themselves. I went with the officers. Went from Nelson Hall to Hemel Hempstead by train. Ate "K" rations and then had meal when I arrived. Every enlisted man was on baggage detail. Got put in site #3 away off from anybody. Quiet except for the planes. Had headache and didn't feel very good. I didn't eat supper. Took a nap. Combat is not far off now.

13--Stayed in bed until 8:00. Went to play baseball. Officers vs. enlisted men. I played right field. Officers won. Went walking around base with Lt. Sanborn looking at trees. Stopped at their barracks. Got caught in rain. Went to show and sat with Albris [radio operator on crew 34]. Saw "Watch on the Rhine". Good picture. Listened to radio and played checkers with Leibengood [I must mean Livengood, radio operator on crew 30].

Sunday, 14--Got up at 10:15. Went to service in chapel. Ate chicken dinner. Went to dentist and had teeth examined. Stayed all afternoon at Aero Club (Red Cross). Listened to radio. Much colder today.

15--Went to breakfast. It was much colder today and they don't have any heat around here. Started to school. Just about the same as all the rest. Talked with officers. Ate supper twice. Went to Red Cross club and listened to radio. Donald Grant of Look magazine gave a talk to the fellows. Still cold. Didn't do much today.

16--Had pancakes for breakfast. The meals arn't so bad around here. Went to school. Part of it pretty interesting. There are times when I feel extremely patriotic. Other times I'm scared stiff. Rained off and on. Went to show after dinner. Saw "Edge of Darkness". Fairly good. Stopped at Aero Club. Still cold.

17--Too late getting up for breakfast. Meals wern't too good today. Started radio school. Took about three tests. I think I'll get along all right. Went to show as usual. Saw "Footlight Serenade". I'd seen it before. Went to Aero Club and played ping pong with Leibengood (?). I beat 5-4. Got something to eat. A woman was there playing piano. The fellows sang awhile. Some people certainly do their part to the war effort. Rained again.

18--Had pancakes for breakfast. Went to radio school. Had some code which lowered my morale. I don't think I'll ever pass 20 WPM. Went to show after school. Saw "Somewhere I'll Find You".

Entertaining. Stopped at Aero Club. Played ping pong with Leibengood (!). I won 2-1.

19--Not so cold. Went to school. Had Harwell Box getting QDM's. After lunch we went flying for 1 hour and 40 minutes. Got QDM. Played cards again. Went to show and saw "Sahara". I played more [cards].

The first day I was in the army a sergeant came in and got a bunch of the recruits into a crap game. I lost about \$5.00 and later found out that this sergeant and a confederate did this to every bunch of new soldiers and was cleaning up alot of money. I decided then not to gamble any more. However, on this day some fellows were playing blackjack and I got involved. I was winning until the Red Cross lady came by and said gambling was prohibited. Later, after the show, the fellows were playing and I was reading. Each fellow that was dealing was losing and nobody wanted to deal. They asked me to join and deal and on the first hand I dealt myself a blackjack. We must have played for about an hour, and I won much more money than I thought I might. It was easy to play with pound notes and not really realize that they were worth \$4.00 each. Since I ended up a winner I decided I should not participate in such a game again.

20--Had final exam on radio. Not bad. I ought to get a good grade. Took 20-word code check and passed. Went to show as usual. Saw "They Got Me Covered". Amusing. Went to Aero Club. Ate and talked with Bill Dameron [a fellow classmate from Ohio that I met at gunnery school in Las Vegas].

Sunday, 21--Colder today. Had code in morning. Went to chapel.
Sat with Lt. Sanborn. Had good dinner. Got 4 helpings. Went to
Grope trainer with navigator and bombardier. Interesting. Went to
communion. Stayed at Aero Club. Wrote home. Talked to musician
from San Diego.

Excerpts from letter home:

May 21, 1944 postmarked May 23rd

All this week I have been attending school. At present we are living in Nissen huts which are not as comfortable as what we did have but they are all right. We go from here to our permanent base. I'm anxious to get settled again.

The weather this week has been alot different from what we had the week before. They tell me this is typical English weather and I can say right now I don't care for it. It is almost always cloudy and usually rains at least once a day. It is too cold for May too.

Before I left my last base I went to a dance they had at the base. They couldn't allow every soldier to get in so we drew tickets and while I didn't get any, one of the radio operators, Lacey from New York [crew 23], gave me his so I went to see what it was like. I was lucky in the drawing when we got passes a couple of days before that. Anyway, the dance wasn't much different from any other dance except that there were very few good-looking women. They dance differently and are hard to understand when talking. It is possible to get used to that after awhile. I think I will stick to American women entirely.

The Red Cross Club here is about like the service clubs. I am inside it now eating a sandwich and drinking a "coke". The food isn't bad after you get used to it, but the cokes are weaker, the hot chocolate less sweeter and the sandwiches thinner than any I have seen before. The food we get at the mess hall is sufficient and usually quite good. Everything at the PX is rationed. We get two candy bars a week, peanuts once a month. I have a box of Powerhouses in my bag but it hasn't arrived here yet. I also had two boxes of gum. My bag was lost somewhere between here and my last base but I guess I will get it back before long.

Bill Dameron from Ohio arrived yesterday and we had a long talk about our experiences. He doesn't especially care for his crew.

You should have seen the dinner we had today. I went through the line four times and really got filled up. We had chicken, potatoes and gravy and corn. It was all good. We eat on dishes here which is better than eating out of mess kits.

Here is my routine for each day. I get up between 6:30 and 7:00 depending on how tired I am or how cold it is. We have no heat in any of the buildings here. Breakfast is served up to 7:30. School goes from 8 to noon and 1 to 5. I eat supper and go to the show at 6:00. They have a different picture every night and most of the pictures are old but I go even if I've seen them before. At 8:00 P.M. I come to the club here and eat and talk with the boys until 10 which is bed time, taps coming

at 11. It is the same every day. Today, of course, I went to church this morning and communion this afternoon. I took a shower this evening so I'm feeling pretty good. The other enlisted men on the crew went to another place so I'm just with the radio operators and the officers. They take care of me well enough. At school I took a code check and was surprised to find my speed is still up to 20. My grades are as high as the best in the class.

We got paid the other day. I received 21 pounds, nine shillings, and nine pence. I think that is equal to almost \$85. A pound is about \$4.00. A half crown is equal to our 50¢ piece. Shillings are worth about 20 cents and a penny is equal to 2¢ in our money. There are 12 pennies in a shilling, 20 shillings in a pound. Rather confusing at first but I think I understand it now. There isn't much to buy anyway.

Vivian, you will be interested to know that the book of stories by Damon Runyon that you gave me has been read by about 20 people since then. My whole crew like the stories. When we got a Red Cross package on the boat another group of stories by him was included in Crowder's bag so we all read that book too. His stories are all interesting.

The navigator and I went for a walk last week around the camp. He majored in forestry and had alot of botany so I learned alot about the trees and flowers around here. There are alot of holly trees with the leaves you see at Christmas time. When he gets his masters' he is going to write his thesis on ecology

(look it up, I know what it is).

Well, I had better quit and go back to my sack (army slang for bed). I sleep with from 4 to 7 layers of blankets on me every night. You can imagine how hard it is to get up in the morning. Hope to hear from you soon.

22--Cold again this morning but it warmed up around noon. Went to gunnery school. Had lecture on sights and in afternoon on the machine gun. Went to show and saw "The Immortal Sergeant" again. Fairly good picture. Got letters from home. It is good to get mail again. It's been about five weeks.

23--Warmer today. Saw films on machine gun. Tired of school. After lunch we started getting tests. Had aircraft recognition test. Got part of it. More tests on the gun and sights. Went to show and saw "Louisiana Purchase". Funny. Talked with Dameron.

I recall taking the aircraft rec test with the officers because I made a better grade than they did. When we started my grade was around 40. The test here included actual films of planes instead of drawings or still photos. I believe my last grade was 87 which was better than three of the officers. I do not recall Rowe being there.

24--Had pancakes for breakfast. Went out to skeet range. Got 5 out of 16. Then to malfunction range. After lunch went back to skeet range. Hit 8 this time. Through with school at 2:00. Went to show with Zima [radio operator crew 24]. Saw "Fantasia" again. Some different. Ate and went to Aero Club. Talked to Dameron for a couple of hours. Lt. Rowe became 1st lieutenant.

*Christin
C 00 56
Lull*

25--Sergeant got us up early for reveille but since we didn't get out of bed were put on detail for this evening. We shipped out at 8:00 on truck and train. Helped with the baggage. Found A3 bag. Stopped for awhile at Bletchly. Ate and then rode some more. Stopped at Cambridge and ate. Finally arrived at 388th group. Put with O'Sullivan [radio operator crew 26] in 561st squadron. Ate a good dinner. Quite tired. Didn't even unpack.

Crew 26 lived in the barracks next to ours. Crew 24 was sent to the 100th Bomb Group, the hard luck group.

26--Slept 'til 9:15. Went over to headquarters. Got paper initialed by a lot of people. After lunch we were on our way to the flight line when we saw the rest of our crew at the mess hall. Went and flew for about three hours. Didn't do much. Got one QDM. Talked with the fellows quite a bit. Got settled a little more.

Rowe's log: 388th Bomb Group B-17G 3:00

561st Squadron

Knettishall, England

My flight record states: No time accomplished at this station during this month.

27--Walked around the base with the boys. Ate lunch, got PX rations twice and went to Red Cross Club. Took a nap. Wrote letter home. Got Lt. Sanborn to censor letter. Talked with officers awhile. Ate midnight chow with Maurer and Nelson.

Rowe's log: 1:10 Crew did not fly.

Finally, the crew was together and we were waiting to go into combat. However, we had more schooling coming up first.

May 27, 1944 postmarked May 28th

As you can see I have changed stations again, but this will be my last move for awhile. I'm settled again and the whole crew is back together again. From all reports we are in the best squadron and in the best group. The food is really good and we get all we can eat. There are a number of clubs on the base, but I haven't been in all of them yet. Right now I'm at the Red Cross Club with Nelson, Maurer and Crawford. My address has changed and so has my APO number. Write my new address from now on.

Lt. Rowe is a first lieutenant now. He was the only one of the pilots that got it out of our group I think. He is certainly a good pilot. We went on a training flight yesterday and had another pilot with us who thought he was exceptionally good. As usual there is more school to attend. We start tomorrow. I go from 9 to 9 every day this coming week with time off to eat lunch and dinner. That will get tiresome too.

They have a cleaning shop on the base and it is possible to get a civilian living on the post to do your laundry. Things are pretty well set up around here and we are free to do almost anything we want. This base is certainly spread out over alot of territory.

The weather is much nicer the last two days. It is quite warm today.

Maurer, Nelson and Crawford had their hair cut real short. Maurer looks the worst. I haven't done it yet but I may.

Sunday, 28--Started school. Same thing over again. It certainly gets tiresome. Warm today. I'll be glad when school is over.

Rowe's log: 1:00 Crew did not fly.

29--Told us at 8:00 we were to fly at 8:30. Then they cancelled it. Started to school again. Class of officers and radio men. Ate with Crawford and played checkers with him. Went to Aero Club. After supper went to dispensary and got tetnus shot. Sat in the barracks and talked all evening. Didn't get anything done. Stayed up for chow with Maurer, Nelson and McIntyre. Rode bicycles for a couple of hours.

Rowe's log: 1:15 & 2:00 Crew did not fly.

30--School started at 9:00. More about radio work. Got rations from PX. Heard lecture on equipment. Went to show with Crowder. Saw "Yankee Doodle Dandy". Interesting. Another warm day today. The weather has been good the last few days.

Rowe's log: 3:00 Crew did not fly.

31--Another nice day. Went to school. Had Harwell and final test on radio. Did some tuning. Helped pilots on test. Went to lecture on tactics. Went to stage show entitled "Skirts" with Crawford. All G.I. Pretty good show. Alot of laughs. Getting cooler.

Rowe's log: 2:00 Crew did not fly.

June 1--Cloudy today. Saw picture on tactics. Got more rations from PX. Turned in helmets to be fixed. More about guns in the afternoon. Read. Went to show. Saw "Shadow of Doubt". Wrote home this morning.

May 31, 1944 postmarked June 2nd

I have a few minutes before the next class so I will start a letter and probably finish it later. School has been taking up almost [all] my time and I am getting mighty tired of going to school. We got out last night in time to go to the last show but that was the first time. I saw "Yankee Doodle Dandy" which was pretty good. There is a stage show tonight.

The weather has been warm the last four days. They say it is rare to have so much good weather at one time.

We get the Stars and Stripes every day except Sunday and the Yank every week. They have a good library here if ever I get time to read.

Down at the other base I used to listen to the radio quite often but here I havn't had much time as yet. John Charles Thomas came on Sunday as usual and I usually got to hear a number of the same programs I heard at home. I guess they were a week old but it was good to hear them anyway. They have a regular broadcasting station for the soldiers in the ETO (European Theater of Operations).

June 1, 1944 [continued]

Got up early this morning and ate breakfast for the first time since I've been at this base. There is an hour left before school time.

No package has come as yet. I would like to have you send me something good to eat as it would come in handy at times. We got a can of peanuts and a can of pineapple juice in our rations this week.

I'm enclosing a money order for \$100 which I happened to have lying around. Use it for anything you need if you want to. I'll be sending money home quite often from now on. I should have got paid yesterday but we were too late in getting here to sign the payroll so will get paid next week sometime.

I had better sigh off for now. It is colder today and looks like it is going to rain. Doesn't seem like June.

2--Talked with Rowe on way to school. Went out to our ship-- Old 66. What a ship! Rather old but I think we can make it. Cleaned guns. Went back again in afternoon. Got equipment together again. Maurer's brother came and visited him. Went to dance at NCO club. May go on mission tomorrow morning. Had shower with Mac.

Rowe's log: marshaling yards Acheres, Paris, France 6:30
12 flak holes Crew did not fly.

3--Didn't sleep so good. Washed some clothes. Had to go to school but didn't do much. Had skeet shooting. Got 11 out of 25. Ate dinner twice with Mac. Went to library and looked at magazines. Played piano at Red Cross Club. My morale is low. I guess I shouldn't think so much.

Sunday, 4--Hard getting up at 7:00. Went to briefing and then out to ship. Got everything ready. Went on first mission to coast of France. Not bad considering everything. Didn't connect my whole suit so I got cold. Didn't feel any too good. Radio was all right. Back by 4:30. Tired. Had interrogation. Ate and took a nap. Mighty tired.

Rowe's log: Cape Gris Nez, Pas de Calais, France 4:45
No damage, gun installations My flight record has B-17F
4:45. I wrote in later Wissant. In my diary I have written
in Boulogne. I am ~~not~~ sure why these places are indicated.

The first mission is the one you look forward to with mixed emotions. Anxiety is certainly a part of the feelings one has, and looking back now I see that one of the reasons that crews are shot down in their first few missions may be due partly to their mental attitude.

On this mission I forgot to snap my heated trousers to my jacket. Thus when it began to get cold I turned up the reostat on my electric suit which had a cord coming out of a sleeve. I had to monitor my radio for five to ten minutes every half hour. Everything was going smoothly when the order came to put on the flak suit. This "suit" was made by two covered metal-woven flaps snapped together at the shoulder. Getting it snapped was somewhat of a problem. Then when my feet got cold and I turned up the reostat another notch I suddenly realized that the pants were not connected to the jacket. I debated on whether or not to take off the flak suit, undo the parachute harness, and snap the two garments together. Not knowing about how much flak we would encounter I decided to just sweat it out. And sweat is what I started to do on my face while my feet were freezing. No wonder I became sick to my stomach. Actually, the mission was an easy one. The crew was tense but we survived. The hot chocolate we got at interrogation was welcome. After dinner I went straight to bed.

A publication which I bought recently is called The 388th at War by Edward J. Huntzinger, published by Newsfoto Yearbooks of San Angelo, Texas, copyright 1979. It starts with information about the 388th Bomb Group going activated at Boise, Idaho and moving to Wendover Field, Utah on February 4, 1943.

"The first planes to arrive in England stayed with the 96th Bomb Group at Snetterton-Heath until the 23rd of June [1943] when Knettishall was officially inhabited by the 388th Bomb Group."

Their first mission was to Amsterdam on July 17, 1943. Our first mission to Cape Gris Nez on June 4, 1944 was mission #128 for the group. A brief description of each mission is given in the book. Edward Huntzinger has given me permission to include in this account the material about our missions.

"For the first of two missions on this day, the 388th furnished two Groups which flew as lead and low in the 45th A Combat Wing formation.

"Formations were effected without difficulty and the briefed route to the target was followed. Bombs were away at 1433 hours from 23,000 feet. The A Group missed the target and the B Group had a loose pattern on the target area. Weather was better than briefed permitting visual bombing.

"Flak was moderate with two of our a/c suffering major battle damage.

"All a/c returned to base."

After reading this I have decided we were probably in A Group because I do not recall hearing anything about flak on that mission. I thought it was an easy mission for the crew despite my problems in coping with the situation.

Chapter Four

We Go to War

This was it! We were finally into combat. The next two months were filled with high adventure and were probably the most exciting times of our lives. Sometimes we were filled with fear; sometimes it was like going on a milk run. At least, it was better than fighting in the infantry in the mud. We got up early and went to war. Hours of routine flying were suddenly changed into a few minutes of real terror. One way or another we seemed to come through and had a boring trip home. It was interesting to see the different countries, but it was hard to identify very much from our altitude. At nighttime we went to a good bed and got a good night's sleep. All in all, it was a delightful way to fight a war.

5--Got us up at 3:20 for briefing at 4:00. Mission wasn't too bad. I felt alot better. Had pancakes and grapefruit juice for breakfast. A raid on Cape Griz Nez (secondary target). Got back at 1:00. Slept 'til 5:00. Went to combat crew library. Read. Went to show and saw "Riding High". Enjoyed it. Got back to barracks to hear we were to have briefing again at 11:30. Tired. Didn't get to sleep. Ate breakfast. Rode in Sweetheart today.

Rowe's log: Cape Gris Nez, Pas de Calais, France 6:00
No damage, gun installations My FR: B-17F 6:00 I wrote in
French coast.

This mission was much less anxiety-ridden. We were a bunch of veterans. This was an ideal way to fight a war. Six hours of

flying time with just a few minutes of real danger where they shoot at you, and then back to the base where we could go to the library and a movie. We were lucky to get two missions in before D-Day. D-Day started a new battle, and I got five points for flying before and five points for flying after D-Day. These points were important for figuring out order of release from the army 16 months later.

The 388th at War

Mission #130 Cape Gris Nez, June 5, 1944

"For this mission the 388th was to attack Coastal batteries in North-western France. The 388th put up two Groups with 11 a/c plus 1 PFF a/c in each group. All of our a/c took-off between 0610 and 0639 hours. The scheduled abortion a/c in the B Group returned to base, all others made the mission. The weather at the primary target prevented an attack. They went to the secondary target where bombs were away at 1019 hours from 19,900 feet. Bombing results were poor. Flak was meager with two a/c receiving minor damage. All a/c returned to base by 1139 hours."

6--Went out to ship named Gremlin Gus II. Put guns in and took off at 2:30. Went over France again. The invasion started and we were in the second wave of bombers going over but it was too cloudy to see much. Did see some ships. This was the day everybody had been waiting for. No flak was seen by us. A good thing. Had hot chocolate and cookies when we got back after interogation. Ate and went to bed. Slept 'til 6:40. Got up and ate supper and went back to bed again as we expected to fly again at 11:30. Raining some.

Rowe's log: Luc, Caen area, France, Cherbourg Peninsula
7:30 D-Day gun installations no opposition

My FR: B-17F 7:30 French coast

We had known D-Day was coming, but I had thought in Ardmore that it would be before we got involved. We knew something special was up because MP's were guarding the door of the briefing room. The officer started by saying, "This is it! This is what we've been waiting for." It was exciting to be a part of such a big operation. I never could see much out of my radio room window, but I did see some ships as we were returning. It took the allies eleven months to finish what started that day.

The 388th at War

D-DAY JUNE 6, 1944, STATION 136

"On D-Day, the 388th flew three separate missions this day sending 72 a/c with only one abort. At 0230 hours our a/c was to lead the 8th Air Force on the first bombing in direct support of the invasion.

Mission #131, Caen, June 6, 1944

"Preview of this Group's participation in the Allied invasion of Germany's Western Front--the coast of France, was such special orders from the 45th Combat Wing as: 'Guns will be manned but not test-fired at any time. Gunners will not fire at any plane at any time unless being attacked. Bombing on primary targets will be carried out within time limits prescribed. Otherwise secondary or last resort targets will be bombed. No second runs will be made on the primary target. Take-offs will be accomplished according to schedule--regardless.'

"All available heavy bombers of the 8th Air Force were dispatched in waves to attack coastal defenses between Le Havre and Cherbourg in France.

The attacks were in direct support of the Allied Invasion Forces which landed immediately after the bombing of the beach area was completed.

"The 388th furnished an A and a B Group plus the low squadron of the 452nd C Group. Our A and B Groups were the first and second wave respectively, and the composite Group (452nd) was the eighth and last wave. The 388th A Group led the 8th AAF D-Day attacks.

[We must have been in B Group since I was told we were in the second wave.]

"(B Group) 17a/c plus 1 PFF a/c were airborne by 0248 hours.... Some difficulty was encountered in forming due to darkness and because the 'Buncher' went out.

"The targets were attacked by PFF methods because of a complete undercast. Bombing was done by groups with squadrons line abreast. Bombs were away at 0656 hours from 15,050 feet for A Group and 0703 hours from 13,850 feet from B Group. The Composite Group did not attack and returned with bombs.

"No enemy a/c or flak was seen on this mission. All of our a/c returned to base by 1043 hours."

Wm. [unclear]?
7--Got up at 10:30 after about 20 hours of sleep. Took shower with whole crew. Went to PX. Ate and went to briefing. Went on mission to Nantes. Got first battle scars. Flak hit the tail. Flew in Jakes Jerks. Longest mission we have had so far. I listened on liason most of the time. Got back at 10:45. Got interogated and ate at mess hall. German planes flying overhead. Tired again.

Rowe's log: Nantes, France 7:00 3 flak holes railroad bridge My FR: 7:00 Nantes

The 388th at War

Mission #134, Nantes, June 7, 1944

"For this mission the 388th furnished two Groups of 14 a/c each, for the lead and low Groups of the 45th A Combat Wing. The 452nd flew as high Group. The target for this formation was a railroad bridge. 3 of our a/c aborted, one because they couldn't catch up with the formation [they must have been flying in Old 66], and two for mechanical reasons.

*We were flying
in an enemy lead
flight*

"Formations were effected and the briefed route to the target was followed. Our low Group bombed the assigned target with good results and our lead Group bombed the marshalling yards just north of the assigned target with good results when they found that the assigned target had already been bombed. One a/c from the low Group dropped its bombs on a bridge at Ancenis.

"Flak at the target was moderate and quite accurate. There was no enemy air opposition."

8--Slept 'til 10:45. Ate lunch. Got paid 14 pounds, 8 shillings and 2 pence. Sent \$100 home while writing. Still no mail. Read about invasion. Ate supper with Mac and then again with rest of fellows. Got coke at Red Cross Club. Went bicycle riding with most of crew. Found woman who will do laundry. Went to wash room with Maurer. Raining.

June 8, 1944 postmarked June 9th Sanborn was the censor.

It has been quite a while since I last wrote but I havn't had time to do much of anything recently. As you can tell by the news we have been busy lately. This is the first lull we have had since our crew went operational. I was going to send you clippings out of the paper but that has been censored now so I will just send you the whole paper after awhile.

We went about 36 hours in one stretch without any sleep but then got 20 hours of sleep so that caught us up. We slept 12 hours last night so at least we get plenty of rest. The food is still good and we get all we want. They seem to give us all they can get. After each mission they have cookies and hot chocolate for us and we get two candy bars during a mission. I've got about a dozen candy bars on hand as I don't like to eat while flying. We are rationed two candy bars a week at the PX.

The missions have all been easy so far. I can't tell you how many I've been on yet. I wouldn't have traded places with anybody on D-Day. I'll tell you about it sometime.

We got paid again today and since there isn't anything to buy here I'm sending home another money order. We havn't had a pass yet so we can't buy anything other than at the PX and that only takes about 2 shillings a week. We should get a 3-day pass in about a week.

August Maurer's brother visited him the other day. He is stationed in a ground crew on a field about eight miles from here.

We are having the regular English weather now. It rains just about every day.

9--Stayed in bed until 10:15. Got rations from PX. Finally some more mail arrived. Went to show with Crawford. Saw "Sullivan's Travels". Interesting. Raining. Rode around camp on Nelson's bike. To bed at 10:30.

10--Got us up at 1:30. Went to briefing. Another mission just to the coast. Nothing happened. Back at 9:30. Ate and went to bed. Slept 'til dinner time. Had steak and ice cream. Went to

Def 66

library. Read. I ought to do more of that. Went to Red Cross Club and ate. Raining most of day. Cooler. Asked Maurer and Nelson alot of questions out of a book.

Rowe's log: Berck sur mer, France 4:15 no opposition gun installations My FR" 4:15 French coast

The 388th at War

Mission #136, Berck-Sur-Mer, June 10, 1944

"The 8th Air Force attacked tactical targets in France. The 388th furnished the lead and low Groups for the 45th A Combat Wing. Both of our Groups attacked coastal installations at Bercks.

"Our 26 a/c including 2 PFF a/c took off between 0458 and 0525 hours. One a/c of the lead Group aborted for mechanical reasons. 10/10th clouds in several layers up to 21,000 feet and dense contrails made assembly difficult. Over the target, heavy contrails still persisted and clouds covered the area. The target was attacked using PFF methods at 0745 from 23,000 feet on a mag heading of 125 degrees.

"Neither flak nor enemy fighters were encountered. All aircraft returned to base by 0914 hours."

V-mail letter dated June 10, 1944 postmarked June 27th
Censor stamp obliterates the name but it is Robert _____

...We got a woman that lives near here to do our laundry so I'm glad of that. I've been doing it myself. We live on a road going straight to town and there are alot of houses near by.... I go to the show in the evening sometimes. They have a pretty good library here so I have been doing some reading. They just got a soda fountain in at the Red Cross Club and have cokes for sale. I wish I could get a big chocolate malt. We had steak for

dinner last night, the first I've had for a long time. We had chicken today for the noon meal. It is now 2:30 P.M. which means you are just about getting up at home....I intend to go to the evening service at the church here on the base. There is a small one-room church built in 1864 nearby that I would like to attend some time. It is a Methodist church.

Sunday, 11--Slept 'til 11:00. Ate chicken dinner. Went riding on bicycle with Maurer. Too late for church. Went to library, Rocker Club, & Aero Club. Beat him in ping pong. Rode over countryside. Decided to visit his brother at 96th Group. Cooler.
12--Started out at midnight. Took an hour to get there. Found him at 1:30. Stayed 'til 4:00. Rode back. Tired. No sleep. Ate breakfast and left for London. Rode truck to Thetford and then by train. Got to London about 10:30. Took the underground to Red Cross Club. Got room. Ate lunch. Took bus to Picadilly Circus. Went on taxi tour of city. Saw Buckingham Palace, Big Ben, Old Curiosity Shop, Downing Street, Scotland Yard and stopped for foot tours at Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's cathedral. Saw alot of interesting buildings and things. Went to burlesque show. Fair. Had pretty good supper. Walked all over town but didn't find much. A girl named Doreen sewed an 8th air corps patch for me at a wax works. Walked and walked. Finally took bus back to Red Cross and went to bed at midnight.

Some of the crew were walking down the street wondering about when would the girls come to talk to us, and a girl first stopped and talked to Crawford. He was rather embarrassed by it, but we all thought it was great fun. Then we saw the wax works, and we

got into conversations there with the employees. Doreen would not accept payment for sewing on my patch. The English were friendly to us Yanks.

13--Got up around 10:30. Went to Trafalger Square with Maurer. A guide picked us up and first took us to a place to eat. Had turkey. [I remember also that we had a dessert called roly-poly which the guide thought was terrific, but we didn't care much for it.] Then he took us all over London. Alot of interesting events. Went inside two court rooms. Saw alot of the bombed area. Quite a bit of walking. Went to burlesque show. Better than yesterday. Saw Phylis Dixey in "Peek-a-boo!" Went to dance at Covent Garden in opera housse. Had a good time there. Enjoyed dancing especially with a girl named Kitty. Let Crawford go home with a girl. Went to Picadilly Circus. Walked around watching the crowd. Fascinating but disgusting. Finally got tired and went to Rainbow Corner (Red Cross), and went to sleep on a davanport.

Curiosity came close to overcoming my moral upbringing but not quite. I felt guilty enough going to the burlesque shows. The setting was unbelievable. Picadilly Circus had hundred of G.I.'s wandering about and conversing with a number of English girls. The number of girls kept diminishing until only a few remained by midnight. The later it got the more brazen the girls became.

According to the book Life published on World War II, copyright 1990, the first V-1 rocket hit London on June 13th. In all, the V-1 killed more than 6,000 and wounded 17,000 before it was replaced by the supersonic V-2, a 12-ton, 46-foot missile with speeds up to 4,000 mph. The V-2 caused twice as many casualties

as a V-1 and 1,817 were fired at England before launch sites were captured by the allies. The last V-2 hit England on March 27, 1945.

14--Didn't get much sleep. Got up at 6:40. Went to meet the fellows at Mostyn Red Cross Club. Ate breakfast with Maurer. Went to railroad station but train was cancelled. Went back uptown and went to show. Saw "Meet the People", invasion pictures and start of "Memphis Belle". Ran for train. Made it just in time. Saw McIntyre and Nelson. Talked with them. Got back at 6:40. Ate dinner. Tired. Went to bed at 11:00.

15--Got us up at 1:00 for briefing at 2:00. Was to go to France but Sweetheart had a bad engine so we aborted. Tried for a QDM but didn't get in. Back at 7:00. Ate breakfast and went to bed. Slept 'til 1:15. Wrote home. Went to Communications to see what was wrong today with radio. Got laundry back. Packed for coming trip. To bed at 12:45.

Rowe's log: local 2:00 day 1:00 night aborted from mission
#1 engine out My FR: 2:20

The 388th at War

Mission #140, Beauvoir, June 15, 1944

"The 388th furnished three Groups which composed the 45th A Combat Wing to attack a military installation on the French Coast.

"40 a/c were airborne by 0354 hours with 4 a/c aborting for mechanical reasons....

Letter dated June 15, 1944 postmarked June 19th Stewart was censor.

Last Sunday evening Augie (Maurer) and I went bicycle riding around camp and even in some of the small towns near here. When we got back about eleven we found out we had a furlough! Quite a surprise to us coming on the spur

of the moment. Nelson and Mac and the officers had already left for London. We were too late to get the last train and the first train in the morning was at 7 something. Augie was expecting his brother over the next morning or rather evening so we decided to go visit him then. We left camp on our bicycles at midnight and got to his camp at one. We talked with him and ate breakfast there. We finally left at 4 and got back here at 5, ate breakfast and were ready to catch the truck to take us to town. I slept on the train most of the way to London. After we got there we first took a subway to one of the Red Cross Clubs and got a room for the night to come. The four of us had a room to ourselves. We first took a taxi tour through London which was interesting. Westminster Abbey was about the most interesting. I saw the graves of Charles Dickens, Handel, Macauley, Kipling, Chamberlain, Chaucer, Ben Johnson, Samuel Johnson, Peabody (the only American), Isaac Newton, Charles Darwin, William Pitt, Robert Clive and many more I can't think of now. St. Paul's cathedral was another interesting place. Most of the kings and queens are buried there. It was all very interesting. I'm enclosing the paper of the places we saw. We went to a stage show. Luckily, we found a place that had steak for dinner. That is rare in London. Went into some wax works that evening.

The next day we got up at 10:30 and Maurer and I went walking down to Trafalgar Square and a guide offered to take us on a walking tour so we took him up on it.... He took us all around and we got more facts this way. Saw #10 Downing St. and the place where King George III (?) lost his head. [It must have been Charles I.] He got us into a real court and we saw the judges and lawyers with their wigs and robes on. They have all their courts in one building in London. Greater London is divided into three cities. The City of London is only a mile square with St. Paul at the center. That was the

section hit the hardest by the bombs. We saw where the buildings had been. Quite a large area. It is the oldest part of London and some of the streets are real small. Everything seems so old. Saw the Cheddar Cheese tavern and many other places where the kings entertained their lady friends. We certainly did walk alot. He charged us 10 shillings a piece which is about \$2.00. I guess it was worth it. That night we went to a dance held in the Royal Opera House. It was about the best dance I've been at since I've been in the army. We had a good time there. The women were better looking too....

We had a great time in London and I hope we get to go again some time....

I can't tell you why but I may not be able to write again for a couple of weeks. Don't worry because I'll be all right. Something special is coming up. Maybe I can tell you after it is all over. Anyway it will be interesting.

P.S. Don't forget to save the papers for the next couple of weeks at least.

[Paper on Taxi Sightseeing Tours of London enclosed.]

Lt. Rowe met with our crew and told us that we had been picked to fly on a shuttle mission to Russia. We were to operate out of Russia for about two weeks. It was secret so no mention of our destination could be made. It was an exciting thought.

16--Slept 'til 11:15. Ate dinner. Went to combat crew library with Maurer. Read. Got six helpings of steak at supper. Had argument about the war with Nelson. Went to library to prove my point. Went to show with Crawford. Saw "Playmates". Second time. Rained today.

17--Up at 9:15. Went to day room. Played Chinese checkers with Maurer. Ate lunch. Went to briefing room. Had aircraft rec. Ate and went to show. Sat on a couple of boards. Saw "Buffalo Bill". Fair. Everybody but Maurer and myself made staff sergeant. What a life! Read. Got 2 weeks rations from PX.

Orders came out making Maurer and me tech sergeants and then were rescinded the next day because we had jumped a rank. I had never been a corporal so I don't know why I couldn't have skipped being a staff sergeant. Until the next orders came out the crew lorded it over Maurer and me because they were staff sergeants and we were still buck sergeants.

S. M. M. M.
Sunday, 18--Briefing at 1:00. Went on raid over Bremen. Got to see more than usual today. Quite a bit of flak. Ate and went to bed. Got up for supper. No good. Went to church. Heard English minister. Enjoyed the service. Read. Cooler this evening.

Rowe's log: Bremen, Germany 6:30 no damage vacuum oil plant
My FR: 6:30 Bremen

The 388th at War

Mission #141, Bremen, June 18, 1944

we flew 1000 ft

"The 388th furnished two Groups as the lead and low Groups in the 45th B Combat Wing. 40 a/c took off and effected formations after which the 5 spare a/c returned to base.

"The route to the target was flown as briefed but because of clouds, the lead Group bombed the secondary target which was the center of the City of Bremen. The low Group bombed the primary target visually through 7/10th clouds. Bombs were away at 0909 hours from 25,900 feet.

"Flak was seen at Heligoland and accurate flak was encountered at the target.

"Bremen also sent up rockets. There was no enemy air opposition on this mission.

"All of our a/c returned to base safely."

[This was the first time we had gone to Germany.]

Miss Lane
19--Got up at 1:30 for briefing at 2:30. Went to airfield in France but due to the poor weather had to come back before we got there. Were above 27,000 for awhile. Cloudy. Navigator got lost. I had to identify, get QTF and seven QDM's. Good practice. Got compliments for bringing ship back. Had chicken dinner. Went to bed. Got up at 3:15 for briefing at 4:00. Mission was scrubbed at briefing. Went to show with Nelson. Saw "Tarsan's Desert Victory". Had six cokes today. To bed at 11:00. Flew Miss Lace 842.

Rowe's log: 40 miles south of Cherbourg in France 6:45
Turned back, brought bombs back from mission because of bad weather My FR: B-17F 6:45 A/F France

The 388th at War

Mission #142, Cognac, June 19, 1944

"The 8th Air Force was to attack tactical targets in France. The 388th furnished two Groups, one as high Group in each the 45th A and B Combat Wing formations. 40 a/c were airborne between 0500 and 0532 hours. [That is faster than one per minute.] 1 a/c of the A Group returned for mechanical problems and 2 a/c of the B Group, one for personnel failure and the other was a spare. Formations were effected and the formations proceeded to the target as briefed.

"Over the Continent the clouds were 10/10th up to 29,000 feet. Just before reaching the target area the 45th B Combat Wing leader (Captain Cockerill) abandoned the mission because of bad weather. The A Group went over the target but did not drop its bombs.

"All a/c returned to base by 1136 hours."

J.C. Red. Miller flew in 75
Place of Miller

20--Briefing at 1:30. Flew Old 66 again to Magdeburg, Germany. Did a good job of bombing. Alot of flak. 20 holes in ship. Came close to Crawford. Slept coming back. Tired. Ate and went to bed. Slept 'til 7:00. Went to Red Cross Club with Crawford. Ate and played ping pong. Finally leaving. Will write more when I come back.

Rowe's log: Magdeburg, Germany 8:00 20 flak holes, synthetic oil plant My FR: B-17F 8:00 Magdeburg

Old 66 always seemed to come back. It had trouble keeping up with the rest of the formation, and we would cut corners so as to stay with the formation.

The Newsletter for the 388th Bomb Group Assn. had an article about Old 66 about three years ago which I wanted to quote, but I have mislaid the copy.

The 388th at War

Mission #143, Magdeburg, June 20, 1944

"For this mission the 388th put up 40 a/c plus 2 PFF a/c. 19 a/c plus 2 PFF a/c of the A Group and 21 a/c of the B Group were airborne between 0400 and 0453 hours. Three a/c of each Group returned early as spares. Two a/c of the B Group aborted after colliding in mid-air at 5310N--0400E.

"No difficulty was encountered in assembling as the formations proceeded to the target, following the briefed course on the route in and out. The weather was clear at the target which was the (Rotensee) synthetic oil plant. It was attacked visually by both Groups with bombs away at 0910 hours from 25,300 feet.

"Strike photos show that the A Group Shacked the target while the B Group bombs were slightly over the target but all bombs were in the MPI. A/c 42-

32004 (Lt. Patrick) was hit by flak over the target. One engine was feathered and the a/c dropped out of the formation. It was last seen in the vicinity of the East Frisian Islands at 1025 hours.

"No enemy a/c were seen on this mission. Flak over the target was intense, accurately predicted concentration. All of our returning a/c suffered battle damage. The 31 a/c suffered a total of 358 flak holes. [Our 20 holes was more than the average.]

"A/c #873 returned to the base early badly damaged after the mid-air collision without injury to the crew.

"Lt. Maring in a/c 42-37523, returned with a crippled a/c and belly-landed on the field. All crew members were safe.

"Lt. Maring was KIA on a Merseburg mission, September 28, 1944 when a Command Pilot.

"Lt. Patrick in a/c 42-32004 went down east of the Frisian Islands after being hit by flak over the target. Ditched 50 miles no. of Figi Island. [The CP, N, and TG were KIA. The other seven crew members became POW's.]

21--Didn't get to bed. Went to briefing and then to ship 123

"Girl of My Dreams". Took off at 5:35 for Russia. Bombed Ruhland on the way. Near Berlin. Flew over Germany and Poland. Went up in the nose for awhile. Enemy ship flew by. Landed at Poltava in Russia at 3:50. Quite tired. Got assigned to tent. Ate and slept some. Went to last part of movie "The Major and the Minor". Feel like I could sleep for a week. This trip should be educational.
M/Sgt. Wilder flew as right waist gunner.

10:15"
Spain
11:40'

Rowe's log: Ruhland, Germany 10:30 shuttle mission ME 109 attacked our formation near Warsaw. Target oil refineries 2 flak holes My FR: 10:15 Ruhland

One of the waist gunners, McIntyre, had to stay behind because he had to go to hospital, so we took a crew chief with us. Over the North Sea we test-fired our guns. It was the only time I fired a gun from the radio position. As I pulled the trigger the gun pulled to the right and I let up just in time to avoid shooting off our tail. Now that would have made a good story. This raid involved 1000 allied bombers over Berlin.

At Ruhland we could see Berlin in the distance where the bulk of the formation was going. The flak was unbelievable. After we got to Poland my radio could no longer pick up England. Collins wanted to listen to the radio, so I requested permission to take his place in the nose. It was fun watching Sanborn keep track of our position. As we passed about 50 miles south of Warsaw I strained to see it, but it was not in sight. Just as we passed the Russian border a plane flew by on our left. I was close enough to see the pilot, and I remember thinking he was flying mighty close. Also the cross on his plane was a peculiar marking. Suddenly a P-51 flew by in pursuit, and I realized German planes had iron cross markings not swastikas. If he had been firing we might not have been here today. As still one of the more inexperienced crews on the flight we were "tail-end Charlie", and that is often the plane that gets hit first.

We were the second plane to land in Russia, and we parked at the far side of the field. A Russian soldier came on board to help us in any way he could. They got that duty as a relief from fighting on the front lines and anything is better than that. When we got to the tent we found he had even put the fire extin-

guisher in the bag. He was most anxious to please us. We noticed a single German plane watching us as the rest of the formation was landing. Our fighter protection had already gone to another base.

The 388th at War

Mission #144, Ruhland (Frantic-Russia) June 21, 1944

"All heavy bombers of the 8th Air Force attacked Berlin except the two Combat Wings to hit the Synthetic Oil Refinery at Ruhland south of Berlin. These were to fly on the Russia. The 388th furnished an A Group plus the low and high squadrons of a Composite Group, led by the 452nd BG. Our A Group led the 45th Combat Wing and the Composite Group was low Group in the 13th B Combat Wing. The two Combat Wings, plus an escort of P-51's, after attacking the Target, continued on across Germany and Poland to land at bases in Russia. This was the first shuttle raid from England.

"21 a/c plus 2 PFF a/c were airborne by 0545 hours.... 2 a/c of the A Group returned as spares....

"Formations were effected without difficulty and the Combat Wings proceeded to the Target as briefed. Weather over the Target was CAVU. Bombs were away at 1030 hours from 20,000 feet.... Strike photos show a 'shack'.

"Meagre flak was encountered over the Target, Brandenburg and Warsaw. Moderate flak was encountered at Cuxhaven and Biala Podlaska, Poland. Our escort broke up the attack of enemy a/c in the vicinity of Biala Podlaska.

"All of our a/c landed at the assigned Easter[n] Command Base except one which landed at Kiev. Flight time on this mission was 11 hours 40 minutes."

[Since I listed the exact times in my diary, 10:15 is the accurate length of our flight.]

The A Group and Composite Group formations are listed by pilots and

plane numbers. Rowe
M | 123 is listed in #6 position in the low squadron of the A Group. A plane is usually designated by the last three digits of its number. 123 is the last three digits of 44-6123 named Girl of My Dreams.

22--At midnight the German planes came over and we had to run for the slit trenches. Flares lighted up the field. Lot of fireworks. The air field was bombed and we were just a block away. Got to bed around 2:15. Woke up at 9:30. Talked. After lunch we went out on the field and looked at planes. Very few planes left. Our plane had the left elevator burned off by an incinderary. Anti-personnel bombs going off all over and we were walking all over the field. Had another air raid scare at dinner. Moved everybody to the open country. Played cards with crew. What a life.

Soon after we got to sleep a soldier came running by the tents blowing a whistle and yelling, "Air raid, air raid". We were used to air raids and nobody moved. Finally, he shouted, "Really, fellows, I mean it." I went to the door and saw the flare in the sky over the air field. I helped get everybody up, and we ran to some trenches that were about knee deep just as the bombs began to drop. You could hear the whine of the descending bomb followed by a big explosion as plane after plane blew up. With each sound we huddled as close to the ground as possible. I remember one fellow wondering if there was a cleaners on the base as he was getting his pants dirty. We had a good view of the whole operation, and it was bigger than any celebration on the Fourth of July. They knew exactly where we were, and they efficiently destroyed almost all the planes which were lined up

so nicely. Another flare appeared behind us and we could see some old, discarded Russian planes, but we wondered if the Germans could tell they were obsolete. It was bright enough to read a newspaper, and we felt like we were in a spotlight. We could have been strafed. Russian anti-aircraft guns kept firing during the raid, but they seemed to have no effect on the Germans. I heard that one gun crew was hit and destroyed.

As we went across the field the next day to see our plane a group of Russians were out there detonating the anti-personnel bombs. They would put a rope about it, back off and yell for us to duck and then pull the rope. One time a fragment went whizzing by us. For a while a dog ran beside us which was worrisome because he could have jarred a bomb and set it off.

That evening the crews all lined up to take a truck to a place in the woods. The line was long and we saw a truck on a different mission, probably getting gasoline, and asked him to take us. He could speak no English and we could speak no Russian. [I recalled thinking two years before when Russian was being offered at the Conservatory that it was one subject I would have no use for. In 1951 I went to Harvard for summer school and took two music courses and German, each class meeting two hours daily. Russian was offered the two hours I had open so I decided to audit the course. The first day the instructor went through a tremendous amount of material including the pronunciation of all the different letters. He gave about four hours of homework which was more than I could handle. I never went back.] The soldier must have figured we knew where we

were going. We thought he knew, but after a long ride in the country we finally got him stopped and turned around. We may have been half way to Moscow by that time. I remember seeing the peasants in the field. We waved at them but they just stood and stared at us which was an eerie feeling. Americans like to wave; so do the Germans.

Poltava had been captured by the Germans, recaptured by the Russians, once again by the Germans and finally the Russians again. Even the ruins were ruined. People lived in the earth. Only one building was left standing. Both sides had used it for a barracks. The Russians really had a hard time.

The 388th at War

"During the night, the Germans bombed the airfield and 11 of our a/c were destroyed. With a clear sky, the German planes came over, then dropped parachute flares which lit-up the entire area for their bomb runs. This lasted nearly two hours."

The 11 planes that were lost are listed. The damage to 15 other planes is listed. 44-6123 of the 561st Squadron (the plane we flew): minor damage, Flyable

A number of pictures of the destroyed planes as well as other scenes in Russia are included in this report.

Another reference book I consulted was Flying Fortress by Edward Jablonski, published by Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, copyright 1965.

"The shuttle mission to Poltava, which began on June 21, 1944, was to prove doubly historic. It was the 8th's first mission to Russia.... The ground had already been prepared for the mission, which enabled the 8th to

bomb deep inside Germany and then continue on to Russia instead of returning to England, by General Eaker, who had lead the first such mission from Italy.

"The target, at Ruhland, was just south of Berlin and the bombing by 114 Fortresses, with an escort of seventy Mustangs, went off as planned and the formation pushed on to the fields in Russia, located at Mirgorod, Piryatyn, and Poltava. The 100th was to land at the latter base, along with planes from other groups. They were not aware of a trailing German He-177 which observed their landing and then flipped away into the clouds.

"That night they experienced their second touch of history. Poltava suddenly lit up under a great shower of flares and then erupted with the bursting of more than a hundred tons of bombs. The Germans, without the loss of a single aircraft, succeeded in destroying forty-three B-17s and damaging twentysix; fourteen P-51s were demolished and others damaged. More seriously twenty-five Russians were killed and one American. General Spaatz later admitted that the raid on Poltava was the 'best attack the Luftwaffe ever made on the AAF.' An attempt was made to repeat the success on the following night but not with the same success. When the time came to leave Russia for the next leg of the shuttle, of the original force the 8th was able to get seventy-one Fortresses and fifty-five Mustangs off the ground on June 26th."

My only comment about this report is that I do not recall any P-51's at Poltava. I do not think we had 71 planes leave Poltava altogether, although the other wing did fly into Poltava the day before we departed.

23--Rained on us during the night. Woke up first at 3:00. Got up at 5:15. Went back to camp. Slept most of morning. Rained. Wrote home. Fairly good supper. Back we went to the thicket. Played checkers with Lt. Collins; He won. Talked. To bed at 10.

Letter dated June 23, 1944 postmarked June 24th censored by Sanborn.

I joined the army to see the world and I guess I'm getting my share because I am now stationed somewhere in Russia. We had quite a trip and it was a lot of fun. I wish now that I had taken Dr. Labunski's course at school because I could use it here. I can't say how long I will be here or exactly where I am, but I thought you would like to know I'm in Russia and that I'm all right. We live in tents which is about like basic training, but the weather is better than what we had in England. This is not our permanent base.

The country around here is a lot like the U.S. It seems strange hearing the people talk. The people look different, and you can tell that they are a hard-working bunch of people. We have women doing the KP work here. Lots of them don't seem to have shoes. I have a rouble that I'm going to keep for a souvenir. I'll have many different kinds of money by the time I get through.

Well, don't worry about me as I'm all right. I wouldn't trade this experience for anything.

24--Up early again. Covered with dew. Back to camp. Went over to some old fighters and looked them over. Shot off a machine gun that was loaded. Had chicken and cherries for dinner. Slept most of afternoon. Went out and looked at planes. I'm ashamed of the Americans and their pilfering. Went to Russian dance and movie outdoors with Nelson. A Russian soldier explained everything to us in Russian.

I heard that the loss of planes at Poltava cost as much or more than Pearl Harbor. However, I do not think any American lives were lost. Some Russians died trying to pull burning ships away from others. Some lives were lost setting off the anti-personnel bombs. A lot of planes were completely destroyed. Many more were damaged, but some of the Americans confiscated some items out of the planes. At the time I thought that was bad.

One time before a meal a woman on KP indicated to two G.I.'s to pick up a garbage can of coffee and place it on the line. They struggled with it as it was quite heavy. She brushed them aside and picked it up and carried it by herself. We were impressed.

At the dance I remember seeing some instruments I had never seen before. At the movie the Russian film would run about 10-15 minutes and then stop while they changed reels. It was hard to understand what was happening, so the Russian soldier explained it to us in Russian which made us laugh. It must have been funny because he was laughing also. It was an unforgettable experience.

Sunday, 25--Went to briefing. Mission scrubbed. Back to bed. Read Bible. Didn't do much. Ate quite a bit for both meals, especially pineapple. Sat in tent and talked about naming ship with crew. Cloudy.

As I recall the air field was cleared off and the other wing of planes flew on to our field. We must have stayed on the base to sleep. The hole in our tail was patched up.

26--Briefing again. Had three hours before take-off. Plane wheel fell into hole while taxiing. Got out and talked with the Russians. They like to talk. I had fun with them. Finally got the plane out. Flew out and over into Poland. Bombed Drohobycz in Poland. Flew over Hungary and Jugo-slavia landing at Italy. Some fellow remembered me from Sioux Falls. Wrong base so went 14 miles more near Foggia. Ate dinner. Tired. Roland Nuber stationed there. Talked with him all evening. We had alot of good times together at Las Vegas. Slept on cots in tents again.

Rowe's log: Drohobycz, Poland landed in Foggia, Italy 7:30
Target--oil refinery 2 flak holes My FR: 7:55 It also lists
B-17F but this was a brand new plane with all the latest equipment.

Two wings of planes flew to Russia and close to 70 planes were destroyed in our wing. The crews on those planes, I believe, were flown out by way of Teheran, Cairo, Casablanca, and back to England. That would have been a great trip since it touched on two new continents. However, I was glad for the opportunity to see Italy.

We flew in a diamond formation behind the leader who dropped a tracer bomb to check wind condition. We flew through the fumes which ate up the surface of the windshield. It had to be replaced in Italy. We flew over the Danube river so I looked down to see it. It wasn't blue. The briefing told us about the two factions in Yugoslavia, one with Tito and the other with Mikhailovitch. I can't remember now which was better. I don't think they knew.

It was fun running into old friends. I never did remember the name of the first fellow I met. I told him we'd get together after we got settled, but we flew on to another base. I was glad to run into Nuber who was one of my best buddies in gunnery school and at Salt Lake.

The 388th at War

Mission #150, Shuttle from Russia, Drohobycz, June 26, 1944

"6 a/c from the 388th Bomb Group took off from an Eastern Command Base at 0900 hours. An instrument assembly was made with the 390th Bomb Group and three a/c as a third element in the high squadron of the 95th Bomb Group. One a/c with the 390th aborted because of an engine failure. The five remaining a/c flew this mission and landed at an Italian airfield."

The six planes and the pilots are listed. With the 390th BG is listed $\frac{\text{Rowe}}{\text{Y}|813}$. This was the plane flown to Russia by Bottenfield of the 563rd Squadron. It also had only received minor damage in the raid. Plane #123, the plane we flew to Russia, is not listed. I don't believe I was aware that we had changed planes.

27--Ate pancakes for breakfast. Went out to ship and helped Lt. Sanborn clean guns. Had meeting in briefing room. Roland loaned me a pair of khakis. Went to town on truck. Walked around for awhile looking at the city. Had doughnuts and lemonade at Red Cross Club. Nice building. Best in town. Played ping pong. Beat him. Went to show. Saw "China". It is more than a shame what war does to the cities and people.. There must be an end somewhere. I feel sorry for the Italians, but it is too late for sympathy.

28--Woke up too late for breakfast. Talked. Wrote home. Went with crew after dinner to swim in Adriatic Sea. Went by truck. Water was warm and I had a good time. A swell beach, Must cost alot to swim there in peace time. Reserved for air corps now. Fun. Coming back we stopped in town. Went to Red Cross Club. Got separated and waited an hour for crew at officers' club. Came back to camp. Had discussion with officers. Went to show. Saw "Moonlight in Havanna" again. Movie outside.

V-mail letter dated June 28m 1944 postmark not legible censored by Frederick Sanborn 2nd Lt. A.C.

Once again I have changed my location as I am now stationed somewhere in Italy. I am certainly doing alot of traveling around Europe. It is an education in itself. I will have lots to tell when I get back but don't arrange for me to give travel talks.

Went into town yesterday afternoon although there isn't much to see there. You can certainly be thankful that you live in America.

When I came out of the mess hall just after I had arrived here a fellow came running up to me yelling my name. It was Roland Nuber whom I knew well in Las Vegas. We had a good time talking about old times. I never expected to see anybody I knew here. He loaned me a suit of khakis to wear here because it is much hotter than any other place I've been. The food is still quite good, in fact, it is better than the last place. I don't know where I will go next. I'll write again before long

and let you know my whereabouts. After being here I'm glad I'm stationed in England. Things are much nicer there. It is time to go eat lunch now so I will quit for now. Hope I have alot of mail waiting for me when I get back.

29--Didn't get up for breakfast. Sat and talked during both forenoon and afternoon. Windy and dusty. Got rations from PX which included 4 candy bars and a coke. Most of crew went swimming and got sunburned. Went out on line and looked at ship. Told Roland goodbye.

30--Had pancakes for breakfast. Got haircut and shave for 15¢. Helped Lt. Sanborn with his guns. Ate big dinner after shower. Laid in tent having discussion with crew. Wrote Mr. Corti [clarinet teacher at the Conservatory who was an Italian]. Went to town at 6:00. Went to Flagella Theater and heard Jascha Heifetz. Played Mendelssohn concerto and a number of other pieces. It was good hearing some real music again although I didn't get as big a thrill as I used to. Got his autograph. Helped Maurer carry Nelson to tent. He was dead drunk. What a terrible way to be.

July 1--Stayed in bed until 10:00. Talked. Went to beach again after dinner. Had fast truck ride. Nice swim. Met crew there. Went back to Foggia. Got doughnuts. Met Nuber there. His crew bought radio. Went to show. Saw "Seventh Victim". Walked around town.

Sunday, 2--Had pancakes without syrup for breakfast. Went back to bed until 9:40. Went to church with Nelson. Stayed in bed

most of afternoon. Went to church with Roland and his bombardier. Talked with Maurer and Lt. Stewart.

3--Hotter today. Felt tired all day. Talked all morning. Went to town with Roland. Read magazines at Red Cross Club. Came back for supper. Had steak. Went out to line and looked for his ship. He became T/Sgt. Maurer and Nelson drinking again. Moderation must be taught.

With my background I was taught the evils of drinking. My mother was a member of the WCTU (Women's Christian Temperance Union). To my family it was an awful thing when prohibition was repealed in 1933. In Hi-Y (High school YMCA) we were warned about drinking. I never had the urge and never drank except for the one time in Oklahoma City. I remember one fellow in my tent in basic training who had to have something to drink, so he drank hair tonic. I believe I grew more tolerant as I grew older but never completely condoned it.

4--Wrote home. Big dust storm came up. Too dusty to do anything. Went to town. Got shampoo and shave at Red Cross Club. Read magazine. Came back for supper. Had ice cream and cake and pork chops. Enlisted men's club opened. Talked with Roland. Listened to radio. Had hash and bouillon with crew. Cool and windy.

Letter dated July 4, 1944 postmarked July 5th censored by Sanborn.

Here it is the 4th of July again. I wonder if you are going on a picnic today. Of course while I'm writing this you havn't even got up as it is 4:00 A.M., but here it almost time to eat lunch. I am still in Italy and it is certainly hot today. We

have been here longer than I thought we would and I am anxious to get back to England as soon as possible. It is too hot here although the breeze isn't bad. Quite a bit of dust is blowing about all the time. The crew and I have gone to the beach and have been swimming a couple of times in the Adriatic Sea. The water is warm and it is a swell beach reserved now for the air force. We may go again this afternoon. Visited the town of Foggia but the Red Cross Club is about the only place in town. Jascha Heifetz, the violinist, gave a concert that I got to hear. I got his autograph after the program. I heard him once before in K.C. We havn't been doing much of anything lately because it is too hot. Right now here in the tent Nelson is making a pair of wings from some plexiglass, Crowder is reading and Crawford and Maurer are playing cards. We have a big tent with plenty of room we don't need. We left our crew chief in Russia and brought a gunner with us who happens to speak Italian. He is in town now, I think. They are building an enlisted man's club here in camp, but it isn't finished yet. Wish I had some ice cream to eat or something to read. All we can do is talk and rest. I think Roland is flying today. Went to church last Sunday to both services. Enclosing the bulletin. Hope you are saving the newspaper clippings about what I've been doing. I wrote a letter to Mr. Corti the other day. He's an Italian. Personally, I want to get back to England as soon as possible. Even the drinking water is warm here. The food is good. Had steak last night. Hope you have a good holiday.

Church bulletin enclosed and sheet from small notebook that says: Greetings--Jascha Heifetz 1944

One day while we were in Italy the pilot came over and wanted to know if we wanted to fly to Naples for a visit. I remembered the adage: See Naples and die, but I wanted to go. We didn't go for some reason.

The Allies and Germans were fighting in Rome about this time. In September 1945 I claimed 5 points for the Rome-Arno battle because I was there at the time, and we did fly out of Italy. An officer at Ft. Leavenworth challenged my claim, but the war was over and everybody was anxious to get out so I believe the points counted.

Seeing Italy was an interesting experience. We were told not to eat in town because it was not sanitary. I saw a number of plates of spaghetti in front of some houses. The town was in ruins, alot of damage was everywhere. It gave us an uncomfortable feeling when we walked a distance from the Red Cross Club. Southern Italy has always been poorer than northern Italy. In 1951 I brought my family to Rome, Florence, and Milan for a visit and it was quite educational.

5--Finally the day came. Got up by 4:30 and ate pancakes. Flew up by Rome, over Corsica, by Marseilles and bombed Beziers in southern France. Saw an enemy fighter. Arrived at 5:20. Not as tired as usual. Got things fixed up again. Mr. Wellington from Kansas City Star came and inteviewed me about the trip. Went to Red Cross Club with Crowder. Felt good. Life is certainly worth living. Cool.

Rowe's log: Beziars, France, landed in Knettishall 9:15
Target--marshalling yards No damage to plane My FR: B-17G 9:15

The 388th at War

Mission #154, Beziars, July 5, 1944

"For this mission five of our aircraft flew with the 100th Bomb Group to hit targets in Beziars. No enemy aircraft were encountered and all a/c returned to base safely."

This account disagrees with mine in that I state I saw an enemy fighter. It was way off in the distance as we were passing Marseilles, and I am sure it was not American.

Edward Jablonski in his book, of which the complete title is Flying Fortress The Illustrated Biography of the B-17s and the Men Who Flew Them, writes on page 215 that the American airmen from England "were guests of the 15th Air Force in Italy for awhile. From Foggia they struck at a marshaling yard in Rumania [The windshield on our plane was being replaced so we did not make this mission. Only three crews from the 388th participated in this mission.], returned to Italy and finally headed back for England, dropping bombs on a marshaling yard, en route."

It was exciting to me to fly over Corsica and to see the Mediterranean Sea and Marseilles. Getting back to England was like getting home. We had been on a nice vacation. Mr. Wellington wanted me to tell him about Russia, but I had been more impressed by Italy. As I recall the article stated that the flyer said the peasants were returning to the fields. I did feel like a celebrity.

6--Got up around 8:15 and signed the payroll. Lt. Rowe gave us the air medal. Looks good. Got alot of mail. Read. Went to hospital to visit Mac. Saw Wilson there too. Mac came back with us. Turned in my radio logsheets and flimsies. Ate dinner twice. Stopped at combat crew library.. Went to show with Pop. Saw "Guadacanal Diary". Felt good all day. Got two weeks rations. Talked with crew.

7--Crew moved to end of barracks. I don't like the change. Went to library and read. Wrote a long letter home. Pilot censored two letters and cut parts out. Mission tomorrow. Going to bed at 11:00.

July 7, 1944 postmarked July 8th censored by Frederick H. Sanborn, 2nd Lt. A.C.

Finally at last I am back in England, having arrived here Wednesday afternoon. Twenty letters were here waiting for me so I ought to do alot of writing this week. No package has arrived as yet.

I'll try and answer some of the questions in your letters first. My bag was found before I left radio school. It had been left in a baggage room. All the candy bars are gone now but I'm getting along all right with what we get from the PX. In the Red Cross package we got on the boat we received life-savers, sewing kit, pencil, stationery and a book. Also some cigarettes which I gave away. I havn't seen a K.C. paper in a long time but we do have some magazines at the library and Red Cross Club. I don't have much time for reading. You say you figure I am just

getting up as you are going to bed but that is only if we are not flying. We usually have briefing sometime between midnight and 3:00 A.M. and take off about two hours later. We haven't flown since we got back but will probably start soon. Of course we are expecting a pass either tomorrow or the next day for 3 days so that will be awhile longer yet. That was a pretty good picture taken in Kearney. The navigator has been taking pictures of us but hasn't been able to get them developed yet. I saw one picture taken of Maurer and me in Russia that was pretty good. We didn't know it had been taken. I will try and get a copy of it.

I hope you got my letter sent from Russia and Italy. They said they would be held up awhile. It was certainly an interesting trip and I enjoyed all of it. I've certainly seen and been in alot of countries that I didn't expect to see. There isn't much I can say about the trip as yet but as Vivian said, I'll really have some things to tell my grandchildren. Nelson and I went to a Russian dance and movie outdoors one night. I was surprised to see that the Russians dance practically the same way we do. At the movie one of the Russian soldiers sat by us and tried to explain everything to us in Russian which of course we couldn't understand. It was funny listening to him. The Russians seemed quite friendly. The movie was shown by a bunch of small reels and after we had watched about 15 of them we decided to go back to our tent as the movie didn't seem to be getting anywhere. Besides it was getting cold outside. We heard the movie still going after we got to bed. It was fun talking with the Russians.

They enjoyed it so much and marveled at the fact that we could ride in the big airplane.

When we arrived in Italy I had just got out of the plane when a group of fellows gathered around each one of us and started asking questions. There were about 20 around me. One of the fellows thought he had seen me before so he asked me if I had gone to Sioux Falls, if I had been in Class 49, in squadron 806 and he said he remembered me but before I had a chance to ask him who he was he was called away saying he would talk to me later. Then the pilot found out that we had landed at the wrong base so we took off and went to the other base so I never saw the fellow again. I met Roland Nuber there so I had a good time with him while I was there. I'm glad I'm not stationed in Italy as it is too dusty there. We really had one big dust storm one day. I went to town to get out of it. The Italians are different from anybody else. They have had a hard time during this war and I feel sorry for them. They have alot of fruit and that is about all. Ham was \$5.00 a pound and eggs 16¢ a piece but we wern't allowed to eat in town anyway. They don't have much water either. The Germans took everything when they left. I wonder what they will do after the war. There were alot of men just walking the streets. In England that is a rare sight. In Russia everybody is in uniform or at least working for the army. The Red Cross building was the nicest building in town. It might have been a nice town before the war but there were alot of ruins there now. Not as bad as Russia but still pretty bad.

The trip back from Italy was uneventful for the most part. It felt good to be back in England. Right after I got back in the barracks and got things straightened up again a Mr. Wellington from the K.C. Star came and interviewed me about the trip so you can look for my name in the papers sometime soon. Send me a copy so I can show the fellows. It probably won't be anything more than one or two sentences. After that I met a fellow in the barracks next door named Cartwright who lives at 31st & Troost in K.C. We talked together for awhile. Yesterday we all went to the hospital to see McIntyre who had his tonsils taken out while we were gone and he was well enough to come back with us so we are all ready to go again. We were given the Air Medal yesterday which I will send home before long. It is given upon completion of six missions but we had that many a long time ago. I can't say how many missions I have now.

It is raining again today as usual, typical English weather. I prefer it to the dust in Italy.

8--Didn't get to sleep at all. Briefing at 1:00. Nelson and Maurer were acting drunk and Mac had been drinking so I refused to fly but Lt. Rowe straightened things out. I acted rather impulsively. Flew near Paris looking for a target. Finally bombed a bridge. A lot of accurate flak. Slept for awhile. Nelson and I cleaned our guns together on ship we brought back from Italy. Slept some more. Ate dinner and went to show. Saw "Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon". Got paid 17 pounds, 11 shillings, 9 pence.

It was dirty
my gun was

Rowe's log: Mantes-Gassicourt, France 5:15 Railroad bridge 3 flak holes My FR: 5:15 I have written in Nantes which is evidently wrong but maybe just a typo.

The 388th at War

Mission #158, Mantes, France July 8, 1944

"The whole 8th Air Force heavy bombers were dispatched to attack tactical targets in the Paris area. The 45th A Combat Wing, with the 388th "A" and "B", high and low respectively, was to have attacked a supply depot Northwest of Beaumont.

"Our 28 a/c were airborne by 0351 hours. 1 a/c from each formation aborted for mechanical reasons and 3 a/c from A Group returned early because of inability to locate the formation. Formations were effected with difficulty due to the hours of darkness, and the Combat Wing never did get together.

"The B Group followed by the A Group crossed the enemy Coast at the briefed point. Approximately 12 miles inside the French Coast the B Group encountered meager but extremely accurate flak from Cleres. The Group leader and his right wing man went down from this attack. Two other a/c were so severely hit that they had to abort. The B Group reformed with the deputy lead taking over the lead.

"The primary target was completely cloud covered and was not attacked. The A Group attacked a railroad bridge over the Seine River at Mantes-Gassicourt. The B Group attacked railroad tracks in the vicinity of Yvetot.

"No enemy a/c were seen. Meagre flak was encountered over the targets. The flak at Cleres which shot down two of our a/c also caused major damage to 6 a/c and minor damage to 5 others.

"Lt. J. Klein was killed by flak. [4 others were wounded.]

"18 a/c returned to base by 0855 hours."

[The crews of the two planes shot down are listed. One crew with 1st Lt. R. E. Gill as pilot on their 13th mission, all became POW's. Lt. Fisher's crew was also shot down at 0645 hours by flak. The left wing caught fire and the a/c blew up. P, CP, RO, BT, LW, and TG were KIA. The N was MIA. The B and TT are listed as ESC and the RW became a POW. Both planes were in the B Group--Low.]

In the chart of the formation in #6 position in the middle squadron of the A Group--Lead is $\frac{\text{Rowe}}{\text{N}559}$. *Standard by Rowe*
Sunday, 9--Got in on the very last pancake for breakfast. Went to church with Maurer, Crowder and Crawford. Another English minister. Had a poor dinner. Our crew got 3-day pass. Had to stand on train all the way. Got room at Royal Hotel with crew. Walked around Piccadilly Circus. Feet tired.

10--Got up about 9:15. Left hotel with Ernest. He was going to Cambridge. Went to Piccadilly Hotel and got room for 2 days at one pound a day. Swell room and swell bed. Went to Red Cross Club and got doughnuts. Met Crowder there. Roamed around awhile. Saw old crew 29. Met crew and Lt. Stewart. He bought us clothes. I got 4 pair of shorts. All ate dinner together. Went to show and saw "Up in Arms". Good picture. Ate supper and went to dance at Covent Gardens Royal Opera House. Stayed 'til 10:45. Roamed around Piccadilly Circus. What a place. Went to bed at 12:15.

11--Felt good to sleep in a good bed. Got up at 9:30. Got doughnuts and coke for breakfast. Saw George there. Went over to Royal Hotel. Got Maurer and Nelson. Ate lunch together. Took them by show. I went to see "For Whom the Bells Toll".

Good picture. Well worth seeing. Went in penny arcade. Ate supper. Went to Covent Gardens again. Had good time dancing with one girl called Angel especially. As I was getting on subway Dorothy, Errol and Tess picked me up. Ate chow with them. Took them to bus stop. Walked around and talked to some of the commandos. What a town! I've found out alot since I've been in the army.

I remember telling Maurer and Nelson about Danny Kaye's picture "Up in Arms", and Maurer went to see it and told me afterwards how much he enjoyed it. I really have no recollection of being picked up but I guess it was easy to do. Despite the blackouts alot of people were out walking. They knew where to go in the dark better than I.

12--Stayed in bed until 11:30. Too bad I had to get up. Went to news theater. Saw latest news on the screen. Got doughnuts and coke. Went to station and got train back to Thetford. Ate supper. Went to bed early. Didn't do much today.

I recall that a hotel valet woke me up and said, "It is six o'clock", and then left. I rolled over and went back to sleep.

There were a number of news theaters in London which showed war news and other items of interest. They were not expensive, and I thought it was a good idea.

My second trip to London was not as satisfying as the first.

13--Woke us up at 01:00. Had pancakes for breakfast. We flew scheduled abortion. Got back at 9:00 as we didn't go on mission. Went to sleep. Got up for supper. Went to show with Crawford and saw "Seven Days AShore". Wrote home. Rained.

Rowe's log: local over channel 4:00 Scheduled abortion
My FR: 4:00

The 388th at War

Mission #161, Munich, July 13, 1944

we flew 2 800 lbs bombs

"For the third day in a row, the 1st and 3rd Air Divisions attacked Munich.... 2 a/c of the A Group aborted for mechanical reasons and 4 a/c of the B Group aborted--one for mechanical reason--one as a spare [this must be us]--one because they could not locate the formation and the other returned after being hit by flak in the Brussels area on the route in."

*Letter dated July 13, 1944 postmarked July 14th censored
by Walter G. Collins 2nd Lt. AC*

Since I last wrote you I have been to London again. Last Sunday we learned at noon that we could get a pass that afternoon so we left about 3 in the afternoon arriving in London that evening. The first night the six of us stayed at the Royal Hotel but the next day we broke up. Crawford and Crowder went to Cambridge. I stayed the next two nights at the Piccadilly Hotel and left London Wednesday afternoon. You should have seen my hotel room. I decided to be extravagant for once so I really spent quite a bit of money. The room cost \$4.00 a night (one pound), but the bed was nice and soft and I even had a private bath. I slept late in the morning and then would go to a show. In the evenings I went to the dances held at the Royal Opera House. It was like a real vacation and I had a good time. Ate most of my meals with the fellows. I saw "For Whom the Bells Toll" and "Up in Arms" at the movies. Next time

I may go to a play. I might decide to go to Scotland, but I know it is fun to go to London. I know my way around pretty well now. I saw a number of fellows I knew while in London.

14--Briefing at 1:00. Pancakes for breakfast again. Went on a long mission to southern France. Dropped supplies to the French. Interphone system went out. Got back at 1:30. Ate and went to bed. Slept 'til dinner time. Got package from home. Full of candy and peanuts. Good. Heard Beethoven's 1st concerto for piano over radio at Red Cross Club. Took shower with Crawford. Cloudy.

Rowe's log: St. Julien, France 10:00 No opposition--
dropped guns and ammunition to French partisans. My FR: 10:00
French installations

The 388th at War

Mission #162, Area #4, Southern France--Support of the Marquies, July 14, 1944

"The 3rd Air Division was dispatched to France on a special mission in support of the French Marquies. All a/c were loaded with C-3 type bombs.

"The 388th furnished three 12 a/c Groups which compose the 45th C Combat Wing.

"Our 36 a/c were airborne between 0040 and 0423 hours and there were no abortions. Some difficulty was encountered in forming due to darkness; after which, the briefed route to and from the target was followed.

"The target area was clear and the briefed recognition signals were easily recognized. Bombs were away from the prescribed altitude as follows: A Group at 0920 hours on a heading of 15 degrees. B Group at 0930 hours on a heading of 360 degrees and the C Group at 0932 hours on a heading of 345 degrees.

"Strike results show excellent results for all Groups."

"No enemy fighters or flak were seen on this mission."

"Our a/c returned to base at 1338 hours."

The chart of the formation has $\frac{\text{Rowe}}{\text{M}|123}$, the plane we flew to Russia, in #3 position in the six planes in the middle squadron of A Group Lead.

The 388th Bomb Group Assn. publishes a newsletter and in the April 1990 edition mention was made of the three missions that carried materials to the French. 62 crews were involved and Ed Huntzinger requested that crew members who had participated in one of the missions to write him. There was a chance that the French government would award the Croix de Guerre to those individuals. I wrote him and gave the names and addresses of our crew members. I also wrote some about my recollections of the mission.

I recall seeing some men on the ground scurrying out to get the parcels the planes had dropped. We were flying at a very low altitude and the parcels had parachutes with static lines. My most vivid memory is about having to hold on to the walkway in the bomb bay and lean out and pull in the static lines which were flapping outside. Luckily we did not hit an air pocket.

If our interphone system went out we evidently didn't talk much on this mission.

In the July 1990 issue Ed writes that only a little more than half of the men have replied. He wants to hear from the rest so they can send their names to France. Now if we can just go to France to receive the award.

In the January 1991 issue a letter is printed which Ed received from the Foundation du Memorial de L'Escadrille Lafayette. Russell M. Porter writes that "there is a cut-off date on all World War II awards.... the Croix de Guerre is not a blanket sort of decoration. This is awarded usually on a unit Commander's recommendation, for specific endeavors.... I will try to investigate a little further, and have seen on one occasion, where there was a national commemoration. There is no automatic application for award of the Croix de Guerre..."

It looks doubtful that anything further will develop along this line. I did notice a picture on page 221 of Jablonski's book Flying Fortress with the caption: "The French present the Croix de Guerre avec Palm to members of the 100th who took part in the drop to the Marquis. Lieutenant Colonel Bennett is the recipient here."

15--Up at 9:00. Went to PX and got rations. Got package from home. Good to eat candy and peanuts again. Got 123 assigned to us. Went to radio school with Crawford and then to gunnery school. Talked with crew. I have a good crew. We have a good time together.

V-mail letter dated July 15, 1944 postmarked July 21 censored by Frederick Sanborn.

Have just enough time to write a short letter. Got your package today and so I'm sending my thanks. It was good but it isn't all gone yet. I've been passing it out and it went pretty fast but I managed to hold some of it back. We went to school all afternoon. I have to go to bed now as we have briefing this coming morning I think. I'm getting in quite a number of missions. Do you know where the Municipal Auditorium is? Well, I am too. [I refer to 13th street in K.C. We had completed 13 missions.]

Got a ship assigned to us today. It is named *Girl of My Dreams* which seems like a good name for it. I wonder if you would send me a couple of pairs of tech sergeant's stripes. They are scarce around here. I want the green stripe on a black background (called OD stripes). Also more candy would be appreciated. Have got to quit now to get this censored before the officers get to bed. Will write more soon. Got laundry today, also PX rations. Got a can of tomato juice this week. That's all for now. Sunday, 16--Briefing at 2:00. Long mission near Munich. Stuttgart I think. Got back at 1:30. Poor dinner. Went to bed and slept 'til 6:00. Ate chicken supper. Went to church. Got coke and cup cake. Wrote to Vivian. Plenty tired.

Rowe's log: Stuttgart 8:30 Center of city--no damage to plane
My FR: 8:30

The 388th at War

Mission #163, Munich, July 16, 1944

"The 388th furnished two groups to fly lead and low in the 45th A Combat Wing Formation.

"18 a/c plus 2 PFF a/c of the A Group and 16 a/c of the B Group were airborne between 0515 and 0540 hours. 1 a/c of the A Group aborted for mechanical reasons and 1 returned as a spare.

"Formations were effected and the briefed route to the target was followed. At the IP, the formation encountered a front up to 30,000 feet and was forced to make a left turn and select another target. Stuttgart was attacked through 10/10th clouds by PFF methods. Bombs were away at 10:15 hours from 24,100 feet.

"Flak over the target was moderate to intense and fairly accurate. Meagre flak was encountered at Brussels and Ludwigshaven.

"All a/c returned to base by 1356 hours."

Letter dated July 16, 1944 postmarked July 18 censored by Sanborn

Dear Vivian,

With all the letters I have here from you it is more than past time I should write to you. You seemed to have got quite a bit of traveling done last month and I bet you saw alot of interesting things. I would prefer to see America first but it looks like I am getting a glimpse^P of the world first.

We got back from a mission this afternoon at 1:30 which is about as late as we ever return. We were expecting a big dinner but when we got to the mess hall all they had was lunch ham and potato salad. That is the time when you feel like it isn't worth the effort. I went to bed and slept until six and then ate a big chicken dinner so I guess that makes up for what we had this afternoon. Church service was at 8:00 and I just got back from there so it is now 9:30. If we fly tomorrow which we probably will I had better go to bed again before long. Two of the crew havn't got up yet.

No doubt you have been wondering if I have been keeping up with your handkerchief collection. The first time I went to London I walked into one of the biggest stores they have and asked for one and was told that I would need ration points. Everywhere it was the same. Just by luck, the last time I was there I found one in a military store that they would sell me without points, so I will send it along when I can. It isn't much but at least it came from London. In Italy there wasn't any to be found. The nearest thing I saw was a small table set which cost around \$10.00. Prices are terribly high there and they havn't anything much to sell anyway. We almost had a

chance to visit Naples and I thought I could find something there but we didn't get to go. Russia is even worse. They don't even have any stores. In fact there isn't much left to the town. I did get a small piece of a parachute that I can give you. I think it is nylon but you know more about that than I do. I'll send a package home on of these days and include alot of things.

You would have liked to go swimming at the beach on the Adriatic. The water is warm and the beach was at least a mile long. It was a swell beach and we had a good time in the water. I got a little red but it is about gone now. It is next to impossible to get a tan in England because the sun seldom comes out. It was quite warm today which is unusual.

You arn't the only one that stayed at Hotel Piccadilly because I did too. Only difference was that I was in a larger city than you were. You ought to come to London sometime. I'm sure you would enjoy it. I know my way around pretty well there now. It is fun riding the subways. They have escalators about 3 stories long and some of them go at a pretty good rate of speed. Then if you run down them you are really traveling. It is inexpensive too. I don't ride the buses much because I don't know where they are going. It is fun riding on the top deck. They have more taxis in London than in New York I think.

Received the package of candy yesterday. It sure tasted good. Send some more if you can. I imagine it is quite hard to find candy there. We get 3 candy bars a week (one Hershey and 2 English bars) at the PX.

Well, I had better quit and get this up to the officers barracks to get it censored tonight. I'm rather tired and want to get to bed.

17--Got up at 9:00. Went with Crawford to Red Cross Club. Ate dinner. Had briefing at 3:00. Already tired. Went to France not far from Paris. Flak

was close and accurate. Our bombs wouldn't drop. Came back and dropped them over the channel. I got 2 QDM's. Tired. Got back at 11:00. Ate at mess hall. Back to barracks at 12:40. No time to sleep.

How was it?
CF Redcliffe
175
at 12:40
Ship No. 434. While putting in gun the adapter flew off and hit me in eye and mouth. Did quite a bit of bleeding.

I still have a scar over my right eye where the adapter flew off and hit me. Too bad I could not claim a Purple Heart.

Rowe's log: 5:50 Maulsunoy, France Flying bomb installations 2 flak holes My FR: 5:50 My notation of French coast is also correct.

The 388th at War

Mission #164, Houpeville, July 17, 1944

"The 3rd Air Division dispatched its forces to attack pilotless aircraft installations just inside the French Coast. The 388th furnished two 12 plane formations which flew individually. Wing formations were not effected for the mission.

"12 a/c of the A Group were airborne by 1757 hours and 12 a/c of the B Group by 1809 hours. None of our planes aborted. The two Groups formed without difficulty and proceeded to the Targets as briefed. The weather over the Target was CAVU and each group attacked visually. Bombs were away from the A Group at 2035 hours from 23,000 feet. Bombs were away from the B Group at 2042 hours from 22,900 feet. Strike photos show excellent results.

"Lt. Pohl in a/c 42-37849 landed safely at this base after his entire crew, except the co-pilot, had bailed out over the field. All crew members are safe. The ailerons of the aircraft had been shot away by flak and Lt. Pohl gave his crew the choice of bailing out or staying with the plane for an emergency landing. All of our a/c returned to base by 2305 hours.

"No enemy a/c were seen on this mission. The A Group encountered meagre but accurate flak at Cleres. The B Group encountered moderate and accurate flak at Rouen and St. Martin."

18--Briefing and out to the ship. Flew in 098. Went to Kiel, Germany. Kluth flew as pilot. Not much happened. Got back at 11:00. Ate and went to bed. Got up at 6:00 for supper. Still tired. Going back to bed.

My FR: 6:30 Kiel

Flying two missions with no rest in between is tiresome. Rowe decided to ground himself but the squadron provided us with an extra pilot, Donald B. Kluth, who had been a copilot on a *DM Thayer* crew that had been picked to be a lead crew. [I recall that our crew was asked if we wanted to be a lead crew which meant losing Stewart. We voted against it. Lead crews only fly the big missions and we were anxious to complete our tour as soon as possible.] Kluth was bumped off his crew so the CO could fly. He had checked out to be a pilot so was available for us. We did not know we would get to fly with Kluth again on our last mission.

My recollection of this mission was that I had to open and close the gas tank valves a number of times. Gas was consumed from the inner tanks, so it was necessary to open the valves of the outer wing tanks so that the gas could flow into the inner tanks. These valves were hard to operate and were located in the back of the bomb bay near my position. To operate them I had to disconnect my intercom, oxygen, and heated suit. In a few minutes I had to return to close the valves as the inner

tanks were full. On both missions with Kluth I had to leave my position a number of times. Col. Kluth now resides in Madison, Wisconsin.

Now the crew had as many missions as Rowe who had flown a mission before we started. Rowe was our good luck charm.

The 388th at War

Mission #165, Kiel, July 18, 1944

"On this day the 1st Air Division was assigned targets in the Peenemunde area, the 2nd Air Division was assigned the Caen area of France, while the 3rd Air Division was sent to Kiel. The 388th furnished two groups. The A Group was the high Group in the 45th A Combat Wing while the B Group was the high Group in the 45th B Combat Wing.

"17 a/c of the A Group and 18 a/c of the B Group were airborne between 0428 and 0501 hours. 1 a/c from each Group aborted. Formations were effected and the briefed course to the target was followed. After the Wing left England, 10/10th clouds prevailed over the entire route. The PFF equipment in the A Group was not functioning and the Wing did not get into position to bomb on the markers of the preceding Wing. Our A Group returned with their bombs. The B Group attacked the primary target with bombs away at 0842 hours from 25,300 feet.

"No enemy fighters were seen. Flak over the target was moderate.

"All of our a/c returned to base by 1123 hours."

19--Another briefing at 1:00. Getting monotonous. Flew in 098 again, Little Donna. Didn't take off until 5:10. Bombed Schweinfurt. Got 23 flak holes in ship. Two came in radio room and one in bomb bay. Back to eat. Went to bed. Slept 'til 8:00.

Went to Red Cross Club with Mac. Back to barracks. Tired. Two other crews in barracks on pass.

Rowe's log: Schweinfurt, Germany 7:20 Ball bearing plant
23 flak holes My FR: 7:20

The 388th at War

Mission #166, Schweinfurt, July 19, 1944

"Some 1200 heavy bombers were to take part in attacking targets in south-central Germany on this mission. The 388th was to furnish the lead and low Groups of the 45th A Combat Wing. This was to follow the 4th Wing which was in the lead for the 3rd Air Division.

"17 a/c plus one PFF of the A Group were airborne by 0527 hours. 20 a/c of the B Group were airborne by 0542 hours. 1 a/c of each Group aborted plus one spare returned to base.

"Formations were effected without difficulty and then a mid-air collision caused one a/c in the B Group to go down over Bury St. Edmunds. The formations then proceeded to the assigned target as briefed. Patchy clouds covered the entire route, but it was clear over the Target. Bombs were away at 0936 hours from 25,000 feet A Group and 0938 hours from 23,300 feet on the B Group. The PFF a/c leading the A Group was reported to have been hit by flak on the bomb run and the formation became slightly dispersed and many of the bombs missed the MPI. Strike photos show that the bombs from the B Group were on the factory just to the west of the assigned factory.

"No fighters were seen on this mission. Flak was intense over the Target.

"Lt. Maring in a/c 42-30195 "Blind Date" made an emergency landing at Honington as the plane received major flak damage.

"A/c 42-30851 "Little Boy Blue" was cut into by the props of the plane below when a/c #851 dropped down in the formation, at 0800 hours over Bury St. Edmunds at 15,000 feet. It was cut just forward of the waist windows. The forward part of the plane spun into the ground and exploded while the tail section fluttered earthward. One waist-gunner and the tail-gunner were able to parachute safely and returned to base. When they returned to base to be interrogated, the S-2 officer (Lt. Ratcliffe) said it was hard to believe this story.

[The other eight members of the crew were KIA. A more complete story of this event is found in the 388th Bomb Group Assn. Newsletter of April 1990 (Vol, 42, No. 2).]

"32 a/c returned to base by 1258 hours."

In the chart of the formation $\frac{\text{Rowe}}{\text{K}1098}$ is in #5 position of the middle squadron on the A Group.

20--Got to sleep later. Briefing at 4:00. We were scheduled abortion. Flew half way across channel and then came back. I would have liked to have gone on. Got back to base at 10:00. Showered and went to show. Saw "Don't Get Personal". Wrote home. Went to dinner and Red Cross Club with Crowder. Four of the crew went to 96th Group.

Rowe's log: over English channel 3:20 Scheduled abortion
My FR; 3:20

The 388th at War

Mission #167, Wetzler, July 20, 1944

"The 388th furnished 28 a/c.... In the B Group. 8 a/c were airborne by 0630 hours flying high squadron with the 452nd B Group which flew low

Group in the Wing. 2 a/c of each Group returned as spares with no aborts."

In the chart it mentions Aborts--Rowe.

We had flown every mission for seven day, July 13-20, with only July 15th off when the Group did not fly. This is a pretty fast pace.

V-mail letter undated [July 20, 1944] postmarked July 27th
censored by Bob Stewart

Have just enough time to write a V-mail letter as I must get to bed before long. We have been flying quite regularly and I must get my sleep or else I feel tired all the time. The weather has been nice lately for a change. It still gets real cool every night which doesn't make it seem like summer. I got your letter written July 6 yesterday in which you told me about the article in the paper. I hope you include the article in the next letter as I would like to see what it said. It isn't every day that one gets interviewed. Did you receive my letter I wrote about the trip? Four of the boys have gone over to see Maurer's brother this evening. I decided to write letters although I didn't get much done. One of these days I'm going to take a day off and get caught up. Well, there isn't much more to write about. nothing exciting has been happening that I can write about. I had better take this up and get it censored and get to bed. Will write again when something interesting happens.

21--Maurer woke me up at 6:30 for a practice mission. Had pan-
cakes and tomato juice for breakfast. Cloudy and started to rain
so we didn't fly. Went back to bed. Slept'til noon. Ate lunch

and wrote letters. After dinner I went to library and read a book "Ladies of Luxury" by Helen Z. Smith. It wasn't so good but made me do quite a bit of thinking about what a terrible condition this world is in. I used to think the U.S. was bad off but after seeing some of the other countries I find the good old U.S. is not doing so badly after all.

22--Again the engineer and I went on practice mission with pilot and navigator. I flew in nose. Flew all over England. What a life! Ate and went to bed again. Sgt. Wilder visited us in barracks. Went to chow. Sat around in barracks and talked with crew. Didn't get much done today.

Rowe's log: local 3:00 Practice formation My FR: 3:00
Sunday, 23--They got Maurer and myself up at 5:30 for practice mission but briefing wasn't until 7:30. Flew in formation at 18,000 ft. I stayed in nose. Learned about the Gee box. That kind of mission is fun. Slept most of the afternoon. Ate big dinner. Went to church with Maurer, Crowder & Nelson. Nice service.

Rowe's log: local 3:30 Practice mission My FR: 3:30

On one of these practice missions we were flying around England when, at my suggestion, we headed north for Scotland, but the weather closed in and we had to turn around. I enjoyed these missions which just included the two pilots, the navigator, the engineer, and the radio operator.

24--Woke us up at 7:30. No briefing. Went straight to plane. Flew in 289. Bombed the front lines in France. Flew over the

target for about an hour. Got back at 4:15. Ate dinner and then went again later. Quite tired. Had headache while flying. Was glad to get down. Stopped at library for awhile.

Rowe's log: Saint Lo area Cherbourg Peninsula, France 6:30
Enemy front line troop concentrations No battle damage My FR:
6:30 French coast

Rowe's log
of the mission

The 388th at War

Mission #168, St. Lo Area, July 24, 1944

"On the 24th of July the whole 8th Air Force was dispatched to a target West of St. Lo, France for saturation bombing to aid a break through of our Ground forces in that area. The 388th furnished three Groups, composing the 45th Combat Wing.

"35 a/c were airborne between 0910 and 0940 hours and there were no aborts. Formations were effected and the Wing proceeded to the target on the briefed course. [Maybe the pilots were briefed.] Weather in the target was hazy with broken skies causing the Wing to make four bomb runs. Bombs were away at 1311 hours from 16,000 feet on a mag heading of 325 degrees. Meagre accurate flak was encountered in the target area along with 10-12 rockets. We were the only Wing in the Division that dropped its bombs.

"In all the Groups of the 3rd Division the total battle damage was 21 minor and 1 major to the a/c with no casualties.

"All of our a/c returned to base by 1603 hours."

In the chart $\frac{\text{Rowe}}{Q|289}$ is in #3 position in the middle squadron of the C Group. No battle damage to our plane although the plane in #4 position had 3 flak holes.

25--Got us up at 7:30. No briefing. Flew over France near St. Lo. Bombed the front lines. Backed up by entire 8th air force. Got back at 1:30. Ate and got rations. Went to barracks and was called out again. Another mission. Flew in Little Donna both times 098. Cruised around up to 28,600 ft. before we got above the clouds. That is the highest I have been. Scrubbed the mission. Came back and ate again. Began to feel tired after a while.

Rowe's log: Saint Lo area Cherbourg Peninsula, France 5:40 Same local 3:00 mission scrubbed after climbing over 28,500 overcast
My FR: 5:40 St. Lo area & 3:00

I believe that the report of this mission said that some bombs dropped on our own troops. Despite this, according to the Life book World War II, this is the day the Allies began breakout of Normandy.

On the second mission that day I seem to recall that we were to form at 10,000 feet but it was overcast, so the order came to form at 15,000. We kept going up but it remained overcast, so they scrubbed the mission. I tried not to think about hundreds of planes circling in the fog.

The 388th at War

Mission #169, St. Lo Area, July 25, 1944

"For the second consecutive day the 8th Air Force sent its forces to a tactical target near St. Lo, France.

"The 388th put up three Groups of 12 a/c for the 45th A Combat Wing. No a/c aborted for the second day in a row. Formations were effected and the briefed route was followed to the target. Bombs were away at 1031 hours from 13,000 feet. Strike photos show a very tight pattern covering the target. Bombing was done from 3,000 feet lower than briefed because of clouds.

"No enemy fighters were encountered. Flak in the target area was meagre

and inaccurate. One of our a/c in the C Group had self-inflicted damage caused by the premature exploding of a fragmentation bomb at bombs away. There were no casualties.

"Brigadier General Kissner, 3rd Division Chief of Staff, and members of his staff accompanied personnel of the 388th on this mission."

The book does not mention the scrubbed mission later in the day.

26--Stayed in bed until 9:30. Didn't get any mail so decided to write some. [Wrote five letters.] Not quite so far behind now. After dinner I went to library. Read awhile and then went to Red Cross Club. Got cup cakes and cokes. Rode back on bicycle with Nelson.

27--Didn't get to sleep because of talking in barracks. Briefing at 2:00. Went to ship 098. Ready to fly to Stuttgart. Mission scrubbed at 5:30. Went back to barracks and slept 'til 11:00. Got letter from Vivian. Ate lunch and got cokes. Went to school. Heard lecture on security and supposed to have one on guns. Went out to ship and removed guns and cleaned them. After dinner I wrote to Vivian. Went to library and read.

Letter to Vivian dated July 27, 1944 postmarked July 28th censored by Robert M. Rowe.

Right now it is 7:20 in the evening and it is raining real hard so I thought this would be a good time to write a letter. This is the kind of weather I thought would be prevalent all the time but we havn't had very much rain. It is cloudy most of the time but doesn't rain too often.

We went to school this afternoon but of course we didn't learn much. We are getting to feel like veterans now. The time has passed rapidly since we have been here and perhaps it won't be long before we'll be through. I'm anxious to get home again.

As yet I haven't had anybody to sew my stripes on. The laundry lady is going to sew on a couple of pairs on my jackets, but I don't have the right kind of stripes for my blouse and shirts. I'm hoping you send me some before long. You ought to see all the ribbons I have across my chest now. You'll be able to see me coming a block away.

I am beginning to get caught up with my mail again. There are only 11 letters waiting here to be answered.

Will probably go to the Aero Club (Red Cross) later on this evening and get something to eat. We can get sandwiches, cupcakes, cokes, tea and coffee there. Almost like a corner drug store although I still miss the milk shakes. I'm going to get five in a row when I get back to the states. We had ice cream for dessert which wasn't bad. We get it about two times a week. Some of the meals are poor but usually we have plenty to eat.

Not much has happened recently and since Crawford is going to get his mail censored now I will quit so he can take this letter with him.

28--Briefing at 2:30. Listened to German news broadcast before take-off. Flew to Meuseburg [actually Merseburg], Germany. Not much flak. Not a bad trip. Got one QDM at 250 miles. Got back to the sack at 3:45. Slept until 9:00. Went to Red Cross Club

with Maurer and Nelson. Back to bed at 11:00.

The trip wasn't as easy as I thought.

Rowe's log: Merseburg, Germany 8:30 oil refinery 5 flak
holes My FR: 8:30 Merseburg

It was enjoyable being a radio operator. I could listen to other stations at times and often get good music. It was possible to pick up Axis Sally at times and get some good jazz. Listening to Sally was always good for a laugh. Collins liked to listen on the radio, and I enjoyed going to his position. It had the best view although to sit there during landing was a frightening experience. On a mission I often stayed listening to my radio, especially if a message was coming in, so did not communicate with the other members of the crew who usually stayed on the intercom channel. I did notice that if the mission was relatively easy the crew did alot of talking and even singing. If the mission was rough the crew was more subdued. Most of the time the crew worked well together. We all had a job to do and we did our best.

It may not have been on this mission but one event stands out in my mind. We were on our way to a target when I looked up and saw a plane flying directly above us. From my position I had a good view up but only a small window on either side. On the earlier models the hatch was left open, but in later models the compartment was more enclosed. On this occasion I called the pilot who called the leader who called the plane and the plane moved back to its right position. I had forgotten about

it when we got to the IP (initial point) where the formation is on the bomb run, and I looked up and there was the plane again, this time with its bomb bay doors open. I could see the bombs. Again I notified the pilot, and it seemed like it took forever for the plane to move. I just knew those bombs were going to hit us, but the plane slid over just a bit and the bombs went by our wing. The disaster was averted.

One other process that cause anxiety when I thought about it, so I tried not to think about it, was our take-offs at night or in the daytime in foggy weather. Some of the missions we were on had a thousand planes involved. The planes took off at specified intervals of 30 seconds, and a procedure was followed by all the planes, climbing up to the altitude specified for putting the formation together. I never heard of any collisions during this procedure, but I'm sure there must have been some. One collision occurred on the runway one day at our base when a landing plane ran into a gas truck. The driver of the truck was killed. I expect he thought he had an easy job, but the war caught up with him.

The 388th at War

Mission #170, Merseburg, July 29, 1944

"The 1st and 3rd Air Divisions were sent to attack a synthetic oil refinery of I. G. Farbenindustrie in the Merseburg-Leuna area. The 388th furnished two Groups, the lead and the low Groups in the 45th B Combat Wing.

"18 a/c plus 2 PFF a/c of the A Group and 20 a/c of the B Group took-off between 0500 and 0527 hours. 3 a/c in the A Group aborted, 2 for mechanical reasons and one because he could not locate the formation.

"After forming, the Groups flew East diagonally across Europe on a briefed flak-free course to the IP, where the course was changed to a East-West for the bomb run. Two sharp right turns were made at the target and RP and the same route was followed on the return to base. Due to cloudy conditions at the target, PFF methods were used with bombs away at 0941 hours from 24,000 feet. The bombs in one a/c of the B Group hung-up and had to be jettisoned South of the target at the RP.

"One ME 410 was observed in the target area but did not attack. Meagre flak was encountered at Koblenz and Kassel with accurate flak at the target.

"25 a/c suffered minor damage and 1 a/c major damage.

"Sgt. E. R. Finn was wounded.

"All a/c returned to base by 1358 hours."

In the chart $\frac{\text{Rowe}}{\text{K}|\text{098}}$ is in position #5 in the high squadron of the A Group Lead. In the list of battle damage 42-97098 from the 561st Sq. has 5 holes listed.

29--Didn't get much sleep. Back to Merseburg [wrong again] again. Quite a bit of flak. That makes 21. When we got to the barracks at 3:00 we found we had a pass. Rained. Took laundry to Mrs. Hubbard. All but Crowder and officers went into Thetford. Walked around awhile with Crawford. I should go to visit some other city but it is London again. Got on train at 11:30.

Rowe's log: Merseburg, Germany 8:30 oil refinery 4 flak holes
My FR: 8:30 Merseburg Total flying time in July--98:40

The 388th at War

Mission #171, Merseburg, July 29, 1944

"For the second consecutive day, 1st and 3rd Air Division forces were

dispatched to the I. G. Farbenindustrie synthetic oil plant at Leuna. The 388th flew high Group on both the 45th A and B Combat Wings.

"The A Group had 20 a/c airborne between 0535 and 0554 hours. In the B Group 19 a/c were airborne between 0520 and 0532 hours. All a/c of the A Group attacked the Target, while two aborted from the B Group for mechanical reasons. After forming, the Groups flew Southeasterly across Germany to the IP, where a turn was made to a west-east bomb run. Clouds covered the Target but black smoke in the Target area indicated direct hits. In the vicinity of the RP, the A Group was attacked by 30-50 ME 109's and 8-12 FW 190's. Only one pass was made before our escort intercepted. Lt. Boyce in a/c 42-39866 was attacked by 3 ME 109's from the rear, setting fire to the two inboard engines. When the fire broke out, he peeled off and went into a dive and disappeared into the clouds at 14,000 feet. The copilot and navigator were able to bail-out and landed into a barley field, and were captured immediately. The Germans at a near-by base said that seven bodies were in the burned aircraft. After this five minute attack, the Group followed the same route home as on the way to the Target.

"Bombs were away at 1006 from 26,000 feet. The B Group made its own sighting and did not bomb with the Wing.

"36 a/c returned to the base by 1354 hours.

"The only flak encountered was at the Target and was intense and accurate. 2 a/c had major battle damage and 21 a/c had minor damage. Sgt. G. J. Mead was wounded and one crew is missing. Claims are two ME 109's destroyed.

[The members of Boyce's crew are listed. All are KIA except the CP and N which are POW's.]

"Lt. Fitzpatrick returned in a crippled a/c and while it was being re-

paired, an a/c from Fersfield making an emergency landing hit his a/c killing the crew chief, Orson Wells and mechanic Joe Haine. Lt. Paulson in a/c 42-97873 Flying in the high squadron came back with nine 20 mm holes in his aircraft."

In the chart listing the positions in the formation, Rowe is listed in #6 position in the middle squadron of the B Group.

From July 13th through July 29th our crew flew on every mission the 388th BG flew plus two practice missions.

V-mail letter dated July 29, 1944 postmarked August 8th censored by Frederick Sanborn

Just going to write a few lines as I'm leaving tonight for a 3 day pass. I'm not sure where I'm going but I'll tell you about it when I get back.

I wish they had postponed it until after pay day as I don't have any too much cash on hand but I guess I can't spend so much this time.

Got a letter from Aunt Maude yesterday. I should have written some letters this afternoon, but I didn't have time. I'll write when I get back. I'm getting caught up as I havn't received much mail lately. Got letter from Chester [fraternity brother] who is now stationed in France.

It has been raining all day. Guess I'll take my raincoat with me.

Well, there is nothing much more to write about so I'll quit. Will write when I get back.

Sunday, 30--Arrived in London at 3:15 or thereabouts. Took taxi to Piccadilly. Got eggs and toast. Walked. Left fellows and went to services in Westminster Abbey. A guide gave us a real tour of the abbey. Enjoyed it. Got hotel room at Royal Hotel. Went to Marble Arch at Hyde Park. Listened to speakers and watched ball game. Interesting. Met Eileen. Ate and talked. To bed at 9:00. I'm tired.

My diary had less space for Sundays than for other days and it seemed like more happened on Sundays than on other days. After the service at Westminster Abbey the guide took a few of the service people all through the abbey and told us alot of interesting stories. I remember one about a king who had dreamed he would die in Jerusalem. He suffered a stroke at the abbey and was taken to a room. When he awoke he asked where he was and was told he was in Jerusalem, the name of the room, and thus he died fulfilled.

Marble Arch was a big subway station and Hyde Park was full of people on soap boxes declaiming everything under the sun. Anyone is allowed to speak their piece in Hyde Park. One fellow was just reading the Bible. Most speakers were pretty emphatic about their subjects. As I left Hyde Park and was walking down the street, suddenly everyone began yelling and screaming and running. Overhead a buzz bomb flew over, and I watched it as it flew from right to left. When it ran out of gas it would fall and explode, but this one flew over and disappeared. Only a few American G.I.'s were left on the street. I can't remember how I met Eileen, but I made arrangements to meet her again the next day.

31--[my future wife's 15th birthday] Stayed in bed until 10:30. Went to Rainbow Center. Then to show. Saw "Murder in Thornton Square" which is called "Gaslight" at home. Pretty good. Went to Berkley Square. Back to hotel. Shaved and met crew members. Went to Marble Arch and met Eileen. First we went to a pub and then to Yankee Doodle for a steak. Took a cab for show. Saw "Going My Way", a good picture. Went to another pub. I didn't like it. Took her home to a subway station. Came back to hotel and talked with Rowe and fellows. Tired. Getting headache.

Eileen claimed it was her birthday but I doubted it. She probably said that to each fellow she met. She really wanted to stay in the pub and drink, but I wasn't interested. I felt sorry for her when I saw that she lived in a subway station. A lot of people who had lost their homes lived in the station. Some of the stations were quite crowded. I guess this was one of the few dates I had while in the army. As I recall a V-2 rocket exploded a block away from where Maurer and Nelson were staying. That was scary.

August 1--Got up again at 10:30. Got doughnuts and coke again at Rainbow Club. Went to news theater. Fairly interesting. Got on subway to go to St. Paul's but decided it was too late so we went on to the train. Read on trip back. Ate and read mail when I got back. Went to Red Cross Club with Maurer and Crowder. Talked for quite awhile.

Got paid 27 pounds, 4 shillings, and 4 pence.

2--Briefing at 10:30 for a change. That's more like it. Flew near Paris to Mery sur Oise. It was the worst mission yet. We got over 200 flak holes. The right elevator was all ripped up.

*How many flak holes
8/16 to 20
to 30
9/28
miss 30*
It was rough. I was more scared today than ever before. Liason receiver wires shot in two. A dynamotor caught on fire. Yet we were all unhurt. I guess we're lucky. Had a good time talking about it afterwards. Got a package of checkers and candy. Lt. Rowe brought us another oak leaf cluster.

Sat in pilot's seat for awhile.

Rowe's log: Mery-sur-oise, France 6:50 Flying bomb storage dump Over 200 flak holes. Half of right elevator shot away.

My FR: 6:50 Paris

This is the mission which, other than our last mission, I remember most clearly. In the fall of 1989 Life Magazine requested some war stories for publication. I wrote up a summary of this mission and then had a hard time reducing it to the required 500 words. I received a letter stating that they had received my story, but it did not get published. Now I shall try again since I am not limited to 500 words.

It always seemed like France had more accurate gunners than those in Germany. We used to joke about Hans and Fritz looking up at the formation and saying, "Let's get engine #3 on that second plane." In Germany it was usually a barage of shots, and we just flew through it. Some of the guns the Germans used were controlled by radar, and it was found that if we released little packets of tin foil it caused the guns to shoot at the cloud of tin foil behind the formation rather than the planes. Thus, on

the bomb run, it was part of my duty to push these packets of foil, called chaff, out through a vent in the side at a particular rate of speed. When a piece of flak landed smoking at my feet the rate of dispersing the chaff increased. In the bomb bay on this mission we were carrying four of the biggest bombs, called blockbusters. It worried me that they were a big target for the flak and that I was mighty close. From the IP to the target the plane was to fly straight and level which presented an easier target for Hans and Fritz. We could feel the ship getting hit constantly as the flak was quite intense. Finally, Collins called out, "Bombs away!" and nothing happened. Nelson reported on the intercom that the bombs were still in the bomb bay. At this point the plane received a direct hit in the right elevator and the plane went into a spin. I remember Rowe telling Collins to get the bombs out, and Collins must have pushed an emergency button or something because the bombs went out much to my relief. Nelson followed the bombs and saw them hit a French farmhouse. We probably blew up the whole farm. Such are the fortunes of war.

Rowe was working to get the plane on an even keel. Meanwhile I tried to call the waist or the ball turret on the intercom and got no answer. For some reason the door to the waist was closed. The pilot told me to check on them. As I opened the door Nelson was motioning me that he needed a fire extinguisher because of a fire in a dynamotor. I got him the extinguisher and then reported to the pilot about the fire in the waist. My radio was not working. We had fallen out of the for-

mation and were by ourselves. The plane was flying straight now, so the pilot decided to check on the damage. He passed my position and went into the waist. Since my radio was inoperative I went up to the pilot's compartment, and Stewart invited me to sit in the pilot's seat. When Rowe returned I was flying the plane. It was the only time I had ever had such an opportunity. However, Rowe had seen that our vertical stabilizer had been tilted to the left and we were in danger. The enlisted men all gathered in the radio room with their chutes in case of a real emergency. With my radio out I was unable to help, but our navigator got us back, and we even got home before the rest of the formation did. Since they didn't want our plane to mess up the runway with the other planes returning we had to circle the field until everyone else had landed. Then we landed and it was a good landing. Our pilot deserves alot of credit for bringing us through with no injury. The tail position was really riddled, and Crawford was noticeably more nervous. Some time previous, it had been decided that one gunner would remain at home so the back three gunners alternated. Nelson was the only one small enough to fly in the ball turret easily so he always flew. In case of an attack I was to go to one of the waist guns. The radio compartment gun was ineffective anyway.

It was a memorable mission. I believe they had to scrap the plane since it was in such bad shape. I seem to recall thinking that we had flown with this ship once before and had some trouble, so it was a good thing it was now out of commission.

*we flew
plane
7
May*

The 388th at War

Mission #174, Mery-Sur-Oise, August 2, 1944

"The 388th furnished two 12 a/c Groups which flew lead and low of the 45th B Combat Wing, plus 3 a/c to fly with the 452nd BG in the 45th A Combat Wing.

"12 a/c plus 1 PFF a/c of the A Group and 13 a/c of the B Group took off by 1307 hours. The 3 a/c flying with the 452nd took-off at 1310 hours. 2 a/c from each of our Groups aborted.

"Formations were effected and the briefed route to the target was followed. Favorable weather conditions prevailed over the target and it was attacked visually. Bombs were away at 1705 from 22,900 feet. Strike photos show excellent results for the B Group with the MPI being covered by a tight pattern.

"The only flak encountered was at the target which was very accurate and intense. No enemy fighters were seen. Six crew members were wounded by this flak.

"One a/c was shot down with the others returning to base by 2008 hours.

"Lt. Balboni in a/c 42-97171 was lost due to flak. The nose of his a/c was blown off and the bail-out alarm was given. Everyone got out except the copilot who crash-landed the plane southeast of Pontoise and it was 70% destroyed. The crew was being shot at during descent, and the pilot was severely wounded. He later died in a German Hospital near Paris. The engineer, T/Sgt. Furfaro, was also wounded and was in the same hospital. He was still in the hospital when the Germans fled and Sgt. Furfaro was taken to a French home until turned over to the American forces. The rest of the crew were POW's.

"When captured, the first stop for the enlisted men was Beauvais, France, then to Brussels, Belgium, Oberslau, Germany, Wetzlar, Germany, St. Wendell, Germany and finally to Stalag IV. They were marched out of Stalag IV on February 6, 1945 and marched through 92 villages until liberated on April 26th at Bitterfield, Germany by the 104th Infantry."

This group must have been processed much like we were a few days later. We ended up in Stalag Luft IV also.

3--Letter came from home with clipping in it about [my] going to Russia. Looks good to see my name in print. Had briefing at 1:00 and after putting guns in and getting almost ready it was scrubbed. Played cards with crew. Came back to barracks and wrote home. Ate supper. Had ice cream and cake. Went to Red Cross Club with Nelson. Full moon tonight.

Letter dated August 3, 1944 postmarked August 4th censored by Walter G. Collins, 2nd Lt. A.C.

I have received five letters from you since I last wrote so I had better start writing again. I got back from pass Tuesday evening but this is the first chance I've had to write. Yesterday we didn't fly until the afternoon so I didn't have any time for writing. We were supposed to do the same today only it was canceled. Now if they let me alone for the rest of the afternoon I may be able to get something done. The letter I got today was the one with the article about me in it. I have three letters written later than this one so it looks like they just hold up some letters. My name looks good in print.

The pictures you saw at the Uptown were probably the ones taken of the 15th air force when they went to Russia. They went to Russia before we did but my group was the first to go from England. In fact our plane landed second out of the whole bunch. Dr. Labunski's [Director of the Conservatory] son must be in the same wing I am although I didn't see him. He and I must have arrived here near the same time. They did take some pictures of us in Russia although I don't know whether I am in any of them or not. They took pictures of the briefing but I doubt if they would show that.

Yes, I have more than one air medal now but instead of giving the medal more than once they give an oak leaf cluster. I have two clusters now and may have another before the week is up.

My base pay is now \$114.00. Flying pay is 50% so that is \$57.00. Overseas pay is 20% of base pay or \$22.80 making a total of \$193.80. I send \$55.00 home, \$18.75 for a bond and \$6.50 for insurance which leaves me \$123.55 for spending money. I never have received that much money yet because while I was a tech sergeant most of July the actual orders didn't come out until July 15th and that is when the money begins. I think I made just about \$100 this month. They are having a big bond drive over here so I bought a \$50 bond and think I will save the rest for awhile in case we get a furlough to go to Scotland. It is nice to have money.

You asked whether I had spaghetti in Italy or not. The spaghetti I saw them making in the streets wasn't the kind I would

want to eat. Besides the army doesn't want the soldiers to eat in town in Italy. You can't imagine how dirty everything is. I heard one girl sing at the Red Cross Club there that had the same technique I was taught, but she was singing American songs. Seems like everything is for the Americans and it is hard to get the true nature of the people.

Today is the warmest we've had it for quite some time.

There is no telling when and where we go on a mission. We may go to Russia again but I really don't know. We never know where we are going until we are briefed about two or three hours before the flight. We did know about the Russian trip before because we had to pack a few things for the journey. I like the long missions usually better than the short. I don't get as tired as I used to because I'm getting used to it now. One time we flew seven days out of eight although two were practice missions and I wasn't too tired. Of course you can't get much done when you fly that often. It is fly, eat, sleep, eat, fly, eat, sleep, eat, etc. You lose track of the time and day. I think our crew has been very lucky. Do you know where Ruppert Stadium is? [The ball field in K.C. was located at 22nd and Brooklyn. This was my way of indicating 22 missions.]

It would be all right to have the Star here [Kansas City Star] but I doubt if it would be worth while as I don't have too much time to read and besides by the time they got it started I might be getting ready to leave. Send it if you want to. The English papers aren't much good.

Will tell you about my trip to London in my next letter. It is supper time and I'm hungry. I hear we have ice cream and cake for dessert. We have ice cream about twice a week. The meals are usually good but I hear we have stew tonight. Will probably go to the Red Cross Club later on this evening and get a couple of sandwiches and cup cakes.

Will write again in the next couple of days if they don't keep me too busy. I had a good time on my pass and will try and tell you all about it.

4--Briefing at 6:30. Went to Hamburg, Germany. Got about 15 to 20 flak holes. Lt. Rowe got hit in foot. Lt. Stewart took over. *Lt. Rowe*
Wonder what will happen now. Took a nap. Going to midnight show. Feel pretty good.

Rowe's log: Hamburg, Germany 6:30 oil refinery 16 flak holes, wounded by flak in left foot.

This is his last entry until he resumes flying at Hendricks Field, Sebring, Fla. on Feb. 7, 1945. Total dual time 245:50 solo 447:25

My FR: 6:35 last entry A total of 13:25 in August, 242:00 to date

I was on my radio listening to the strike report when I heard that Rowe got hit. I reached for my first aid kit but was informed that someone had taken care of it. After bombs are dropped the leader radios in a report, and I usually make a copy. Monitoring the radio I was often off the intercom.

Business was conducted on the intercom. I was often off the intercom listening to my radio. To reach me one had to press the call switch. One time they forgot to notify me to put on oxygen until we were at 18,000 feet.

Roger wilco was the official response to a message on intercom. It meant Received, will comply. Our crew used the words Rodney Wilcox instead.

The 388th at War

Mission #175, Hamburg, August 4, 1944

"The 388th furnished the high Group in the 13th A Combat Wing. 2 additional a/c flew with the 452nd Bomb Group to Oslebshausen.

"Our 21 a/c plus 1 PFF a/c were airborne by 0917 hours. 2 a/c aborted for mechanical reasons. Formations were effected and a course over the North Sea was followed to the target area. Bombs were away at 1323 hours from 26,000 feet. Two of our a/c had mechanical difficulty in the target area and dropped their bombs on a target of opportunity. Strike photos at Hamburg show poor results but the two a/c that dropped later state that a railroad line was destroyed in the town of Bederkesa.

"Moderate accurate flak was encountered at the target with 17a/c receiving battle damage. Lt. R. Rowe was injured by this flak.

"All a/c returned to base by 1551 hours."

5--Didn't get anything done today. Laid around and ate candy. Read for awhile at Aero Club. Got laundry back. Went to supper and show with Crowder. Saw "Once Upon a Time". Funny. Ate at Aero Club.

If Rowe had not been shot we probably would have flown on the mission to Magdeburg on August 5th.

Chapter Five

The Last Mission

Some of the crew went to the hospital to see Rowe on Saturday. I thought I would go on Sunday. I was glad I got my laundry back on Saturday.

It was common knowledge that when a crew has someone wounded or killed on a mission they are given a seven-day furlough. Crews were also awarded a seven-day furlough when 25 missions were completed. We were close with 23, so we knew we would get seven days off one way or another. Our squadron had two crews on pass due back at midnight. Usually a crew got back just before midnight and had to go to briefing almost immediately. It had happened that way with our crew. All we had to do was wait until Sunday and get our furlough for a week. We had talked about going to Scotland. We had been to London three times, and it was getting to be a hot spot with all the V-2 rockets coming in. Fate intervened. The call for crews came in before midnight, and the squadron had a quota to fulfil. If a crew on pass came in late and missed a briefing they would be declared AWOL. The squadron decided to let our crew fly with Kluth as pilot again to satisfy their need. Our crew did not find out that we were on alert until late, and some of them had started celebrating early.

Briefing may have been as early as 5:00 A.M. or soon after that. When the curtain over the map was removed and Berlin was shown to be the target, I think we all had a premonition. One should not go to Berlin with a 7-day furlough in your pocket.

I remember going back to the barracks after briefing and putting my recent pay in an overcoat pocket. Crowder was stirring (It was his turn to stay home.), and I told him to get a letter I had written censored for me. I thought of telling him that I had a feeling about this mission, but I decided not to burden him with my problems.

The crew checked out their parachutes, and I left my billfold in a locker and rode a truck out to the plane. We got the guns in their position and gave the plane a complete check as usual. Sometimes we had to wait for an hour or more for the pilot to arrive. Some of the crew were dozing. They had had little or no sleep. I recall that I spent the time waiting by talking with Stewart. I believe it was the longest conversation I had had with him. Finally, the pilot arrived and we started on our 24th mission without Lt. Rowe, our good luck charm.

Soon after takeoff I checked on my radio and found that the Germans were jamming the frequency. A message was coming through, but it was next to impossible to decipher anything. Now and then a letter or two could be made out. The message was repeated over and over, and since the procedure was always the same I kept trying to get it down on my log. Finally, about two or three hours later I was getting more and more of it. Suddenly, the intercom said, "Pilot to radio." He wanted the valves on the outer tanks opened. I had a feeling of deja vu. After that chore was accomplished I returned to the radio and almost had the message completed when I was asked to close the valves. I did as I was told,

and finally, with much concentration I completed the message. Then it was decoded, and the message said to switch to a new frequency without the interference. This was entered on my log, and I felt that when the logs were examined by the radio chief he would mention to me that I had received the message earlier than anyone else in the group. I was really proud of this accomplishment.

Our plane was flying the #3 position off the left wing of the leader. Since we were bombing a tank factory/part of the city going northwest we were immediately to turn left after the bomb drop so as to avoid flying over more of the city. At the IP the plane began to bounce around, which meant it was close to the explosions and getting hit by fragments of flak. This is the worst time of the mission, but a sigh of relief came when Collins called out, "Bombs away." The bomb bay doors shut, and I went back to my radio to listen for the strike report. A big explosion occurred, and I looked up to see the front wall of the bomb bay in flames.

I have relived these moments many times, and I have talked to everybody who was on board for their viewpoint of what happened. I shall try to give a description of what happened.

Lt. Kluth was piloting the plane from the right seat, the copilot's seat, because it is easier to do so when flying #3 position. Some one told me that the leader had called us and said to move over, as we were flying so close that the leader could not turn left. There is a report called the Missing A/c Report

which states that "a/c #098 went down in the target area after bombs away. Reports are conflicting on the cause of the plane's loss, but apparently the oxygen system of the a/c was not functioning. The plane went to a lower altitude because the pilot reported crew members fainting from lack of oxygen, and some crews claim hearing the a/c call for fighter escort. When last seen, the a/c was under control going down. Some crews claim the a/c was on fire as it went down. Possibly two chutes were seen." This report is one sheet of the 388th B.G. Air Force Mission Report for August 6, 1944.

Let me digress. A letter to Stewart dated 2-10-1979 from Collin's daughter-in-law states:

Dear Bob:

Enclosed is the 388th B.G. Air Force Mission Report for August 6, 1944.

I used it to verify Walter's claim for compensation, because, as you know they had him marked down as M.I.A. and somehow never got around to changing him in the records.

Anyway, it was sort of hard to get and now that he is gone, I thought perhaps you might want it. I know he would want you to have it as you were remembered affectionately by him always and you might enjoy reading how accurate your mission was, etc. Walter enjoyed reading the intelligence report which was only recently declassified, and so forth.

I hope you find this interesting and enjoy reading it. If you do not desire it, perhaps The Eighth Air Force Historical Society may make good use of it.

I just couldn't bare to throw it away, I remember Walter explained every part of the mission to me and he shared happy moments about those days as I hope you will too.

My very best regards to you and your family.

Love,

(signed) Colette T. Hawkins

(Walter's daughter-in-law)

In August of 1986 my wife and I attended an Anderson reunion in western Kansas and then drove to Pennsylvania to see my daughter and to Connecticut to see my sister Vivian. On the way home we stopped in Newport News, Virginia to see Stewart. He was the only member of the crew that I had not seen since that fateful day. He showed me these papers which I was so glad to see and he said I could take them and copy them, which I did and then returned the papers to him. Stewart was rather reticent about talking about the last mission but did say he may have passed out. This was the first I had known this, so perhaps we did have oxygen problems before we were hit. I shall come back to the papers later, as some interesting facts are included which I can relay on to the readers.

First, the report about this mission in Huntzinger's book:

The 388th at War

Mission #177, Berlin, August 6, 1944

"For this mission the 388th furnished one Group of 22 a/c for the 45th Combat Wing. 3 a/c aborted for mechanical reasons.

"Formations were effected without difficulty and the briefed route to the target was flown. Berlin was bombed visually. One of our planes was hit by flak over the target just after bombs away.

"18 of our a/c returned to base safely.

"Sgts. Churchill and Tinney on Lt. Creagh crew were wounded.

P	1st Lt. D. B. Kluth	POW	2
CP	2nd Lt. R. S. Stewart	24 POW	
N	2nd Lt. F. H. Sanborn	24 POW	
B	2nd Lt. W. G. Collins	24 POW	
TT	T/Sgt. A. Maurer	24 POW	
RO	T/Sgt. J. H. Anderson	24 POW	
BT	S/Sgt. D. I. Nelson	24 POW	
WG	S/Sgt. R. McIntyre	24 POW [He did not have 24 missions.]	
TG	S/Sgt. E. Crawford	24 POW	

"Lt. Kluth in a/c 44-6088 "Fortress Nine" [I believe we were flying in 098, "Little Donna".] was hit by flak just after bombs away in the area of the flight deck. The oxygen tanks exploded causing a fire at which time the pilot gave the bail-out order. The crew's regular pilot, Lt. Rowe, was wounded on the Berlin [should be Hamburg] mission two days before."

Incidentally, the last combat mission flown by the 388th Bomb Group was Mission #306 to Landsberg, on April 21, 1945.

Now for the information gleaned from the papers sent to Stewart by Collins' daughter-in-law. The first eight pages present A. Statistics, B. Operational Summary, and C. Intelligence concerning the mission. Rather than try to copy just the relevant parts I shall reproduce all eight pages. On page 1 the statistics show that over 1000 heavy bombers flew that day. On pages 2-3 the pertinent material is on the Third Force. Page 4 indicates the photo reconnaissance. Page 5 gives weather reconnaissance and starts the intelligence report. Page 7 gives the damage to enemy installations. Our results are listed first.

Hill

~~SECRET~~
HEADQUARTERS EIGHTH AIR FORCE
AAF STATION 131
APO 634

GROUPS SUMMARY NO. 98

PERIOD: 0001 hours 6 August 1944 to 2400 hours 6 August 1944.

A. STATISTICS

	<u>Missions</u>	<u>Disp.</u>	<u>Sorties</u>	<u>Atkg.</u>	<u>Tonnage</u>	<u>Claims</u>	<u>Losses</u>				<u>Totals</u>
							<u>E/A</u>	<u>AA</u>	<u>N/E</u>	<u>OT</u>	
Heavy Bomber Atks.	20	1182+	1117	1027	2424.4++	0-4-8 A	4	18	4	2	28
Fighter Escort	16	741	649	0	0	31-2-7 A 2-0-4 G	0	0	0	9	9
Fighter Sweeps	0	0	0	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	0	0
Fighter Bombing	0	0	0	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	0	0
Photo Recon.	31	31	31	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	0	0
Weather Recon.	11	11	11	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	0	0
Air Sea Rescue	20	20	20	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	0	0
Special Operations	<u>41</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0-0-0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Totals	139	2026	1869	1027	2424.4	31-6-15A 2-0-4 G	4	18	4	11	37

+ Includes 16 spares (4 used).

++ Does not include tonnage of 75 B-17s attacking Gdynia.

B. OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

1. Bomber Attacks

23 combat wings (646 B-17s, 536 B-24s - 1182 a/c) dispatched in five force against 13 industrial targets in north central Germany, Poland and seven Noball targets in France. Five Noball targets not attacked. 1027 a/c dropped 2424.4 tons G.P. and I.B., visually, on all other assigned primaries and other targets. E/a opposition: two attacks by approximately 25 e/a at Genshagen and Berlin. Claims: 0-4-8. Losses: 28 a/c (17 B-17s, 11 B-24s).

First Force: 11 combat wings (414 B-17s) dispatched to attack aero-engine works, pilotless a/c plant and a/c assembly and component plant in the Berlin area. 390 a/c dropped 916.3 tons G.P. and I.B. on the three assigned primaries and other targets at 1223 - 1257 hours from 23,500 - 26,000 feet. Leaflets dropped at Brandenburg. Battle damage: 84 minor, 22 major. E/a opposition 16 FW-190s and Me-109s attacked at Genshagen. 50 - 75 e/a seen south of Hamburg but no attacks. Claims: 0-0-3. Losses: 11 B-17s (7 to AA, 4 to AA and E/A).

Fighter Support: Four groups (196 P-51s) dispatched. Up 0841 - 0931 hours, down 1411 - 1527 hours. 168 sorties. One group strafed Gutersloh-Lagdeburg area. E/a opposition: 15 plus Me-109s and Do 217s seen near Schonfeld and Strasbourg A/F. Four Me-109s and one FW-190 bounced near Brandenburg. Combat with two Me-109s south of Brandenburg. 30 plus Me-109s engaged SE of Hamburg. Claims: 19-0-2 air. Losses: 2 P-51s to unknown reasons.

Details of bomber attacks as follows:

<u>Assigned Targets</u>	<u>Dispatched</u>	<u>Attacked</u>	<u>Tons</u>		<u>Results</u>
			<u>G.P.</u>	<u>I.B.</u>	
Brandenburg (a/c assembly)	148	126	232.5	69.7	Good
Brandenburg Opel (pilotless a/c)	76	69	134.8	25.0	Good-Very Good
Genshagen (aero-engine)	190	174	283.0	119.3	Good
<u>Other Targets</u>					
Stendal A/F		12	30.0		Good
8 T/Os		2	22.5		Unobserved
Totals	414	390	702.8	214.0	

Second Force: Two combat wings (78 B-17s) dispatched to attack FW-190 assembly plant at Gdynia and to proceed to bases in Russia on completion of bombing. 75 a/c attacked assigned target and landed at Eastern Command bases. Complete details unavailable. Battle damage: 21 minor, 2 major. Claims: 0-2-2. Losses: nil.

Fighter Support: Three groups (160 P-51s) dispatched. Up 0850 - 0945 hours, down 1345 - 1545 hours. 154 sorties. E/a opposition: combat with 30 - 40 Me-109s at Schweriner Lake. 40 Me-109s and FW-190s sighted at Neumunster. Combat with 50 plus s/e e/a at Havelberg. One group (64 P-51s) escorted bombers to Russia, and landed safely. Claims: 7-2-3 air. Losses: 5 P-51s to unknown reasons (two believed in Russia).

Details of attack as follows:

<u>Assigned Target</u>	<u>Dispatched</u>	<u>Attacked</u>	<u>Tons</u>	<u>Results</u>
Gdynia/Raknel (FW-190 assembly)	78	75	Not available	Very Good

> Third Force: Three combat wings (154 B-17s) dispatched to attack tank-engine and aero-engine assembly plants in Berlin. 139 a/c dropped 331.6 tons G.P and I.B. on both assigned primaries and other targets at 1233 - 1240 hours from 22,000 - 25,000 feet. Leaflets dropped over Berlin. Weather: CAVU at target, 2/10 - 4/10 en route. Flak: moderate to intense, barrage and tracking; accurate on some groups. Battle damage: 87 minor, 16 major. E/a opposition: 6 Me-109s and one FW-190 made one attack on lead group in target area. 15 jet-propelled a/c sighted in Helmstedt area but no attacks. Claims: 0-2-3. Losses: 6 B-17s (3 to AA, 2 to unknown causes, 1 crash-landed in U.K.).

Fighter Support: Three groups (144 P-51s) dispatched. Up 0905 - 0933 hours, down 1515 - 1523 hours. 107 sorties. E/a opposition: combat with 6 - 8

~~SECRET~~

s/c e/a NE of Bremen. Bounced one Me-410 over Breszeu. Three groups strafed south of Berlin and Hamburg and in Bremen area. Claims: 4-0-0 air, 2-0-4 ground. Losses: one P-51 to unknown reasons.

Details of bomber attacks as follows:

<u>Assigned Targets</u>	<u>Dispatched</u>	<u>Attacked</u>	<u>Tons</u>		<u>Results</u>
			<u>G.P.</u>	<u>I.E.</u>	
Berlin/Niedersciwie (tank engines)	57	45	71.3	35.0	Good
Berlin/Marienfelde (aero-engine)	97	83	155.3	42.5	Good
<u>Other Targets</u>					
Nordholz A/F		4	7.5	2.5	Unobserved
6 T/Os		7	12.5	5.0	Unobserved
Totals	154	139	246.6	85.0	

Fourth Force: Six combat wings (445 B-24s) dispatched to attack torpedo works at Kiel and six oil installations in the Hamburg area. 399 a/c dropped 1118 tons G.P. and I.B. on all assigned primaries and other targets at 1152 - 121 hours from 21,000 - 26,000 feet. Leaflets dropped over Harburg and Schulau. Weather: CAVU in target areas. Smoke screen at Kiel restricted visibility. Flak: intense, accurate at Hamburg, both predicted and barrage type. Battle damage: 262 minor, 28 major. E/a opposition: nil. Several Me-410s and JU-88s observed in Hamburg area but no attacks. Claims: nil. Losses: 11 B-24s (8 to AA, 3 crash-landed in U.K.).

Fighter Support: Five groups (173 P-47s, 44 P-38s - 217 a/c) dispatched. Up 0915 - 0946 hours, down 1422 - 1502 hours. 196 sorties. E/a opposition: combat with 2 Me-109s south of Hamburg. Two P-47s bounced by four Me-109s SW of Hamburg. Claims: 1-0-2 air. Losses: one P-47 to unknown reasons.

Details of bomber attacks as follows:

<u>Assigned Targets</u>	<u>Dispatched</u>	<u>Attacked</u>	<u>Tons</u>		<u>Results</u>
			<u>G.P.</u>	<u>I. B.</u>	
Harburg (Rhenania) Oil Refinery	66	62	162.5		Good
Harburg (Ebano) Oil Refinery	36	33	88.5		Very Good
Harburg (Rhenania) Oil Refinery	71	61	171.8		Very Good
Kiel Torpedo Works	98	58	84.5	85.5	Poor
Harburg (Schlieman) Oil Refinery	36	32	90.5		Poor
Harburg (Schulau) Oil Refinery	78	72	203.4		Very Good
Harburg (Dutch Petroleum)	60	54	155.8		Very Good
<u>Other Targets</u>					
Hemingstedt Oil Refinery		23	63.5		Good
4 T/Os		4	12.0		Unobserved
Totals	445	399	1032.5	85.5	

Fifth Force: One combat wing (91 B-24s) dispatched to attack seven Noball targets. Five targets not attacked because of weather. 24 a/c dropped 58 tons G.P. on two assigned targets at 1229 - 1236 hours from 22,500 - 23,000 feet. Weather: 9/10 in target area with breaks in cloud. Flak: meager, inaccurate. Battle damage: 9 minor, 0 major. E/a opposition: nil. Claims: nil. Losses: nil.

Fighter Support: one group (24 P-47s) dispatched. Up 1000, down 1451 hours. 24 sorties. Escort uneventful. Claims: nil. Losses: nil.

Details of bomber attacks as follows:

<u>Assigned Targets</u>	<u>Dispatched</u>	<u>Attacked</u>	<u>Tons G.P.</u>	<u>Results</u>
Forêt de St. Sei	13	Not Attacked		
Val des Jence	13	Not Attacked		
La Briqueterie	13	Not Attacked		
Mont Gournoy	14	Not Attacked		
Mont Couvaire	13	11	26.5	Poor
St. George-sur-Fontaine	13	13	31.5	Good
St. Jean des Cardemay	<u>12</u>	<u>Not Attacked</u>		
Totals	91	24	58.0	

2. Fighter Escort

16 groups (197 P-47s, 14 P-38s, 500 P-51s - 741 a/c) dispatched to escort bombers attacking targets in Germany, Poland and Noball targets in the Pas de Calais area. Up 0841 - 1059 hours, down 0931 - 1545 hours. 649 sorties. E/a opposition: combats with approximately 125 - 150 s/c and a few t/c a/c in Bremen, Hamburg, Brandenburg areas, and north of Berlin. Four groups strafed transportation facilities near Magdeburg, Hamburg and Verdun, and grass A/Fs south of Berlin. Claims: 31-2-7 air, 2-0-4 ground. Losses: 9 a/c (8 P-51s, 1 P-47) all to unknown reasons.

In addition to e/a destroyed on the ground, strafing claims include:

<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
3 locos	6 locos
5 tank cars	36 - 40 goods wagons
2 goods wagons	

3. Fighter Sweeps

Nil.

4. Fighter Bombing

Nil.

5. Photo Reconnaissance

31 a/c dispatched on photo reconnaissance missions. Four a/c failed to obtain photos. 19 F-5s dispatched on a mapping mission in Paris area. Two

~~SECRET~~

P-5s dispatched on special targets. Four P-5s and two Spitfires dispatched over Germany. Four P-5s intercepted by e/a. 400 bursts of accurate, black flak seen over Kiel. All a/c returned safely.

6. Weather Reconnaissance

19 a/c dispatched on weather mission. 18 were successful. Four Mosquitoes, two B-17s, one B-25 dispatched as weather scouts for special operations. Eight P-51s and one Mosquito dispatched as weather scouts for bombing operation. Two Mosquitoes dispatched over Brest and Hanover. All a/c returned safely.

7. Air Sea Rescue

20 a/c (12 P-47s, 8 P-51s) dispatched on Air Sea Rescue operations. 12 a/c completed routine spotting work and reported no ditching incidents. Eight a/c attempted an unsuccessful interception of a Danish fishing vessel, which on 5 August was known to have picked up part of a bomber crew from an airborne lifeboat off the Frisian Islands. All a/c returned safely.

8. Special Operations

6 B-17s dropped leaflets over two targets in Holland and 16 targets in France. All a/c returned safely.

19 a/c dispatched on special operation. All a/c returned safely.

16 a/c dispatched on special operation. All a/c returned safely.

C. INTELLIGENCE

1. Enemy Air Opposition

Due to effective fighter support, heavy bombers encountered only two slight attacks although the G.A.F. put forth its greatest effort in the past three days of strategic bombing.

The lead group of the last wing attacking assembly plants in Berlin was attacked by six Me-109s and one FW-190. E/a made a single attack from the rear and were reported as "not aggressive". Claims were 0-2-3 for no losses.

B-17s attacking Genshagen encountered 12 FW-190s, 6 Me-109s and 1 JU-88 in the target area. E/a made passes both from the tail and head on from above, in groups of 4 - 6, on the low box of the combat wing. The attacks were persistent, fighters coming in through their own flak, and were made both upon the box as a whole and on the stragglers which had been hit by flak. Claims were 0-0-3 for losses of four B-17s to combination of E/A and AA.

Other bomber forces sighted e/a but experienced no attacks. 50 - 75 e/a were seen south of Hamburg, several Me-410s and Ju-88s in Hamburg area, 15 - 20 s/e e/a over Kiel Bay, and 15 jet-propelled e/a in the Helmsedt area. The jet-propelled e/a remained in the vicinity of the formation for about 15 minutes but did not attack. A B-17 group reported sighting 6 - 10 a/c, believed jet-propelled, just before the target at Genshagen. No attacks were made but contrails and other distinctive characteristics caused crews to believe the e/a to be jet-propelled.

Supporting fighters reported combat with approximately 125 - 150 e/a. Groups escorting first wave force B-17s in the Berlin area engaged 15 plus Me-109 and Do-217s near Schonfeld and Strasbourg A/F, 30 Me-109s southeast of Hamburg and 7 Me-109s and FW-190s near Brandenburg. Claims were 19-0-2.

A P-51 group dispatched to escort B-17s attacking Gdynia, rendezvoused with wrong bomber force, and supported other B-17s in the Berlin area. One squadron encountered 30 - 40 Me-109s at Schweriner Lake at 1200 hours and another squadron had combat with 50 plus s/e c/a at Havelberg. In addition, 40 FW-190s and Me-109s were sighted near Neumunster, but no combat.

Another P-51 group engaged 6 - 8 s/e e/a northeast of Bremen and one Me-410 over Prenzlau with claims of 4-0-0. P-47s escorting B-24s attacking Kiel encountered eight Me-109s, which dived to deck from 30,000 feet. Two of these e/a were engaged. The same group encountered four Me-109s southwest of Hamburg. Claims were 1-0-2.

2. Flak

Brandenburg - moderate, inaccurate to accurate.
Genshagen - intense, inaccurate to accurate.
Heligoland - meager, inaccurate.
Cuxhaven - meager, inaccurate.
Wesermunde - moderate, inaccurate.
Nordholz - meager, inaccurate to accurate.
Bremervorde - moderate, inaccurate.
Ottendorf - meager, inaccurate.
Hamburg area - several rocket bursts.
Berlin - moderate to intense barrage and tracking fire.

3. Observations

Airfields

35 plus u/i a/c on grass fields two miles southwest of Oldenburg.
2 e/a believed jet-type sighted on A/F two miles south of Oldenburg.
25 plus t/e a/c on A/F east of Magdeburg.
Runway lengthened and activity seen on A/F five miles west of Rensburg.
E-W runway at Neumunster and Waltenkirche A/Fs are being lengthened approximately 200 yards on east end.
Extended runways on A/Fs at Luneburg and Jever.
20 plus u/i e/a on Melun A/F.
New A/F under construction at 5315N-1233E.
Construction work on A/Fs at Lubeck, Kiel and Echernforde photographed.
Runway described as one and one half as long as the average heavy bomber runway observed 15 miles southwest of Hamburg.
Uncharted A/F at 5350N-0958E.
A/F under construction at 5358N-0955E.
A/F under construction near Bad Braustedt at 5355N-0953E.
A/F under construction with camouflaging at Rensburg.
A/F, two runways under construction, 2 planes on field at 5418N-0932E.
A/F under construction at 5342N-0952E.
A/F reconstructed at 5335N-0954E.

Other

Newly constructed 4,000 foot ramp seen on Scharnhorn Island.
15 flat-topped ships, which looked like a/c carriers, seen at 5345N-0800E.
Oil storage depot, 8 small tanks, at 5340N-0830 E.

Camouflaged buildings with nets over them in woods at 5343N-0943E and
5346N-0943E.

8 - 12 oil tanks one mile east of Grundelich painted white, 17 oil storage
tanks at Stade.

Some built-up areas observed resembling power plant on Neuwerk Island.

New Barracks observed near Bad Segeberg at 5356N-1012E.

Much shipping observed in harbors at Bremerhaven Cuxhaven and area off
Heligoland.

Searched at Kiel, Eckenerford, Schlessig, Lundern, Rensberg, Osternoor,
Schleismals, and Elshorn.

4. Damage to Energy Installations.

Berlin/Niedersewitz (tank-engines) - Good Results

Two patterns blanketed the target and a third probably extended into it.
Eight hits by GP bombs noted on the two main buildings and four hits on smaller
buildings. Nearby M/Y received at least twelve bursts, and two hits seen on
highway bridge over river.

Berlin/Marienfelde (aero-engine works) - Good Results

Three out of five groups attacking hit the target area. Difficult to
check extent of last pattern and estimate damage. One group laid tight pattern
in center of target, blanketing most of heavily built-up part of area. Another
dropping slightly shorter, covered the adjoining Fritz Werner A.G. and the
Siemes & Halske A.G. Probable that the very large building in the former was
severely hit. All of the buildings in the target area probably received hits
or near-misses.

Genshagen (aero-engine) - Good Results

Ten concentrations of GP bombs, five concentrations of IB cover most of
target area. Smoke in area prevents complete assessment. However, damage to
this target appears severe. Hits were made on following installations with GP
bombs: 11 workshops, 1 storage building, 1 office building, 1 canteen building,
2 engine test beds. Hits were made with IB on the following: technical school,
2 work shops, 1 stores and office building.

Brandenburg (One) (RT & Pilotless a/c) - Good to Vary Good

Five concentrations of GP, one concentration of IB in target area. Direct
hits on following installations: main assembly building, 2 annex buildings, 1 u/i
building - 75 x 350 feet, 2 medium sized u/i buildings, power plant, 12 small
buildings. Direct hits seen in the factory parking area which held a consider-
able number of vehicles at time of attack.

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

Brandenburg (Avado) (Ho-177 Assembly and Component) - Good Results

Intense smoke over target area prevents complete assessment of damage. Direct hits seen on following buildings: 4 assembly buildings, 8 work shops, 1 machine-gun range, 1 stores building, 2 a/c shelters, 4 huts or work shops, these huts burning intensely indicating probable use as portion of factory.

Stendal A/F - Good Results

Approximately 100 bombs bursting in northwest hangar, barracks area. Two hangars - two direct hits each. Five barracks buildings received direct hits.

Harburg (Ebano) (Oil Refinery) - Very Good Results.

Target covered by good pattern of bombs. Large fires burning at end of attack.

Harburg (Rhenania) (Oil Refinery) - Very Good Results.

Numerous patterns cover target. Severe fires seen burning in late photos over target.

Harburg (Rhenania) (Oil Refinery) - Very Good Results

At least six patterns of GP and IB bombs burst squarely on target or lost in smoke of fires that started immediately after 1st Squadron attack. Fierce fires seen to be burning late in attack.

Harburg (Deutsche Petroleum) - Very Good Results

At least five patterns of GP and IB bursts are seen to strike MPI and immediate target area. Fires seen to be burning fiercely.

Hamburg (Schliemann) (Oil Refinery) - Poor Results

No hits on the target area.

Kiel (Torpedo Works) - Poor Results

Due to heavy smoke screen largely obscuring Kiel area, bursts partially unobserved. One pattern seen to burst across MPI area near east entrance Kiel Canal. Both sets of locks at this end of Canal covered by GP patterns, with probability of some damage.

Heringstedt Oil Refinery - Good Results

One very good pattern of GPs burst squarely across MPI.

Hamburg (Schulau) (Oil Refinery) - Very Good Results

Six patterns of GP and IB bursts completely cover the MPI and target area. Large fires seen burning at end of attack.

NOTE: The foregoing is based on preliminary reports and is not to be used for record purposes.

MISSION DATA

Date 6 Aug 44

Duty Officer Lt Ratcliffe

Targets (388th PG)

	A Group	B Group	C Group
P	BERLIN (NIEDERSCHONHEWELDER)	same	
S	JUTERBOG	same	
LR	GARDELEGEN	same	

Other Attacks

	130CW	4th CBW	1st BD	2nd BD
P	Rahmel (NEAR GDYNIA)	BERLIN	GENSITACEM	Kiel
P			BRANDENBURG	Hamburg
P				Schulau

Main Briefing Officer Lt Rosen Briefing Time 0500

Gunners Briefing Officer Lt Ratcliffe

Other Officers Lt Swihart ("Nutsy")

3BD I/O # 372 45th CBW I/O # 236

Group Position

Lead of 45TH

B Low Sqdn of 96TH Group, which is High in 45TH

ORDER OF WINGS: 45TH; 4TH; 92ND

Take-Off Time 0740 A Gp 0730 ~~0630~~ B Gp

ETP 1545

Additional Information Lt Col. Henggeler, Command Pilot.

Bombs: 10 x 500 GP

Bombing Alt: 25,000

Total ships from 388TH: - 23 (+ 2 PFR)

Target: - The largest single producer of tank engines in Germany.

Most of the rest of the sheets are 8½ X 14" which makes them difficult to reproduce for this project. I shall copy the pertinent material.

"...SECRET...

INTELLIGENCE...

THIS PLANT TOGETHER WITH THE MAYBACH PLANT REPRODUCES THE GREATER SHARE OF TANK ENGINES FOR THE USE OF THE REICH WAR MACHINE.

THE MAYBACH PLANT HAS BEEN HIT TWICE BY THE R.A.F. AND VERY RECENTLY BY THE 15TH A.F., AND IS COMPLETELY WRECKED. AS A RESULT THIS PLANT REMAINS THE LARGEST SINGLE PRODUCER OF TANK ENGINES IN GERMANY WITH ANY OTHER PRODUCTION NOW BEING ACCOMPLISHED ONLY BY SMALL DISPERSAL PLANTS..."

Next page:

ADVANCED WARNING TO 45TH C.B.W. F. O. NO. 236.

1. B. TARGETS:

PRIMARY: GN 5052

MPI: 040030 PHOTO SORTIE E/138

SECONDARY AND LAST RESORT: TO FOLLOW

2. A. FORCE REQUIRED:

388A - 17 A/C PLUS 2 P.F.F. ALSO 6 A/C LOW SQUADRON FOR
96 COMPOSITE.

452A - 18 A/C PLUS 1 P.F.F. ALSO 6 A/C HIGH SQUADRON FOR
96 COMPOSITE.

96 - 6 A/C PLUS 1 P.F.F. FOR LEAD SQUADRON OF 96
COMPOSITE ALSO 1 A/C FOR DIAMOND OF HIGH SQUADRON
OF COMPOSITE.

B. GROUPS WILL FORM AS PER 45TH C.B.W. INSTRUCTIONS 55-1-9

3. A. 388 - LEAD

96 COMPOSITE - HIGH

452 - LOW

X. (1). BOMB LOAD:

ALL A/C 388 AND 96 COMPOSITE 10 X 500 G.P. 1/10 X 1/100

ALL A/C 452A GROUP 10 X M17 I.B.'S

(2). TRAIN INTERVAL - TO FOLLOW

(3). FUEL LOAD - MAXIMUM PLUS TOPPING

(4). WEATHER A/C - 388

(5). ZERO HOUR - 0900 D.B.S.T. AT OFFORDNESS

(6). ORDER OF WINGS - 45, 4, 92

5. A. PYROTECHNICS:

388 - Y.Y.

96 COMP - R.R.

452 - G.G.

R/T CALL SIGNS:

VAMPIRE YELLOW

VAMPIRE RED

VAMPIRE GREEN

ALDIS LAMP COLORS - NORMAL

B. V.H.F. RECALL PHRASE:

"KILL THE UMPIRE"

Next page entitled BRIEFING NOTES ON BOMBING OF 6 AUGUST 1944

...3RD DIVISION

B-17'S 154 A/C WERE DISPATCHED AGAINST TARGETS IN BERLIN OF WHICH 45 A/C ATTACKED A TANK FACTORY, WITH VERY GOOD RESULTS AND 83 A/C ATTACKED AN A/C ENGINE FACTORY WITH GOOD RESULTS. FLAK WAS MODERATE TO INTENSE AND FAIRLY ACCURATE AT TARGET. 6 ME 109'S AND 1 FW 190'S WERE SIGHTED WHICH ATTACKED 1 GROUP FROM THE TAIL. CLAIMS ARE 0-2-3. 5 A/C ARE MISSING (3 TO AA AND 2 TO UNKNOWN) WEATHER WAS CAVU.

FIGHTERS

753 A/C DISPATCHED. LOSSES 9 A/C ENCOUNTERED APPROXIMATELY 150 S/E AND T/E IN BREMEN, HAMBURG, BRANDENBURG, BERLIN AREAS RESULTING IN CLAIMS OF 31-0-5 (AIR) 2-0-4 (GROUND)

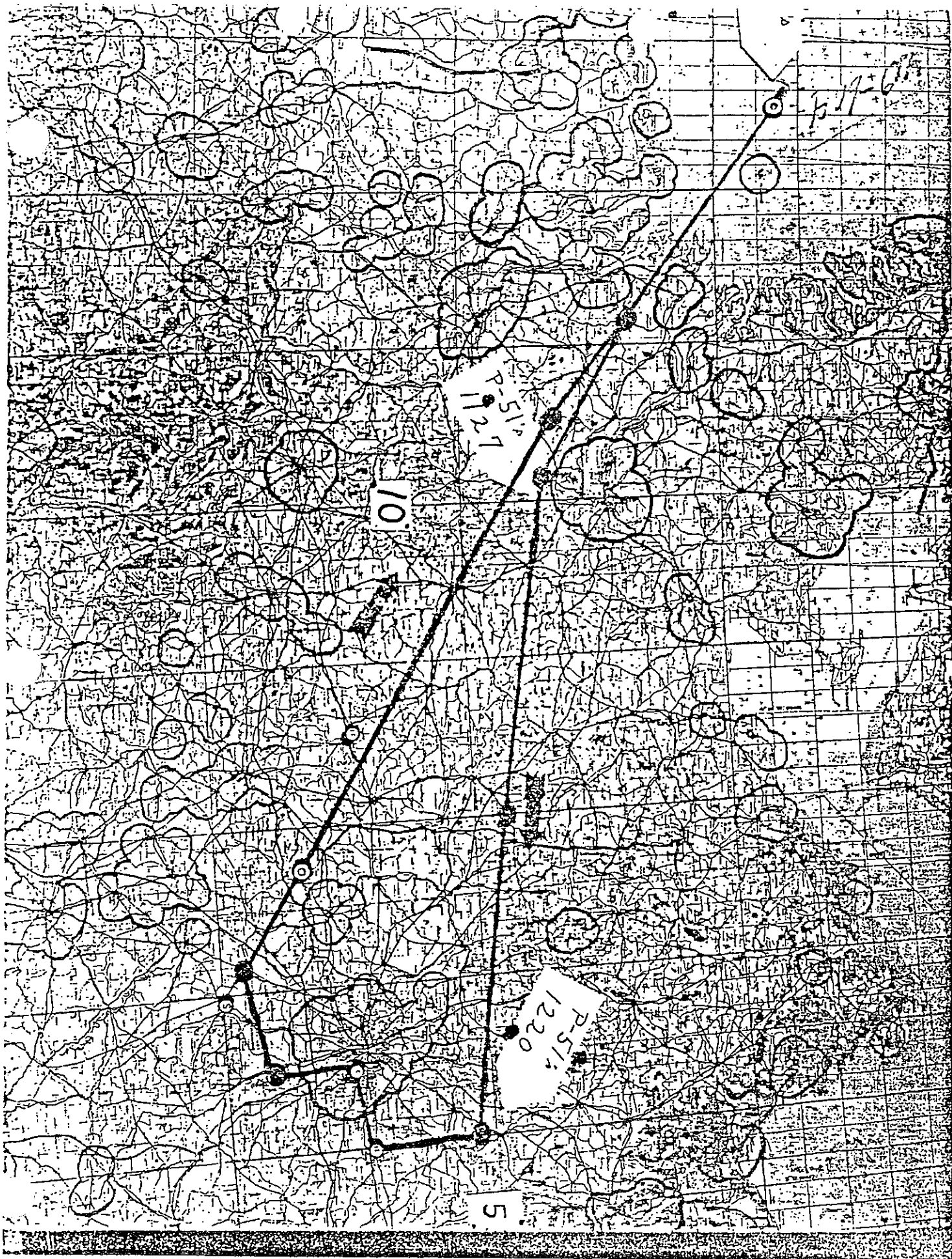
A map of the route in and out of Germany is included on page 153. It shows how the route avoids most of the flak areas except Berlin. The IP (Initial Point) and T (Target) may be too small to identify, but T is in Berlin and IP is at the turn just before. This map is evidently a detail of a larger map.

The following two pages are copies of the S-2 Report and the MISSING A/C REPORT. The listing of the number of missions by each member of the crew is probably correct. It seems unlikely that Kluth had the same number of missions as most of us, but it is possible.

The next two pages [the first has its heading cut off so as to fit onto the page] comprise the Flak Report by Lt. Davis T. Ratcliffe. All planes are shown to have been hit by flak at the target. One ship in Group B, #989 with Lt. Meagher, is omitted.

A three-page report lists the battle damage for the planes from the 388th on the raid. All planes received from two to fourteen flak holes. Again ship #989 is not listed, but on their interrogation form they list battle damage as 4-5 small holes. Thus no one escaped without some damage. It did not seem necessary to copy this report.

A confidential operational narrative report states that "STRIKE PHOTOS SHOW EXCELLENT BOMBING RESULTS FOR THE A GROUP WITH THE MPI WELL COVERED."



R 514
1220

5-17-60

10

R 514
1220

5

7778
HEADQUARTERS
328TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (M)
APO 339

D-D-2

8 August 1944

SUBJECT: S-2 Report on Berlin Mission, 6 August 1944.

TO : CO.

The 1st Division was dispatched to targets at Genshagen and Brandenburg. The 2nd Division went to Kiel and Hamburg. The 3rd Division went to Berlin, with the 13th Wing going to Ratzel. The 328th furnished the lead group of the 45th CW, plus 6 a/c flying low squadron with the 96th Composite Group, which flew high in the wing.

The 328th A had 16 a/c airborne between 0740 and 0754 hours. 5 a/c of the B Group took off between 0729 and 0731 hours. After assembly, the Groups flew out over the North Sea and into Germany, through the usual northern channel. In the A Group, 4 a/c aborted, two for mechanical and two for personnel reasons. There were no abortions from the B Group.

11 a/c in the A Group and 5 in the B Group had bombs away at 1233 hours from an altitude of 25,400 feet. The target was a tank factory in Berlin. Strike photos show excellent results. The bomb pattern completely covered the IPI.

16 a/c returned safely to this base by 1805 hours. 1 a/c is missing - see attached report.

Briefed flak out of range was seen in both the route to and from the target. At the target, a moderate inaccurate barrage was experienced. 14 a/c had minor battle damage and 2 had major damage. Lt J. R. Madolny was wounded.

Key Personnel:

Group Leader	Lt Col Henggeler
Deputy Leader	Lt Richards
Lead Pilot	Lt Sanson (PFF)
Lead Bombardier	Lt Godwin (PFF)
Lead Navigator	Lt Casabero (PFF) & Lt Carraway

Lt Patten led the squadron in the Composite Group.

WILSON A. BERR
Captain, Air Corps,
S-2.

MISSING A/C REPORT
(See reverse side for A/C to be reported)

No. 002 Squadron 561 Group USS A Date A/C Missing 5 August 1944
Number of previous raids with names and ratings of crew.

24 Pilot 1st Lt D. B. Kluth 24 T.T. W/Sgt A. W. Mourer
24 Co-P 2nd Lt H. S. Stewart 24 B.T. S/Sgt D. L. Nelson
24 NW 2nd Lt F. H. Sanborn 17 R.W. S/Sgt E. J. McIntyre
22 Bomb 2nd Lt W. G. Collins L.W. Position not manned
24 Rad Op. T/Sgt J. H. Anderson 22 T.G. S/Sgt E. Crawford

Observer _____ Unit _____ Base _____

Targets assigned BERLIN Attacked by Group Yes Attacked by this A/C Yes

A/C was lost to: (use X)
 Fighters _____ Rocket _____
 A Fire _____ Collis. _____
 in Bomb _____ Other X
 Communications _____

Position of A/C in Group (Circle number) 5
 Position of Group in Formation:
 1 2 3 4 5 6
 3 2 6 5 3 2
 4 4
 6 5 6 5

A/C sustained initial damage at (co-or) BERLIN Time 1235 No. chutes 2

A/C was last seen at (co-or) BERLIN Time _____ Altitude 10000 Hdg. _____

(Give a complete narrative, citing all known facts not covered in above answers, using reverse side if necessary. If weather was a contributing factor, describe briefly. Bear in mind that a ship which "blew up" cannot continue to fly and that an explosion aboard is not necessarily a ship "blown up").

A/C #098 went down in the target area after bombs away. Reports are conflicting on the cause of the plane's loss, but apparently the oxygen system of the a/c was not functioning. The plane went to a lower altitude because the pilot reported crew members fainting from lack of oxygen, and some crews claim hearing the a/c call for fighter escort. When last seen, the a/c was under control going down. Some crews claim the a/c was on fire as it went down. Possibly two chutes were seen.

Info. from crew of A/C 106 Group 388 ^B Interpreting Officer Capt E.E. Anthony

WRA: 588th Bomb. Gr. Lt. Davis P. Hatchiff
 (Reporting Officer)

Target Berlin Date of Mission 6 August 1944

1. The 388th B group flew as High, ~~low~~ of the 45th C.

Altitude of Lead A/C A 25,000 B --

Altitude of High A/C A 25,500 B 26,200

Altitude of Low A/C A 24,500 B 25,700

Remarks: "388th B" was the low sqdn (5 ships) of the 96th Group which was high in 45th C.W.

2. Actual route followed over enemy territory (by inclosure, photo, map, etc)

See "Captains of Aircraft" map attached.

3. Visibility at target. (Condensation, trails, clouds, etc)
 Clear

4. a. No. of A/C over axis territory A 13 B 5
 b. No. of A/C over target A 12 B 5
 c. explanation if a. and b. are different

Ship 091 (Pilot, Lt. Head) aborted at 5334-0905

5. A/C damaged by, and/or lost to flak:

A/C No.	Height	Classification: (A, AC, B, E)	Brief description- (Place A/C was hit by flak, or lost to flak. Describe serious damage and A/C lost to flak.)
Group A			
039	25,400	A	Target
523	24,800	AC	Target- 2 holes in left inner wing
849	24,500	A	Target
062	24,800	A	Target
617	24,900	A	Target
434	25,000	A	Target
328	25,000	A	Target
685	25,000	A	Target
599	25,3000	A	Target
861	25,400	A	Target
210	25,200	A	Target
098	25,000 (approx)	Lost	Target-after "Boobs Away" - Ship was hit and apparently the oxygen system would not function. Last seen going down under control.
Group E			
996	25,700	A	Target
745	26,200	A	Target
873	25,700	A	Target
106	26,000	A	Target

6. Axis of bomb run and time bombs away (From lead A/C _____

 250° - 1233 hrs.
7. How long did formation fly straight and level before bombing?

 10 minutes
8. Turn after bombing. (Course away from Target)

 45° to left (for course, see "Capt's of A/C Map)
9. Short description of evasive action in target area.
 Lost altitude and "snaked" along. Did not turn 90° to left, because of barrage to left.
10. A description of flak enroute and at target, including if possible suggestions as to type of fire control employed. Include herein any phenomena or comments.
- Flak seen out of range at Bremerhaven, Cuxhaven, Heligoland, Magdeburg.
- At Berlin: 1. Fairly accurate tracking, but not as intense as expected. Apparently the formation was not within range of as many as 100 guns, as briefed.
2. Many ground rockets seen.
3. After left turn to R.P., a barrage was seen directly ahead so formation "cut the corner" (see Capt's of A/C Map)

THE OISNT V KNE NR 14 R
FROM KNE 071500B
TO THE ATT: A-2 RPTG SECTION
OISNT ATT: SENIOR A-2 OFFICER

S-2 Qdies
~~SECRET~~
0945

BT
CONFIDENTIAL 388BG A-173-D

388TH A AND GXXX B GROUPS INTELLIGENCE REPORT - BERLIN - 6 AUGUST 1944

1. NONE
2. EXTENSIVE SHIPPING ACTIVITY AT MOUTH OF ELBE RIVER AND AT CUX-HAVEN, BREMERHAVEN, WILHELMSHAVEN. 8 TO 10 T/E A/C AT LUNEBURG A/F. AN ARMY CAMP WAS OBSERVED AT 53 DEGS 18 MINS N, 09 DEGS 17 MINS E. SMOKE FROM HAMBURG ROSE TO AN ALTITUDE OF 15,000 FEET.
SEVERAL UNIDENTIFIED A/C ON A/F AT GARDELENGEN.
6-BALLOON BARRAGE AT HELIGOLAND.
30 TO 40 CIRCULAR OIL TANKS WELL CAMOUFLAGED BETWEEN TWO SMALL LAKES AT 53 DEGS 01 NIXXX MINS N, 13 DEGS 38 MINS E. NE OF BERLIN. A SMOKE SCREEN AT BAD FRIENWALD.
18 UNPAINTED SHIPS THAT LOOKED LIKE BIG BOMBERS ON A/D JUST TO EAST OF MAGDEBURG.
NEAR HAMBURG, 4 P-51S STRAFED A TRAIN, LEAVING IT BURNING WITH A BLACK SMOKE AS IF FROM OIL. 3 SILVER A/C ON A/F AT BURG.
3. 2 B-17S WERE SEEN TO GO DOWN AT THE TARGET. 1 WAS SEEN ON THE GROUND BURNING. THE OTHER WAS GOING DOWN ON FIRE. NO CHUTES WERE SEEN.
AT 1241 HOURS, 1 B-17 ROLLED OVER ON ITS BACK IN A STEEP BANK TO AVOID A COLLISION WITH ANOTHER GROUP. IT WENT DOWN AT TEXXX THE SECONDARY TARGET IN A SPIRAL SPIN. NO CHUTES WERE SEEN.
3 B-17S WERE SEEN BURNING ON THE GROUND IN THE AREA OF 52 DEGS 21 NXXX MINS N, 13 DEGS 22 MINS E.
BETWEEN BRANDENBURG AND BERLIN, 3 ROCKETS HIT AN UNIDENTIFIED B-17, CAUSING THE SYXXX SHIP TO DISINTEGRATE.
4. EXCELLENT FIGHTER SUPPORT.

BT 07 1500B
AS
TOD 07/1740B JR AR
STNS Q FOR R
THE R...2SIGS.....07/1740B RND AR
OISNT R...2SIGS.....07/1747B ACS A

On an OPERATIONAL REPORT - STATISTICAL SECTION under A/C LOST it has only the number 1 listed under By reasons unknown. This implies that the authorities were uncertain what happened to our ship. The report continues with more information about the mission.

TIME OF ATTACK 1233

ALTITUDE OF ATTACK 25400

BOMBS DROPPED

- a. Number 110
- b. Size 500
- c. Type GPs

PERSONNEL CASUALTIES

- a. Killed
- b. Wounded 1
- c. Missing 9
- d. Rescued

BATTLE DAMAGE

- a. Minor 9
- b. Major 2
- c. Salvage 0

Next is the Report of the Operations Officer, Major Andrew A. Chaffin, on the mission of 6 August 1944 to the Commanding Officer, 388th Bombardment Group, APO 559. Unfortunately, the copy is difficult to read, especially the second page, because of the mirror image of the print is also visible. Since this SECRET report is interesting I shall copy the pages.

I have retyped the formations mentioned in the report for easy reference.

HEADQUARTERS
388TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (E), AAF
APO 559

8 August 1944.

SUBJECT: Report of Operations Officer on Mission of 6 August 1944.
TO : Commanding Officer, 388th Bombardment Group, APO 559.

388th "A" Group Formation:

1. General Narrative. The 388th "A" Group formation took off 0740 - 0755 hours. An instrument assembly was made above the base to 6,500 feet, not as briefed at 6,000 feet because of cloud coverage at briefed assembly altitude. Then at 0830, the 388th "A" Group formation, leading the 45th Combat Wing, set course for Downham Market with the 452nd Group formation flying low and the 96th Composite Group formation flying high. The wing and Air Division assembly route was flown as briefed, making all times good. The 45th Combat Wing departed Southwold at 0914, altitude 6,000 feet. After leaving the English Coast the climb to altitude was begun and the formation closed up into a fairly good climbing formation. The course out over the North Sea was made good and the enemy coast was crossed at 1106, 22,300 feet in defensive formation. The route from the enemy coast to the I.P. was as briefed, however quite a bit of trouble was encountered from the last wing of the 1st Division. This was due to the short interval between the two wings. The turn at the I.P. was made a little past the briefed point so as to have sufficient spacing behind the groups ahead. After bombing, rally was effected as planned. The 96th Composite Group reassembled back into wing formation shortly after the rally point but the 452nd Group formation was a little slower in getting into wing formation. The route out was as briefed without incident, recrossing the enemy coast at 1341, altitude 21,000 feet. The 388th "A" Group formation reached home base at 1533 and landed 1540 - 1555 hours. Flew over the target was intense and accurate. No enemy fighters were seen and friendly fighter support was excellent.

2. Aircraft Not Attacking. Seventeen A/C, plus two PFF A/C, were scheduled to take off. One A/C failed to take off because of a mechanical failure. Thus, sixteen A/C, plus two PFF A/C, took off. Three A/C returned early, one a personnel failure, the other two mechanical failures. The remaining thirteen A/C, plus two PFF A/C, attacked and received sorties. Their positions in the formation, at time of assembly and over the target, are shown in the attached diagram.

3. Aircraft Lost. A/C 44-6096 went down over the target area after bombs away. Reports are conflicting on the cause, but apparently the oxygen system was out. A/C went to a lower altitude because pilot reported

Report of Operations Officer on Mission of 6 August 1944. (Cont'd.)

crew members fainting from lack of oxygen and some crews reported hearing pilot call for fighter aid. When last seen A/C was losing altitude under control. Some crews claim A/C was on fire. Two parachutes.

96th Composite Group

General Narrative. The six aircraft from the 388th "B" Group flying as low squadron in the 96th Composite Group took off 0730 - 0735 hours. An instrument assembly was made to 8,000 feet. Then departed the base on course for Rancher #9 where they took their position as low squadron in the 96th Composite Group. Reference is made to the above report of the 388th "B" Group general narrative for the remainder of the mission which was flown in company with the 388th "A" Group formation.

Aircraft Not Attacking. Five A/C took off as scheduled, attacked, and received sorties. Their positions in the formation, at time of assembly and over the target, are shown in the attached diagram.

Aircraft Lost. None.

Andrew E. Griffin
ANDREW E. GRIFFIN
Major, Air Corps
Operations Officer

1. [Illegible text]

~~SECRET~~

2. [Illegible text]

A GROUP

Samson (Henggeler)

760

4/21/45

[] = aborted

Kluth
K|098

mechanical

Fitzpatrick
R|787

Porter
G|849

10/1/44
2. 11/20 Ong
3/14/45 Betty Ann

Gierach
T|328

10/1/44
2. 11/20 Ong
3/14/45 Betty Ann

Sherman
M|062

personnel

Brottenmarkle
S|878

Kellenyi
J|523

10/1/44
2. 11/20 Ong
3/14/45 Betty Ann

Oswald

personnel

McFarlane
M|123

mechanical

Head
S|091

Brinegar
L|434

Beatty
Q|599

Morse
C|685

10/1/44
2. 11/20 Ong
3/14/45 Betty Ann

Richards
N|861

no take-off

Riddle
E|210

Schneider
Q|202

Little
Q|039

10/1/44
2. 11/20 Ong
3/14/45 Betty Ann

FINAL ARRANGEMENT

Samson (Henggeler)

Kluth

DOB 7/3/42

Oswald

Sherman

Kellenyi

Ong

Gierach

Brinegar

Beatty

Morse

Richards

Riddle

Porter

Little

B GROUP

Patten
Y|873

check 11/7/44

Chimenti
U|745

Meagher
V|989

*Miss Adair
11/15/44*

Maple
X|106

Grandin - 11/15/44

100 11/15/44

no take-off

Price
U|778

5846

100 8/3/44

Saunders
E|996

These two charts give the original placement of the planes in the formation and the eventual arrangement. Both groups are given. 388A was the lead Group for the 45th Wing. 388B was the low squadron of the 95th Group flying in the next wave. The ones in boxes either did not take off or else they aborted the mission. Each of these planes filled out an S-2 Abortion Report. For A Group: Schneider Ship 202 563rd Sq. did not take off - mag drop on both left & right mags. #4 engine Brotemarkle Ship 878 560th Sq. turned back at 0943 at 10,000 alt. Pilot was ill - gas fumes in cockpit were intense. Landed at 1118½ with bombs. McFarlane Ship 123 561st Sq. turned back at 1026 at 16,000 alt. Pilot was ill. Bombs were jettisoned. Landed at 1130. Fitzpatrick Ship 787 560th Sq. turned back at 1040 at 13,000 alt. #1 engine internal failure - Symptoms were oil blowing out of breather & extreme roughness. Subsequent

check showed ground metal in oil
cuno [sic] Bombs were jettisoned.
Landed at 1125.

Head Ship 091 562nd Sq.

turned back at 1114 at 22,000 alt.
#2 engine throwing oil, smoking,
vibrating. Loss of power due to
RPM drop. Made a 180 went out over
water & circled back on a 90° head-
ing to the A/F at Nordholz. Bombs
fell short of aiming point. Some
bombs hit the road. Aimed at a han-
gar 6 grouped together.

For B Group:

Price Ship 778 563rd Sq. did not take off no report

At the end of each mission each crew went to an interrogation
session, and included in the papers that I have are all these
sheets for this mission. I was interested to see what the crews
had to say about seeing our plane go down. Following are the per-
tinent comments following FRIENDLY AIRCRAFT LOST OR IN DISTRESS.

Plane #1 Samson with Lt. Col. Henggeler (PFF plane) did not
fill out form. The pilot is from Squadron 413 in another
group. Ship #760. 9786?

Plane #2 Oswald (also PFF) from Squadron 413 did not fill out
form. Ship number not available. 943

#3 Kluth Ship #098 from 561st Sq. MIA

#4 McFarlane aborted and was replaced by Gierach, ship #328,
561st Sq. Comments: B-17 blew up over target, Group behind-no chutes

#5 Brinegar Ship #434 561st Sq. Only an X listed.

#6 empty slot

These five planes were flying at 25,000 feet and bombs were away at 1233.

In the low squadron #1 Fitzpatrick aborted and was replaced by Sherman Ship #062 560th Sq. Comments: one B-17 down over target Far away (2 chutes) 2 B-17 from other div. seen burning over Berlin.

#2 Ong Ship 617 560th Sq. Comments: 2 B-17's at target (1 on ground burning and 1 going down in flames - no chutes

#3 Kellenyi Ship #523 560th Sq. answer to question Was it a good formation? loosened before bombs away as #098 pulled out. Next answer: None with chutes Lost #4 engine over target. Came back on 3.

#4 Porter Ship #844 560th Sq. 1 B-17 over target turned over in air - went into flat spin - 3 chutes was without Gp - off to right slightly from high squadron circled about 5 times 4 engines running.

1 B-17 blew up near ground as going into dive - after bombs away - from Gp behind us

#5 Brotemarkle aborted position empty

#6 empty

This squadron of four planes had bombs away at 1233 at 24,800 feet.

In the high squadron #1 Head aborted and Beatty Ship #599 took his place Comments: 1 B-17 go down over target 1 chute

#2 Morse Ship #685 Both Beatty and Morse were from 562nd Sq. Comments: 1 - B17 down over target chutes (2 possible)

#3 Riddle Ship #210 563rd Sq. 2 -B-17 down over target

#4 Little Ship #039 560th Sq. A/c not from group down over target
no chutes (burning)

#5 Schneider did not take off

Richards Ship #861 562nd Sq. scheduled to fly #4 says they
flew higher and to right of formation Comments: B-17 hit by ground
rocket from group ahead, SW part of city. Went down in ball of fire,
1236 no chutes

This squadron of five planes had bombs away at 1233 and altitudes were
from 25,000 to 25,400.

To summarize the A Group, 14 ships were flying, two gave no report and
one was shot down. Out of the 11 remaining one made no mention
of a plane down, eight saw one plane go down and two saw two planes
going down. Of the number of chutes seen five saw no chutes, one
saw just one, two saw two chutes, one saw three chutes, and one
made no mention of chutes plus the one no report. Richards states
that the B-17 was hit by a ground rocket and that is possible.
Porter reports that 1 B-17 over target turned over in air and went
into a flat spin. This is certainly possible, but I have not
heard any crew member mention turning over. The flat spin seems
correct. Three ships report a fire on the aircraft in distress.

Following this group of planes comes the next wave which
included the 388B Group flying the low squadron. They dropped
their bombs at 1234 (one ship writes 1254, probably a typographical
error, and one plane states 1333, an obvious mistake).

#1 Patten Ship #873 563rd Sq. one B-17 from wing ahead down
(under control) 3 chutes

#2 Meagher Ship #989 563rd Sq. 1 B17 down in front & to right No chutes. Landed a bit SE of Luchenwalde. 1236 1B17 went straight down over target. No chutes.

#3 Chimenti Ship #745 563rd Sq. B-17 went down at 1236 over target Flat spin--No chutes 1244 west of Berlin B-17 blew up no chutes

#4 Maple Ship #106 563rd Sq. Comments: a/c peeled off over target said he had lost oxygen and crew was passing out. plane down in flames. Crew observed 1 chute over target.

#5 Saunders Ship #996 563rd Sq. over target at 12:40 3 B-17s burning on ground approx 52°21'13"22" 1 B-17 at 12:41 to avoid collision with another group, made steep bank, rolled over on back, went down in spiral - at target S. of this group - no chutes seen - last seen headed down At 12:45 approx. _____? [word indecipherable], B-17 .
broke up & on fire - no chutes

#6 Price never took off.

Out of these five ships three saw no chutes, one saw one, and one saw three. A plane rolled over on back as noticed by Porter in A Group, but since Saunders times it at 12:41 I doubt that this was our plane. The most chutes that were seen were three (two ships, Porter and Patten, saw three chutes). One undoubtedly was McIntyre. The other two were Crawford, Kluth, or Sanborn. Since the plane went into a flat spin after four had exited the plane the formation was too far away to see other chutes. Information from other groups is not available.

I have always thought that we received a direct hit by an anti-aircraft gun, but one report states the plane was hit by a rocket. The hit, whatever it was, was evidently in the oxygen system.

After all of that I am less sure I know what happened than when I started. All that remains now is to give my story of the events as I recall them. Memories can be wrong, yet some of my memories are still vivid and will remain so.

My first reaction upon seeing the flames in the bomb bay was to grab the fire extinguisher which is located on the wall above my radio. I had a little trouble getting it off the wall, and suddenly over the intercom came Stewart's voice with a forceful and meaningful intonation, "Bail out, bail out." My position is supposed to exit the bomb bay, but the doors were closed and the switch was on the other side of the bomb bay in the flames. I decided to go to the rear door instead. I forgot to stop and eat the rice paper with all the code information on it, but I did remember to pick up my parachute which I carried on the way to the rear.

Maurer, the engineer, stationed immediately behind the pilots, had his fire extinguisher out ready to operate when he heard the bail out command. He dropped it and, like me, decided to exit the rear entrance. Lt. Kluth, surrounded by flames, said he pushed the bail-out button, which rings a bell throughout the ship, and then departed. No one faults him for this because it is every man for himself in an emergency.

Our crew had often discussed what we would do in an emergency. A Reader's Digest article had related how a ball turret gunner had been unable to escape his position after a direct hit, and one of the crew members told him over the intercom, "Don't worry! We'll take this last ride together." We thought that was

ridiculous. Besides, how did anybody know that happened? We all agreed that in an emergency situation it was every man for himself.

I never heard a bell, but it may have rung. Lt. Sanborn had his fire extinguisher working when he saw the pilot leaving the plane. He immediately exited the plane after the pilot. Crawford in the tail pulled the emergency hatch in the tail open and dove out head first. McIntyre in the waist went to the rear door on the right side and tried to open it. He then remembered it had an emergency handle which causes the door to come off, so he pulled it, but the door was off the latch and remained in place. He said he put his head down and pushed his way out. He pulled his rip cord immediately, and it took him about an hour to reach earth. I thought we were flying at 26,000 feet; this altitude was in my mind. (On the official report it states the altitude was 25,000 feet.) Four of the crew members had left the plane and probably the first chute was McIntyre's. I have often thought that with ten more seconds three fire extinguishers might have put out the fire. However, it was not in the cards.

As I went through the open door to the waist I had a full head of steam going. Nelson was coming up out of the turret, and, as he reached for his chute, I ran into him knocking him back in the turret and sending me sprawling on the floor of the waist. I thought I might have hurt him because I hit him pretty hard. As I struggled to my knees I watched him get out of the turret, put on his chute, and take a few steps toward the rear. The plane then went into a spin, and Nelson fell in front of me. We

were pinned to the floor and could not move. We both struggled to no avail. Nelson, later, said he heard the engines going faster and faster and the sound going higher and higher. My past life flashed through my mind, and we both decided to quit struggling and make our peace with God.

Suddenly, relief! The pressure was lifted! Nelson went directly to the door, and as I watched he didn't just go out, he disappeared instantly. Still on my knees I finally got my parachute attached to my harness. Maurer appeared at the door to the waist. His first thought was that I was wounded. I yelled to him inquiring as to the condition of the plane. Since we both had our oxygen masks on we could not tell the other one was speaking. I remained away from the door, and Maurer went directly to the door which was still jammed in place. Then I noticed that the back of his fatigues was covered in sparks. He had been in the flames. When we went into the spin he was half inside the radio room. He thought he felt the rubber melting on his flying boots. He figured he was about to burn to death. Needless to say, when relief came he was anxious to leave. I reached out to hit his back and stomp out the sparks, but my hand hit only air. He, too, just disappeared.

Nelson, later, said he remembered a lecture which said to free fall until you can distinguish the leaves on the tree. He did this, felt a big jerk, and then landed immediately. He was in a garden without his boots and couldn't run through the weeds and stickers. He was captured almost immediately. Maurer, after

pulling his rip cord, found that one leg strap was not fastened so he was falling at an angle. He could feel the warmth on his back but could not reach it. Upon landing his parachute fell over a clothes line, and he was attacked immediately by a bunch of ruffians who gave him a real beating. When I next saw him he had an arm in a sling and his face was all puffed up.

After Maurer left I realized more than ever that this was a serious situation. I knew Maurer would not leave if there was any hope. It was then that I realized that I would really have to jump. I went to the door and looked out the window in the door. There I saw the tail just to the right. There was no way you could go out without the tail hitting you. Nelson and Maurer were probably knocked out falling to their deaths. I looked back to the radio room and saw smoke now entering the waist. If the thought of my flying jacket, left in the radio room, had come to mind I know I would have gone back to get it, It was a nice leather jacket with a circular brand mark on the sleeve. Fortunately, I never thought of it until later. The immediate question was how to get out without hitting the tail.

As I pondered this problem and tried to get up enough courage to jump, I was leaning against the door and the door fell off and I went with it. I never saw or felt the tail. A tremendous blast of air hit me, and I saw one of my flying boots going straight up. Next I felt my socks coming off. I still had both hands on my chute, the wind was on my back and my feet were flapping above me. I counted to ten three times and then decided to look over my shoulder at the earth. It was there all right, but

it was spinning. If I pulled the ripcord while spinning it might get twisted and not work right. I took my left hand and put it out to the side. It did slow my spinning, but it felt that if I put it down I would fall face down. I decided not to do that. The thought occurred to me that if the chute doesn't work I could take it back for a new one. That's an old air force joke. It became necessary to know if the chute worked. My right hand pulled the handle, and I practically died right then, because the handle came off in my hand. I had not expected that. I must have a defect. While this thought was occurring the chute opened, and I was jammed into my harness with my arms slightly raised. All sound ceased. I looked up and the chute was going back and forth above me. I realized that it was I who was moving, but it didn't look or feel like it. I looked out on a pretty country scene. I could not see Berlin anywhere. I turned a 360° turn and saw off a ways a parachute just reaching the ground. That must be a crew member. When I landed I would go over and get him, and we would walk back to England together.

At first, there was no sense of movement at all, but the ground began to move closer, slowly at first and then more rapidly. The worry of running into electric wires came to mind, and I tried to spill my chute to see if I could direct my falling. I had no strength at all to do so with my arms in their set position. I would go where the parachute would take me. I saw nobody. I seemed to be alone. Later, I figured that I must have opened the chute around 10,000 ft. We must have fallen at least

a mile in the spin. None of us had any idea how long we were in the spin. As I came closer to the ground I began to view the direction to go. I landed with a big jolt and sat down hard in the middle of a grassy plot surrounded by a small hedge. My chute fell in front of me and collapsed. I had recalled that it was wise to keep your back to the wind. I took off my harness and went to feel my nylon chute. Nylon was rather new, and I appreciated the packer who had done a good job. A narrow cinder path ran on one side of the plot. I left my chute and went over to the path.

On the other side of the path was an orchard of trees about 3 to 4 inches in diameter. Beyond the hedge was a grain field with some trees about a mile in the distance. I would have to hide my chute and then go meet my buddy, whoever he was. I did look up in the sky, and it appeared to me that the plane had exploded.

What had happened to the four officers was unknown at that time, but I knew the five enlisted men had bailed out. Collins told me later that he tried to knock a hole in the plexiglass nose in the hope that the wind would then blow out the flames. After the spin he jumped. He landed in a tree and refused to come down at first until someone of authority arrived. The copilot was missing for quite some time. Perhaps he didn't make it. Someone told us much later that he was in a hospital. He had pulled off his gloves and the flames had burned his hands and face. He still has the scars, but they were not bad when I saw him in 1986. In reconstructing the events Maurer, Nelson, and I decided that it must have been Stewart who pulled us out of the spin.

It was an action that saved our lives. When I first got back to the states I wrote out a recommendation that Stewart be given a medal, but as far as I know nothing came of it. Even after talking with him in 1986 and knowing that the events were painful for him to talk about, I am convinced the plane could not have recovered on its own. His actions saved the lives of four of his crew members as well as his own. I, for one, am eternally grateful.

I started down the path to my right and I had gone only a few steps when I could see a farmer coming toward me on a bicycle carrying a rifle. I retraced my steps and took stock of the situation. The trees in the orchard would offer no protection. The only place to hide was the hedge around this plot of grass. (This plot was evidently left to accommodate someone who parachuted.) Hiding behind the hedge was too obvious and would not delay detection very long. The only other alternative was to run across the field towards the trees. It seemed similar to a rabbit running from a hunter, and I decided that would not be very smart. My safest course was to go and meet him. The farmer dropped his bicycle and came rushing at me. The rifle turned out to be a pitchfork with which he proceeded to hit me on the head. The two of us kept circling. He was talking in an agitated way, but I tried to communicate that I was the friendly type. Soon a soldier in uniform came running up yelling, "Pistolet, pistolet," with the accent on the first syllable. I responded, "Nein, pistolet." He was carrying a big butcher knife, and I could see he was a private. He didn't look intelligent enough to be a

corporal. After he was sure I had no gun (I had decided never to take my pistol with me.), he calmed down and went through the things I had in my pockets. This included my escape kit, a list of phrases in foreign languages, a New Testament, and that was about all. We went back and picked up my harness and parachute, and proceeded to march me down the path. Soon we came to a clearing with a number of houses grouped around an open area. About a dozen people gathered around, and they began to ask some questions. I had taken German one summer, but my use of the language was very limited. I asked for my phrase book and turned to the German section. Here everything I read did not apply to my situation. There were phrases such as I am wounded. Where is a hospital? I turned to French (two years of high school French) and saw what I wanted. "J'ai soif." (I am thirsty.) Someone said, "Français?" and I said, "Nein, American." Some one was sent into a house and came back with a glass of trinkwasser. I was grateful. I believe I had skipped breakfast that morning. Then a boy spoke up, "How old you?" When I replied, "21", he did not understand. I indicated 21 with my fingers which he translated to eins und zwanzig. Everyone responded, "Nein" or shook their head. They thought I looked much younger. When they discovered the boy knew some English they asked him to ask me numerous questions. He evidently only had some English in school and had trouble talking so I could understand. Then a big man in a black uniform arrived and took charge. He wrote everything down in a book and finally had me pick up all my belongings and walk.

with him out to the highway. He had a bicycle which he pushed. After we had walked about a mile he said something to me and patted the seat of the bicycle. I looked puzzled so he did it again. I figured he wanted me to ride the bicycle, so I threw my right leg over, and he pushed me back and said, "Dummkopf!" This I understood. What he wanted was for me to put my big bundle, parachute and harness, on the seat. I did so and said in my best German, "Danke schön."

We came to a town named Grossbeeren, and a number of children began to taunt me and throw rocks. I was glad when we finally arrived at an office where we waited a few minutes for an officer to arrive. The soldier who captured me was there and gave his report. I understand that a reward is given for a capture of a prisoner. A sergeant reported on my property which included a G.I. watch(which I never got back because it was G.I.) and my Air Corps bracelet. The sergeant knew some English, and he asked me what the bracelet was. I tried to explain it when he then said, "Talisman?" I thought that was as good as anything so I said, "Ja, talisman." Finally, the officer completed his report, and I was placed in the custody of the sergeant. We proceeded to walk to the train station. The sergeant knew some French also, so between the three languages we communicated pretty well. We got on one train and then transferred to another. At one busy station we had to wait, and a circle of people surrounded us. I noticed that the circle was getting smaller. One man carrying a briefcase (most Germans seemed to carry a briefcase which con-

tained their lunch), was very outspoken, and he kept threatening me with his briefcase. I kept moving away, but there was no escape. Suddenly, he lunged at me with the briefcase over his head. The sergeant came up to him and yelled in his face. The man wilted and went to the back of the crowd. I was grateful to the sergeant. We made seven different trains. A Hitler jugend was on one train. He was about 16 years old and was wearing a Nazi armband and short pants. He made a number of disparaging remarks and pinched me when the sergeant was not looking. Finally, we got on a double-decker bus which was pretty crowded. As I was ascending the steps I heard someone say in English, "It is a good thing you have someone with you."

We arrived at a jail, and I was placed in a cell. That evening I got 2 slices of black bread, a piece of meat (liverwurst?) and coffee. I was never a coffee drinker and not hungry enough to eat the food. Eventually, I nibbled on the bread but could not eat it. Then I met Nelson and got to talk for awhile. A guard gave me a coat to wrap up with at night. It was quite an eventful day.

August 7--In the morning a guard motioned me to pick up my dinner, and I carried it into another cell. Here was Collins. I showed no sign of recognition, but I laid down the food and said, "Here is your breakfast." He told me later he would not touch it. He said he could see where mice had nibbled on it. I never told him that I was the mouse. Then I saw Maurer with his many hurts including a burnt hand. We got a half hour of exercise in the

courtyard. The six of us--Maurer, Nelson, Collins, and I and two other Americans--got on a truck and went to the Berlin depot. A lot of people were walking around, most of them in uniform. They would salute with either hand, or if they were carrying a rifle they would sharply turn their head to the side. It was humorous to see them, but we decided not to laugh. It reminded me of Chaplin's film "The Great Dictator". The depot showed signs of destruction. We walked through the station with two guards. The guards treated us well. I remember getting a German equivalent of a LIFESAVER. I remember the smokers among our group passing a cigarette back and forth until it was impossible to hold it. We were allowed to talk, and the train traveled all night. The train was crowded so it was hard getting to sleep. It was cooler that night.

We arrived in Frankfurt just before dawn, and Frankfurt is as good a place as any to stop the narrative. I have the rest of the story all written out for the next eight and half months, but that story can be put in Part II. It has taken longer to type this than I expected. If I had had more time the story could have been shorter.

I want to quote the source book once more.

The 388th at War

Mission #212, Cologne, October 17, 1944

31 Lt. Resch in a/c 43-38578 was lagging behind from the time the formation went over Belgium until it was hit by flak near the RP. The a/c was on fire and dove 3,000 feet below the formation putting the fire out. Later

the a/c was seen to explode at cloud level."

All the crew members became POW's except the ball turret gunner who was KIA. Everyone was on their first mission except the top turret gunner who was credited with 25 missions. His name was T/Sgt. D. [evidently a mistake. It should be G.] Crowder. Pop, as we often called him because he was older than the rest of us, deserves a lot of credit for finishing up his tour of duty and then volunteering for another. He wanted to be an engineer on a plane and it looks like he got his wish at least for one mission. As luck would have it he showed up at Stalag Luft 4, and we had a big reunion. He was in a different compound from the rest of us, but we managed to make arrangements for a meeting in the hospital.

Crowder will miss our next reunion. I just received word that former Fire Chief George T. Crowder of Selma, Alabama deceased on March 5, 1989.

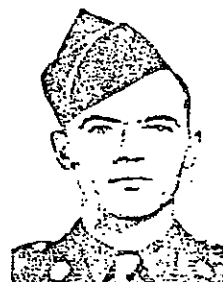
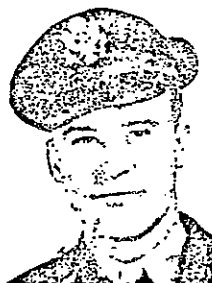
On page 16 of this lengthy missive (I originally thought it would be about 80 pages.) I mentioned how we had our pictures taken for a classbook at the 222nd Combat Crew Training School at Ardmore, Oklahoma. Probably most of the crew members have a copy of the book. In case one does not and for the record I want to include the pictures of the crew since I have no other pictures. This is the way we looked 47 years ago. I wish I had a picture of Sanborn, the navigator, so this could be more complete. These pictures are probably the images we have kept in our minds for almost a half century.

Robert M. Rowe
Second Lieutenant—P

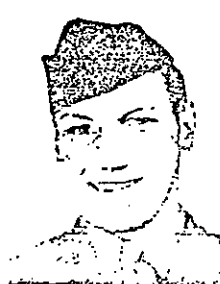
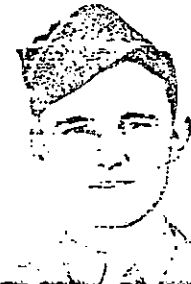
Robert S. Stewart
Second Lieutenant—CP

W. G. Collins
Lieutenant—B
Navigator

August W. Maurer
Sergeant—AEE



CREW No. 2525



John H. Anderson
Sergeant—AEE

George T. Crowder
Corporal—AEE

Ernest Crawford
Corporal—BUN

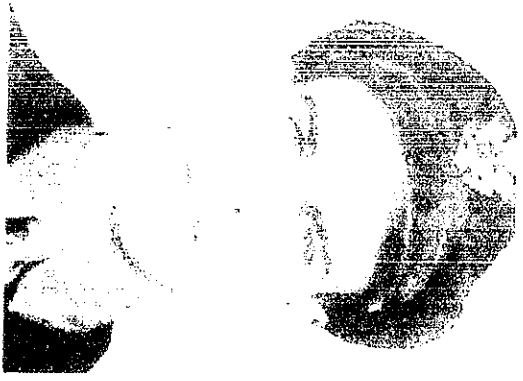
Robert J. McIntyre
Lieutenant—AEE

Donald L. Nelson
Sergeant—AEE

At Ardmore the combat crews were in three sections: Section A had 41 crews, B section had 56 crews, and C section, our contingent, had 56 crews. The numbers of the crews in C section ranged from 2518 to 2573. We were Crew 2525 or simply 25. The enlisted men in crews 2518-23 lived in one barracks and 2524-29 were in the next barracks. Thus we got to know the members of these crews best.

I used to know what happened to many of the crews, but only some memories remain. Crew 2518 never finished training. I have mentioned before that Crew 2524 was assigned to the 100th Bomb Group and got shot down on their first mission. Only a waist gunner, Addison, survived and became a leader in the church coun-

Robert M. Stone



Robert S. Stewart

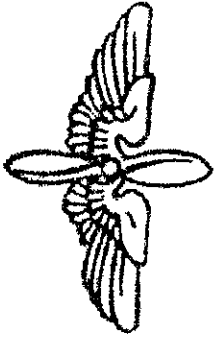


W. G. Collins

Lieutenant 1st Lt
1950-1952



August W. Mason



John H. Anderson
Sergeant—ROG



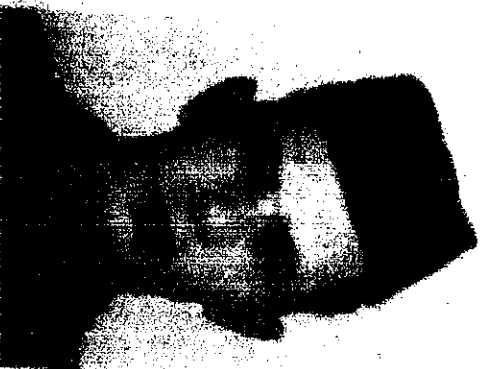
George T. Crowder
Corporal—AAEG



Ernest Crawford
Corporal—GUN



Robert J. McIntyre
Sergeant—AG

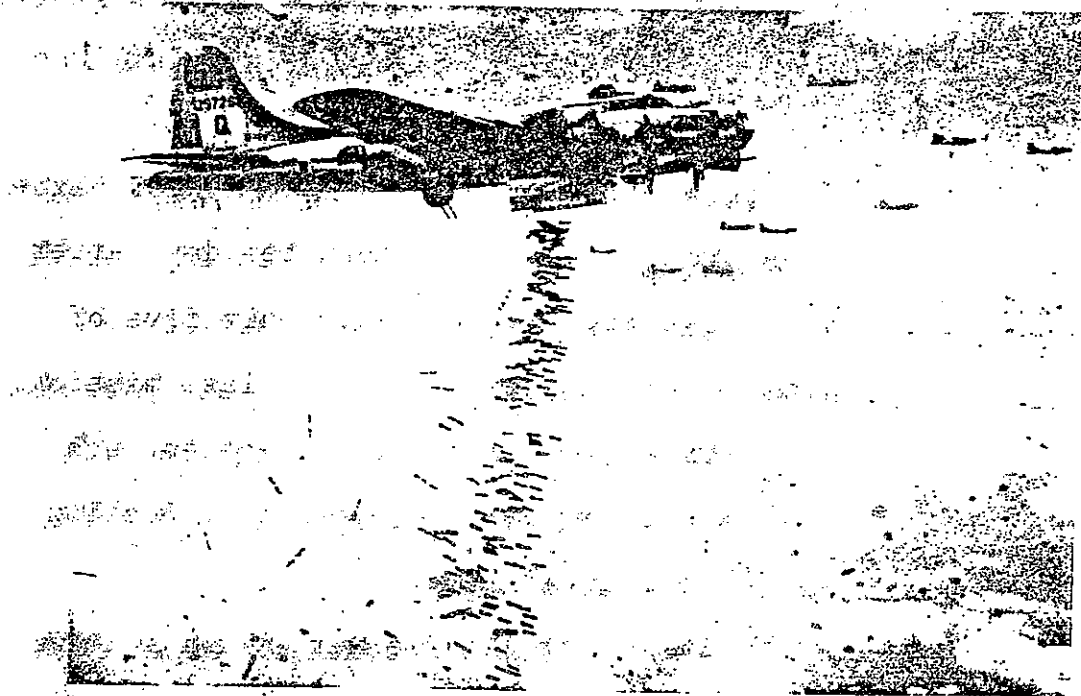


07/26/2009



cil in Stalag Luft 4. He became an authority on the life of Paul, the Apostle. I believe our experiences changed the lives of many of the men in the combat crews including our own crew.

Crew 2526 on the other side of us was with us in the 388th in the 561st Squadron although we seldom saw them. In looking through The 388th at War for mention of Lt. Sarten, the pilot of 2526, I was surprised to see his name listed a number of times. Most of the reports on missions do not list the crews. The first listing is on the Schweinfurt mission of July 19th. On July 20th they flew to Wetzler, and we flew an aborted mission. On July 24th the target was St. Lo. Sarten flew #2 position and Rowe flew #3 position in the middle squadron of the C Group. I never knew, or at least do not remember knowing, that they were close by. However, Rowe gave me a picture of our plane dropping bombs on a mission, and it also appeared in the Newsletter of the 388th Assn. The large letter H on the tail indicates the 388th Bomb Group. I have noticed on most of the pictures of B-17's on TV they never show the tail. The number of the plane is also visible-- Q 297289. The only time we flew this plane was on the mission to St. Lo. The proximity of the photographer would indicate that Sarten or someone on his crew took the picture. It is a great shot. I believe I can see McIntyre at the waist window. Nelson has his turret pointed so he can watch the bombs. Rowe and Stewart^{are} almost distinguishable. Collins is toggling out the bombs with Sanborn right behind him. Present but unseen are Crawford, Crowder, Anderson, and Maurer, a crew working together.



A Crew at Work on their 18th Mission

On July 28th Sarten flew #3 position and Rowe #5 position on the mission to Merseburg. The next day the positions were reversed on the return to Merseburg.

On August 1st while we were in London Sarten flew with a command pilot on a mission to carry supplies to the Marquies in southern France.

On August 14th they flew to Ludwigshaven in #1 position of the high squadron.

On August 16th on the mission to ^ZLeitz the mission report reads: "Bombs were away at 1135 hours from 21,500 feet. Lt. Sarten in a/c 44-6123, was lost on the bomb run when a plane above dropped down and cut the rudder off. The a/c then went down out of control. A/c #326 continued with the formation."

The names of the crew are listed as MIA except for the pilot, Lt. Sarten, and the radio operator, T/Sgt. L. L. O'Sullivan, who were KIA.

I had always thought that they were shot down on their next-to-last mission, but I was wrong. They went down ten days after our crew did with six more missions than we had. Only five of the crew in their pictures at Ardmore were on their last mission. It may be somewhat unusual for a crew to remain intact through training and combat. I wonder if any of the crews in C Section at Ardmore ever finished their tour of duty.

On page 7 Huntzinger writes: "Of the more than 450 combat crews to pass through the 388th Bomb Group, 138 were missing in action, over 200 completing their tour, and over 100 returning to the States at the end of the war in Europe. Many of the men that were shot down, returned to the Group before the war ended as escapees or POW exchanges, and these men were sent to the States.

"In the first 100 missions the Group lost 83 crews. The remaining 206 missions, the Group lost 58 crews. Several went to Sweeden, one to Switzerland and some had to ditch in the North Sea or English Channel."

On page 261 of The 388th at War figures are given for the casualties of the bomb group. On the next page I have reproduced the statistics for the three months we were there plus the totals. Multiply these numbers by the number of groups and you begin to get a picture of the immensity of the sacrifice made by the men of our generation.

	Planes	KIA	POW	INT	MIA	ESC	TOTAL
1945 figures June 1944	2	12					12
1979 figures June 1944	*14	15	7				22
1945 figures July 1944	5	17	16		17		50
1979 figures July 1944	7	32	22			2	56
1945 figures August 1944	5	5	18		18		41
1979 figures August 1944	6	11	27		8		46
1945 figures July 43-Apr. 45	142	259	521	15	406		1201
1979 figures July 43-Apr. 45	162	524	742	48	43	33	1390

*Planes lost at Poltava

One more story before I quit. At my 50th high school reunion in October 1989 I got to talking with Kenneth C. McQuitty who had been in my class but was someone I did not really know. I found out he was a ball turret gunner on a B-17 and had trained in Ardmore about two months later than our crew. His pilot had written a book entitled Fletcher's Gang, A B-17 Crew in Europe 1944-45. I ordered the book and it soon came with a nice inscription:

For John Anderson "A B-17 crew man with the 388th Bomb Group (H) 45th Wing stationed at Knettishall." With warmest regards, Eugene Fletcher A.K.A.

"Fletch" July 4, 1990 Your Poltava visit was more exciting than ours!

The experiences the crew had at Ardmore were similar to ours. They were ten days at Kearney, Nebraska and got assigned to the 96th Bomb Group after arriving in Wales on D+1-Day via ATC. They flew their first mission on July 6th. The bombardier and navigator kept notes on each mission, so it was interesting to me

when they flew the same missions as we did. This occurred first on their mission #4 (our 13th) where we dropped supplies to the Maquis (I believe this is the accepted spelling.). The navigator wrote an interesting review of the mission.

The crew bombed a three-track concrete railroad about 60 miles southeast of Paris on July 17th. Our crew bombed rocket installations nearby.

On July 18th their target was an oil refinery about 40 miles southeast of Kiel (Hemmingstedt). The target was completely covered with clouds. They bombed at 18,000. We bombed at 25,300.

Their missions #7&8 on July 24-25 were our missions #18&19 to St. Lo. They returned with their bombs on the 24th. The bombardier wrote that his ship carried 38 clusters of 6 20-pound fragmentation bombs. Perhaps this is what is showing in our picture. The pilot gave a lengthy account of the second day's events and of learning that evening that some group had dropped their bombs on the forward lines of the American troops.

Their ninth mission was to Merseburg, Germany to the Leuna Oil Refinery. It was a rough mission for them. They had to feather #4 engine, and they could not keep up with their group.

On August 4th, the bombardier writes about the Hamburg mission: "It was a long over-water hop. Saw no flak until we hit the target area and then it hit us. Believe they have stopped throwing up flak in shells--it comes up in a blanket. 388th Group carried some new anti-radar equipment, and it seemed to work fine. But our group didn't get any benefit

from it." Our report shows poor results, but the pilot writes, "The results were good."

Finally, on our last mission we went to Berlin while they proceeded to an FW-109 factory near Gdynia. After they hit the target they went on to Poltava in Russia.

They flew their last mission, #35, to Fulda, Germany on December 27th, so some of the crews did complete their missions.

That exhausts my material as, I am sure, this tome has exhausted you. If I can get it duplicated in time for our reunion on August 19th in Valley Forge, PA then it will be a success. I am looking forward to our reunion and seeing each of you. We spent 200 days training, working, and flying together. During that time we had many unforgettable experiences. I thank you for your part in making this recounting of a short period of our lives an enjoyable experience. I am sure I have omitted some events which you recall with satisfaction, and I have included some material which had better been left out. Excuse my faults; this was a labor of love.

Two of our crew members, Collins and Crowder, have gone to their reward. No response has been received from McIntyre and Sanborn. I cannot get an address for McIntyre or a phone number for Sanborn. That leaves Rowe, Stewart, Maurer, Nelson, Crawford, and me. May I wish each of you a long life with good health and much happiness. We are some of the luckiest people in the world.

MISSIONS PERFORMED BY ROWE'S CREW

BOMB GROUP	OUR MISSION	DATE	TARGET	PLANE	ALTITUDE	RESULTS
MISSION						
128 #1	6-4-44	Cape Griz Nez / Old 66 42-30778 / 23,900 / Loose pattern				
130 #2	6-5-44	Cape Griz Nez / Sweetheart 42-3262 / 19,900 / Poor				
131 #3	6-6-44	Invasion Coast / Gremlin Gus II 42-30595 / 13,850 / Second wave D-Day				
134 #4	6-7-44	Nantes, France / War Wary 42-31996 / ? / Good results				
136 #5	6-10-44	Berck-Sur-Mer / Old 66 42-30778 / 23,000 / PFF				
140(#6)	6-15-44	Beauvoir, France / Sweetheart 42-3262 bad engine, aborted mission				
141 #6	6-18-44	Bremen, Germany / Old 66 42-30778 / 25,900 / 7/10 th clouds				
142 #7	6-19-44	Cognac, France / Miss Lace 42-39842 / 29,000 / abandoned mission, bad weather				
143 #8	6-20-44	Magdeburg, Germany / Old 66 42-30778 / 25,300 / shacked the target				
144 #9	6-21-44	Ruhland, Germany / Girl of My Dreams 44-6123 / 20,000 / 'shack'				
152 #10	6-26-44	Drohobycz, Poland / Sack Happy 42-97873 / with 390 th B.G.				
154 #11	7-5-44	Beziers, France / Sack Happy 42-97873 / with 100 th B.G.				
158 #12	7-8-44	Mantes-Gassicourt, France / Star Dust 42-102559 / railroad bridge over Seine				
161 (#13)	7-13-44	Munich, Germany / Haughty Hazy II 42-97289 / scheduled abortion				
162 #13	7-14-44	Southern France / Girl of My Dreams 44-6123 / supplies to Marquis				
163 #14	7-16-44	Munich, Germany / Girl of My Dreams 44-6123 / 24,100 / on Stuttgart				
164 #15	7-17-44	Houppville, France / Heavens Above 42-102434 / 22,900 / excellent				
165 #16	7-18-44	Kiel, Germany / Little Donna 42-97098 / 25,300 / 10/10 th clouds PFF				
166 #17	7-19-44	Schweinfurt, Germany / Little Donna 42-97098 / 25,000 / slightly dispersed				
167 (#18)	7-20-44	Wetzler, Germany / Little Donna 42-97098 / 13,000 / tight pattern covering target				
	7-22-44	practice mission 3 hrs.				
	7-23-44	practice mission 3 1/2 hrs. formation flying at 18,000				
168 #18	7-24-44	St. Lo area / Haughty Hazy II 42-97289 / 4 bomb runs at 16,000				
169 #19	7-25-44	St. Lo area / Little Donna 42-97098 / 13,000 / tight pattern covering target				
	7-27-44	mission scrubbed				
170 #20	7-28-44	Merseburg, Germany / Little Donna 42-97098 / 24,000 / PFF method				
171 #21	7-29-44	Merseburg / Little Donna 42-97098 / 26,000 / B Group made own sighting				
174 #22	8-2-44	Mery-Sur-Oise, France / Heavens Above 42-102434 / 22,900 / excellent				
175 #23	8-4-44	Hamburg, Germany / Little Donna 42-97098 / 26,000 / poor				
177 #24	8-6-44	Berlin, Germany / Little Donna 42-97098 / 25,000 / excellent				

Missions flown by OLD 66, 42-30778

Flew 85 missions from Sept. 26, 1943 to August 13, 1944. For the 388th Bomb Group it was from mission #24 to mission #182.

Rowe 's crew flew the plane on their first mission on June 4, 1944 to Cape Griz Nez, France; on mission #5 on June 10, 1944 to Berek-Sur-Mer, France; on mission #6 on June 18, 1944 to Bremen, Germany; and on mission #8 on June 20, 1944 to Magdeburg, Germany. It was the second most often flown plane used by Rowe's crew. Only LITTLE DONNA was flown more often.

Sarten's crew flew the plane on their first mission on June 5, 1944 to Cape Griz Nez, France and on mission #5 to Portaubault, France.

OLD 66 had a reputation in the 561st Squadron of being a slow plane but still dependable.

I thought I had a photo of OLD 66 but have not found it yet.



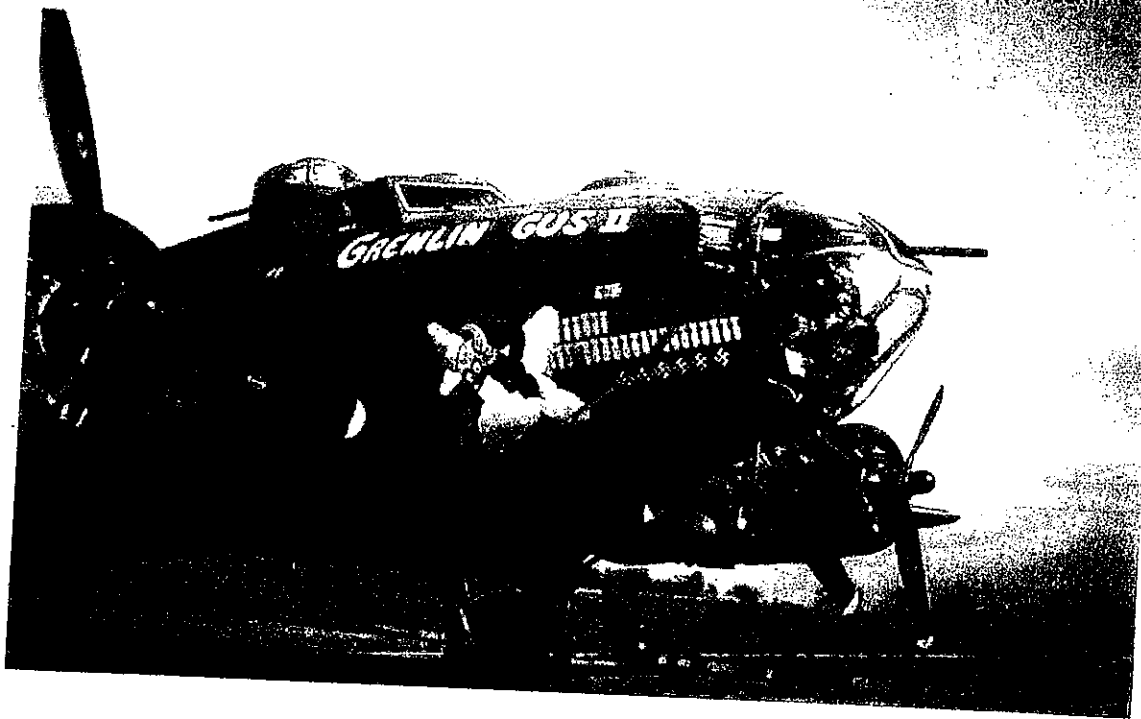
Missions flown by SWEETHEART #42-3262

Flew 62 missions from July 24, 1943 to March 30, 1945. For the 388th Bomb Group it was from mission #2 through #289.

Rowe's crew flew the plane on their 2nd mission to Cape Griz Nez, France on June 5, 1944, mission #130 for the 388th Bomb Group, and again when they flew to Beauvoir, France on June 15, 1944 where they aborted the mission for engine trouble and did not get credit for the mission, mission #140 for the 388th Bomb Group.

Sarten's crew flew the plane to Amiens, France on June 12, 1944. They aborted the mission because of problems with personnel.

Most often it was flown by crews with the 561st Squadron.



Missions flown by GREMLIN GUS II #42-30595

This plane flew 54 missions from August 15, 1943 to D-Day, June 6, 1944. For the 388th Bomb Group it was mission #9 through #131.

Rowe's crew flew this plane on D-Day, June 6, 1944 to Caen, France in support of the Allied invasion, our third mission. For the 388th Bomb Group it was #131.

F. J. Henggeler flew as Commander on the 49th mission in Gremlin Gus II with Bohne as pilot. The mission was on December 24, 1943 to the Crossbow Target.

Missions for WAR WEARY #42-31996

No picture is available for this plane. It flew 93 missions from February 24, 1944 to November 6, 1944.

Rowe's crew flew mission #4 on June 7, 1944 to Nantes, France. This was mission # 134 for the 388th Bomb Group.

In my diary I wrote that we flew in Jakes Jerks, but I found out over 50 years later that this plane was shot down in May. I do not know how I made this mistake. Now the information is on the internet.



Missions flown by MISS LACE #42-39842

The plane flew 54 missions from November 30, 1943 to August 4, 1944. No complete picture is available but the photo shows how the tail was damaged from a hit. The plane was attached to the 560th Squadron. We normally flew missions in planes from our squadron - 561st Squadron.

Rowe's crew flew in this plane on June 19, 1944 to Cognac, France. It was the 388th Bomb Group mission #142.



Missions flown by GIRL OF MY DREAMS #44-6123

This plane flew 35 missions from June 6, 1944 to August 16, 1944, 388th missions #131 to #184.

Rowe's crew flew on their mission #9 to Ruhland, Germany on June 21, 1944 and landed in Poltava, Russia, mission #144 for the 388th Bomb Group. They also flew to Southern France to aid the freedom fighters on July 14, 1944, mission #162 for the 388th. On July 16, 1944 the mission was to Munich but they bombed the secondary target - Stuttgart. #163 for the 388th Bomb Group.

Sarten's crew flew to Hamburg, Germany on August 4, 1944, mission #175 for the 388th. On August 14, 1944 they flew to Ludwigshafen, mission #183 for the 388th. Then on August 16, 1944 they were flying in #123 to Zeitz when they collided with another plane which came down and cut off their rudder. When I wrote about it on page 183 two of the crew were KIA and the others were MIA. Now we know that all the crew were KIA. The engineer of the crew, Ranold Musolf, had his diary published in the newsletter of the 388th and our crew knew him well. I have since made contact with his brother Neale Musolff and hope to be able to meet him in person at the reunion of the 388th in Savannah at the end of this coming August.

Many of the crews had a picture taken in front of a plane. Rowe's crew never did have a picture of the entire crew. A picture of Sarten's crew is included since they did have a picture taken.



388th Bomb Group



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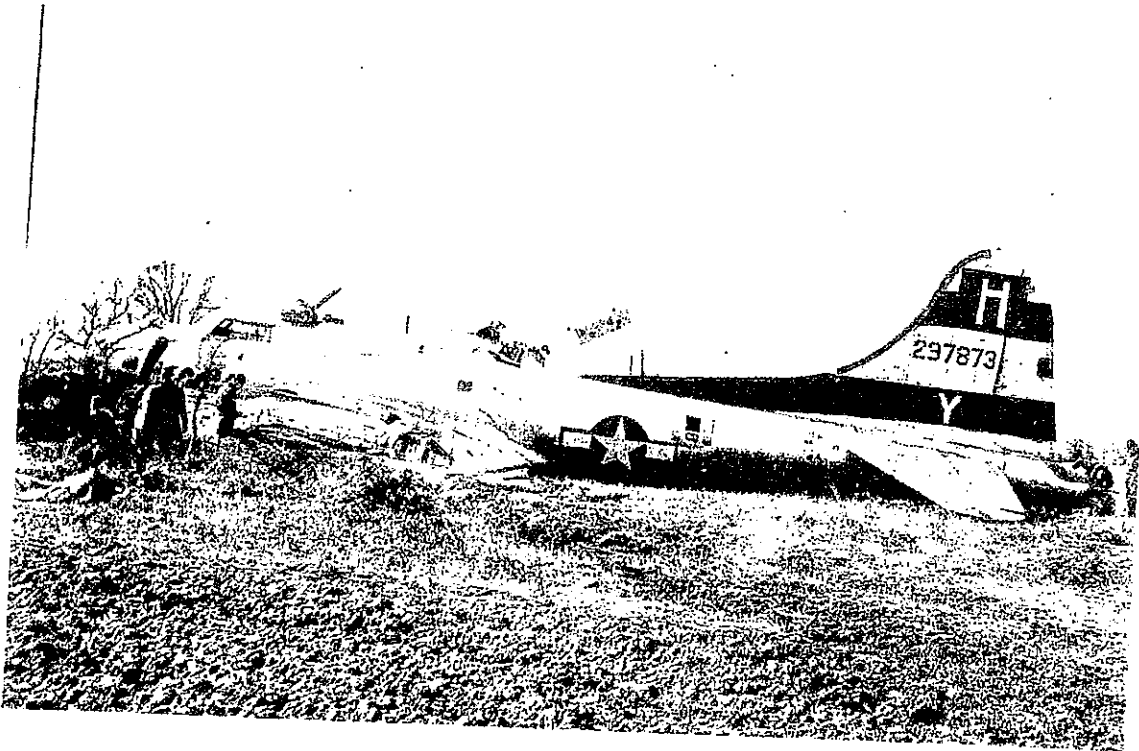
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Sarten Crew



<u>R. C.</u>	...	<u>W. T.</u>	...	<u>J. C.</u>	...	<u>C. R.</u>	...	<u>L. L.</u>	...
<u>Musolf</u>	...	<u>Milts</u>	...	<u>O'Grady</u>	...	<u>Bissell</u>	...	<u>O'Sullivan</u>	...
...	...	<u>J. E.</u>	...	<u>J.</u>	...	<u>J. H.</u>	...	<u>J. A.</u>	...
...	...	<u>Sarten</u>	...	<u>Brisken</u>	...	<u>Pointer</u>	...	<u>Delaney</u>	...



Missions of SACK HAPPY #42-97873

This plane flew 77 missions from June 15, 1944 to February 24, 1945, 388th #140 to #264.

Rowe's crew flew in this plane on their second lap of the shuttle mission from Poltava, Russia to Foggia, Italy, their tenth mission, on June 26, 1944. The target was Drohobycz, Poland. It was mission # 152 for the 388th. They continued to fly the plane on the last lap of the shuttle from Foggia, Italy to Knettishall, England on July 5, 1944. The target was Beziere, France. It was mission #154 for the 388th.

The plane evidently was assigned to the 563rd Squadron as it was used most frequently by crews from that squadron.

No photo of the plane is available but here is the plane after its last mission.

Missions flown by STAR DUST #42-102559

This plane flew 94 missions from April 24, 1944 to February 26, 1945, 388th missions from #98 to #266.

Rowe's crew flew the plane on July 8, 1944 to Mantes-Gassicourt, France, their mission # 12. It was #158 for the 388th Bomb Group.

No picture is available.



Photo John H. Anderson, radio operator on the Rowe crew, remembers when this photo was taken. On Mission # 168 to St. Lo on July 24, Sarten flew #2 position and Rowe flew # 3 position in the middle squadron of the C Group. Sarten, or someone on his crew, took a picture of us dropping our anti-personnel bombs on that day and gave the photo to our pilot Rowe. He gave me a copy of it, and later, it appeared in the newsletter of the 388th Assn.

Missions flown by HAUGHTY HAZY II, 42-97289

Haughty Hazy II flew 18 missions assigned to the 561st Squadron. For the 388th Bomb Group it was from May 11, 1944 to July 29, 1944, # 110 to #171.

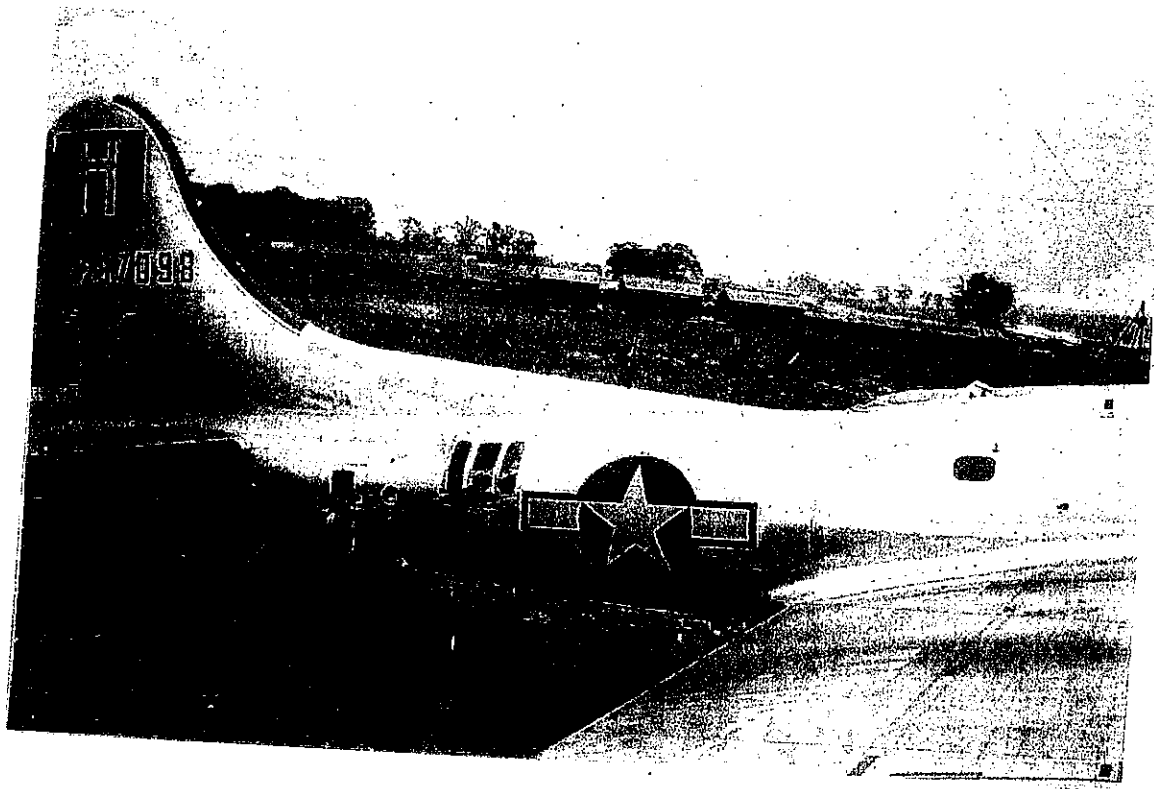
Rowe's crew flew their scheduled abortion mission to Munich, Germany on July 13, 1944 on this plane, mission #161 for the 388th, and again on July 24, 1944 to St. Lo area, their mission #18. For the 388th the mission was #168.

Missions of HEAVENS ABOVE #42-402434

This plane flew 33 missions from July 6, 1944 to Sept 24, 1944.

Rowe's crew flew a mission to Houppeville, France on July 17, 1944, their 15th, and another on August 22, 1944 to Mery-Sur-Oise, their 23rd. The 388th missions were #164 and #175. On page 128 I thought that we received so much damage to the plane that it must have been scrapped. Now I know that the plane flew to Berlin two days later on our last mission. At the end of our mission the vertical stabilizer was leaning a few degrees from vertical, the tail position was riddled with holes, we counted over 400 holes in the plane. The ground crew must have been busy to have it ready to fly four days later. Generally, the ground crews did a good job of getting the plane they worked on ready to fly.

Sarten's crew flew their 17th mission in this plane to Munich, Germany on July 13, 1944.



Missions flown by LITTLE DONNA #42-97098

This plane flew only 15 missions before it was shot down. Its first mission was on July 11, 1944 and it was shot down on August 6, 1944. For the 388th it was missions 159 and 177. Rowe's crew flew eight of the missions. They were:

# 388 th MISSION	ROWE'S CREW #	TARGET	DATE
165 Kluth as pilot	16	Kiel, Germany	7-18-44
166	17	Schweinfurt, Germany	7-19-44
167 scheduled abortion		Wetzler, Germany	7-20-44
169	19	St. Lo area, France	7-25-44
170	20	Merseburg, Germany	7-28-44
171	21	Merseburg, Germany	7-29-44
175	23	Hamburg, Germany	8-4-44
177 Kluth as pilot	24	Berlin, Germany	8-6-44

INSERTION

Our crew had some unusual adventures during the time we were operating out of England. We had three 3-day passes, which I used to go to London. When our pilot got shot in the foot on Mission 23 we knew that a 7-day furlough would be available. Our plans were to go to Scotland. All we had to do was wait until the crews who were on pass returned to the base at midnight Saturday night. The Eighth Air Force decided to have a big mission and go to Berlin. The squadron had to furnish its quota of crews. The call came in around 10:30 on Saturday night so they assigned our crew a substitute pilot and put us on the list to go. I recall thinking that we should not fly to Berlin when we had a 7-day furlough almost in our pocket.

Surely, our last mission was the most traumatic mission we had. Our entire life was changed in a short moment and the plane we were flying was shot down. Our lives from then on were completely different. We all became prisoners of war.

My second book relates my experiences as a prisoner of war. The time I spent in Stalag Luft IV was a real learning experience. I would not trade that time for any comparable period in my life. I learned so much that I was able to use later in my career. The bad time came when we left camp and walked for 53 days across Germany. I was able to stay at Stalag XIB at Fallingbomel while the main body of men in the Air Corps had to march on for over another month. All in all I was the luckiest member of my crew.

Next to that last mission in importance was the mission we flew to Ruhland, Germany, just south of Berlin, and landed in Russia. It was the first shuttle mission flown from England. A group had flown from the 15th Air Force in Italy previous to our flight. The 388th decided to make the shuttle mission the main topic of the reunion held in Savannah in 2002. I wrote up the story of the mission and submitted it to the program chairman, but he did not pick it for presentation. My pilot, Robert M. Rowe, had written an article about the mission, which was published in **The Kingstonian** on August 1, 1984. He sent me a copy so I think it is worth reading. Here is the

article:

NEWTON -- Newtonian Robert M. Rowe, Main St., took part in an extraordinary combat mission to Russia 40 years ago this summer.

A former captain in the Air Force Reserve, Rowe piloted one of the thousands of planes that flew in support of an invasion forces at Normandy on D-Day. A few missions later, he and his crew were chosen to take part in the Russian adventure.

Several weeks after returning from that flight, he was wounded by enemy gunfire over Hamburg, Germany. He spent two months in a hospital in England and then returned to this country.

The following is his own story of the adventure in Russia:

"Forty years ago this summer, a group of Flying Fortresses of the U.S. Air Force participated in what was the longest three-way combat mission ever flown in Europe. It also marked the first time American bombers from England had ever landed in the Soviet Union.

At the time this feat was accomplished, the American Air Forces in Europe were reaching their peak of power. This had been a long, difficult and bloody endeavor which had seen thousands of our planes and airmen lost in battle.

Following the reorganization of the Eighth Bomber Command in mid-1943, the raids against Hitler's fortress were stepped up dramatically. In the following few months, battle after bloody battle took place in the flame-filled skies over Europe. These were the days when our large bombers had to go in alone. Our fighter planes at that time did not have the range to fly the full distance. Ironically, during this same period the Luftwaffe was at its fighting peak.

Industrial targets located in such cities as Bremen, Leipzig, Marienburg, Brunswick and Regensburg were the prime objectives. The Germans put on their most vigorous defenses to protect the all-important ball bearing works at Schweinfurt.

In December of 1943 our North American P-51 Mustang became operational. This plane, at that time, had the utmost in firepower and maneuverability, but most important of all, it

had the range to accompany our bombers anywhere in Germany.

It was these 'Little Friends', as we called them, that accompanied us all the way to Russia. The mission to the Soviet Union was designed to prove to Hitler that no part of his empire was any longer immune to attack because of distance.

We took off as part of a force of more than 1,000 B-17 and B-24 bombers and as many fighters. This was just weeks after D-Day, and the target was Berlin. It was a beautiful, clear day for flying. Many of the groups encountered fighter opposition and heavy anti-aircraft fire over the target. After dropping our bombs on an oil refinery outside Berlin, we continued on to Russia as one of 100 out of the bomber forces of 1,000. The others returned to England. We flew on across Poland, just on the outskirts of Warsaw. We were attacked there by ME-109 German fighters, but our accompanying P-51s soon dispersed them.

As we crossed the Russian border, we were greeted by Soviet fighter planes. They escorted us over the large Dnepr River and then on deep into the Ukraine. The Russian landscape, from the air, looked much like any other country, interspersed with fertile farmlands, forests and glistening bodies of water.

Our fighter planes landed at Piryatin and half the B-17s at Mirgorod. The remaining 50 bombers, one of which was ours, touched down at Poltava.

Our planes filled the sky with their wheeling traffic pattern and the thunder of their motors. We came in so rapidly that as many as five planes were on the wire mesh runways at one time. We cleared them swiftly to make room for the remainder. Newsmen, who had arrived in Russia a few days earlier, provided a genuine welcome along with many Soviet citizens. Some bouquets were tossed by Russian women officers, and greetings such as 'Allo Joe' were heard.

The first suggestion of trouble came while the crews were still telling their stories to intelligence officers. Oft in the distance, an anti-aircraft battery opened up. Too high even to be seen a German reconnaissance plane had followed the bombers about 400 miles into Soviet territory. Shell bursts,

like puffs of cotton in the sky, traced its course. Some of the officers dismissed the firing as practice. Most of us were very weary after 14 hours in the air in a 30-ton bomber, and were ready to tumble into the cots set up in tents near the field. Many didn't even take time to eat.

Shortly before midnight, sentries with whistles, alerted the camp. We listened then slept some more until suddenly the guns were firing from every direction and the area was lighted like day by the flares dropped by the Nazi planes. We left the tents with one jump and scattered in all directions. I don't know how many times my feet touched the ground, but I kept going until I tumbled over a rock pile. I tossed enough rocks out of the center of the pile so I could crawl into it. There I stayed.

The next two hours were a nightmare. Back and forth came the Nazi bombers, picking out targets they had missed on earlier runs. The light and medium anti-aircraft that hammered continually seemed not to disturb them a bit. When one wave exhausted its bombs, another took its place.

The tent area was so close to the field it is only a miracle that there were not countless casualties from stray bombs. If the Germans had chosen to deliberately attack the tent area, I shudder to think what would have happened. Fortunately for us, they were concerned only with our bombers.

The early morning light disclosed a sickening sight. We walked out onto the field, surrounded by the broken sagging skeletons of B-17s. Only a cluster of motors and twisted propellers marked where some had been. Most of us had seen, for the first time, what it could be like on the receiving end of a bombing raid. Out of the 50 huge bombers we landed at Poltava, only six were in condition to be flown out.

Before darkness fell the following day we were all transported by truck to a point several miles away where we slept in the woods. This was a precautionary measure in the event that Nazis returned to bomb the tent area. They did not.

This did give us an opportunity to see a little of the Russian countryside. There were some peasant farmers in the vicinity who wanted to be friendly. The language barrier prevented us from conversing with them except by signs and

smiles. They wanted us to accept tokens of their friendship, but we had been instructed not to accept anything because of their poverty resulting from the ravages of war. Generally, this part of the Soviet Union was, at that time, a picture of desolation. Most buildings showed the effects of war which had been fought there twice. First, when the Germans marched in on their way to Stalingrad, and again when they were routed by the determined Soviet forces.

Our visit to Russia came to an end four days later. Although our plane had been destroyed in the holocaust, we were assigned to fly one of the other Fortresses on the second shuttle leg to Italy. The remaining crew members, who were stranded without planes, were flown back to England by Air Transport, via Iran, Egypt and Spain. Those of us in the six planes joined the other 50 that had landed at Mirgorod. They had not been attacked. We flew over Poland, where we dropped our 5,000 pounds of bombs on an oil refinery, and on over Hungary and Yugoslavia to Foggia, Italy.

We found it very hot and dusty in Italy in July and after a week there we were on our way back to England. Our target on the third leg of the mission was a railroad marshalling yard in southern France. It was refreshing to return to the cool, green English summer.”

Who am I to dispute what my pilot wrote? Still I have some different remembrances from some of the events. I clearly saw the German reconnaissance plane after we had landed. The official flight time to Russia was 11 hours, 40 minutes. My diary says the time was 10 hours, 15 minutes. The plane we flew to Russia was Girl of My Dreams, M123. It was not destroyed by the German bombs but returned to our base and flew other missions. It was the plane last used by Sarten and his crew on mission to Zeitz on August 16th when the plane above dropped down and cut the rudder off. There were no survivors.



This picture was taken in Poltava, Russia on June 22, 1944. Maurer is on the left, then Anderson plus familiar faces on the right, probably men we knew at Ardmore. We are looking at the airfield with all the destroyed planes.

John Chopelas of Killeen, TX corresponded with me in 2008. His plane was destroyed by the German bombs and he had to get back to England with a big group of fliers. He sent me some pictures he had of the destruction done in Poltava. They were too small to be used here. At the time I was corresponding with him moving pictures of two planes landing in Poltava were displayed on the 388th website. Since we were the second plane to land on the field I tried to identify the landing plane as ours. The numbers were never clear enough to read. I could not say for sure it was our plane.

A GI mess sergeant and his Russian KPs waiting to serve what they called "Americanski Vodka" - cocoa to you. One gal is wearing the sarge's jacket.



A GI mess sergeant and his Russian KPs waiting to serve what they called "Americanski Vodka" - cocoa to you. The girl on the right is wearing the sarge's jacket.

The opportunity to visit Russia was an educational experience. The Russian people had a hard life, but they still enjoyed what pleasures they had. Here even the ruins were ruined. The original plans had been that we would operate from the airbase in Poltava and attack targets unreachable from England. Instead of two weeks we were only there five days.

Flying on to Italy we spent nine days, sometimes swimming in the Adriatic Sea. I enjoyed seeing Italy more than Russia, but I did appreciate the opportunity the Air Corps gave me to see those counties.

ADDENDUM

Ever since I wrote my war story I realized that I did not have all the right information on some of the events. I always thought that I would take the time to rewrite the story and maybe try and get it published. Once when I was in Kansas City I contacted Francis J. Henggeler who was the lead pilot of the last mission we flew to Berlin on August 6, 1944. "Hank", as he is known as, agreed to write an introduction when I was ready to proceed.

Dick Henggeler, his son, is now the Historian of the 388th Bomb Group and was a big help to me in trying to get all the facts straight. His father died recently so my plans to include his contribution have changed. Ed Huntzinger had our crew flying in "Fortress Nine", 44-6088 with Lt. Kluth as the pilot. Our regular pilot, Lt. Robert Rowe, confirmed with the ground crew that we flew in "Little Donna" that day, number 42-97098. In the plane mentioned in the secret report of the mission, which I included in my story, it was numbered 44-6098. Perhaps the number of "Fortress Nine", 44-6088, caused the confusion. I have talked with Dick and he said he would try and get it right.

While in prison camp the four of us that were of Rowe's crew often talked about the events of our last mission. Five of the crew had left the plane and the other four were in the plane when it went into a spin and movement was impossible. The only key to what really happened was to know what happened to Stewart the copilot. When I met Stewart again in 1986 at his home he was reticent about talking about his experience. Even at the crew reunions in 1991 and 1994 I did not learn much about what happened on the flight deck during that mission. In 1999 I wrote to him and asked some specific questions that would help if I ever decided to rewrite our adventure. He responded and answered all my questions. Here are the questions I asked and the answers he gave.
Question #1: Do you recall needing oxygen before we got hit? Did we request fighter escort? Answer: The oxygen system was not functioning because there was a direct 88 mm hit under the flight deck and as a result the oxygen supply tank

under the co-pilot seat exploded. The explosion caused a fire ball on the flight deck and Kluth turned on the auto-pilot. It was at that time I called through the intercom to bail out. I do not remember seeing Kluth after that. I stood between the pilot and co-pilot seat to get my parachute. Since I had removed my oxygen mask I felt that I was beginning to lose consciousness. My thought was I had to bail out before passing out. I crawled to the nose hatch and bailed out. Because of the lack of oxygen I pulled the parachute ripcord as soon as I jumped from the plane. I remember seeing the chute open and since I was at 24 or 25 thousand feet altitude I passed out. I floated down to about 1 thousand feet before I regained consciousness. I was passed out from high altitude until I was almost on the ground. I was captured by 3 German soldiers riding toward me in a "Jeep"? I do not remember Kluth reporting crew members fainting for lack of oxygen. I do not remember and I know that neither Kluth nor I called for fighter escort. From the time we were hit by flak there was no conversation except to bail out. There was no time for that because of the fire ball and the extreme heat on the flight deck. I do not recall needing oxygen before we got hit.

Q. #2: We were flying #3 position on that final mission. Piloting the #1 plane and leading the formation was Col Henggeler, who was sitting in the co-pilot's seat. Maurer, I think it was, told me that the leader called us and told us to move over so they could turn left. Do you recall that happening at all? Maurer said it did. (When I was in Kansas City in May of '97 I called Henggeler on the phone and asked him about the mission. I don't believe he was aware that our plane went down. He did say yes when I asked him if he would write an introduction to my book.)

A: I do not recall that the leader told us to move over so that they could turn left.

Q. #3: Sanborn told me that he had started using his extinguisher when he saw Kluth leave. Maurer was set to operate his extinguisher. I was getting my extinguisher off the wall when I heard you say, "Bail out, bail out," in a forceful manner. If another 15 seconds had elapsed there could have

been 3 extinguishers on the fire. Could that have made a difference?

A: With 3 extinguishers there may have made a difference but the heat & flames on the flight deck-- no one would have been able to stay at the controls.

Q. #4: Maurer left the plane just ahead of me and landed in the city. I went out 30-45 seconds later, and after pulling the ripcord I saw a chute a few thousand feet below me off to the side. I watched it until it hit the ground. That chute had to be you.. How long was it before you were captured?

A: The chute you saw below you to the side could not have been me since I floated down from high altitude and I can imagine it took a long time. I landed in an open ploughed field and there was no house or people near by. The German soldiers had been watching me and they were there just as I hit the ground. They drove me to an army base and I was given first aid treatment at the clinic. Later that night I was taken to the big hospital in Berlin.

Q. #5: I feel badly about never seeing or contacting Kluth again after he left Wetzler. Did you ever contact him? Do you know when he died? Do you know when Collins died? The letter from his daughter-in-law was dated 2/7/79, so it happened before that. I tried to contact the Collins family when I was in Miami in '91 but had no luck.

A: I never did see Kluth and I never did contact him. I don't know when Kluth died. I don't know the date of Collins' death. I wish that I could help you.

Q. #6: The last time I talked to you, you thought that perhaps you had passed out while in the nose of the plane. If you did then you probably were lower than 22,000 when you jumped. Officially we were flying at 25,400 when we dropped our bombs at 12:33 P.M. Do you recall the spin? That took a few seconds or minutes.

A: In question #1 I explained that I passed out (not completely) while on the flight deck. I should not have said that. I passed out in the nose of the plane. I do not recall the plane being in a spin. I assumed that the auto pilot kept the plane under control.

Q. #7: [I was under the mistaken impression that Kluth was

sitting in the co-pilot's seat so as to see better to fly the #3 position off the leader's left wing. Stewart told me that Kluth was in the pilot's seat on the left and he was in the right seat.] I wonder why your left hand was burned worse than your right hand when you were sitting on the right. You probably used your left hand to get your chute.

A: I can't explain why my left hand was burned more than my right hand. It could be that I used my left hand to get my chute.

The next questions were about his POW experience and do not pertain to the main issue.

Q. #10: We first heard that you were alive on Sept. 22nd when Addison, the waist gunner on crew 24 (at Ardmores) assigned to the 100th BG (bad luck), came in and said he had seen you. Do you remember him at all? He broke his leg when he landed, so must have seen you in a hospital. I believe he was shot down on his first mission.

A: I did not know Addison. He may have seen me in the P.O.W. Hospital, but I don't remember talking with him.

In a final comment he writes: "In the papers that Colette Hawkins, Collins' daughter-in-law, sent to me our aircraft was identified as a/c 44-6098. I have always thought that our plane was called 'Little Donna'. This is the first time I have heard of the name 'Fortress Nine'."

Robert Stewart died in April, 2003. Our pilot, Robert Rowe, sent me an e-mail on April 10, 2003 and it said, "Although we knew him for only about six months out of a lifetime, those months were probably the most memorable we ever experienced. He was a fine man, a good friend, and a first rate pilot. We always worked well together and helped one another when and where it really counted. May God rest his soul."

Since six bombers were shot down over Berlin that day there could have been as many as 54 parachutists in the air that day. The one I saw on my way to earth was not Stewart so it must have been Collins, the bombardier. All nine crew members got out of the plane. The last four of us spent the night in separate cells in a Berlin jail. The next day we took a

train from the Berlin depot to Frankfurt and ended up at the interrogation center at Oberursal.

On page 178 I write about the truck ride to the Berlin depot with three of my crew and two other American fliers. We rode the train all night arriving in Frankfurt at dawn. Seated next to me on the train was a blond headed soldier of whom I was a bit suspicious so we did not talk much. When I received the information sent to me by Roland Geiger in April, 1999 I realized that one of the men who answered his questionnaire had a similar story to mine. I wrote him, Winfried Riemer, of Brillion, WI and found that he was the one I was worried about. Here is what he wrote to me on May 16, 1999:

I had flown 25 missions with Lt. Muehlman's crew and we were awarded a 3-day pass to go to Scotland on August 6th. However, I was drafted to fly because there was a shortage of radio operators on that day – so instead of a 3-day pass to Scotland I wound up with a 9-month "furlough" in the Fatherland.

I met most of my crew again at Wetzler where we received new clothes and other supplies. Three of the five who jumped before the spin came into Wetzler a couple of days later. Sanborn and Stewart were both burned enough to be sent to a hospital. Collins and Kluth were sent to Stalag Luft I at Barth the next day. The five enlisted men were sent to Stalag Luft VI at St. Wendel. McIntyre left Luft VI early to go to a hospital, but we saw him again in Stalag Luft IV near Gross Tychow. Crowder also was at Luft IV but in a different compound. I was the first of the crew to be liberated and first to return to the US.

It was 2001 before I finally relocated McIntyre in Columbus, GA. I had lived in Columbus for 13 years and had moved to Florida after retiring in 1982. My wife and I visited Mac and his wife in their home and I gave him copies of the books I had written. In a couple of years his phone no longer worked. His wife had died and he had remarried. His new wife called me after I wrote him a letter. Again the phone has now been disconnected. Maurer and I are probably the only ones still alive from our crew.

Soon after I moved to North Carolina it occurred to me

that I had never consulted the MACR, the Missing Air Crew Report. I do have a slight recollection of getting an MACR but it was not about our plane. The invoice lists the MACR at \$28.00 and shipping at \$2.00 for a total of \$30.00 dated September 08, 2009. The report did not have a lot of new information but it did contain items of interest. On May 7, 2010 I wrote a letter addressed to Augie Maurer and McIntyre describing what it contained. My explanation is still a good way to describe what the document contains.

1. ORGANIZATION: Location ETOUSA Command or Air Force 8th Air Force

Group 388th Squadron 561st Detachment None

2. Specify: Point of Departure Station 136 Course Berlin, Germany

Intended Destination Station 136 Type of Mission Combat

3. WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF CRASH OR SEEN LAST REPORTED: Weather conditions good

4. GIVE: (a) Date 6 August 1944 Time 1235 and Location 13o 20' E - 52o 20' N of last known whereabouts of missing aircraft.

(b) Specify whether () Last sighted; () Last contacted by Radio; () Forced Down; () Seen to Crash; or () Information not available.

5. AIRCRAFT WAS LOST, OR IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN LOST, AS A RESULT OF: (Check only one): () Enemy aircraft; () Other circumstances as follows: See interrogation Report on reverse side

6. AIRCRAFT: Type, Model and Series B-17G; A.A.F. Serial Number 42-97098

7. ENGINE: Type, Model and Series 1820-97; A.A.F. Serial Number (a) SW-005752

(b) SW-007166; (c) SW-012345; (d) SW-012258

8. INSTALLED WEAPONS (Furnish below Make, Type and Serial Number)

(a) See reverse side

9. THE PERSONS LISTED BELOW WERE REPORTED AS: (a) Battle Casualty Yes or (b) Non-Battle Casualty No

10. NUMBER OF PERSONS ABOARD AIRCRAFT: Crew

9; Passengers None; Total 9 (Starting with pilot, furnish the following particulars: If more than 10 persons were aboard aircraft, list similar particulars on separate sheet and attach to this form).

Here the Crew Position, Name in full (Last Name First), Rank, and Serial Number are listed. The print is a bit blurred, especially the serial numbers so I shall omit this section.

The Date of the Report is 8 August 1944 and it is signed by Earl W. Sweeney 1st Lt.
Statistical Officer

On the back of the sheet is a list of Cal..50 machine guns on Plane 42-97098:

The number and manufacturer of 13 guns are listed. I can only recall the location of 11 guns. We must have had two extra guns that day for some reason. I doubt it.

Next is the Interrogation Report which reads:

A/C No. 098 went down in the target area after bombs away. Reports are conflicting as to the cause of the plane's loss but apparently the oxygen system of the a/c was not functioning. The plane went to a lower altitude because the pilot reported crew members fainting from lack of oxygen, and some crews claim hearing the a/c calling for fighter escort. When last seen, the a/c was under control going down. Some crews claim the a/c was on fire as it went down. Possibly two chutes were seen.

This is the same paragraph found in the Missing A/C Report found on page 155. The testimony of Stewart, the copilot, contradicts some of the information listed. It must be difficult to try and keep the records of thousands of planes without making mistakes. I do not understand how this report was formulated.

Every prisoner of war has a story, some better than others. Included next in the MACR is a Individual Casualty Questionnaire which has been included by mistake. It is a report on 2nd Lt. Edward Reichel, a bombardier, filled out by a crew member named John Taber. It is an interesting story that Taber relates so I shall include it here.

Did he bail out? yes

Where? Over Berlin Germany Aug. 6, 44

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: He assisted and told me to jump.

Was he injured? yes -- in stomach

Where was he when last seen? At Hermann Georing [sic] Hosp. in Berlin

Any hearsay information: None - All witnessed by myself

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: He died the next night supposedly from his wound after a very peculiar incident which i shall explain on reverse side -- Lt. Reichel was of Jewish birth and i do not believe he died from his wound.

Total number of missions of above crew member: Approx 25

Dates and destinations if possible: This information could be had from our pilot -- H. H. Hatfield 604 1st Ave. Asbury Park Md.

By: John D. Taber

2324 Beech St.

Baton Rouge, La

On the reverse side is the following information:

Lt. Reichel and myself were operated on at the same time in the same operating room at the Hermann Georing Hosp when i awakened the next morning at 10:30 A.M. Lt. Reichel was in the second bed from me, there being ten yanks in this same room. Shortly after the Hospital Commandant his under Doctor, three nurses and one attendant walked in went straight to his bed and asked him if he was a jew. Then they turned and ask every other man in the room if Lt. Reichel was a jew. Each man said No, He is an American. They disagreed loudly with a lot of jabbering among themselves, then left.

Lt. Reichel and myself had some conversation, but due to security reasons very little. He seemed in very good spirits, and could move about in his bed. That evening a nurse came with glucose for him inserted the needle, and in fifteen minutes he was asleep and never awakened. He died at 11:00 P.M. that night.

I hope what i think is not so, at any rate, it has never been told before.

Your Truly John D. Taber

This sordid story gives an insight into the workings in the enemy's hospital. One reason I included it is because on another sheet of paper I found the following:

Air Force Hospital 1/III (Berlin) Berlin-Reinickendorf-
West, 14 August 1944
Administration/Hospital Admission Spendamer Weg 42
We./A Phone 49 23 71 App.
292

To Research Centre West REGISTERED
(16) Oberursal/Taunus, near Frankfurt am Main

Enclosed money and personal property of wounded American Prisoners of War is submitted for

1. Flight Officer Robert S. STEWART (1
Incl.) * [my copilot]
2. Flight Off. Frederick N. SANBORN (1
Incl.)* [my navigator]

Brought in without money, personal property or equipment are:

3. Lt. Edwar REICHEL
4. Lt. Virgil CARNEAL **
5. Sgt. Alvin BERNSTEIN ***
6. Sgt. Edwin GAVIN ****
7. Sgt, Joe GARZA *****
8. Sgt. John D. TABER *****

Registered letter substitutes for receipt of acknowledgement.

Yes, two of my crew, Stewart and Sanborn, copilot and navigator, were in the same hospital room along with Taber and Reichel. This last sheet indicates that they were transferred from the Berlin Hospital to the one in Oberursal. They were listed as Flight Officers but they were both Lieutenants. These sheets are probably American translations of German records.

What I do not understand is how Reichel is included if he died

in Berlin. Evidently, my two crew members were asked if Reichel was a Jew. I wonder if they remembered the incident. If I can find the time perhaps I can investigate further and satisfy my curiosity. The fact that the two, Taber and Reichel, had about the same number of missions as we did may have contributed to their inclusion into our MACR. I do have their pilot's name and address but I guessed at his initials.

The next few sheets confuse the subject. They are evidently of a different plane. Since at least six planes were shot down that day it would be easy to mix them up. The date of August 6th is the same. The time is listed as 1250 and the plane is a B-17F. I believe that Little Donna was a B-17G. The types of engines and serial numbers are different. A marking on the aircraft was special lettering "Betty and Al". Of the crew 2 are prisoners, one is wounded and 7 are fleeing. It must be a completely different plane. The plane crashed in Berlin at Zehlendorf.

On page 7 it states that the following listed American prisoners of War being transferred to Oberursal/Taunus today (August 8):

- 1.) Off. KLUTH, DONALD B.
 - 2.) Sgt. CRAWFORD, Ernest
 - 3.) Sgt. INTIRE, Robert J.
- (Serial numbers are given.)

These are our substitute pilot, tail gunner and waist gunner. (Name is McIntyre)

On page 8 it gives the information about 2nd Flight Off. Frederick N. SANBORN

He was captured at 1300 and sent to Air Force Hospital Berlin-Reinickendorf.

Page 9 is about Flight Off. Robert S. STEWART, captured at 1330 and sent to Air Force Hospital Berlin-Reinickendorf.

Page 10 is about S/Sgt. Robert J. McINTIRE, captured at railway station Berlin-Lichtenfelde-South

Page 11 concerns 1st Fl. Off. Donald B. KLUTH, captured at Frederickendorf, 3,5 km south Berlin-Marienefelde, at 1300.

Page 12 is about S/Sgt. Ernest CRAWFORD, captured at Frederickendorf, 3,5 km south Berlin-Marienefelde, at 1300.

The last two were evidently together.

Page 13 concerns Sgt. John D. TABER from a downed B-17F at Berlin-Zehlendorf 4, Jaegerstrasse 20-22, wounded, captured at 1315.

Page 14 gives place of crash of B-17F as Berlin-Zehlendorf f,4, Jaegerstrasse 20-22. Markings of craft: unidentifiable (special letterings Betty and Al) Equipment: not found. Frequencies unidentifiable, radio set completely destroyed, hit and burned, completely destroyed.

Page 15 is about 2nd Lt. Walter G. COLLINS connected with the crash of a Boeing B-17F which crashed at Berlin-Zehlendorf 4, Jaegersteig 20/22 at 1250. He was captured at 1315 at Berlin-Stalmsdorf, Schlieffen-Kausarne. He is identified with the wrong plane.

Page 16 concerns T/Sgt. W. August MAURER connected with the crash of a Boeing B-17F which crashed at Berlin-Zehlendorf 4, Jaegersteig 20/22 at 1250. He was captured at Teltow - Hannemanstr. at 1315.

Page 17 is missing. It could have been about Nelson or me.

Pages 18 and 19 are telegram forms about the capture of enemy aircraft, the marking of the craft: unidentifiable, special lettering "Betty and Al". Message sent to Research Centre Wets, Oberursal/Tau?as from Hq. Airfield Tempelhof Receiving Unit.

This definitely was not our plane.

Page 20. IDENTIFICATION TAGS

1. WALTER G. COLLINS with serial number
2. DONALD L. NELSON with serial number
3. JOHN H. ANDERSON with serial number

This is the last of the numbered pages. The next page has a listing of 10 men with their serial numbers and rank. Nelson is listed as a Sgt. instead of a S/Sgt. and S/Sgt. John D. Taber is included as if a member of our crew. Two of the officers, Stewart and Sanborn, are listed as being in the hospital.

The next page says that the plane was claimed by 1st Flak division. It is about the other B-17 F which is mixed up with our plane.

The next page is blank with the notation that On this

page only pencil marks 12

Next comes a listing of the nine members of our crew, all of which have been capt'd and sent to Dulag Luft. Stewart and Sanborn are indicated as wounded with date of 8/23/44. At the bottom of the list is the name of John Taber under first supplementary report of 15 Sept. 1944 A date under his name is 10 Nov.14 ? (maybe it should be 44?) According to my records I arrived at Dulag Luft at Wetzlar on August 11 and left with Nelson on August 14. Maurer, McIntyre and Crawford left a day later. Perhaps the Sept. date was about Taber.

The next-to-last page is a German form which is not translated. It lists the nine crew members (my crew) from a plane simply called Fortress.

The final page is a map of northern Europe indicating the route of the mission similar to the map I have on page 153 showing the approach to the target was from the east flying west with a left turn immediately after dropping the bombs.

That concludes the papers in the MACR most of which were duplicated.

In 1996 while I was in Kansas City I contacted Col. Henggeler who was the Command Pilot of the final mission I flew on August 6, 1944. Later, I wrote him a letter with questions and he graciously responded on 7 March, 1996. It does shed some light on some of the questions I wanted answered. He also encloses a chart of the formation used by the 4th Bomb Wing on their missions. On the second page he explains the use of PFF planes and why their briefing papers were not included with the other crews. The planes came from a different base. I shall try and add his letter to this report.

10843 Summit St.
Kansas City, MO 64114-4949
7 March 1996

Mr. John H. Anderson
P. O. Box 13753
Mexico Beach, FL 32410

Dear John:

Thanks for your letter of Feb 10, '96 which was very interesting and stirred up many memories. The mission to Berlin on Aug 6, 1944 was along ways back, however, I'll try to answer your questions to the best of my memory and with what other info I was able to dig up.

The mission to Berlin on Aug 6, 1944 was the 177th mission of the 388th BG. The target was a Tank Factory located in the Eastern part of Berlin along a river. The bomb run from the IP to the target was in a westerly direction. The weather was clear and the visability unlimited, so a visual bomb run was made rather than using the PFF's radar equipment. Through bombs away it was a generally typical mission for such a deep penetration into a heavily defended area. Twenty-two a/c took off for the mission, and three aborted for mechanical reasons. Nineteen a/c went over the target and dropped their bombs. Shortly after bombs away it was reported that a/c #3 of the lead flight of our group sustained a flak hit. There also was a possibility this a/c had a fire on board caused by the flak hit. During all this period we were in the process of making a left turn to the RP. Also while in our turn to the RP, I noticed another CW of B-17's south of us flying in a westerly direction. They were drawing a heavy barrage of flak, so I elected not to get any closer to that area, thus cut short our turn of 90 degrees. This explains your statement "Did not turn 90 degrees to left, because of barrage to the left". As I recall it was during this time frame that a/c #3 left the formation and started its downward decent still apparently under control of the pilot. Assuming that the oxygen system had been knocked out, The pilot needed to get to a lower altitude as soon as possible. If the pilot reported his emergency or plans over the radio, I had no knowledge of it. As I see it, in the emergency your pilot must have faced, he had immediate decisions to make: could he continue in formation? must he descend to lower altitude immediately? must the plane be abandoned? These are split second decisions which require positive action. If the a/c is to be abandoned, the pilot must give the bailout signal and then check by intercom (if is working) or is some other manner that all his crew members got the signal and are able to bail out, before he leaves the plane. It would appear unlikely, given the seriousness of your emergency, that the pilot made any effort to make contact by radio. Outside of radio communications, the crew members would be the best source of what all went on during your emergency and at what altitudes you all bailed out. Who was first out? Who was last out? Etc.?

I do not ever recall that a/c #3 or any other a/c was flying so close to the lead a/c that it could not make a turn to the left. If so it would have been told to get back into its proper formation location. No two a/c in the group fly at the same level. There is a 50 ft. vertical separation between each plane in the group. (I've enclosed a chart showing the formation make up of a bomb group, which will better explain what I'm trying to say.) In a group formation turn, an a/c if necessary can slide in or out as need be to stay in formation.

As to the best seat position, I would not have been in the best position to observe a/c #3. As commander of the group/wing, I rode in the right hand seat (Co-pilots). Aircraft #3 would be to the left and below the lead a/c. Now I could see the #2 a/c of our flight as well as the high squadron (lead Gp) and the high group. On most missions the lead a/c had a control officer fly in the tail gunners position. He could keep the commander informed about a/c in the group and the wing, as well be

the look out for enemy fighters.

Now for some comments on the PFF (Pathfinder) planes. Some time in the fall of 1943 all B-17 & B-24 groups of the 8th AF were ordered to send a plane and a crew to a RAF station called Alconbury. The project was classified, but there the crews were trained to bomb by radar. Each plane was equipped with a radar (Mickey). In Nov 1943 the 8th AF began using PFF planes to lead group formations when it appeared that the weather conditions wouldn't permit visual bombing of the targets. The PFF plane and crew would arrive at your station in time to sit in on the briefings and to add any further info they might have. The command pilot would then fly with the PFF plane and crew. Now if the weather was clear over the target the bombing was usually done visually. The radar operator may help to set a good course in from the IP to the target so that the bombardier could concentrate on getting a good rate and drift set. When we returned from the mission the PFF plane and crew would drop off the command officer and then return to Alconbury. This was why you did not find pilot, etc. reports with the 388th BG Station reports. Their reports would have been made at their Headquarters at Alconbury. I went to all the debriefings after the missions I was on. I gave a verbal report about the mission. My comments would have been included in the operational narrative and summary.

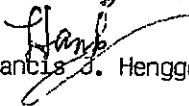
I gathered from comments in your letter that the oxygen system of your plane had been knocked out. You never did say if the pilot ever gave the bailout signal or called on interphone (assuming it was operating) to tell the crew to bail out. Ed Huntzingers' book (The 388th at War) indicated that all got out and were POW's. However, it looked like you were flying short of a Waist Gunner. Was this true?

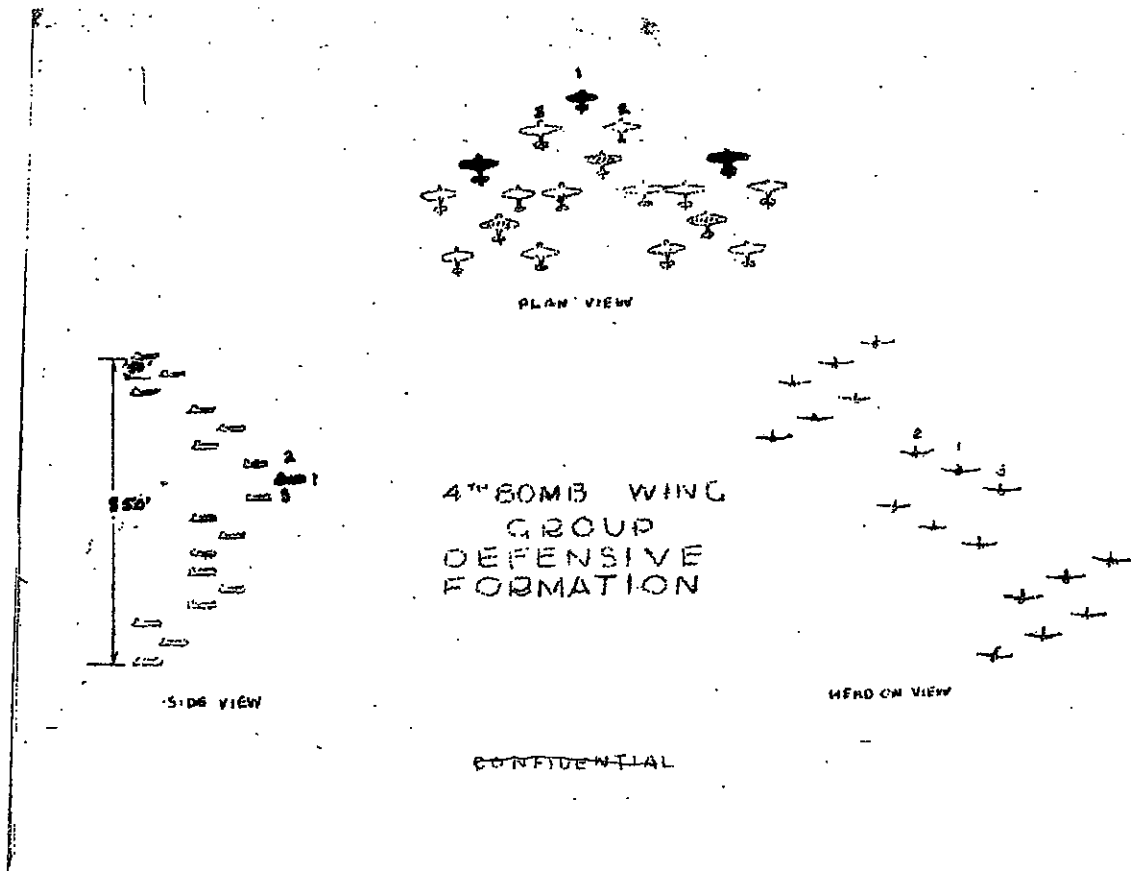
I mentioned earlier the term Combat Wing (CW). A CW in flight is three BG's in formation. On the Aug 6, '44 mission the 388th flew lead at flight level 25,000 feet. The lead a/c flew at that level while the other a/c of the group were stacked vertically up and down. (see enclosed chart). The High group flew at the 26,000 foot level and a/c stacked as in the lead group. The Low group flew at the 24,000 foot level with their a/c also stacked as in the lead group. It was very important that each group maintain their proper flight level to permit the CW the ease of maneuvering especially in heavily defended areas. The leader of a CW never varied altitude or speed. The only maneuvering the CW did was to vary direction. The tightness of the turn, the direction turned and the number of degrees turned always varied. The leader always alerted the other two groups of a turn and its direction. It was always necessary when flying in or near heavily known defended area to constantly maneuver the CW to keep the gunners on the ground confused. This defensive type formation also proved to be the best defense against enemy fighters. Again maneuvering was a very good defensive action to take especially if the fighters were making head on or tail attacks.

I hope I've provided you some useful information. This letter has ended up a lot longer than when first started it. Should you be in K.C. this Aug or any other time please give me a Call. We're listed in the phone book.

Also thanks for mentioning my wife (Dorothy). She has made a lot of improvement since her problem in Sep and also from a vascular problem she had in Jan. Our daughter-in-law has had radical surgery, has had considerable Chemo treatments and is now having radiation and chemo treatments simultaneously which should be completed in July. Her doctors are up beat on her progress.

Sincerely yours,


Francis J. Henggeler



This ends the first volume of my experiences in the service of my country. I do believe that my crew and I had some bearing on the war even though we sometimes missed the target. We flew our missions in a couple days beyond two months. My biggest regret was not getting to go to Scotland. That is a part of the fortunes of war. All in all it was a grand experience and I am proud that I was able to serve my country.

The second volume I entitled **Life as a P. O. W.** because it relates my adventures in prison camps. My imprisonment lasted eight months and ten days. Except for a couple of days I write about my doings as a prisoner which does give one a different perspective on life. One does learn to be patient while a prisoner. I believe that I continued to serve my country and support the morale of my fellow prisoners.

After liberation it took a month and a week to get home and start my 60-day furlough. Now read volume II.

LIFE AS A P.O.W.

by

John H. Anderson .

August 1994

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that this is crucial for ensuring the integrity of the financial statements and for providing a clear audit trail. The text notes that any discrepancies or errors in the records can lead to significant complications during an audit and may result in the disallowance of certain expenses.

2. The second part of the document addresses the issue of proper documentation. It states that all receipts, invoices, and other supporting documents must be retained for a minimum of three years. This requirement is intended to ensure that all necessary evidence is available to substantiate the reported amounts. The document also highlights the importance of organizing these documents in a systematic and accessible manner to facilitate the audit process.

3. The third part of the document focuses on the need for transparency and communication. It advises that any changes to the accounting policies or procedures should be clearly documented and communicated to all relevant parties. This includes providing a detailed explanation of the reasons for the changes and the impact they will have on the financial statements. The text also stresses the importance of maintaining open lines of communication with the auditors throughout the process to address any questions or concerns promptly.

4. The fourth part of the document discusses the role of internal controls in preventing errors and fraud. It notes that a strong system of internal controls is essential for ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the financial information. This includes implementing segregation of duties, regular reconciliations, and a robust review process. The document also mentions that the effectiveness of these controls should be periodically evaluated and updated as needed to reflect changes in the business environment.

5. The fifth and final part of the document provides a summary of the key points discussed. It reiterates the importance of accurate record-keeping, proper documentation, transparency, and strong internal controls. The text concludes by stating that adherence to these principles is not only a legal requirement but also a best practice for any organization seeking to maintain the highest standards of financial reporting and accountability.

6. The sixth part of the document provides a detailed overview of the audit process. It begins by explaining the role of the independent auditor and the scope of their responsibilities. The auditor is tasked with examining the financial statements and the underlying records to provide an objective opinion on their fairness and accuracy. The document outlines the typical steps of an audit, including the planning phase, the execution of audit procedures, and the final reporting stage. It also discusses the importance of the auditor's independence and the potential consequences of a qualified or adverse opinion.

7. The seventh part of the document discusses the various types of audits that may be conducted. These include the annual financial statement audit, the tax audit, and the compliance audit. Each type of audit has its own specific objectives and requirements. The document provides a brief overview of each, highlighting the key areas of focus and the typical procedures involved. It also notes that organizations may be subject to multiple audits in a given year, and it is important to understand the requirements for each.

8. The eighth part of the document addresses the issue of audit fees and the cost of the audit process. It explains that the fee is typically based on the complexity of the organization's operations, the size of its financial statements, and the scope of the audit. The document provides some guidance on how to negotiate the fee and what factors should be considered when evaluating the cost of the audit. It also notes that while the audit process may seem costly, it is a necessary investment in the organization's financial health and credibility.

9. The ninth part of the document discusses the importance of the audit report and the implications of the auditor's findings. The report is a key document that provides the auditors' conclusions and recommendations. It is important to understand the meaning of the different types of opinions and the potential consequences of a qualified or adverse opinion. The document also discusses the importance of addressing any deficiencies identified by the auditors and implementing the recommended corrective actions to improve the organization's financial reporting and internal controls.

10. The tenth and final part of the document provides a summary of the key points discussed. It reiterates the importance of understanding the audit process, the role of the auditor, and the implications of the audit findings. The text concludes by stating that a thorough understanding of these concepts is essential for any organization seeking to maintain the highest standards of financial reporting and accountability.

DEDICATION

For this opus I want to dedicate it to my sister, Vivian Anderson Putnam, who has been a great sister for all these many years. As a big sister she always took good care of her little brother. She was always a help and a guide to me and she had as much musical talent as I did, although I got most of the credit.

I know she contributed to the war effort in many ways. She did her part as an employee of Pratt & Whitney Aircraft Corporation where she was a Chemical Investigator in the chemical research department of the plant, perhaps the only girl in the U.S. who held such a position at that time. She was chosen to make a tour through the factories of the east and north to collect new data in regard to some problems being studied in the PW laboratory.

She wrote me often in the service, sometimes when she was dead tired, and kept me informed of the events at home.

In rereading her letters here are some of my favorites: A letter written on Dec. 30, 1944 which I received during the summer of 45 after I was home states, "Here another year is almost over. Looks like I will be home alone drinking lime rickey." That is a poignant scene.

Another was written Feb. 1, 1945, "Last Sunday at the Canteen a boy asked me if I could sew so ended up sewing a button on his overcoat." Another small contribution was made to the war effort.

On March 9, 1945 she wrote, "Certainly enjoyed the trip to Leavenworth last Saturday for your awards. We will have a lot to

tell you. Mother received a picture of it yesterday. You will be proud of it." Yes, I am proud of it. The picture shows an officer pinning the Air Medal with 3 oak leaf clusters on my mother. The picture is in a frame along with the medal and is on the wall of my room. Vivian was always there for our mother and me.

During the summer of 1947 I went to Storrs, Connecticut to sing three songs at my sister's wedding and then walk down the aisle and give her away to Paul Putnam. She had started teaching at the University of Connecticut in 1945 and has remained in Storrs ever since.

(While I was in New England I drove up to Boston and then to Plaistow, N.H. to see Robert Rowe. He had moved to Rhode Island, but I saw his parents and had a talk. He sent me a letter later saying he was sorry I missed him.)

I served my country but in her quiet way she did her part for her country too. I doubt if she has ever received much praise for her accomplishments. She is gifted in many ways. Her latest project has been quilting. Her master's degree from Iowa State was in Textiles and she is very knowledgeable about the subject. She became a world traveler late in life and has been almost everywhere.

For all her talents and accomplishments and her lifetime support to me I salute her.

INTRODUCTION

Arrangements have been made for a 50th₂-year reunion of the crew to be held at the 388th Bomb Group Association meeting in Richmond, Va. The meeting starts on August 23, 1994 and ends with a banquet on Saturday the 27th. This may be our last chance to get together. Rowe wrote me in March that he was recovering from hip replacement surgery but thought this would be a good time to meet. Nelson, I believe, is the only one who has not retired and has a busy schedule, so I checked with him and he put it on his calendar. Rowe wrote again on June 13th and said he would contact the others and also write to John Henningsen, the crew chief, and Marvin Wilder, the line chief, who also flew to Russia with us. Rowe plans to get to Richmond on Thursday, Aug. 25th. Stewart wrote me on June 22nd and said he planned to meet Rowe on Thursday. Maurer called and is also planning to arrive on Thursday. So it looks like this reunion will be more successful than the last one. I have not seen Maurer since he visited me in the hospital tent in Fallingbostel. Now we plan to room together for three nights. Sanborn has health problems so he may not be able to attend. At least we have him located. He was lost to us for awhile. I'm sure the 5 or 6 of us will have a great time. When you get to be our age something is always happening to our health. We shall grab the opportunity while we can.

Robert J. McIntyre is still missing. He had originally lived in Wilkinsburg, Pa. so I sent a card there but it was returned.

When I visited my daughter in Allentown, Pa. I went through a number of telephone directories from Pennsylvania in the library and located four people with that name which I then wrote in April with no success. My daughter told me about a new computer program called ProPhone for the Eastern Region and she got a printout containing 17 names. I wrote cards to all 17 in July. Two people phoned me: from Darien, CT (born in 1948) and Shapleigh, ME (father died 2 years ago but was not in the army). Two others responded by letter--a newsy letter from Trafford, PA and a simple "Sorry, I can not help you" from Gloucester, MA. Then I discovered that the library in Panama City had ProPhone. However, only two listings were given and I had already contacted both. I'm not sure what to do next.

My letter to Ernest Crawford in Los Angeles this spring was returned. His phone number has been given to someone else. I put his name in the ProPhone and 66 listings were given. It is evidently a popular name. I have written my niece who lives in Los Angeles and I wrote the editor of the Los Angeles Times to see if they could find out what happened to him but neither responded.

I last talked to Ernest in 91 and he thought he could come to that reunion. The desk at the hotel said he had made a reservation. He did not appear and I have had no further contact with him other than to send him a copy of my first book about our flying experiences.

On July 11, 1947 I was visiting in Arkansas and drove to Memphis where Ernest was living. I drove out to see him but he had just left. I attended a show at the Memphis Open Air Theater and then went back to see him. Just before I decided to leave he came home and we had a nice talk. On the 16th I went back to his house and met his

mother, sister, and other relatives. He took us to dinner at a drive-in. Then we got his girl and went to MOAT for a performance of "Robin Hood" by De Koven. Ernest paid for everything.

On my way back from an interview in Athens, Ga. where I was hired by the University of Georgia I stopped in Memphis again. I called Crawford but he was on vacation in Chicago. I have not seen him since.

I never did see the enlisted men on the crew again until our last reunion when Nelson showed up. I did telephone them from time to time, usually on August 6th. I first heard about the 388th BG Association from Maurer about a decade ago.

About two months ago two new friends who accompanied me on my trip to Germany and Poland near the end of April sent me a beautiful plaque with the insignia of the United States Air Force. The plaque reads: John & Jack Anderson In Memory of Our Return to Stalag Luft IV to Replace Bad Memories with Good Ones 1944-1994. Jack & Norma Sites. Jack worked with the doctor in the hospital group on the march so I probably ran into him somewhere along the trek. He lived in Barracks 7 in C Lager. We had a great time on this recent trip and I like the sentiment expressed. My bad memories are fading and the good memories come more easily now. I was a prisoner for 8 months and 10 days and then it took 1 month and 8 days to get home. My total time overseas was almost 13 months. With this volume I have reported on almost every day.

This rendition of our activities is incomplete. To do it right I should have got some input from each crew member. Just

reporting my diary entries is not very exciting. Again I think I could have done a better job if I had taken more time. (More than fifty years?)

However, the task is complete. I hope at least part of this recitation will revive some memories for you.

Part 2

June 16, 1994

Can I do it again? The first part of my story turned out to be 186 pages, and I was able to make enough copies for each member of my crew. We had our reunion at Valley Forge in 1991, but only four of us, Rowe, Stewart, Nelson and I turned up. I gave each one a copy and sent a copy to Sanborn, Crawford, and Maurer. McIntyre is still among the missing. Collins and Crowder are deceased.

Now the crew is planning on a 50th-year reunion in Richmond in August of this year. I shall try to get the second part typed up and reproduced so that copies will be available for the reunion. When I wrote the first part I went ahead and wrote the second part, so it is all ready to go, except that I may need to edit it. I also want to add some about the trip I took in April of this year to the Stalag Luft IV campsite.

This should be my last opus. It has been alot of work but also alot of fun. Alot of memories have come back and now I can lay some of them to rest.

Summary of Part I

Part I was a review of our crew's training in Ardmore, Oklahoma. We went to the staging area at Kearney, Nebraska and then to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey. By boat we were transported to England and after more training were assigned to the 388th Bomb Group, 561st Squadron where we flew our first mission on June 4, 1944. A total of 24 missions were flown

before we got shot down on August 6, 1944. Our pilot, 1st Lt. Robert M. Rowe, received a piece of flak in his foot on the mission to Hamburg two days before, so he did not accompany us on the fateful last mission. Berlin was the target for the last mission.

I believe I was the last one out of the plane after we were hit and I landed in a field just outside of Grossbeeren, a suburb of Berlin.

On April 27th of this year my son Jack and I took a taxi from the Penta Hotel in Berlin to Grossbeeren to see if we could locate the spot where I landed. After 50 years it was a real longshot. The taxi driver, Wolfgang, spoke good English and was very helpful. We stopped in the center of town and consulted a map displayed there. I was not sure of the direction I came from in 1944, but I do recall making a left turn in town. One empty hotel looked vaguely familiar. I saw numerous examples of patchiness of small trees. In April they were in bloom. I had thought they were fruit trees in August '44. I saw numerous hedges and a couple of small paths so I seemed to be close. Mainly, we were looking for a semi-circle of houses where I was interrogated by the residents until a policeman arrived. We stopped and talked to one old gentleman, but he had only come to that area in 1948 so would not know about me. We finally gave up the search, but I was satisfied to have at least tried.

The first night I spent in Germany was in jail. I left the next day, first by truck and then by train, with Nelson, Maurer, Collins, two other American GI's, and two guards, arriving at Frankf^urt early the morning of August 8th. This was where I stopped the narrative in Part 1. Now I continue with the events of the next nine months.

8 Soon after dawn or maybe just before dawn we arrived in Frankfort. We had to change stations, and as we walked down the street the people were going to work and many made comments which were not complimentary. Alot of ruins were evident, but Frankf^urt was a big and busy town. We walked for a long time and I carried one of the guard's suitcases. Finally, we took another train and then a street car.

We arrived at the interrogation center. I was placed alone in a room in the basement where it was cold and damp. I was wearing my fatigues and was barefoot. After a couple of hours I was thoroughly chilled. A fellow came and apologized for the treatment. He said they were extra busy and hadn't meant to leave me downstairs so long. I was placed in a room with a nice bed and an open window. I thought that this was more like it. I could forgive their neglect. A short time later I was taken to the interrogation officer and given a Red Cross form to fill out. It started out innocently enough--name, rank, serial number, religion-- but went on requesting home base, name of group and squadron and CO, home town, next-of-kin, military training, name of crew members and on and on. I filled out the first three

blanks and gave it back to him. He said that I should indicate religion. What if I died? Wouldn't I want to have the proper burial service? I mulled this around for awhile and finally wrote down P for Protestant. Then he said that three bodies had been found in the wreckage of the plane. They needed their names so they could notify the next-of-kin. I knew four of us were alive and six had exited the plane, so I figured it was possible that three were dead. However, I told him my orders were just for name, rank, and serial number. Then he stated that unless I cooperated I would be returned to the cellar. It was a good selling gimmick. I listed the names of the crew but would go no further. He insisted but I refused.

I have read and seen on TV alot about psychological warfare and prisoners being forced to reveal military secrets. Revealing the names of my crew members has been one of the big regrets of my life. I can rationalize and say that they already had the information, but the interogater's argument that they needed to notify the next-of-kin seemed to justify my decision to write down their names. I did not want to go back to the cellar. While I didn't sell my birthright for a bowl of porridge I did not act like a true American soldier. I regret my decision. One of my crew members told me later he was shown a list of the crew members. This is the first time I have admitted it.

I was sent to a new room, not downstairs but not with a nice bed and open window either. It was solitary confinement.

It was a small room with one barred window with opaque glass and a hard bed. That day I had a bowl of soup for lunch and bread and butter for supper. I sat in my room counting cracks in the ceiling and wall and did alot of thinking.

Since I had no paper or pencil I was unable to write down my activities for a number of days. When I finally got the opportunity to write I tried to recall my thoughts. Paper was scarce and I didn't have much space to write. When a piece of paper got filled I would put it in behind the binding page of my New Testament. This was examined at least twice, but they did not find any contraband. My diary in England was sent to a warehouse. After the war was over they returned it to me. I took the time to transcribe my notes to the 1944 diary but never did the 1945 notes. Even then some of the notes were blurred and unreadable. I still have the 1945 notes but after 46 years (I wrote this in 1991) alot will be largely indecipherable. Meanwhile, I'll plunge ahead with the notes I transcribed into my diary after the war, probably in 1946.

9 Stayed all day in solitary. A long day. Took a nap in afternoon. You can certainly think of alot of things by yourself. The day went by slowly and was very uneventful.

10 Got to wash and shave. Got interogated again for radio information. I was asked for the call letters, but since they changed them every day I could not help them because I had forgot them. They asked me about my squadron CO by name

but I did not tell them that he had been shot down the day before we arrived at Knettishall. They did not know everything.

They asked me about a long-nosed B-17. I figured they were talking about a B-29. I understand the Air Corps left one B-29 out for them to see. They asked about radar. I was truthful when I told them I was ignorant about that also. I think they learned nothing from me this time.

First a civilian and then a sergeant [did the interrogation]. Left the flea center and went to open camp near by. Talked with fellows I knew at Ardmore. Had a little more to eat (tea and bread). Slept in barracks.

10 This center was in Oberusel and most POWs went through the same process I did. Left on train at 8:30. Took a long time to go a short distance. Arrived at Wetzlar in afternoon. Dulag luft. Maurer and Nelson there. Talked with them and other fellows. Took shower. Had dinner in mess hall. Red Cross food much better. Good meal. As I recall my first meal included salmon right out of a can which my folks used to eat but I would only eat in croquettes. This time it tasted real good. Still felt weak. Got shoes and clothes from gov't. I got British airman uniform. It just happened that they were issuing British uniforms that day including black shoes with hobnails. The other crew members got GI clothes. Got package of everything you need from Red Cross. Good for them. We were asked if we had an aged, sick parent. If we did we could send a notice that we were a prisoner.

I decided not to do so. I wrote a card home.

Kriegsgefangenenpost

Postkarte

On the back is Kriegsgefangenenlager. My writing is printed caps.

AUGUST 11, 1944 DEAR MOTHER--I TOLD YOU I WOULD BE ALLRIGHT. THERE IS NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT. I AM SAFE AND ENTIRELY O.K. DON'T WRITE ME AT THIS ADDRESS. WILL WRITE LETTER SOON. RED CROSS TREATING US FINE. HAVE PLENTY TO EAT. YOU CAN GET READY TO SENT BOX. SEE RED CROSS ABOUT IT. SORRY IT HAPPENED THIS WAY BUT NO NEED TO WORRY NOW. MORE DETAILS LATER. LOVE-

Note by Mother: Recd. Oct. 27

12 Got up for first breakfast. Was on detail digging for awhile. Sat around and talked with fellows. Had roll call twice a day. Meals pretty good. Went to library after dinner. Got a book on Beethoven by Sullivan. Read quite a bit.

13 Sunday No [work] details. Went to church after good breakfast. Nice service. Enjoyed singing. English warrent officer in charge. In afternoon Mac, Crawford and Kluth came in. Talked with them for awhile. Sanborn's hand hurt. No word about Stewart. We were pretty anxious. A week in Germany.

These were the first four out of the airplane so evidently they landed fairly close together. After the next day I never saw Kluth again.

14 Helped clean up barracks. Collins and Kluth left.

Read book. Nelson and I are on shipment. The officers were sent to Stalag Luft I near Barth. I have a book entitled The Yankee Kriegies by Colonel C. Ross Greening and Sergeant Angelo M. Spinelli which shows pictures of baseball games in uniform, basketball and volley ball games, sixteen men jammed into a typical officers' room, typewriters, vegetable gardens, a library at Stalag Luft I containing 15,000 volumes, and many other examples of hardships. I am sure they had hard times also. "Every prisoner dreamed of making a successful break for freedom, but although many tried, only a few succeeded."

About 100 men were ordered to this formation. The officer in charge (American major or colonel, I forget which) called me to the front and said that since my name was first on the list I was to be in command of the group. Then it was pointed out that a crew chief, a master sergeant, had flown on a mission with a crew and had been shot down and he was the highest ranking non-com present. Thus I came close to having a command but not quite.

Ate and marched down to station. Got on train and got Red Cross parcel for two. Train compartment crowded so it was hard to sleep.

15 Rode all day except for stop in station. American bombers bombed Frankfort while we were there. Saw some planes get shot down. This was always worse to see when watching from the ground than it was in the air, although I don't believe I actually saw a plane go down while I was flying. The planes

that were in a spin reminded me of our experience and you kept hoping to see some chutes. The planes that just fell always seemed to me to be the worst situation although that may not be actually correct.

With the Red Cross parcel we were able to eat pretty well. Had enough to eat. Took a nap. Got some kind of salami from Jerry also beer which I didn't touch. I was pretty much of a prude in those days.

16 Arrived at St. Wendel. Walked through town to camp. First to arrive there. Got searched again and all canned goods were oopened. Had to eat quite a bit of it. Nelson bunked below me. Talked with him for awhile. The camp was not completed yet so we were placed in a large, garage-like building. I seem to recall having to stuff a gunny sack with straw? to be used as a mattress.

17 Finished up Red Cross food. Helped unload beds from truck. The weather is rather hot. Bread for breakfast, soup for lunch and bread for supper. You get sort of hungry after awhile.

18 Sat and talked with Nelson. In afternoon Maurer, Crawford and Mac came in to camp. Good to see them. Helped eat their parcels. It is good to have friends. Things could be worse.

19 Didn't do much all day long. The soup for lunch and supper were quite poor. Washed and shaved. Washed clothes. Need a haircut. Alot of extra time on my hands. Camp going better. New latrine tomorrow.

20 Sunday Up at 6:30. Was on detail making beds. Missed part of church service. Had better dinner. Potatoes in soup. Wrote card home. Wish I could receive mail. A little more soup for supper. Had argument about wine with Knox on next bunk.

AUGUST 20, 1944 AM AT PERMANENT BASE SO YOU CAN WRITE TO ME HERE. I JUDGE IT BEST NOT TO SEND A PACKAGE AS IT WOULD TAKE TOO LONG. WE GOT CLOTHES AND SHOES FROM RED CROSS. THEY TAKE GOOD CARE OF US. THE FOOD WILL GET BETTER WHEN R.C. PARCELS COME. WE HAVE LOTS OF TIME ON OUR HANDS. HOPE WAR IS OVER SOON. THINK ALOT OF HOME NOW. WILL WRITE LETTER THIS WEEK.

Received on Feb. 3.

21 Up at 6:00. Read Testament some more. Had fair lunch. Played carads. Washed. After dinner I helped peel potatoes. Met fellow from K.C. Ate a couple of raw potatoes and felt better. I would not eat raw potatoes now in Germany, but I did not know that then.

On August 21st my mother received a form letter which stated that an overpayment of \$90.00 was made to her in excess of the amount due based on the military service of above named soldier (me). The amount due the Government should be promptly refunded by cash or money order, payable to the "Treasurer of the Uniter States."

An undated telegram arrived the same day or possibly the day before with the time indicated as 1202P. It reads:

THE SECRETARY OF WAR DESIRES ME TO EXPRESS HIS DEEP REGRET THAT YOUR SON TECHNICAL SERGEANT JOHN H ANDERSON HAS BEEN REPORTED MISSING IN ACTION SINCE SIX AUGUST OVER GERMANY IF FURTHER DETAILS OR OTHER INFORMATION ARE RECEIVED YOU WILL BE PROMPTLY NOTIFIED=

J A ULIO THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

That is sort of a double whammy. I do believe the ones at home had a harder time than we in the service did.

22 Worked outside of camp shoveling dirt into a hole.
Felt weak. Wrote letter home. Slept a little while. Quite hot. Took a cold water bath. Food fair. Cabbage in soup. Played cards.

Just outside of camp was a tremendous hole, probably dug for an air raid shelter and then abandoned. According to the Geneva Convention sergeants who are prisoners-of-war do not have to work but may have to supervise work. At our camp everybody was a sergeant. We talked it over among ourselves and decided to protest the work assignment. The Germans cut us out of a meal saying, "No work, no eat." We met again and decided it would be wise to work or at least give the appearance of working. A work detail was out filling up the hole most of the daylight hours, but we didn't work hard. It would have taken months to fill up that hole.

Letter written August 22, 1944:

The weather here is much the same as it is at home. Some of the days have been quite hot but I don't mind it. We have lots of time on our hands but no doubt we will

start having classes, etc. soon and that will give us something to do. The enlisted men of the crew are here with me. You could write to Lt. Rowe at my old address. He didn't make the trip. I will certainly have alot to tell when I get home. Here's hoping it will be soon. Havn't heard any news recently. Hope you didn't worry too much. There wasn't anything [else] I could do. I may be home by the time this arrives. I imagine it takes at least 3 months. Had a sweater given me by Red Cross--Conway Chapter. I wonder where that is. I even have pajamas, bedroom slippers, overcoat, toothbrush and powder, towels and almost everything else I need. The Red Cross certainly deserves alot of credit. I will have to tell you about my trip to London when I get home. I attended services at Westminster Abbey. I have my New Testament with me and it is being read by someone all the time. I'm glad I have it. We are only allowed 2 letters and four postcards a month. There isn't much I can write about. I'll tell you about everything when I get home. Hope I have alot of good things to eat when I get there. There isn't anything to write about so I'll sign off. Will write again before too long. Don't worry about me as I am alright. At least I'm not spending any money so I'll have quite a bit when I get out. See you soon I hope.

Received Feb. 9th (over 5 months later)

My Gefangenennummer (POW number) was 4005.

23 Had to go on detail shoveling dirt again. Worked harder this time. Had jam on bread for both breakfast and supper. Soup not so good. Didn't do much afterwards. Helped make a deck of cards. Hot today.

24 Stayed in bed most of morning. Went on detail putting beds together. Not hard. Took cold water bath. Wrote to Aunt Maude and Uncle Pat. Got Red Cross parcel. Had 2 bowls of soup for supper and salmon. Morale much higher. Felt good.

On Oct. 26, 1984 my cousin, Charles Patterson, wrote me a letter and stated: "First, enclosed is a letter from you to my folks written in 1944 when you were a POW and found recently when Lora & I were going thru some old pictures. Thought you'd like to have it."

Letter dated August 24, 1944 addressed to Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Patterson, 1830 Walker (I guessed at the address), Kansas City, Kan.

I had just started a letter to you while I was still in England but I didn't have a chance to finish it so will write another from Germany and hope that it reaches you before I get home. I can't say too much about my life here but we get along pretty well. There is not much to do and plenty of time to do it. I guess I'm stuck here for the duration but perhaps that won't be too long. Being a prisoner of war is something you think about but never figure it will happen to you. My crew was fortunate in many ways and I will have alot of experiences to relate when I get home. I'm a

member of the Caterpillar Club now. The food we have here is not too bad and the Red Cross helps us quite a Bit. They donated alot of supplies that we needed and life is much more enjoyable because of them. I will certainly appreciate them after this. I'm looking forward to the big dinners we will have when I get back. Hope I am there for Christmas. The weather here is similar to that at home. It is even better than what we had in England. I will have to close for now. Take good care of my family until I get back. Mother has done too much worrying already. Personally, I think this is an interesting experience and besides I'm saving alot of money. Sincerely your nephew.

This was received Feb.2nd.

25 Up early. Played cards during morning. Rained. Chow was late. Soup was good. Had a couple of air raid alerts during day. Last one during supper. Food is plentiful now. Talked with fellows. Good fellows. Had haircut.

Maurer and Nelson had all their hair cut off about this time. I never had the nerve to do it although I envied them for doing it. It made them look more like prisoners.

Meanwhile, back at the base, the 388th Bomb Group was entertained by Glenn Miller and his orchestra. I would have enjoyed seeing that. I believe he disappeared on a flight to the continent soon after this. This was the day the Allies liberated Paris.

On 25 August, 1944 Major General Ulio sent a letter to my mother.

This letter is to confirm my recent telegram in which you were regretfully informed that your son, Technical Sergeant John H. Anderson, 37,502,787, Air Corps, has been reported missing in action over Germany since 6 August 1944.

I know that added distress is caused by failure to receive more information or details. Therefore, I wish to assure you that at any time additional information is received it will be transmitted to you without delay, and, if in the meantime no additional information is received, I will again communicate with you at the expiration of three months. Also, it is the policy of the Commanding General of the Army Air Forces upon receipt of the "Missing Air Crew Report" to convey to you any details that might be contained in that report.

The term "missing in action" is used only to indicate that the whereabouts or status of an individual is not immediately known. It is not intended to convey the impression that the case is closed. I wish to emphasize that every effort is exerted continuously to clear up the status of our personnel. Under war conditions this is a difficult task as you must readily realize. Experience has shown that many persons reported missing in action are subsequently reported as prisoners of war, but as this information is furnished by countries with which we are at war, the War Department is helpless to expedite

such reports. However, in order to relieve financial worry, Congress has enacted legislation which continues in force the pay, allowances and allotments to dependents of personnel being carried in a missing status.

Permit me to extend to you my heartfelt sympathy during this period of uncertainty.

Sincerely yours, J. A. Ulio Major General The Adjutant General

26 Had air raid during night. Bombs fairly close. After roll call I washed clothes. Another air raid. Slept part of afternoon. Another alert at supper. Food like oatmeal today. Tomorrow we eat good.

The food like oatmeal was barley. We had it often at the next camp. During an air raid alert we were not allowed to be outside.

After my mother received the telegram she wrote to Ardmore for the names and addresses of the crew members. She received this letter dated 26 August 1944:

Headquarters 222nd Combat Crew Training Station Army
Air Field Ardmore, Oklahoma

Dear Mrs. Anderson, Reference your letter of 21 August 1944 requesting the names and addresses of next of kin of other Officers and men on your son's crew.

The following is a list of crew members at the time they departed this station. It is quite possible that it was

subsequently changed, as they went from this station to staging area prior to their departure for overseas:

Lt. Robert S. Stewart Mrs. Francis S. Stewart 2911 Woodcliff Avenue Richmond, Virginia	Lt. Frederick H. Sanborn Mrs. Frederick H. Sanborn 739 Gosden Street San Marcos, Texas address crossed out and replaced by 9 So. Madison Staunton, Va. Sgt. Donald L. Nelson Mrs. Carl A. Nelson 52 France No. Camden Station Route #6, Minneapolis, Minn.
[sic]Lt. Robert J. McIntyre Mrs. R. F. McIntyre 1108 Belmont Street Wilkinsburg, Pennsylvania	Sgt. August W. Maurer Mrs. A. W. Maurer Lake Nebagamon, Wisconsin
Cpl. Ernest Crawford Mrs. Cora Crawford Cotton Plant, Arkansas	Mother has written in: Mrs. L. H. Collins 120 N.E. 56th St. Miami, 38, Fla.
Sgt. George T. Crowder Mrs. Ila B. Crowder Route 1, Box 25 Selma, Alabama	

Very truly yours,
Kenneth D. King
Captain, Air Corps
Adjutant

In the yearbook or whatever it should be called that we received from Ardmore I found the picture of Kenneth D. King, then listed as First Lieutenant, Assistant Base Adjutant. He evidently got promoted in rank and position.

On a piece of note paper Mother made a list of the crew members and their positions. This includes Robert M. Rowe Pilot. I believe Mother wrote to the next of kin and I shall include their replies as they arrived starting Sept. 9th.

27 Sunday Stayed in bed late. Roll call at 9:00. Went to church. Could be better. Ate alot of food for dinner. Slept in afternoon. Air raid twice.

28 I should accomplish more. I would feel better. Got another

Red Cross parcel. Still had some cheese left from last one.
Played cards with crew.

29 Cooler. Ate breakfast. Had jam on bread and coffee.
Roll call. Had soup and milk for lunch. Soup and milk and
corn beef for dinner. Rained some. Not enough to do.

30 Cloudy and cooler all day. Stayed in bed most of
morning. Maurer sick. Took a nap in afternoon. Started
to think of music. Wrote to Vivian. Had air raid as usual.

Card written to my sister Vivian August 30th:

Hello from (censored word) [undoubtedly the word is Germany]. This is a nice cool day so I think I will take the day off and sleep. There is nothing to do anyway but talk and sleep. That gets monotonous after awhile. How are you getting along at home? Not working too hard I hope. I'm looking forward toward the time when I'll be home again eating a lot of everything. Want to be home by Christmas anyway. Hope I get my souvenirs back. Take care of everything at home. It's a good place to be.

Received Jan. 27th

31 Cold and cloudy all day. Played cards. Slept. Meals
fair. Hope we aren't here too long. Talked as usual.

September 1 Air raids off and on all day. Six raids alto-
gether. No bread for lunch and not much for supper. Laid
in bed and thought alot. I wish I had something to do to
take up time.

2 Rained all day long. Got two slices of bread for breakfast. Soup no good for lunch. Opened up can of salmon. Had spinach for dinner. Slept in afternoon. Washed. Quite cool. Talked alot.

3 Sunday Cold night. Windy and cold but finally warmed up in afternoon. Air raid lasted all morning. Talked with August. Dinner was late. Read Testament. Had two cups of coffee for supper. Sat in sun awhile.

I was not a coffee drinker but this coffee was made from grain which was not unpleasant. I liked it better than the tea which had a slight peppery taste and which we had occasionally.

4 Sun came out and it got warmer. Soup was terrible for dinner. Shaved. Got headache and laid down. Couldn't eat supper. Nelson gave me aspirin. Felt a little better. Walked around. Went after coffee for breakfast and bread in afternoon.

This was the day we got to use the latrine in the new camp. I remember the toilets were different from ours at home but better than the outdoor facilities we had been using. The camp never got opened. A camp near Lithuania had been called Stalag Luft VI but the Germans had closed it and moved the prisoners to Stalag Luft IV. I have heard that those prisoners rode a boat part ways and had some bad experiences before they reached Luft IV. This camp at St. Wendel was also called Stalag Luft VI which created some confusion, but it never really opened.

In the distance we could see a highway and a number of trucks and tanks were moving toward the interior. We heard that the Allies had rushed across France. Information was scarce, but we did hear a lot of rumors. Actually De Gaulle entered Paris on August 26th, British armoured columns entered Brussels on the 3rd, Antwerp on the 4th, and then penetrated into Holland.*

Each of us felt that the war was nearly over. In World War I the Germans had capitulated rather than fight on their own soil. It looked like they were rushing back home. There would probably be one more big battle and then Germany would surrender. Everyone took a date for the end of the war. Many picked dates in late September or October. I picked October 4th. The most pessimistic fellow picked November 11th for obvious reasons. We talked about a mass escape but it did not seem feasible. I would judge that there were about 400 to 450 prisoners at our camp.

5 Air raid lasted all morning. Went after potatoes for dinner. Had plenty to eat. Tanks getting close so they evacuated camp. Marched down to railroad. Got on box car. Quite crowded 46 men & 7 guards. Plenty of bread and butter. Played cards.

*History of World War II, A.J.P. Taylor, Editor in Chief, first published 1974 by Octopus Books Limited in England.

We were not surprised to have to leave camp. There were a number of Italians around camp who were workers but they did not work very hard. If we had ever gotten into the camp it would have been a nice set-up, but that was not to be.

The freight cars in Europe are smaller than the ones in the states. I remember reading about them in the first World War when they carried quarante hommes ou cinq (huit?)
(8?)
chevaux (40 men or 5 horses). In my car the doors were in the middle and the guards sat by the doors. Each end was fenced off with barbed wire and 23 men were on each end. Our shoes were removed and placed in the middle. Thus we had more passengers than they did in the first war.

6 Morale pretty high. Nothing much to do but we did alot of singing in evening.

7 Still going. Alot of destruction along the road. Ate some more from Red Cross parcel. Guards treat us pretty fair. We laughed alot. Nothing will beat us. How wonderful to be an American.

Telegram dated Sept. 7 6:50 PM to Mother states:
REPORT JUST RECEIVED THROUGH THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS STATES THAT YOUR SON TECHNICAL SERGEANT JOHN H ANDERSON IS A PRISONER OF WAR OF THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT LETTER OF INFORMATION FOLLOW FROM PROVOST MARSHAL GENERAL= J A ULIO THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

8 Ran out of parcel food. Ate alot of bread and butter. Feeling fine. Had fun arranging different ways of sleeping. You can get used to anything.

At one stop we got out of the train and went a short distance away. Fighter planes were in the vicinity and could have straffed the train. I thought it pretty decent of the Germans to get us away from the danger. They could have let us just "sweat it out".

9 Arrived at Kiefheide. Got shoes back and walked 40 minutes to camp. Processed and searched again. Inside camp I met alot of old friends. Talked with Bill Sewell. Other 3 crew members came later. Had potatoes for supper. Slept in tent. Cold.

As we were standing naked being searched we were in alphabetical order. The fellow behind me had a Jewish name. A tall German guard came up to him, picked him up and threw him against the wall. It was one of the few brutal acts that I saw in camp.

When newcomers arrive they meet with the leaders of the camp and are given tips on how to act. Information about the war is exchanged. When we came we were placed in tents in A Lager or compound until they finished C compound. About 8,000 prisoners were eventually in camp there, 2,000 to a compound. D compound held some 500 British airmen, but everyone else was American. I since have learned that about 10,000 men were there including some Canadians, French, Australians, Belgium, and Polish airmen. The camp had opened up in May. A few Russians did some dirty jobs around camp, and it was forbidden to talk or give anything to the Russians. Two roll

calls were held each day. Each compound governed itself although a German officer was present at each call. It was necessary to salute the officer if you passed him. More about camp when we get to C compound.

Letter dated Sept. 8, 1944 postmarked Cotton Plant, Arkansas Sept. 9:

Dear Mrs. Anderson, Your most highly appreciated letter came today and I hasten to send you a reply. I am so glad & happy that you knew my son and that he was with your son so that is the tie that binds our hearts and hopes for them. On Sept. 6 I had a wire from J. A. Ulio, the Ajt. General 226P that a report had come to him thru the International Red Cross that Ernest Crawford is a prisoner of war of the German Government and a letter of information would follow from the Provost Marshall General. I suppose by this time you also have a like wire; hope so any way. My heart beats fast and my hopes run high for you and you dear son as well as mine. I am so glad you met my boy for he really is a fine Christian Boy and has never given me a moment's trouble, and I know your son John is equally as fine. Ernest sent me his air medal and Oak Leaf Cluster.

Since the wire from the Adj Gen in regard to the report from the A— Red Cross, or "International", my hopes have been high and my heart much lighter as the load has been somewhat lifted. Just to know the Red Cross is functioning over there and has reported warms my heart and thrills me beyond words. It is an all wise and loving Father who doeth all things well and is able to keep that sacred trust: "Our dear boys" at all times and under all conditions. May the Lord hasten the day of a just & righteous peace for all nationa & all peoples and bring our boys home again. Hope you have had good news from R C and feel encouraged by same. When I have further information I shall write you at once & you do the same. May the Lord bless you and keep you and I, is my humble prayer. Let me hear from you again when you have further news. Thanks for writing me. Sincerely,
Mrs. Cora K. Crawford

10 Sunday Up at 7:30. Had coffee and ? for breakfast.
Went to church service. Tech sergeant gave a good sermon.
Enjoyed it. Talked with Bill. Went to evening service.
Hear English padre. Good. Slept with Crawford.

Letter dated Sept. 10, 1944, Postmarked Sept. 11

Minneapolis, Minn.:

Dear Mrs. Anderson, I received your letter Sat. Sept. the 9th and I am glad to be able to tell you we have further news to tell you and hope you have received the same. We got a telegram last nite stating Don is a prisoner in Germany. At least we know where he is and that he is alive. That is so much to be thankful for. I do hope you got the same news and that he is alright. I hope all the boys are safe and all o.k. I am going to write to the other Mothers and my daughter-in-law, Don's wife, is going to help me out. I will let you know any further news I get and hope you will do the same. Yours truly, Mrs. Carl Nelson

11 Went after food today. Rained part of day. Had soup for lunch.

Letter written September 11, 1944:

Once again I will let you know I'm getting along alright. In fact we have been having some good times. Played baseball today although rain broke up the game. Yesterday we had a tech serg. give a good sermon in the morning and a British padre talked to us in the evening. Men are much more religious here than I've ever seen them in the states. I've met a number of fellows I know, among them being Bill Sewell, the fellow I brought home with me from gunnery school. We spent most of

yesterday talking over our experiences. The enlisted men of my crew are still together. We made a deck of cards and played alot of different games. The food is still good and I am getting plenty. We have some books to read now so that will help take up time. I wish I had some books I could study. Maybe I can find some among the supply. It is getting cooler here and will probably be winter before long. Wish I were home at this time. School has started I suppose by now. Hope to be home for Christmas if not before. Will write a card again before long. Don't worry about me. I'm all OK.

Received Jan. 27th

For the next five days I have no entries in my diary. I got out the flimsy pieces of paper which were the original writings and only an occasional word was identifiable.

- 12 Got Red Cross food. Did alot of trading.
- 14 Out of bread.
- 15 Walked around camp. Peeled potatoes. Catholic mass.
- 16 Cold. Walked.

Letter dated Sept. 13, 1944, Postmarked Sept 18th
Benton City, Wash.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, Received your letter yesterday. As you will note we are in Wash. Have been here 2 months now. Will be leaving here for our home in Lake Nebagamon, Wis. in about 2 weeks. We were glad to hear from you and have the addresses of the other mothers who have received the missing in action notice. We feel very badly about it, but I have so much hope that he is alive and well. We just can't give up.

As you know from your son's letters August had another brother in England at the same base he was at. We also have a son who is a transport pilot in the Marines in So. Pacific. Now maybe this information will ease your mind a bit. About 2 weeks before

we received the telegram from the government, we received 2 letters from August's bro. in England. In both of them he talked about Augie being further from home and it would take longer to get letters from him. But he assured us that he was sure we would be hearing from him as soon as he could get mail out from there. Also that he was sure that August was safe and well. Since then we have received several letters from him and in each he assures us he is sure August is safe and we will be hearing from him. Now we believe they are prisoners but maybe we are wrong.

We figure that Jake (that's our son in England) has talked to some of the fliers of planes that did return from that mission and has information that he cannot impart to us. Whenever we get other information I'll send it on to you immediately.

Will just copy a bit of Jake's letter of Aug. 11. He writes—"I have a little news for you a bit of it you may have heard about before now. If not you will soon, but don't worry about it, as every thing looks and sounds okay to me. Have gotten a little news about Augie (August's nickname) and from what I know about it he's safe and well. Don't worry about him as I am sure he will be okay. Will let you know about him as soon as I get all the dope or hear from him. Should get a letter from him within next few weeks if mail gets through okay." Now this is part of his letter, since then we have several others all telling us not to worry, that he is sure we will be hearing from Augie soon as he can get mail out. So we do feel he knows things he can't write. I do hope this comforts you a bit. Of course I know how you feel. But as long as mothers can keep faith with God I'm sure he will do the best for our loved ones. All we can do now is pray they are well and safe, and will be returned to us soon if it be God's will. We have had a very hard thing to bear happen to us before but with God's help we have gotten through it and I'm sure we will this also. We lost our only girl in 1935. She was 23 yrs. a beautiful girl and of course the darling of the family. Boys (we have 5)

all tho't a lot of their sister. But God does know best I'm sure of that now. I would appreciate hearing from you again. If you write after Oct. 1 please address us at Lake Nebagamon Wis. If you write earlier you will reach us here at Benton City Wash. I saw the Red Cross yesterday but got very little information. Go to your local Red Cross, you may get some information. I must close and hope and pray with you the boys will be returned safely soon. I remain Mrs. A. W. Maurer

Letter dated 14th Sept. 1944 postmarked Sept. 15,
Richmond, Va.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, Your letter of Sept 6th rec'd and really I'm ashamed I havn't answered before now. I appreciate you writing so much.

Yes I received the same telegram Aug 22nd that he went down on Aug 6th about my son. And it was a terrible shock to me. The reason I havn't answered sooner is, on the 6th of Sept the day your letter was written to me I rec'd a telegram from the War Dept. saying he was a prisoner of the German Gov't. And I thought maybe you would write and tell me you had rec'd one also. But after thinking it over I thought if you had not rec'd the same message, it would be some comfort to you to know that one of the crew was safe. The telegram stated that he was wounded at time of capture, and a letter of information would follow. But to date I have not rec'd it.

I'm so relieved and glad to know that he is alive. I believe that if his injuries had been serious they would have stated same in telegram.

I also rec'd a letter from War Dept. saying that from past experience it takes from two to three months to get any information from German Gov't. about prisoners. If you have not rec'd any message as yet, it's possible by them not bailing out at the same time, that it may take longer to hear or get a report from all the boys. I do feel though that they are all safe.

Have you heard from any of the other boys' Mothers? I would like to write them. But wonder if they have rec'd a message that they are prisoners.

I hope and pray that you have rec'd the same telegram as I have, and that this awful war will soon end and they will be back with us. Hope to hear from you again soon.

Sincerely, Frances Stewart

17 Sunday Nice day. Went to church service as usual. Very interesting. Good stew for dinner. Took a sun bath with Sewell. Went to evening church service. Crawford sick.

18 Another nice day. Went to Bible study and prayer group. Heard story of Samuel. Began to feel sick. Lasted all day and night. Potatoes for supper. Went to dispensary and got some pills.

Letter dated Sept. 18, 1944 postmarked same date
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, I am writing this for my Mother, Mrs. Cora Crawford, of Cotton Plant, Ark.

She received your card yesterday, and we are so glad you got the same message we did, that John is a prisoner. It is bad to think of them being prisoners, but as you said, we have a lot to be thankful for, just knowing they are alive. We too hope that the crew can be together.

We also had a letter from Mrs. A. W. Maurer of Benton City, Wash. yesterday. It was a very nice letter and we were indeed glad to get it.

Mom had a letter from the War Dept saying it would probably be from one to three months before we could get the address to write them. As soon as we get Ernest's we will send it to you, and should you get John's first send it to us please.

I don't know if Mom told you in her letter, but we have a small record the boys made and Ernest sent it to her. John was one of the boys that help make it... So even

though we didn't meet the boys we do have one or two of their voices recorded.

Mrs. Anderson, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for having written to Mom. Your letter was a great comfort to her. You see she is kind of old and her health isn't so good either. Of course I realize it is hard on all mothers to receive news like that, and believe me, my heart goes out to them.

Let's hope and pray this old war will soon be over and they can soon come home.

Please write when ever you can. Sincerely, Ovie Crawford

19 No entry.

20 Peeled potatoes. Went to library and got book on Milton. Talked with Bill. Met a couple of Fellows from K.C. Talked about old times. Feel good. Nice weather.

21 Not readable.

Letter dated Sept. 21, 1944 Postmarked same date
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, I received your letter and I think it was very nice of you to write and get the names of the boys addresses who were the crew members of the same plane. I myself never even thought of it as I am kept pretty busy with the rest of my family. I received a telegram on Sept. 8th telling me Robert was a prisoner of war then a week later I received a letter from the provost marshal general stating that they didn't know the name of the camp as yet so he said it takes at least three months for that to come through. I also received a letter from Mrs. Maurer but according to her letter she has not heard that her son is a prisoner. Mr. McIntyre has a cousin stationed in England who is with the ground crew of the air force and he is going to write to us and tell us what he can. He knew before we did that Robert was missing as he had a three day pass of Aug 14th and went to see my son but was told not to inform us until we heard from the war

department. I have a son in the navy somewhere in the Pacific and another son who was in the Infantry but was given a medical discharge last October but who is married now. I also have two other sons whose ages are 16 yrs and seven years and two daughters whose ages are 10 and 13 yrs. And they sure keep me busy for which I am very thankful for as sometimes I start to think and I think I'll lose my mind. But we will just have to have faith and pray and hope that this war will be over soon. I have a book of the 222nd Combat Crew that Robert sent me and all the boys' pictures are in it. Robert was 20 yrs. old on Aug 7th the day after he was reported missing. I will close now hoping to hear from you again.

Sincerely, Mrs. Raymond F. McIntyre Wilkinsburg, Pa

22 Rained most of the day. Maurer and Nelson came over. They said Addison of crew 24 had come in and he had seen Stewart which was good news. Had sore throat and was hoarse most of day.

Addison was a waist gunner on crew 24, assigned to the 100th B.G., the hard luck group. His story was really dramatic. They were flying over the target on their first mission when the tail was blown off. He looked down at his feet and he fought the other waist gunner, Sawaya, for the chute which was lying there. He put it on and went out the open end of the plane breaking his leg upon landing. He was the only member of his crew to survive. He was a changed person from the person he was in Ardmore. In C compound he became a member of the church council and was constantly studying the Bible. He became an authority on the life of Paul.

23 Read quite a bit. Went to morning Bible Study class. Beginning to have cold. Walked around compound with Bill Sewell. Got more Red Cross food.

Letter written September 23, 1944:

As long as I have another letter to write I will try and find enough to fill the whole page. I have two cards left to write this month. It is surprising the number of friends I have met here at this camp. We have had good times talking together. One fellow lives next door to Cottinghams [Mr. Cottingham was the principal of Benton elementary school and lived about three blocks from my house] and another fellow was in Gene's choir. [Gene Christy was one of my good friends at the Conservatory.] Just heard yesterday that the copilot was safe so that means our whole crew is ok. The officers stay at a different camp. We receive Red Cross food pretty regularly now and with what we are rationed we have enough to eat. I have been reading a biography of John Milton this week. Also attend some of the Bible discussion classes each day so I have plenty to do. Don't hear much news but still hoping the war will be over soon. I wrote to Bob Havighurst this week. I wonder what he is doing now. Hope we can have our annual party together this year. [Bob and his sister Martha spent New Year's eve with my sister Vivian and me for a number of years. He was a great person and a fine friend.] Wish I could hear from you soon and to learn about the happenings at home. I guess I missed the last package you sent. [Here a sentence has been blacked out. I have no idea of what I wrote that had to be censored. It was probably the most interesting sentence in the letter.]

Well I should do some of my washing today so I will quit for now. Will write again next month. A lot of things can happen in a month. Perhaps the war will be over before long. Tell everybody hello for me.

Received Feb. 12th

24 Sunday Went to church. Read some. Talked in afternoon. Had two roll calls in evening. No evening service because of no interpreter. Talked in barracks.

25 Rained most of night. Got windy during day. Played cards. After lunch our tent played baseball. Had good dinner. Much colder. Still have cold. Peeled potatoes. To bed at 7:00.

26 Got up early. Got cold in morning. Read. After lunch the men living in tents moved to new compound. Rained. Now in barracks with crew. Will be better. Wrote cards.

One event occurred in A compound that I did not mention in my diary, or else it occurred on a day that I cannot transcribe which is more likely. Two or three planes of German origin came flying over the camp. They began to do acrobatics and we were all watching them when one of the planes did not pull out but plunged into the ground a short ways off from the camp. Instantly a cheer went up and the guards in the towers got visibly more nervous. I decided not to cheer. We were all told to go inside.

As I recall Crawford and I were in the same tent together and Maurer and Nelson were in another tent. I believe that McIntyre had gone to the hospital. When we moved to C compound

I was first sent to Barracks 5 to a double room. Maurer and Nelson and, I think, Crawford were in Barracks 1, room 3. I talked to someone in their room and he agreed to swap. It was nice to have the four of us together again. I believe McIntyre was in Barracks 5 for awhile and was at a hospital or a different camp for awhile. We had twenty fellows in our room until four more were added in January. Maurer was elected Room Leader. One of his main duties was to divide the bread ration. [Since I have been in the Stalag Luft IV organization I have received a list of names of the individuals who were in Room 3. It would be fun to get them together again.]

27 Lots better sleeping inside. Started a card tournament.
Another cold day. Washed clothes in afternoon. Warmed up some.
Read some. Played more cards.

Someone had a pinochle deck and the crew decided to play until the end of the war. Maurer and I were partners against Crawford and Nelson. The losers were to take the winners to dinner after the war. I had never played pinochle before, but it is a good card game. After a period of time the score was 5,000 to 3,000 or thereabouts in favor of C & N. They wanted to know if we wanted to quit, but we were just getting started. Bidding is important and we soon learned to guess what the partner had in his hand. When the score reached 30,000 to 25,000 in our favor we decided to give it up. There was no chance C & N could ever catch up. Incidentally, the winners never did collect. It's getting late fellows.

28 Nice day. Walked around compound with Grant. New fellows came into compound. Played some cards. Maurer and I were partners. Fell behind. Talked to Addison. When will war end?

Two roll calls were held each day. Other than that we were pretty much on our own. One of the best activities was to meet some one new and walk around the compound getting acquainted. Each person had experienced an unusual series of events which led him to this place. I had it easy compared to a lot of the stories I heard. I remember one fellow parachuted into the Zeider Zee. That was a place I had read about in grammar school. King, one of men in our room, was with the French underground for a long time. He tried to get into Switzerland but was unable to make it. The French then took him south and he was captured going across the Pyrenees. In our compound he was in charge of the record players; we eventually had four or five in the compound. When one got broken King would bring it to our room for repairs. Thus we often had music in our room. One of the most popular records we had was Bing Crosby and the Andrew Sisters singing Jingle Bells.

29 Another fair day. Spent a long time in roll call. Got deck of cards and pencils and red cross food. Things could be worse. Played more cards. It can't be long now.

At roll call we all stood in front of the barracks in rows of five. The guards would count each side of the compound, barracks 1 to 5 and 10 to 6. Then they would total

up the count as they walked back to Der Hauptmann (the German captain). If the tally was not correct they counted again. Some days roll call lasted over an hour. A search of the barracks came when it was decided some one was missing. I remember one poor fellow had fallen asleep and no one had awakened him. I expect he spent some time in solitary confinement. Only a couple of times can I remember when the weather was so bad we had roll call inside.

We were locked in the barracks at sundown and lights were out about nine o'clock. Shutters were placed over the windows. We often had conversations going in the room after lights out. The barracks were built about 3-4 feet off the ground so it was impossible to dig a tunnel. Dogs roamed in the compound at night. We were a short distance from the Baltic Sea, but it would be hard to cross that sea.

30 Cloudy. Played more cards. After lunch which was sauerkraut we played a game of Monopoly. Fun. Maurer and I forged ahead in card game. Still have cold.

October 1 Sunday Played cards again. Shouldn't do it on Sunday. Had good meals today. Visited Grant in barracks V. Went to church in afternoon. Nice service. Played monopoly. Full moon soon.

2 Misty outside all day. Walked around compound by myself. That is good for thinking. Wasted whole evening. Clocks set back an hour. Wait til Wed.

Since I had picked Oct. 4th as the day the war would be over I was looking forward to that day.

3 Walked around. Read. Peeled potatoes as usual. Had good soup for lunch. Potatoes for supper. Got part of Canadian Red Cross parcel. Some of it is better. Last day I hope.

Except for Thanksgiving week and Christmas week we were on half-rations of Red Cross food all the time we were in the camp. A standard food package issued by the Red Cross to POW's weekly included the following: 1-7 oz carton of Type K 2 biscuit; 1-8 oz carton of processed cheese; 2-4 oz bars of ration D chocolate; 5-packages containing 100 cigarettes; 1-4 oz tin of soluble coffee; 1-12 oz tin of corned beef; 1-15 oz carton of dried fruit; 1-6 oz tin of liver paste; 1-16 oz tin of whole milk; 1-16 oz tin of oleomargine⁸⁷; 1-4 oz tin of orange concentrate; 1-12 oz tin of pork luncheon meat; 1-8 oz tin of salmon; 2-2 oz bars of odorless soap; and 1-8 oz carton of white lump sugar.

In camp alot of trading went on every time we got some Red Cross food. Cigarettes were our medium of exchange. A box of prunes cost one pack; a can of powdered milk cost four packs; a chocolate bar cost a pack; Spam went for a pack; some parcels had raisins instead of prunes, they cost a pack and a half; some times prices would fluctuate but normally you could make a deal for what you wanted.

I omitted a card which was dated Sept. 27, 1944 postmarked Sept. 28, Minneapolis:

Dear Mrs. Anderson, We got our telegram Sept. 9th saying Don was a prisoner. That is a lot better than not hearing at all. I sure hope and pray they can all come home soon. No we don't have the address of the pilot or the bombardier. I sure do hope you can write again and I will do the same if & when we get any more news. Sincerely, Mrs. Carl Nelson

4 Figured war would be over today. Ate alot all day long. Peeled potatoes by myself for awhile. Went to morning devotion class and then to choir practice after lunch. Felt good. Nice clear day. Made cake with Crawford.

Peeling potatoes was almost an every day chore. More about this later. Crawford wrote home about this cake two days later.

5 Got Jerry jam and cheese today. Got room to peel spuds before roll call. Went to morning devotion service. Clear day but windy and chilly. Laid out on blanket for awhile. Had part of cake. Quite delicious. Played monopoly.

Undated letter postmarked Oct. 5, 1944 Miami, Fla.

On August 22nd, we received word that our son, 2nd Lt. Walter G. Collins, was missing since August 6th, in action over Germany. Needless to tell you of the heartache and grief and all the anxious moments that we have had since that time.

I contacted the Red Cross, hoping and praying for further information and surely God heard our prayers, for it was at a Red Cross desk, where I found a Mrs. David, who is the wife of Colonel David, Commanding Officer of the 388th Bomb Group of the Eighth Air Force-- in other words "C.O. of our boys' outfit."

I felt indeed fortunate, for Mrs. David is very young, loveable and understanding and felt happy to make contact with anyone who had a loved one under her Bill's command and we immediately became friends. She promised to write to the Colonel, that very evening and make a special request for the names of crew members and their home addresses and secure what possible information he could gather for us, of our Walt.

In the meantime we received a 2nd telegram Sept. 6th, where the Red Cross had reported 2nd Lt. Walter G. Collins as prisoner of war of the German Government. We later received a letter confirming this telegram and giving us an 'unstated' prison camp, in other words they had not received the name of the camp.

Yesterday Mrs. David called, and she had heard from Colonel David, also had names and addresses of crew members and information. I know that you are anxiously waiting for word and inwardly grieving as to the possibilities of information that you may already have, being a little bit indefinite, so we are sharing what knowledge we have received through the boys' Commanding Officer and know it will comfort you.

Ship went down Aug.6, 1944 over BERLIN , GERMANY -Ship went down, under control, apparently oxygen system was not functioning. Possibly two chutes were seen* This group has had two presidential Citations and the 388th Bomb Group has just completed its 200th Bombing mission, had had fewer loss than any other group, and every man a true soldier and credit to the Eighth Air Force*

Our Walt has been awarded the air medal and two clusters and was promoted to 1st LT. August 18th - went down on his 22nd mission - was regular Bombardier on Lt. Robert M Rowes Crew. From location given us where the ship went down, we can only presume that our boys are prisoners of a camp located in Berlin, this of course is only a presumption on our part. We understand they are treated more kindly in Berlin, particularly since the end is so very near in sight, let us pray that the day isn't too far away. before our boys will be home again.

I know that it shouldn't be, but somehow it is rather difficult for me to write this letter. The fact that our Walt would want me to contact the loved ones of his Buddies and give them what consolation I am able to, does make it a little easier, but frankly, it touches a most tender, aching spot in my heart - as surely it must in the hearts of most 'moms and dads.'

Our family consists of only four - Walt who is 23 and now a prisoner, Bob who is 21 an a NAVY NIGHT -FIGHTER Pilot, getting ready to check out at a Rhode Island base, for the Pacific - and that just leaves 'mom and dad' home alone.

I have taken the 'next of kin' address on the crew members list and if by chance, there are other loved ones who are interested, won't you please share this letter with them.

It will be a comfort to know that you have received this letter, also whether you have any further information, your telegrams and we will appreciate hearing from you.

Sincerely, Marion Collins

6 Went to morning devotion after roll call with Crawford.
Also to choir practice after lunch. Brought hymnal back to barracks. Sang alot. Had good chow. Played cards. Got salmon. Good news.

Choir practice was now scheduled for one o'clock on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Having a hymnal made my job a lot easier. The good news I mention was probably about the war. I probably thought I would never forget it, but fifty years later I have no idea what it could have been.

7 Peeled potatoes again as usual. Went to morning devotion. Nice service. Played cards most of day. Had air raid. Maurer and I are way ahead of Crawford and Nelson. Soon I hope.

8 Sunday Swept the hall. Went to church service. Sat with choir. Heard Padre Jackson. Was to sing in afternoon but had roll call at wrong time. That interrupted the Catholic mass too. Walked and talked.

Two English padres took turns coming to our compound for services. Rev. Anthony H. Jackson was from the Isle of Guernsey and Rev. G. Rex Morgan was from South Wales. The Catholic priest was Rev. T. J. E. Lynch who later lived in Southampton. I believe these men had been captured at Dunkirk. Padre Jackson was a dynamic, interesting speaker who always had something vital to say. Padre Morgan was quiet and reserved and a lot different from Padre Jackson.

On this Sunday I recall that the Catholics were having their service outside and Rev. Lynch was officiating. There is a point in the mass where the priest is obligated to continue no matter what happens. The Germans waited until that spot and then called roll call. The priest remained at his improvised altar for over an hour without moving, waiting for the boys to return to the service. I admired his courage and perseverance.

In C compound we had a church council which met weekly or oftener to plan the protestant services in the compound. Morning devotions were held daily. One or two church services were held on Sundays. Later, Bible studies were held when the padre could come, and we had Sunday School near the end. One member of the council was designated each Sunday as back-up speaker in case one of the padres did not appear. The boys who did preach did a fine job of it. The members also took turns leading at morning devotion. In my notebook I had each member of the council write his name and address: Fred G. Anderson of Minneapolis, Minn.; Cloman D. Bogart of Sycamore, Ohio; Calvin D. Churchill of West Haven Conn.; Brian H. Cleworth of Minneapolis, Minn.; Charles M. Doss of Morris, Ill.; Curtis L. Snell of Red Top, Mo.; Robert B. Conrad of Schuyler, Nebr.; Harvey Rueschman of Greentown, Ohio; John K. Jones of Springfield, Ill.; and Rex L. Hayes of Alexander, N.C. I was a member of the council by virtue of my position as choir director. This was a good group of fellows.

9 Went to morning devotion. Watched football game. Went to choir practice. Arranged hymns for [morning devotion]. Played cards. Cloudy day.

We had a tournament between the ten barracks in football. Since I was not a football player I helped make up some yells for Barracks 1. A game always had a good crowd. I do not remember Barracks 1 ever winning a game.

10 Choir sang at morning devotion. I sang one verse solo. Washed clothes during rest of morning. Had good soup for lunch. Watched football game. Warm day. Played cards.

11 Warm night. Peeled spuds as usual. Went to morning devotion. My temper almost broke at breakfast. Went to choir practice. Heard alot of shots. Played cards. Good meals again.

I have no recollection of my problem. It may have had something to do with peeling potatoes.

12 Nice day. Went to morning devotion then peeled potatoes. Watched football game. Good game. Towers test fired guns so we had to move around. A fellow brought victrola into room and played records. Enjoyed it.

13 Cloudy and cold. Went to morning devotion, Waited in line all morning for library book. Got "The Thirteenth: Greatest of Centuries" by Walsh. Read. Went to choir practice. Had roll call at night.

This was a good book which impressed me a lot. I used information from it many times when I was teaching music history years later.

The building we called the Red Cross building was located just to the left of the gate in the middle between the two rows of barracks. It housed the kitchen and a big room which we used for church services. The library was located in one corner of this large room. It must have been a popular place if I had to wait in line all morning to get in to get a book.

14 German broke up devotion service for awhile. Peeled spuds. Read most of afternoon. Had hamburger for supper. Good. Got Red Cross food. Read some more. Thirsty.

For every meeting a German interpreter had to be present. On this occasion we must have started without him, so he broke it up when he arrived.

Our meat ration was rather slim. It was normally included in the soup. The cooks asked everyone for permission to save up the meat ration for a week and give everyone a hamburger. It was delicious and a big help to morale.

15 Sunday Went to church.

16 Went to morning devotion after having barley for breakfast. Brian Cleworth gave the talk. Very good. Read. Took over the choir at choir practice. Watched football game. Lockup at 8.

17 Rained all day long. Went to morning devotion. Read most of day. It is an interesting book, well worth reading.

18 Rained again. Went to morning devotion. Finished book. Went to choir practice. Sounded good. New fellows came in. News not too good. Taught Crawford some music. Wrote letter home.

This letter never arrived. This is probably not the postoffice's fault.

19 Peeled spuds. Went to morning devotion. After lunch watched a hypnotist. Good show. Cleworth brought me new hymnals. Played cards. What is next?

The hypnotist was the son of Mark Warnow, a well-known orchestra leader. He put one fellow under and had him regress to the age of five. He had trouble tying his shoes and was bashful when asked about girls. He even talked with a youthful voice. When told he had wet his pants he started to cry. One or two fellows could not be hypnotized. It was a good show.

20 Had blanket inspection. Went to morning devotion. After lunch had choir practice and then quartet practice. Filled sack again. Got more rations. Played [cards. Arranged music for] quartet.

21 Foggy in morning. Quite cool all day. Went to morning devotion. Went to Bible Study class. Padre Morgan in charge. Got a lot of hot water for coffee today. Time goes faster now.

22 Sunday Cloudy all day. Peeled spuds. Went to church. Choir sang hymn. John Jones gave the talk. Read aloud a German magazine. Had long talk about music with Alec Palmer. Very interesting. Got music pupil. Rained. Had good crowd at evening service. Choir sang again.

Alex Palmer was interested in the different temperaments (tunings) in music, and he was working on a new system. I had never studied much about that aspect of music, but I enjoyed

listening to his explanations. In later life I studied it a great deal and would like to be able to talk with him again. I am sure he prodded my interest in the subject.

In my notebook he wrote Alex (instead of Alec) Palmer. He was from Detroit.

I was beginning to be busy which made time pass more rapidly. I am sorry I did not record the name of my first student in camp (other than my crew members). Since no music manuscript paper was available I took cigarette package wrappers and other labels and drew staff lines on them. This was a mundane and uninteresting chore, but it was necessary to demonstrate musical ideas to my students. I also made arrangements for the choir and quartet. I did get some white sheets of paper later which made the job a bit easier. I still have the copies of the parts of a couple of my arrangements. My biggest project was to try to write out the Hallelujah Chorus from the Messiah. I had sung the soprano part as a boy and the bass and then the tenor after my voice changed. It wasn't too hard to figure out the alto, but then it had to be arranged for male voices. I never completed the project. I expect someone has made an arrangement for male voices. I would like to see it.

23 Gave prayer at morning devotion. Had pupil in music in barracks 9. It is interesting to work in music again. Went to choir practice. Watched football game. Interesting. Had Addison and another fellow for music lesson. Room sang hymns. Read. Good day.

24 Six months overseas. Went to morning devotion. Ate early.
Had classes all afternoon. Enjoyed teaching music. I ought to
get more pupils. Played pinochle again. Make cake and also
smeargoo. Wrote to Vivian.

Card written October 24, 1944:

I'm not sure whether you will receive the last card I wrote you so I will write another. I wonder if you have received any word from me yet. It will be interesting to compare dates when I get home. I guess you are still making quite a bit of money. My pay continues at the same rate until I leave here. I have quite a sum saved up by now. Must go and peel some spuds now.

Received Feb.10

Making a cake was a lot of trouble but they usually were delicious. My best concoction was what I called smeargoo. I grated up a K 2 biscuit and a square of a chocolate bar. Put in some powdered milk (a quarter can if I could afford it), water and some sugar. Next I cut up some prunes and broke open the pits and cut up the nut-like seed inside. It had sort of a cherry flavor. Then I let it set overnight. In the morning it was absolutely delicious. At first it was a rare treat. Later I would trade some of my food for the ingredients and make it almost every night. Since I didn't smoke I had 2½ packs of cigarettes I could trade immediately. While I was in Athens, Georgia in 1948 a veteran student and I made up a batch of smeargoo, but it was not nearly as good as I remembered it.

25 Prepared lessons. Had class after morning devotion. Had
plenty to eat. Choir practice. Sounded good. [Started] book

Travels of Sir John Mandeville. Walked with Nelson.

26 Wrote letter home. Took Nelson to morning devotion.
Waited for Padre for Bible study but he didn't come. Had
quartet practice and then two lessons. Talked with Nelson and
Maurer about old times.

This was another letter that did not arrive.

My crew and sometimes my room would participate in a game such as naming all the cars you could name. We all got along pretty well.

27 First real cold day we have had. Peeled potatoes inside.
(probably in the washroom). Worked with fellows on music.
Had choir practice. Air raid came so we had long practice.
Played cards for quite awhile.

28 Much colder. Still not too bad. Went to morning devotion.
Only had one lesson today. Peeled potatoes in washroom. Got
part of British parcel. Had friendly fight with Nelson.
Played cards again. A waste of time.

29 Sunday Not quite so cold. Peeled potatoes. Went to church.
Choir sang pretty good. Padre Jackson gave a good talk. 470
there. Had talk again with Alec Palmer. Had two lessons.
Played cards Worked with Maurer on music. Not so cold.

30 Cold again. Went to morning devotion. Had about six
lesons today. Keeps me busy. Had choir practice. Time
passed rapidly. Played cards. Wrote out quartet music. More
work with Maurer. Tired.

Card dated Oct. 30, 1944 postmarked same date Robbinsdale, Minn

Dear Mrs. Anderson, Received your card this morning and was glad to hear from you and that you had heard from your son too. We got a card from Don also wrote the 9th of Aug. but we didn't get it till Oct. 16. We also have Don's address, we got at last Fri. Oct. 27. I wish when you get your son's you would write us his address as I will send you Don's but will put it in a letter it will be a little more private that way. Sincerely,
Mrs. Eleanor Nelson

31 Had bad time sleeping. Not so cold. Peeled potatoes.
Had lessons again. Had quartet practice. Got seconds for
lunch. Good soup. Played cards again. Maurer and I way ahead.

Letter dated October 31, 1944 postmarked same date Miami, Fla.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, Thanks so very much for your letter of the 7th. We enjoyed it and it was most welcome. I feel a bit guilty about not writing before this time, but felt that some kind of news would be coming along momentarily and wanted to pass it on to you, nothing to date has arrived, and the waiting is so hard and such a long time.

Mrs. Nelson, the ball turret gunner's mother had a card from him, saying that he was "not sick or wounded and that the food is good, thanks to the Red Cross", the card was dated August 9th, and so had hopes of hearing from our Walt—but after attending the last Red Cross meeting—Prisoner of War—understand that the mail both in-coming and out-bound is at an almost 'standstill' where Germany was concerned and very little, if any, was getting through at this time, so really don't expect to hear in the near future, but waiting is so hard.

We have had no further word from the Gov't as to location or name of the camp where the boys are being held. Have you? Mrs. Nelson said that she was going to write to you and tell you that she had heard from her Don.

The reason you do not have Lt. Rowe's home address or 'next of kin' is perhaps because he was not Pilot of the Crew at the time it went down. We have heard since that

he was wounded on the mission of the day before and was confined to the hospital for foot wound (flak) and a replacement Pilot was with our fellows. I have heard from his mother and in writing to her this morning, told her that I was giving her address to the crew members 'nest of kin' and hoped she would hear from them. Some have requested her address and I do think that it helps so much to keep in contact. Our fellows would want us to and I know it; address—Mrs. Emma B Kluth—833 A, So. 8th Street, Manitowac, Wisconsin. (Mother of) 1st Lt. Donald B. Kluth, Pilot. Please write to her.

Now some how— Colonel David gave me the address of Robert S. Stewart co-pilot next of kin as: Mrs. Mary Ann Stewart, Willamina, Oregon (wife) and I wrote to her. Imagine my surprise to learn that he is not the Stewart I want, but was also taken as prisoner of war of the German Gov't on July 31 and the a.m. that my letter arrived, she had received a card from her hubby saying that he was o.k. and not to worry, things are as well as could be expected etc., but what a coincidence to get her address by mistake - and I particularly wanted the co-pilots address for Walt talked of him so often and used to spend liberty in London with him. When I noticed the nest of kin address and it said (wife) I hardly thought that he was married, for Walt had related several incidents Bob had told him that reminded him of 'his mom' etc., so will you please send through the home address of 2nd LT. Robert S Stewart co-pilot and I will be so grateful for it. I don't think any of the others have been reported as wounded, did Mrs Stewart say whether seriously and whether it stated the camp or hospital?

I do remember - when Walt called home the second time - from Kearney -"just to say Good-bye again and another thing Baby - if ever there is any report that comes through about me, don't you believe one word of it - do you hear? All you have to do Honey is keep on praying that I get back in one piece etc.," and when I scolded about him calling back the second time, he had that funny little laugh that was supposed to convince you that he wasn't worried, but being a 'mom' I knew what was in his heart - and he said" gosh one of the fellow's mother is here and I had a hard time convincing her that her

little fellow was going to be o.k. gosh, these poor moms - now remember what I said about any report, 'cause it will be the bunk and you take care of 'my little daddy'" and he has to say 'good-bye to his daddy again. "Silly long-legged brat, I would like to box his ears - for ever thinking about being a Bombardier"

Surely this letter is a bit mixed up and in true 'family' style - just, rambling on as the thoughts come about, guess maybe because I am a bit more lonesome this morning. We have had thirty letters returned from Eng. and a package - and I understand that the personal belongings and clothes will also be returned.

Our little Navy Night Fighter pilot has his Flt. Post office number in New York, so won't be long. I really must run along, Please do write again - real soon - and remember our Bob and Walt in your prayers. and let's hope we will have our boys home in time for Christmas. With the nicest kind of good wishes, Sincerely Peg Collins

P.S. I have not heard from Mrs. Chloe W Sanborn 739 Garden Street, San Marcos, Texas - wife of the Navigator.

Then you mention not having heard from Mrs. Crowder, I know that he was on the crew at Ardmore #2525 but then Colonel David does not list his name as one of the crew members, so apparently he wasn't with them, unless you have heard differently. Please let me know. I do know that the crew consisted of nine members - there was a time when it was ten. I must run along now, you know Mrs. Anderson, since you met 'our Walt' while in Kearney, I am enclosing a picture of him - for you - to put right next to one of his "Little Static Happy" buddy and let's hope they are together and we know that everything will turn out alright.

November 1 Went to morning devotion . Worked again on lessons.
Had phonograph in room. Heard some records. Had choir practice.
Padre was supposed to have meeting but didn't come. Got stove
put in room. Played cards. Worked with Crawford and Maurer.

Letter dated Nov. 1, 1944 postmarked same date Pittsburgh, Pa.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, I received your card yesterday and was happy to hear that you

had heard from your son. I received a card from Robert on Oct. 9th which he had written on August 14th. I also have received the name of the camp and the labels to sent him a box. Mrs. Collins wrote to me and the pilot of the boys' crew wrote also. The pilot Lt. Rowe had been wounded in the foot on the previous mission and is in the hospital. Another pilot took them up that day. Robert my son is at Camp Stalag 7A Germany #4238. I certainly was thrilled the day I received his card and recognized his printing. Have you heard anything more from Mrs. Maurer as I havn't. So far I know that the co-pilot Lt. Stewart, Lt. Walt Collins, your son and my son are prisoners of war. Sincerely, Mrs. R. F. McIntyre
P.S. I also had a letter from Cpl. George Crowder of the crew and it was written in England so I wrote back and asked him how he came to be in England.

Don Nelson wrote home first of August 9th, McIntyre wrote on August 14th. This letter indicates he was at a different camp. He arrived at Dulag Luft in Wetzler on Aug. 13th. My first card was written on Aug. 11th. I do not know when Maurer wrote his first card.

2 Had good oatmeal for breakfast. Went to morning devotion. Had Bible study with Padre Jackson on The Hound of Heaven. Very interesting. Had quartet practice. Read part of Shakespeare's Twelfth Night. Had cocoa. Good.

Card dated Nov. 2, 1944 postmarked same date Lake Nebagamon, Wis.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, Received your very welcome card. Up to date we have not had any word from August. Did get a nice letter from their pilot. He was not on the mission that day. I also got a letter from my son in England, he has talked to other men who were on that mission and they think the boys are in Switzerland as they radioed back to the other crews that they were heading back to England. Will write you a letter in a day or two with all he said. I am Sincerely, Mrs. Maurer

Letter dated Nov. 2, 1944 postmarked same date Staunton, Va.

Dear Mrs. Anderson: —Thank you very much for the letter and card about our boys. As you see from the above address I have moved and that has kept me busy.

I know about what you do, I guess. I have a card from Fred dated Aug 25th. I did get one notice from the War Dept. that no doubt you did not. An evening propaganda broadcast intercepted by our government said Lt. F. H. Sanborn was suffering from second degree burns on the hand and face. He must have been in the hospital being treated between Aug 6th and Aug 25th when his card was written. Fred's message put heart into me. He, too, spoke of the Red Cross and all it did for them. I am trying to write to Fred even now because an address was given on his card. Stalag Luft #3. He may never get them but a girl here had the same experience. Her husband is in the same camp. She showed me how to write and I obtained the prisoner of war forms and am trying to get through. This girl said her letters reached her husband O.K. It is a very complicated business. There are a million rules! If you have any trouble writing when you get John's address I will be glad to pass on what I have learned.

You might write to the following address. Ask for their pamphlets.
American Parcels for Prisoners of War Ass'n. 269 Delaware Ave. Buffalo, N.Y.
They are a great help in many ways.

I will keep in touch with you and thanks a lot for your card. It helps to know about the crew. By putting it all together we get a picture of what happened.

Best luck and good wishes. Sincerely, Chloe Sanborn

3 Led morning devotion. Talked about the picture of The Last Supper. Had a couple of pupils. Chow was late. No choir practice. Had bacon and eggs. Went to entertainment in Red Cross room. Had plum pudding for dinner. Talked.

I recalled that I had read that the same person posed for the figures of Jesus and Judas in da Vinci's Painting, so I related the story at morning devotion. The entertainment program may have been the first public performance of our jazz band. I do not remember for sure. The plum pudding probably came from a British R.C. parcel.

Letter dated Nov. 3, 1944 postmarked same date Minneapolis, Minn.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, Since I have written that card to you Mrs. Anderson, we have received Don's address and his labels from Washington, D.C. We got his address last week and we have already sent him a box and cigarettes. I do hope you have heard too. Wasn't it wonderful to get that card Mrs. Anderson? Just to see their handwriting is enough for me to know he is all right.

I wrote a letter to Mrs. Collins tonite as I heard from her today. She stated that Lt. Rowe wasn't the pilot at the time they went down as he was in the hospital with a wounded foot. Did she write and tell you that? The pilot was Lt. Kluth. His mother lives at Mrs. Emma B. Kluth 833 A So. 8th St. Manitowac, Wisc. Maybe you would like to write to her. Do let me know when you get your son's address as I will be anxious to know if they were kept together.

I will let you know if I hear any more news and hope to hear from you again.

Sincerely, Mrs. Eleanor Nelson

4 Addison let morning devotion. Took bath instead of going to Bible study. Got accordion and practiced awhile. Had choir practice. Sounded good. Maurer started writing music. First example not so good. Nelson got a card from his wife. Maybe I'll get mail soon.

A few instruments had come into camp and among them was an accordian. My sister had played accordian, and while I was at the Conservatory a fellow student offered to teach me accordian. I took ten lessons and two pieces that I worked on were "Skaters Waltz" and "Funiculì--Funiculà". I practiced on these numbers and also some hymns, but the results were not too good. I believe it was this same instrument that one boy carried with him on the march across Germany. I hope he got to keep it because it was rather heavy.

It was difficult to teach music with no keyboard instrument with which to play the examples. The accordian did not help much with this chore. Maurer eventually went through most of the music course without being able to hear the examples he wrote. I wonder how many times that has happened in the teaching of music theory.

Don was always the lucky one with mail.

5 Sunday Nice day again. Went to church. Padre Morgan spoke. I led choir and congregation. Nice service. Talked with Alex Palmer. Went to afternoon singspiration. Choir sang again. Played cards. Washed out some clothes. Shouldn't work on Sunday.

6 Raining. Went to morning devotion. Got library books. Had choir practice. Sang alot. Had one class. Got Red Cross rations. Nelson got seven cards from home. Had fried potatoes and spam. Hot in room.

7 Rained most of day. Went to morning devotion. Sgt. Doss sewed my sack for me. Talked with Padre Jackson and Churchill. Got haircut which I certainly needed. Played cards. Life isn't bad here.

Padre Jackson had used the poem The Hound of Heaven in a Bible study and we enjoyed it so much we wanted him to enlarge on it and he said he would at Sunday service. He asked me to find some appropriate hymns which depicted Christ as someone who follows after a person such as is implied in the poem. I remember, especially, his telling me not to use the hymn "Lead On O King Eternal". I looked through the available hymns but could find nothing appropriate, so I just picked generally accepted hymns for the service.

8 Went to devotional service. Brian Cleworth gave good talk. Played solitaire. Read some. Had choir practice. Had one lesson. Ate dinner. Fried some potatoes again. Baked a cake during day. Helped Crawford. Maurer finished piece.

If the stove in the room was not being used we could cook on it. Fried potatoes in a little butter made an excellent meal. You may notice that no potatoes have been peeled lately.

9 Had roll call early. Padre Jackson came for Bible study. Very interesting discussion. Had quartet practice. Read some of book about Alfred Tennyson by Walter Ware. Played cards.

This was probably the time the German interpreter did not show up. Padre Jackson decided to continue and quoted passages from the Old Testament which he felt depicted the Germans and the Russians.. I believe it was from the book of Daniel. As I

read Daniel now he must have referred to the beasts in Chapter 7, but I have forgotten the signifigence of the passage. He made it rather exciting.

10 Went to morning devotion. Waited in line all morning with Nelson for library book. Had choir practice and quartet practice. Had one class in music. Played cards again after lockup. Had big discussion.

11 Armistice Day but nothing happened. Rained all day. Had both roll calls inside. Read some. Worked with Crawford and Maurer. Read some more. More rations came in. Had fried potatoes again.

12 Sunday Went to church. Choir sang a group of numbers but didn't do so good. My fault I guess. Padre Jackson spoke. Practiced accordian. Talked with Palmer. Read more of book "The Mysterious Universe" by Sir James Jeans.

13 Snowed last night but most of it gone by morning. Cold. Went to morning devotion. Went to library. Got new book. Wrote letter home. Had choir practice. Good group there. Had another class. Talked with Maurer. More rumors.

Letter dated November 13, 1944:

Time has certainly been passing rapidly lately. I guess that is because I have been so busy. My music classes are still going although I give the pupils a day between classes now. Maurer is about as far advanced as anybody. We have two accordians here and I have been doing some practicing. I may start playing for church. The choir is still going. Yesterday

we sang 4 numbers before church began and then one during the service. Also sang at the afternoon service. That keeps me busy too. I'm high tenor (?!) in a quartet which sang yesterday. I'm writing an arrangement of "The Bells of St. Mary" for the Catholic choir. May use it too. I will have to start on Christmas music before long. Nelson got seven cards from home last week so I should get some mail soon. One of the cards mentioned that you had written to his mother. The last one was dated Sept. 26th. I try and read a couple of books a week. Read some Shakespeare and an astronomy book. Have one now on "Organization and Administration of Secondary Schools". It is rather deep. A new and better group of hymnals came in which we are using now. Could certainly use some music manuscript paper. Had our first snow last night. All gone today. Beginning to get cold but we are ok. Time to eat now. Hope everything is all right at home. I'm getting along famously. Till later

Received Feb. 13th

14 Been down 100 days. Quite cold today. Led morning devotions. Talked about north star. Read. Talked with Palmer about new scale. Interesting. Talked with church council. Read poem "The Hound of Heaven". Listened to records.

This time I do not remember what I said but the north star is a provocative topic.

15 Another cold day. Went to morning devotion. Read. Had choir practice. Quite a number there. Went to communion service. Padre Jackson in charge. A nice service. Bought prunes. Lights went out.

16 Not quite so cold. Went to morning devotion. Fixed salmon patties. Went to Bible Study by Padre Jackson on the tabernacles. Gave Snell a music lesson. Talked with Palmer again. He's an interesting fellow. Cooked some prunes. Talked after lights out.

17 Went to morning devotion. Wrote card home. Started writing music. Went to choir practice. Not as good as it should have been. Had one lesson. Read. Talked with fellows. All about girlfriends.

Most of our conversations centered around food. I noticed that when we got enough to eat the topic of conversation usually turned to women.

Card dated November 17, 1944:

Another card to let you know I'm getting along OK. Went to communion service a couple of days ago. Just like the ones we have at home. The choir sang quite a bit. Just got a soloist which will help alot. Going to start on Christmas music soon. Have been working on a new system of music with another fellow. I wish I had taken some physics some time or other.

Received Mar. 10th

18 Getting cold again. Went to morning devotion. Read. Renewed book at library. Had another lesson. Began to snow. Got more Red Cross food. Made a batch of goo to eat for breakfast. May get colder. Took bath.

19 Sunday Not so cold again. Rained most of day. Went to church. Padre Morgan spoke. Choir sang "Come Ye Thankful People come". Meals were good today. Talked with church council. Good fellows. Read. Helped Maurer with music.

20 Nice day. Went to morning devotion. Read. Ate lunch. Went to choir practice. Had 16 there. Getting better. Had church council meeting. Lasted over an hour. Missed lessons. Washed clothes. Copied music for trumpet. Lock up at 4:00.

One of the records we had was Harry James' version of "The Carnival of Venice" which was a theme and variations on the well-known tune. Our trumpet player, whose name is now forgotten, wanted to see this on paper so I tried to transcribe it for him.

21 Windy. Went to morning devotion. Had church council meeting. Peeled spuds. Ate early. Worked with Snell. Had quartet practice. Went and talked with Padre. Rained. Had jam session in barracks. Finished book "The Story of Music" by ? .

22 Another fair day. Had morning devotion in Red Cross room. Wrote new arrangement for choir. Had good choir practice. 17 there. Organ came into lager. Padre Morgan came in for awhile. Had trumpet or rather cornet lesson. Good for me. Talked.

As I recall morning devotion was usually held in Barracks 9. It was unusual to meet in the Red Cross room.

One piano and three pump organs came into camp. I would have loved to have had the piano, but I believe it

went to B compound. Nevertheless, the small organ was a big help in future arrangements and for accompanying the congregation at church services. It was a big help to me. There were a number of fellows who could play.

My trumpet player friend gave me a lesson in response to my writing out some music for him. I had taken trumpet for a semester at the Conservatory. It was another fun activity.

23 Played organ for morning devotion. Went to Bible Study with Padre Morgan. Read. Talked with fellows. Nelson got 5 more cards. Mother notified Sept. 7th. Crawford's birthday. Made more goo.

24 Crawford led morning devotion. Rained. Practiced organ. Had choir practice. Gave lesson to Count. Talked with fellows. This has been a good experience.

25 Still raining. Went to morning devotion and Bible Study with Padre Morgan. After lunch I practiced in Red Cross room on organ. German soldiers heard me. Began to get full ration for this week. Had jam session in barracks. Barracks was searched but nothing was taken.

The Red Cross room was our main meeting place. The library was located in one corner of this room. The organ was portable but was usually left there. This day I was practicing with a lot of fellows in the library and a couple of Germans also in the room. I wrote about this incident in an article for the Reader's Digest, Humor in Uniform, sometime in the early fifties. It was not picked for publication but here it is.

In Stalag Luft IV American prisoners-of-war were rejoicing over a new pump organ which had just been brought into the compound at Christmas time. As one of the American sergeants was playing Silent Night, a German guard remarked, "Ach! Stille Nacht", and motioned that he would like to try and play it. The sergeant got up and the German played the carol quite well. Turning the pages of the hymnal the sergeant asked the guard to play other tunes: Hark! the Herald Angels Sing, Away in the Manger, and Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken, all of which the German immediately recognized and played. The talking of the other American prisoners in the same room abruptly stopped when they turned in amazement to see the German playing the one forbidden piece, The Star-Spangled Banner.

26 Sunday Nice day. Fairly warm. Went to church service in wash room. Padre Jackson spoke. I played the organ. Helped Baier on clarinet. Had long service. Had roll call. Read "Buried Alive", a novel. Talked with Nelson.

Many times Nelson and I would sing together. He would sing the melody and I would harmonize. He liked country music which includes more intervals of 4ths and 5ths, so he liked it better when I included them. I, personally, preferred using 3rds and 6ths, but I enjoyed trying to please his ear.

27 Got a G I blanket. Led morning devotion. Musicians had meeting. Helped move the organ. Had good choir practice. Had church council meeting. Read. Started another book. I have lots to read but not enough time to do it all. Wrote letter home. Guess I won't make it home for Christmas.

Letter dated November 27, 1944:

Another letter to finish out the quota for this month. Havn't received any mail yet but should do so soon. Nelson got five more cards last week. You had written them again saying you were notified Sept. 7th. That's pretty good time, just a month and a day. Had a good church service yesterday. A small organ similar to the ones in the states came in and I played it for the service. The choir is much larger and we will start on Christmas music next week. I think we will have a Thanksgiving service. The food has been better this week. We are getting a full Red Cross parcel this week. The days are getting shorter so we spend more time inside the barracks. More musical instruments are coming in all the time. I intend to use them for Christmas. I started taking trumpet lessons again. Played the clarinet awhile yesterday. The weather hasn't got too cold yet. Seems unusual for this time of year and this far north. I'm supposed to get a glee club up now in a couple of weeks for a Christmas program. I don't know when I am going to find time to do everything I'm supposed to do. At first this was like a rest camp but I don't have much time to rest now. It looks like I won't be home in person for Christmas but maybe we can celebrate when I do get home. Merry Christmas to both of you and also a Happy New Year. I'll be home before too long a time. Don't worry about me because I'm ok and getting along fine. Crew members ok.

Received Feb. 26, 1946 (!!)

28 Beginning to get colder again. Went to morning devotion. Read some more. Carried the organ again. Had a harmony lesson. Had quartet practice. Read. Made more goo for breakfast. Talked some more. Do alot of that.

29 Colder. Went to morning devotion. Read. Had council meeting. Got more rations. Went to choir practice. Had organ ___?___. Early roll call. Made some manuscript paper.

30 Thanksgiving. Had bath. Had barley at 10:00. Read. Finished part of book yesterday Organization and Administration of Secondary Schools by Harl Douglas. Cleared wash room for church service but didn't have it. Watched football game awhile. Had stew after practicing organ. Potatoes at 7:00 P.M. It's been a good day. Thanks. Put belt in pants.

We expected to have a church service to celebrate Thanksgiving. Padre Jackson later apologized for not coming as he did not know Thanksgiving was such an important holiday for us. He discovered our meaning of Thanksgiving in the other compounds and was sorry he did not make it for us. We had alot for which to be thankful.

Sometimes meetings were held in the washroom building which was next to the latrine building. I expect everyone had to stand for those meetings.

Letter dated November 30, 1944 postmarked same date Miami, Fla.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, I am just getting letters off to the crew members' mothers and enclosing a letter form that is addressed to our Walt. Won't you please write him a little note and sign it "John Anderson's mother". I know it will make Walt most happy to

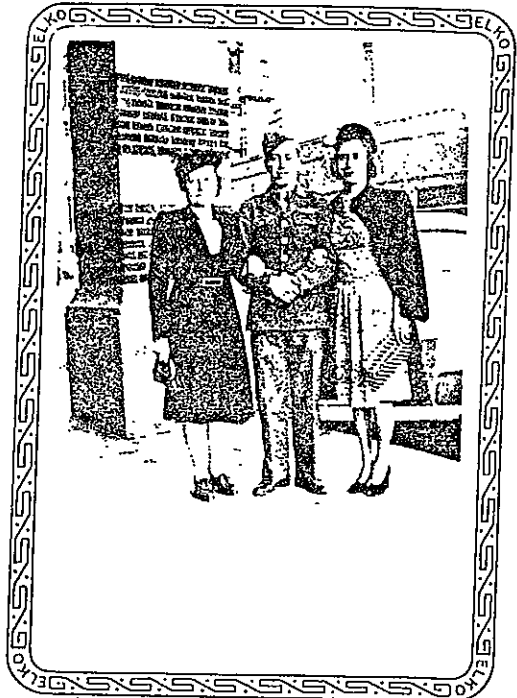
hear from you and it will be a comfort to me also.

An enclosing a card, please give us John's address so we may drop him a note. You did say he was in Stalag # 4 but failed to give us his prisoner of war number and without that, I can't get the mail through. We have had a card from Walt and it was dated August 10th and it took three months and eight days for it to arrive—now isn't that terrible? I am so thankful that we heard and as you said about John's card—just to see his writing or printing gives us such comfort.

There was little enough on the card, other than he was safe and sound and also a P.W. & that Red Cross was wonderful to them and I was to be sure and give Bob notice of his whereabouts. Bob is the brother who is the naval aircorp night-fighter. Oh gosh, but we were so happy and thankful for just those few lines.

His address followed from Washington within a few days and then the parcel labels and tobacco labels arrived. I sent the parcel label to that Buffalo New York concern, feeling that perhaps they would be able to get theirs through a little quicker. Please excuse the mistakes and wrong 'keys' but my fingers are so cold this morning, making typing a little difficult, AND IT IS UNUSUAL FOR IT TO BE QUITE THIS COLD.

I have a few other notes to get off, so forgive the shortness of this letter. Please send us John's address and some further news if you have any, would love to hear from you, and write to Walt. And don't forget our Bob and Walt in your prayers. Sincerely, Marion Collins
P.S. Mrs. Anderson, I did thank you for the picture of our Walt and John—it meant so much to us to be able to keep it. Thank you again.



Picture of Lt. Walter Collins and Sgt. John Anderson taken at Kearney, Nebraska.

The second photo is of my mother and sister Vivian and me, taken at the same place in Kearney, Nebraska probably by Lt. Collins.

December 1 Went to morning devotion. Practiced organ. Wrote music for organ, cello, and violin. Had late chow and choir practice. Sounded good. Got manuscript paper. Started music class in barracks. Make cake with Nelson. Tasted good. Finished The Robe by Lloyd C. Douglas. Good story.

2 Another nice day for December. Nelson got 2 more cards. Went to morning devotion and then to Bible Study. Rehearsed with the violins and the organ. Had glee club practice. Did fair. Another jam session in barracks. Had one class in afternoon.

The Catholic boys had a choir also and I heard them practicing some Gregorian chant. I could hear some good voices so I decided to have a glee club that could use the good voices in both groups--Protestant and Catholic. Choir practice was M W F and glee club was T T S, all at 1:00 P.M.

The jam sessions began to sound better and better. It wasn't long before we decided to have a program and feature the jazz band.

3 Sunday Choir sang "Bells of St. Mary". Did fine. Got alot of compliments. Had barley to eat. Padre Morgan gave good talk. Went around getting college songs. Started copying music. I certainly keep busy,

The rendition of the "Bells of St. Mary" went well. I had written out the parts in the key of F but found that that key was too high. I wrote the two violin parts and the cello part in the key of D and that worked out well. I still have all the music we used for this performance. The string parts are written on manuscript paper; the organ part is written on the back of a Chesterfield wrapper first and then transposed to a large piece of paper. All my work sheets and the reverse melody for the soloist are written on rough greenish gray cigarette wrappers which even then were hard to read. The choir parts are written on manuscript paper using all the space available--4 1st tenor, 2 2nd tenor, 2 1st bass, and 3 2nd bass. Evidently some students made the copies. The cellist was Charles E. Becker from Sheridan, Wyoming.

THE BELLS OF ST. MARY

2. IN.

The first system of handwritten musical notation consists of three staves. The top staff is for Violin I, the middle for Violin II, and the bottom for Cello/Double Bass. The music is in G major and 4/4 time. The Violin I part features several slurs and accents. The Violin II part includes a 'Bva' marking. The Cello/Double Bass part has a 'BEB' marking at the end.

The second system of handwritten musical notation consists of three staves, continuing the Violin I, Violin II, and Cello/Double Bass parts from the first system. The notation includes various rhythmic values, slurs, and articulation marks.

The third system of handwritten musical notation consists of three staves, continuing the Violin I, Violin II, and Cello/Double Bass parts. The Violin I part has a '1' marking above a slur. The Cello/Double Bass part has a 'Bells of St. Mary' marking above it.

The 1st violinist rewrote his part and put in some bowings.
The other two parts for 2nd violin and cello are in my writing.

For the glee club's first performance I decided to make an arrangement of college football songs. I went around to the different rooms in the barracks and found people who knew the words and music to the football songs of the universities in the mid-west. It included Minnesota, hats off to thee, Indiana, my Indiana, the Notre Dame song, On Wisconsin and maybe some others which I do not remember now. In the Indiana song I was not sure which was correct: "We're all for you" or "Hurrah for you". I arranged for a trumpet to accompany the glee club and supply the musical modulations between the pieces.

4 Went to morning devotion. Copied choir music. Had choir practice. Had nice crowd there. Helped ? council meeting after practice. Had a music lesson. Started copying music for glee club. Nelson drew lines on paper. Gave music lesson in room 12. I find it easy to keep busy.

Evidently, I didn't have much manuscript paper. I thought it was nice of Nelson to volunteer to draw staff lines on paper.

The reference to room 12 confuses me. As you walk into the barracks the odd numbered rooms are on the left and the even on the right. Room 3, our room, was second in line. I am sure that there were only ten rooms occupied in each barracks. At the back of the barracks a wash room was on the left and the latrine was on the right. If the wash room was numbered it should have been room 11. Maybe there was an outer room just outside the latrine. I do not remember.

5 Getting colder. Went to morning devotion. Copied music all morning. Had glee club practice. Beginning to sound good. Had music lesson before and after roll call. Had another trumpet lesson. Didn't do much. Talked with Ray.

6 Snowed for a couple of minutes. Went to morning devotion. Talked with Addison about Christmas play. Washed hair and took bath. Had a good choir practice. Had music class in barracks. Copied more music. Had trumpet lesson.

7 Had long roll call. Inspection of bowls and cups. Went to morning devotion. Didn't get any lunch. Supposed not to get any dinner. Had good glee club practice. Got hoarse talking with Maurer and Nelson. Had fish for dinner. More rations.

One of the duties we had every day was to peel a bucket of potatoes in the morning for the dinner meal. Each room solved the problem in different ways. In some rooms everyone would peel two or three potatoes and be finished in about five to ten minutes, or two or more people could be assigned the task in a rotating manner. The job wasn't too bad at first, but when the weather got bad it was a cold, disagreeable job. It was possible to do the peeling in the wash house, but it was unheated there and nobody liked doing it in the cold. Some fellows in our room had other duties such as sweeping up, or caring for the stove, or collecting the coal briquettes, bringing the food to the room, etc. Peeling the potatoes was one of my chores which I did almost daily for quite awhile. Then we found that if you went to pick up the potatoes late enough the supply had

run out. It became the norm for our room to just skip the task altogether. Our transgression of the rule was found out and was brought to the attention of our governing council. They decided to omit us from one day's food rationing and eliminate our coal ration for some period of time (I forget exactly). We had it coming. Our sins had been found out, and we took our punishment. We stayed out of our cold room until bedtime.

8 Rained some inside by my head. Led morning devotion. Had one lesson. Helped both Andys with play. Had choir practice. Didn't do so good. Couldn't sing so good. My voice getting hoarse because I've been singing too much. Had music class in barracks. Crawford started Bible class inside.

Locked in at sundown there was little to do except play cards and talk. I had begun to teach a music class in my barracks, and Crawford decided to start a Bible Study class. I think I was the one who decided to start with the book of Proverbs and take a chapter every night. I was proud that Crawford had decided to be in charge.

9 Raining again. Went to morning devotion after getting up early and copying music. Had short choir practice with instruments. Went to Bible Study with Padre Morgan.. Talked about Romans. Had glee club practice. Had Bible Study in barracks. Didn't get much done in writing music.

10 Sunday Went to church. Padre Jackson gave a good sermon. Choir sang "Send Out Thy Light" by Gounod. Got a pair of socks. Went to afternoon song service. Brought organ into barracks to write out arrangement but only played songs and hymns. Went to Bible study in barracks. Wrote card home.

This card never arrived at home.

I have the choir parts for this anthem which I just copied out of one of the song books I had. In order to maximize the use of the precious Manuscript paper the string parts were written on the back of the "Bells of St. Mary" parts. Each vocal part has just two lines of music and covers both sides of the paper. There are copies for 4 1st tenors, 5 2nd tenors, 5 1st basses, and 4 2nd basses. All the vocal parts are in the key of F, the key in the songbook. However, the string parts are in D, the actual key of the performance. I saved all these parts because I thought I might be able to use them again when we arrived at a new camp.

11 Cold again. Went to morning devotion. Worked on music awhile. Had choir practice. Sang Christmas carols. Had church council meeting. Went to Bible study in barracks. Hoover led the discussion. Nelson's wedding anniversary. Made a schedule to follow for next 2 weeks.

One of the fellows in our room was Harold Hoover from Columbus, Ohio, and he was gung ho about the Bible study. After about a week he expressed dissatisfaction about the project. He said he thought we would be able to come up with good explanations for the problems he encountered . . .

in the Bible. Our discussions were not solving his problems. I tried to explain to him that even one insight was worth the trouble. Nothing comes easily, and wisdom is acquired after trying many times.

12 Snowing when we got up. Went to morning devotion.
Worked on play with both Andys. Had glee club practice.
More work on play. Got note from McIntyre who is in hospital here. Crowder is in lager A. Rowe went back to the states.
What a crew. All but pilot in Germany. Went to Bible study in barracks. Wrote out music.

I have in my possession a very beat-up piece of prisoner stationery. The printing on it is fading and some of the folds have obliterated the words. This is the note from McIntyre addressed to Crawford. I'll try to transcribe it.

At the top: I'm in ward 13 ...surprise of your life, George Crowder is over in A lager (bks 7 rm 3) with me. He was shot down in Oct. on his 26 mission. Here is a bit of damn good news. Stewart is a P.O.W. and not dead as we believed. Anderson, Stewart's mother heard from them sometime in Sept. Bill Broad was shot down not long ago. He should be in this [camp] some place. Tell Addison I said hello and not to worry about that money I owe him. He won't need it for awhile. I sure was glad to hear he was O.K. I have been all over this damn Germany since I left camp for ____?. I got to this camp on the 12th of Nov. so you see I've been around a good bit. Has any of our crew heard from home yet? I havn't because I've been moving so much since I've been a P.O.W. I'm in the hospital now with the same thing I had back in Ardmore. George

and the rest of the boys send their best wishes. Try to answer this right away by means of the medic or one of the boys going to the hospital. Your pal Mac

It is no wonder that we had lost track of Mac. Crowder had become an extra gunner in the squadron after we did not come back and finished his tour of duty at 25. He had always wanted to be a first engineer so he volunteered for another tour and got shot down on the first mission and ended up in our camp in A lager. That is a real coincidence.

He deserves a lot of credit for his contribution to the war effort.

13 Went to morning devotion. Service about Padre Jackson who has left. Ground covered with ice. Helped Reisman with solo. Churchill came over and helped copy music. Had 22 there for choir practice. Early roll call. Started on more music. Had harmony class in room 12. Had interesting Bible study in barracks. Talked.

The rumor was that the Germans moved Padre Jackson because he was too outspoken. He was a great person; we were sorry to lose him.

Near the back of my notebook I have written some notes which came from a Bible Study with Padre Jackson. It is entitled 7 Dual Calls

Abraham	"Faith"	Gen. 22:11
Jacob	"Sacrifice"	Gen. 46:2
Moses	"Holiness"	Ex. 3:4
Samuel	"Service"	I Sam. 3:10

Martha "Knowledge" Luke 10:41

Simon "Suffering" Luke 22:31

Saul "Glory" Acts 9:4

I am glad I have this remembrance of him.

14 Cold day. Had to talk with Tom Edwards so didn't get to morning devotion until later and left early. Peeled potatoes. Had early glee club rehearsal. They sang at program at 1:00. Sounded pretty fair. Fairly good program. Brought organ into barracks. Played and Steve sang. Had Bible study.

Early in December the Germans built a stage in the Red Cross room with extra lights. This may have been because the Germans had renewed vigor, the Battle of the Bulge began two days later, or maybe they just decided to be helpful. Tom Edwards was from New York and was a promoter of sorts. He had arranged for the program to be performed, and we had a full house. The glee club sang the collection of football songs and the audience responded vigorously. The medley ended with On Wisconsin with the words "fight, fight, fight, we'll win this game". I was taking a bow in front of the group on stage when the interpreter said to me, "It is forbidden to sing fight song." I told him it was a football song, very common in the U.S. He said, "Who gave you permission to sing fight song?" I pointed out Tom Edwards and then led my group off stage. As I recall the jazz band also played and there must have been some other acts.

It was nice to be able to bring the organ into the barracks. Barracks 1 had the medics' room just to the right of the front door, room 2. Steve and Ken were the medics, the only British prisoners in C compound, and they lived in that room. Sick call was held in their room daily after morning roll call. Steve had been shot down in September 1939 so had been a prisoner for over five years. He had been all over Germany and had finally ended up here. He had learned about pharmacy and thus became a medic. He had a nice voice and he sang a number of songs from a hymn book which I still have called Best-loved Hymns containing 177 pieces. I also have The Blue Book for Male Voices Twice 55, but it was less useful. William Stevens was from Leeds, England. The other medic was Ken Warren who was from Plymouth, England.

15 By far the coldest day yet. Heard that it was 23 below. Heavy wind. Went to morning devotion. Copied music with Churchill again. Had choir practice in Red Cross room. Made cake with Maurer and Nelson. Almost got into argument with Nelson. Hoover stopped us. Went to Bible study. I led the service on the 7th chapter of Proverbs.

16 22 years old. Where will I be next year at this time? This has been a year of many different experiences. Not quite so cold but I almost froze my feet. Day same as usual. Ate cake. Had glee club practice. Wrote letter home. New fellows came in. Stomach didn't feel too good. Will I get married this year as supposed?

It was nice of the fellows to make a cake for my birthday.

This was another letter that did not make it home.

My mother was 27 and my father 31 when they got married. I had thought for years that I would get married when I was 22. I missed it by four years.

17 Sunday Peeled spuds. Went to church. Padre Morgan came unexpectedly. I called in the rooms of half the compound in order to get more there. Went to song service in afternoon. Saw Crowder across the street. Feel fine. Brought organ into the barracks. Finished piano part. Went to Bible study. Got into big discussion.

Lager (or compound) A was cater-cornered across from our lager C. We waved at Crowder and yelled at him although the guards in the tower eventually motioned for us to move on. We had made arrangements to see him through the medics.

18 Went to morning devotion. Worked on music awhile. Had sauerkraut for lunch. Went to choir practice. Sang pretty good. Had church council meeting. Practiced with solo. Wrote out more music. Went to Bible study. Lights went out early. Talked awhile.

19 Busy all day. The other three here went to hospital and saw Mac and Crowder. I wrote out music. Had glee club practice. Practiced with soloist. Had roll call. Captain got mad. Got more Red Cross. Nelson got 4 cards and a letter. Went to Bible study. Quite a discussion. Had air raid.

20 Went to morning devotion. Had quartet rehearsal and then practiced solo. Had choir practice with orchestra. Sounded fair. Worked with them for awhile. Had seconds for lunch. Didn't do much after lock up. I feel tired. Went to Bible study. Good session. Wish I were home but this is good for me.

21 Went to morning devotion. Helped the three other crew members make a big Christmas cake. It ought to be good. Had glee club practice. I'm beginning to sing alot. Had quartet practice. Bible study in barracks. Nelson got letter and more cards. I should get some soon. Lights out.

Letter dated December 21, 1944 postmarked Dec. 22

Plaistow, N.H.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, There is no doubt you've been wondering why you havn't heard from me, because I'm sure some of the other families have told you I wrote to them. I wrote to all of you at the same time while I was in the hospital in England. George Crowder, who was also on our crew and didn't fly the day the boys went down, brought all your addresses to me in the hospital. Three of them proved to be wrong and after about 3 months my own letter came back to me. I hope your address is correct this time.

I was wounded in the left foot by flak on the mission previous to the one on which the boys went down, and I spent 2½ months in the hospital in England before being sent back to this country. I returned here the first of November and was given a 26 day leave. Then my wife and I went to Atlantic City, N.J. where I reported for reassignment. After staying there several days the doctors decided to give me another 21 day convalescence leave to allow my foot to rest longer. So now I'm home again, fortunately for Christmas. Soon I will return to Atlantic City and be assigned, probably in this country for awhile, but one never knows for how long.

It was very kind of you to write to Ardmore for the addresses of the boys and then get in touch with the families. They all appreciated it and it made things so much easier for all of you to be able to correspond and learn of the safety of them all. I think it's swell that they are all

alive and not seriously injured. Of course being a prisoner of war isn't pleasant but being alive comes first. I guess they are fairly well treated, but the monotony is the most unpleasant part of it. We all hope the war there can end soon so they can all be released. Right now the German counter offensive isn't very encouraging, but I'm sure nothing dangerous will come of it.

It is strange my wife never heard from any of you, but probably her address was given as Ardmore when it was sent to you. I know you knew she was leaving there so you and no one knew what her address would be.

Am enclosing a couple of snap shots taken in Ardmore last April. I am sure you and Johnnie will want them. I may have more soon. If so I will try to sent them also, if they are good.

I hope you'll forgive me since this is the first letter from me, but I'm hoping you'll receive this one. I sent the other one to 13th St. but apparently there is no 2920 E. 13th.

Please write when you can, especially if you hear any more about John or the other boys, You may use this home address for the time being.

The best to you all for Christmas and the New Year. Sincerely,

"Bob" Rowe

22 Went to morning devotion again. Had quartet practice and then choir practice with orchestra. Sounded pretty good. Glee club stayed in Red Cross room after lock up. Did alot of singing. Almost got sore throat. Had Christmas story at Bible study. Two new fellows came in.

Staying in the Red Cross room after lock up was not too bad. We were let out when dinner was served and then returned

to our barracks. It gave us more time to practice.

With two new men our room now had twenty-two fellows.

On a Christmas card postmarked Dec. 22 from Staunton, Va.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, I hope you have heard again from your son. We have had only the one card from Fred so far. We pray for all the boys as we do for Fred. We know that Fred is at Stalag Luft 3 Germany. He has no prison number so far. We have sent a box as we got a label. It is hard waiting to hear. I wish Xmas would bring us all a little line from them. Thank you for writing me. I am teaching and don't keep up with letters as I should. I think all the boys are accounted for now & safe. Best wishes Mrs. F. H. Sanborn

Card undated with no post mark from Miami:

We were so happy to see his handwriting again, and I do believe that it is the nicest Birthday present I have ever received. I'm claiming it at any rate. COPY received Dec. 9th—dated August 26, 1944 "Dear Dad: This sure is one devil of a way to end up but it just couldn't be helped so that's that. The treatment is Fair—no kicks, and altogether life is quite bearable—We have sports, including soft-ball and swimming. The food combined with Red Cross parcel every week is good enough to get by on. Have Mom drop a line to the "S-2" Officer at my old address saying I am a P.W. and they will appreciate it. Lots of love, Walter" Sincerely hope that you have had more news by this time. Lovingly and in haste, Peg Collins

Part of a Christmas card, no date:

Mr. & Mrs. Anderson: First off, I want to tell you how very happy it made me to hear that John is safe & still with Don. You see, I had the pleasure to meet your son while I was visiting Don at Ardmore. Both John & Ernest Crawford had sent me little notes in Don's letters & both of them have talked on a record that Don sent me. The three of them were awfully good friends & so it made me very happy indeed to hear that they were still all three together. Mrs. Nelson shares all of your letters with me—so please don't feel that you have to write me too. Best wishes, Mrs. D. Nelson

Note from a Christmas card undated:

Dear Mrs. Anderson, Have you had any more word from your son? I surely hope so. I havn't heard from Ernest any more. I am very glad to hear from you any time and would appreciate any information you have from any of the boys. Will close for now. Hope to hear from you soon. Love, Mrs. Crawford

23 Read the Christmas story at morning devotion. Went over and had choir practice with play. After lunch rehearsed with string group. Had 2 roll calls in afternoon.. Have been busy. Rehearsed with Steve. Conducted carol service in barracks. Read Christmas story and gave a prayer. Wish I had more of the Christmas spirit.

Life was becoming one rehearsal after another. That evening I put the organ in the hall of the barracks and we all sang Christmas carols. Steve sang a solo. Then I read the Christmas story from the Gospel of Luke and offered a prayer, mainly for the folks at home. A fellow came to me afterwards and said that it was the most beautiful, appropriate prayer he had ever heard and asked how I had done so well extemporaneously. I told him it just came out that way, although I had given it some thought earlier and knew pretty much what I wanted to say.

24 Sunday Got Christmas parcel but didn't open it. Went to church. Padre Morgan led in communion service. Had barley for lunch. Had glee club practice. Glee club put on program in Red Cross room. Sounded pretty good. It's taken alot of work but it is still fun. Had spuds for supper. Had choir practice with play. Started playing organ and played for about an hour

while the fellows sang. Choir sang as background for play.
Good play. Walked around compound after dark. Talked with
YMCA representative about needs of choir. Glee club sang carols
at midnight with brass choir. Nice day.

Had three performances on Christmas eve and they were all effective. My memory fails me concerning the glee club program and the play. I do not remember what we sang. However, the last service at midnight is much clearer.

The Germans did not lock us up as usual. I do believe singing carols at midnight in the middle of the compound with a brass choir was a moving experience. I recall the YMCA man said he was deeply moved by it. He told me when I saw him earlier that we had less equipment and supplies than any other camp he had visited. I told him I needed music manuscript paper, music harmony textbooks, and other supplies. He said he would see that we would get them.

Let me digress for a moment. In 1993 I was informed by the Stalag Luft IV group that arrangements were being made for a visit to the camp site April 28-May 5, 1993. Earlier they had told about a monument which had been placed at the site on Sept. 4, 1992. The idea of a return trip did not interest me much, and on March 9th of '93 I had a serious car accident from which it took quite awhile to recover. Thus I could not have gone anyway.

When the notice of another visit in 1994 came it still did not excite me very much. Another group sent information about a visit to the camp site and then to some of the cities on the

march. I thought that would be rather interesting but did not reply. I understand that latter trip was cancelled.

Then a notice arrived that "Mr. & Mrs. Chris Christensen from Denmark will join the tour in Berlin. Mr. Christiansen was at STALAG LUFT IV during Christmas 1944. He was employed by the War Prisoners' Aid of the World's YMCA."

This was the man I had talked to on the 24th and who had attended our service in the middle of the compound at midnight. That helped make up my mind. I decided to go and talk with him once again.

In a reprint of an article he wrote for the EX-POW BULLETIN, January 1994, which I received just before I left Mr. Christiansen writes that "(These) pages in my Wartime Log will testify that I ...had the privilege of spending Christmas 1944 together with American and British Air Force men at Stalag Luft IV, Gross Tuchow, an unforgettable experience." A reproduction of a rather elaborate patch is shown with symbols of the RAF and the Air Corp patch chained to wings. The message reads "All the best wishes and thanks from the British and American P.O.W.'s Room 2 Barracks 10 Stalag Luft 4 Christmas 1944" A number of signatures are around the edges. Below is another reprint which reads "Stalag Luft 4 25/12/44 x-mas dinner by the American and British Camp Leaders." Three names that I know are listed in the 14 signatures: S/Sgt. Francis A. Troy (from Ohio), who was leader of C lager, T/Sgt. F. (for Francis or Frank) S. Paules U.S.AAF (known as Man of Confidence from Lensdale, Pa.), and Leslie Caplan, Capt. M.C. U.S.AAF (more about him later). This does prove that he was in camp

at Christmas time.

So, on April 25th of this year my son Jack and I joined the group in New York and flew to Berlin. At the get-acquainted dinner at the Berlin Penta Hotel on April 26, 1994 I was conversing with the lady next to me when I discovered she was from Kansas City and used to live about four blocks from my high school. It was Norma Sites, wife of Jack Sites who was on my left. Jack had been in C lager in Barracks 8. "It's a small world after all."

Following dinner I moved to another table to converse with Mr. Christiansen. I started by saying he did look familiar to me, but I would not have recognized him. I said, "You probably don't remember me," and he agreed. I proceeded to tell him how I had met with him on the 24th and what he had said about our camp having few supplies. I told him some of the things I had requested that day and that he had said they would be sent. Then I said, "They havn't come. I'm still waiting." He replied by saying we had left camp too soon.

My association with him and his wife Inger was one of the high points of the trip. He gave us a lot of insights about the region in Poland and especially Berlin where he lived during the war. His house/office was bombed out, but at the end of the war he was arrested by the Russians and spent a year in prison in Russia. Thus he was incarcerated longer than I was.

I now believe that the experience of being a prisoner may add to the nobility of your soul. Certainly the veterans on this trip were all fine fellows, and the Christiansens fitted in well with us. In 1944 he gave us hope when he visited us. I remember my

elation after my meeting with him.

The YMCA deserves a lot of credit for its work with prisoners. The instruments and books that we had came from them. The hymn-books and the few other copies of music I had came from the Y. I was a member of the YMCA when I was in high school and college. It is a fine organization which was a big help to me personally.

25 Opened Christmas parcel. Got alot of good things to eat. The Red Cross deserves alot of credit. Went to church. Choir sang The Holy City. Brian Cleworth gave the sermon. Enjoyable. Had barley again for dinner. Didn't eat much. Put on another glee club program. Sounded better that the other one. Had big discussion about wasting time in room. Went to church again. Choir sang a group of numbers and carols. Put on play again. Rounded up a bunch of fellows and went caroling in all the barracks. Fun. It's been a nice Christmas. Had turkey for supper and alot of cake. It is nice to have friends.

Four performances and caroling--what a great way to spend Christmas. The Holy City is really an Easter anthem, but it is an effective number and I wrote it out from memory in the key of C. The vocal parts that I still have include 4 1st tenors, 3 2nd tenors, 3 1st basses, and 5 2nd basses. Only 2 of the 2nd tenor, 1 baritone, and 1 bass are in my handwriting. Two staves of music are used on both sides completely. The organ part is in the key of B-flat. This is about the extent of the music I wrote out that I still have.

The Red Cross room would only accommodate less than 500 people so we had to repeat the programs from the day before. As I recall the place was packed all day long.

A fellow in our room named John L. Jones, now living in Selmer, TN, was constantly complaining about the barbed wire. He spent most of every day playing cards. I told him he needed to get busy at something. I told him I bet I could have a class every night and have good attendance. It was a shame to waste this opportunity. There was no need to dwell on confinement. More about this later.

This was only the second week we had a full parcel. The Christmas parcel was special. According to a newspaper article my mother saved I read: American Red Cross Christmas packages for prisoners of war arrived in Europe for distribution to captive Yanks in German prison camps, in time for Christmas, according to Basil O'Connor, chairman of the American Red Cross.

The packages were shipped from Philadelphia in August in order to arrive in time for Christmas despite delays in transportation through war areas, O'Connor said. A large reserve was included to allow for men who might be captured during the months between August and December.

The packages contain turkey, plum pudding, sausages, strawberry jam, nuts, fruit bars, dates, canned cherries, chewing gum, deviled ham, cheddar cheese, butter, bouillon cubes, tea, honey, cigarettes, smoking tobacco, a pipe, a washcloth, playing cards, a game, and two pictures of American scenes.

The American Red Cross instructed the international committee in Geneva to distribute the regular weekly food parcel to American prisoners of war in addition to the Christmas package, the national chairman stated.

At our camp we got the Christmas parcel in place of the regular parcel. I believe the food items were allowed to remain unopened for a change. One of the most hilarious and yet tragic events happened that evening or the next day. One of the boys was heating his can of turkey on the stove when it blew up. He was soon scrapping turkey off the ceiling, the walls, and everything else. What a tragedy! Yet, it was funny.

26 Took it easy all day long. Got up just in time for roll call. Went to morning devotion. Played organ. Laid in bed most of day. Had turkey and fried potatoes for lunch. Peeled spuds. Talked. Listened to victrola. Went to Bible study class. One more day to do what I want. Wrote letter home.

One record that I liked and that we played a lot was Bing Crosby with the Andrews sisters singing Jingle Bells. Some music was very comforting.

Letter dated December 26, 1944:

Well, Christmas is over and I can rest for a couple of days now. Let me tell you of the last two days' activities. Sunday morning we had communion service at church. That afternoon the glee club put on a program. Sunday night we had a Christmas play which I helped write with the choir as a background. At midnight we sang carols with a brass choir in the center of the compound. Christmas day we had another morning service and the choir sang The Holy City. Brian Cleworth from Minneapolis gave the sermon. The glee club put on another program in the afternoon and the choir put on a concert in the evening. It

has kept me busy just arranging music. Now I have to work on a minstrel show coming up next week. I also intend to start a singing class next week. For the first two days of this week I am going to take things easy and then start to work again. Havn't got any mail yet but I hear there is alot of mail on the way now. Nelson got a letter the other day. I am anxious to hear how things are going at home. Had quite a bit to eat for Christmas. We made a big cake and still have quite a bit yet. We got a Christmas parcel from the Red Cross with plum pudding, turkey, candy, nuts, jam, a game, honey, ham, Vienna sausage, cherries and other various articles. I still have some left but I'm so full I can't eat it now. We have a stage fixed up now which helps out on the programs. I missed being home for Christmas but perhaps I'll be there next year. Will quit now and get to reading again. Read The Robe recently.

Mother neglected to notate the arrival date.

27 Another day to myself. Took a bath. ___? came and I went to council meeting. Wrote home. Finally got a letter from home. It sure felt good. Hope I get more. Went to Bible study. Getting better I hope.

I still have the one letter I received from home which was written Nov. 4th. Mother printed it in capital letters as per instructions and gave me all the news. Nelson was lucky to get many letters but only one reached me, although my mother wrote many times. She mentioned that she "had letters today from Mrs. Maurer, Mrs. Collins, Mrs. McIntyre and Mrs. Nelson. Is there anyone with you that you know? We will send you a box as soon

as we get the label. Wish we could have sent it sooner."

The letter was a real morale booster.

After I got home I got to read 8 letters sent to me at the 388th B.G. marked missing by Capt. J. R. Gross and returned to sender. Eighteen letters sent to me in Germany were also returned.

28 Had 2 roll calls in morning. Went to morning devotion. Went to musical show in Red Cross room. Fairly good. Ate lunch. Got dictionary. read some. Went to Bible study in barracks. Talked. Did alot of thinking about home.

29 Late in getting up. Read some more after morning devotion. Had choir practice with orchestra. They didn't do very good. Had church council meeting. I'm head of the music now entirely. Had glee club practice in Red Cross room after lock up. Had Bible study. Talked.

30 Went to morning devotion. Snowed. Nelson's birthday. He is 21. Had meeting with Padre again. Talked about Sunday school. Ate lunch. Had glee club practice in Red Cross room again. Tom Edwards was there. Almost got locked in. Had Bible study. Made alot of goo for breakfast.

31 Sunday Last day of year. Didn't think I'd be here this long. Peeled spuds. Went to church. Choir sang "The Holy City" again. Snowed some more. Had year's end service with fellows. Talked with Tom. Had another glee club rehearsal. Sounded better. Had Bible study. Played cribbage with Steve and Kenneth and Crawford. Stayed up til midnight.

A number of new projects got started in the new year. Other people worked in music also, because I had nothing to do with the show on the 28th.

An integral part of a music theory program is training in sightsinging. That is one of my skills. So, I made arrangements for classes where I taught singing by syllable (do, re, mi). Keyboard harmony was impracticable, and dictation without manuscript paper was nigh impossible.

Tom Edwards had spoken to me about putting on a minstrel show on January 8th. It required more work than he anticipated, and the show was postponed for awhile.

The evening Bible study in the barracks was going well, but it was always over by 7 and we still had 2 hours with the lights on. I decided to have some event every night at seven o'clock and see if we could attract enough people to make it interesting. I talked with Ken, the British medic, who was a bit older than most of us, and requested that he give a series of lectures on health and diet and, when he got to it, to even talk about sex. He agreed to do so. I appropriated a blackboard which had come into our lager and wrote out: Lecture on Sex Monday, Jan. 1st, in the washroom. Everyone coming to sick call would see it and wish they were in Barracks 1. Ken was embarrassed by the sign, so I had to add that the first part would be on diet.

Other events were planned for the other nights of the week.

In a letter written by my mother on Christmas day, which] did not read until it was returned to Kansas City in late June, she wrote, "We hope you will soon be getting our letters, also the boxes." Boxes is plural, but nothing more ever arrived. She did make a list of what was sent in one box:

2 pr. socks; 1 Kraft dinner; grape nuts; 1 lb. prunes; 4 life savers; 15 tea bags; 3 Mars bars; 1 box spaghetti; 2 condensed vegetable soup; 1 6oz. chocolate bar, Nestles; 1 8 oz. cocoa; 5 Powerhouse bars; 1 coin trick block puzzle; 1 Christmas card; 3 pkgs. chicken noodle soup; 1 Betty Crocker vegetable noodle soup; 2 pkgs. dried puddings; 1 book, Lost Horizon; 1 pkg. red hots; 1 4 oz. Baker chocolate bar; 1 lip pomade; Kleenex papers; 1 box cough drops; 5 picture post cards; 1 bag peppermint candy; Baking Powder; Soda; Malted Milk Tablets; Salt; and 1 rag. Cloves, cinnamon and 1 shorts have been scratched out. Everything is listed with its price. The total was \$5.17. If I had received that box I believe I would have been in seventh heaven.

January 1, 1945 Starting out a new year. Had church service. I led singing. John Jones preached. Had glee club practice again. Think it will go ok. Had Bible study. Kenneth Warren led a group discussion of foods. Played cribbage again.

Ken spoke mainly of what was best to eat in the Red Cross parcel. I remember he emphasized cheese and milk. He gave hints of things to come. The glee club rehearsed instead of the choir because of the upcoming minstrel show.

2 Went to morning devotion in Red Cross room. Had Bible study class with Padre Davis. Had church council meeting. Peeled spuds and carrots. Had Bible study class. Conducted class in public speaking. Had a fair size crowd. Enjoyed it.

Evidently Padre Davis was sent as a replacement for Padre Jackson. I have no information on him.

My material about speaking came from a book. I also gave rules for a debate for next week and had volunteers take sides and get prepared to speak.

3 Went to morning devotion. Read some. Had choir practice. Did fine. Padre Morgan came and had church council meeting. Talked with Kenneth Warren. Had Bible study class and then class in music appreciation. Larger crowd than I expected. Played 3rd movement Beethoven's 6th.

I gave a short summary of the life and works of Beethoven and played a movement from his Pastoral Symphony. The rest of the symphony was not available. We did not have very many classical records.

Card dated Jan. 3, 1945 postmarked Jan. 4 Lake Nebagamon, Wis.

Mrs. Anderson, I just received my son's address. He is at Stalag Luft 4. I also received labels & tobacco labels. I have had no other direct word yet from Augie. Weather here is real cold tonite. It is 18 below just now. I hope I hear from you soon again. Have you heard any more from your son? I had a letter from Lt. Rowe with a few snap shots of the boys taken before they went over seas. I have no other word from any one. Will appreciate a word once in a while from you. Sincerely, Mrs. Maurer

4 Went to morning devotion. Didn't do much in morning or afternoon. Quite slippery out. Much warmer. Fellow came back from hospital. Didn't feel too good. Had Bible study. Started class in dancing. More there than I thought.

I do not recall what I taught this session. In fact, I am surprised to see it in my diary. In college I had taken ball room dancing and exhibition ball room dancing for no credit. No telling what we did that night.

5 Went to morning devotion. Play organ at meetings. Went to choir practice. Sounded fair. Had roll call. Had Bible study. Worked with dictionary. Had class in vocabulary and then a spelling bee. Interesting.

This was another fun night.

New Year's card undated postmarked Jan. 5, 1945 Manitowoc, Wis.

Dear Friend, Have just received my first letter from Don. It just made me sick that I hadn't heard as soon as you mothers did. His captured card didn't get here yet. Nevertheless, I'm so happy that he's O.K. as your sons are. There is another boy from Manitowoc in the same camp with him—at least they have something in common to talk about. Don says he's well—not wounded—and I shouldn't worry. Sincerely, Mrs. I Kluth

6 Colder again. Went to morning devotion. Had bath. Went to Bible Study with Padre Morgan. Got haircut. Started class in sightsinging. Had glee club practice for minstrel show. Had Bible study in barracks. Had air raid. Had fried potatoes.

This evening I heard a lot of complaints because nothing was planned. Starting the next Monday I planned for something in the washroom every night following Bible study...

This marked the end of my diary on scraps of flimsy paper. Evidently about this time I got ahold of a blue notebook which was a big improvement. On page one I have written in small script my diary entries through Jan. 28th. Page two goes to Feb. 16th. It is written in pencil and both pages have become extremely blurred or smeared. I am not sure how much I shall be able to transcribe. Then after a blank page (which is dirty with the carbon of page 2) there are three more pages which are fairly legible. This goes through April 19th. I hope I can make out enough to get the gist of the events.

Further in the notebook which is permanently folded in half and has the cover detached I have listed the addresses of a number of people: the two British padres, the two British medics, the church council, two of my roommates, John C. Meese from Maywood, Ill., who may have been the violinist because his name is just above Charles E. Becker who was the cellist and a good musician, Alex Palmer who was working on a new system of music temperament, and Leroy E. Guidroz from Raceland, La. who has left my memory completely. On one page I have listed my favorite breakfasts: waffles & syrup, pancakes, Grape Nuts-Post Toasties-Puffed Wheat (I still like to eat three cereals at a time although Oat or Bran Flakes have replaced Post Toasties, Apple-Cinnamon Tasteos have replaced Puffed Wheat and Nutty Nuggets have taken the place of Grape Nuts.), toast & scrambled eggs, bacon & eggs, and cinnamon rolls. The next page is captioned

Supper and includes: Scalloped potatoes, baked beans, roast beef, noodles, dumplings, chicken, steak, and dressing. Today I eat more vegetables and salads and I would have to say that I have dropped dumplings from my favorite list and added fish. My sermon notes cover three pages, but I shall cover that in February. It hurts me every time I see how many blank pages I left in the notebook. I could have recorded so much.

Most of the material I am going to report will be read by me for the first time since it was written. I have no recollection of ever having read it in the last 46 years. This is a bit like reading the Dead Sea scrolls.

7 Sunday Went to church. Choir sang [number from] Creation by Haydn. Heard Padre Davis. Walked around compound. Had [minstrel] rehearsal in Red Cross room. Had Bible study in barracks. [Worked] with violin. Made smeargoo.

8 Went to morning devotion. Peeled spuds. Had short choir practice. Got program lined up for minstrel show and we postponed it for a day. Wasted most of afternoon. Had church council meeting. Went to dancing class. Had Bible study plus Steve gave lecture.

The end men in the minstrel show may have had to do a dance while they were singing so we had to rehearse it, or perhaps someone offered a dance class. I see dancing listed again later on.

Steve pinch hit for Ken with a lecture, but I am unable to decipher the topic.

9 Led singing at morning devotion. Padre didn't come for Bible study. Wrote card home. Minstrel show postponed indefinitely. Helped beginners write out music. Visited Conrad and fixed up outline for Sunday School. Played cards. Played organ for Bible study class. Had debate on C _____.
Accompanied trumpet on organ. Had big discussion.

The card I wrote never arrived. The church council had decided to institute a Sunday School and I helped with the plans. This was one of the evenings when I had the organ in my barracks, and I must have played at Bible study and with the trumpet player. I wish I could make out the topic of our first debate.

10 Snowed most of day. Went to morning devotion. Had choir practice. Waited for Padre who never came. Talked with _____? . Went to dancing class. Had Bible study. Played organ. Kenneth Warren had class.... Talked on diphtheria.

Ken made up for missing his Monday talk. The topic was not of my choosing, but I needed to keep him happy.

An excerpt from a letter Mother wrote me on Jan. 10th which I did not receive until I got home reads:

"I just talked to Mrs. Bebb, Charles' mother. Have you seen him there? He is one of about forty K.C. boys there. I had letters this week from Mrs. Maurer and Mrs. Kluth. I didn't know till then that August was with you. I had heard that Donald and Ernest were."

Charles Bebb stood next to me at my high school graduation. Among my mother's papers is a typed list of the names of 40 soldiers from K.C. and environs who were at Stalag Luft 4 and their next-of-kin. Mother has checked 19 of the names as if she had called or else met them at a meeting.

11 Thawing some more. Went to morning devotion.... I wonder if show will [ever be presented.] Peeled spuds. Had class in sightsinging.... Bible study class. In charge of round table discussion on _____?

It seems that it is the important passages that I can't make out. I shall just include the parts that make sense.

12 Still thawing. Went to morning devotion. Went to choir practice. Got commentary. Read part of it. Went to dancing class. Went to Bible study. Had extra large class. I didn't have time to make goo. Talked.

After lights out our room would often start talking in the dark, all of us lying in bed. We never had enough coal briquettes to keep a fire in the stove all night so got pretty cold. Somebody had the job of getting up first and starting a fire in the morning.

13 Fair day. Much warmer. Went to morning devotion. Went to Bible study with Padre Morgan. Had Sunday School meeting. Had Bible study class in barracks. Had Brouder give talk on the future of aviation.

It was not hard to convince some of the fellows in the barracks to talk about some subject with which they were familiar. We eventually had some strange topics.

It was about this time that the camp began to set up for college courses which could be taken for credit starting in March. Since I had a degree in music I could be the music teacher. I was looking forward to this opportunity. I did regret that I was unable to take German from a fellow who

was teaching a class in Barracks 3.

14 Sunday Started Sunday School. I taught class on Pastor
_____? Padre Morgan gave a good sermon. Choir sang "Lo,
How a Rose E're Blooming". Had long roll call. Went walking
with Andy and Nelson. Slid on ice. Finished writing arpeg-
gios for trumpet. Had Bible study. 9 there. Made some
more smeargoo.

We had quite a bit of snow and along side barracks 8 (or was it 7?) some of the fellows poured some water which froze and made a great slide. It was the longest man-made ice slide I had ever seen. With a running start you could slide almost the length of the barracks which was an exciting experience. I heard that one fellow broke his leg, and I believe the slide was closed down.

The trumpet player could read music but wanted some exercises to practice. He knew scales so I wrote out some arpeggios for warm up purposes.

15 Peeled spuds. Went to morning devotion. Went to choir
practice. Visited church [group]. Went to dancing class.
Had Bible study. Had extra potatoes. Played cribbage. I
won. Talked after lights out.

Getting seconds at dinner was a rare treat.

16 Colder. Led in morning devotion. Padre Davis had Bible
study. Got music copiest. Worked with [three names]. Went
to dancing class. Had Bible study. Conducted debate on
"Are Negros afforded their full constitutional rights?"
Talked.

Letter dated 16th January 1945 postmarked Jan 18
Richmond, Va.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, I think you wrote to me last and told me you had heard from your son John and I was so glad to know you had. Well I finally rec'd a card from my son Robert on Jan 8th. It was written on Aug 26th. He was in a German Hospital & he said his hands were burned a bit, but would be O.K. He also said he was getting very good treatment.

I was so very glad to hear from him. I had waited so long. His official address from War Dept. is Stalag 9 C—Germany and he is the U.S. Prisoner of War #52641. Wonder if your son John has the same address.

I have sent him a personal package & cigarettes.

Hope you have good news from your son and here's hoping & praying they will soon be back home with us. Sincerely, Frances Stewart

17 Windy. Went to morning devotion. Had choir practice. Padre Davis talked with me about hymns. Went to take shower in afternoon. Got headache. I don't like it. Had Bible study and class on physiology. Went to bed early.

I believe this was the first time we had a shower bath in camp. We were marched to a building near the front of the camp and the shower was delightful. The only trouble was that after getting wet they turned the water off and we were told to lather up. Then we only got cold water to rinse with. Still it was a big improvement over trying to bathe in the wash room with a pan of water.

18 Felt better but not too good. Practiced on organ.
Padre Morgan came over. Went to dancing class. Had Bible
study. Had round table discussion: Girls today are better
than their predecessors. Made smeargoo.

The round table discussions were even more fun than the debates because more people could get involved. This was a good subject and a lot of people participated.

19 Windy. Talked with Brian Cleworth for awhile. Had
Bible study. Hoover gave talk on horses. Had choir practice
in morning.

20 Went to morning devotion. Went to Bible study with
Padre Morgan. Went to hospital and saw McIntyre. Had
Bible study.

This was the last time I saw McIntyre.

21 Sunday Had long roll call. Taught Sunday School class.
Padre Davis [preached]. Walked around compound with Risman.
Cold. Had short vesper service.

22 Went to morning devotion. Played a game. Practiced
with choir. Went to church council meeting. They are a
bunch of good fellows. Went to dancing class. Started
jitterbugging. Had Bible study.

About half of my activity is omitted since it is unreadable. It was about this time that our bread ration stopped. Earlier we would get three or four loaves to a room. Maurer was elected to portion out the bread. Our individual piece of bread kept getting smaller all winter

until finally no bread came at all. We were always hungry, except, perhaps, for Christmas week, but if one kept busy it was not too bad.

When I first tasted the bread I thought it was sour, and I refused to eat it for awhile. But when you get hungry your tastes will change. Sometimes we would find sawdust on the bottom of the bread, and we wondered what was in the bread. A piece of spam or cheese on a slice of bread was really pretty good.

23 Foggy out. Went to morning devotion. [Rehearsal of minstrel show began] sounding pretty good. Got a new pair of G.I. shoes. _____? with Maurer. Had Bible study. Led debate on Prohibition.

My English shoes with hob nails were rather unique, but I think they were not as good as GI shoes. At that time I wore a 6½ D, but the only pair close to that was a 7 D so I took it. I have worn a 7 ever since. It may have been the same day or soon after that a GI shirt was allotted to our room. We had a drawing and I won the shirt. It was a size 16 and too big for me, but I was glad to get it. More about this shirt later.

Letter dated January 23, 1945 postmarked Jan 24 from Sebring, Fla.:

Dear Mrs. Anderson, Received your very nice letter a couple days ago and will keep my promise and answer quickly for a change.

Since my last letter to you I have been assigned as a pilot instructor at this B-17 school here in the sunny Florida citrus district. It really is wonderful here now, and I am so glad to be away from the cold and snow of the north.

The great Russian offensive is certainly encouraging but I believe it is unwise to be overoptimistic about it. I am hoping you may be right in feeling there is a possibility of some prisoners encamped in the area of eastern Germany may be released. More than anything, of course, we all hope those Russians keep right on going all the way and release everyone, and possibly end this war soon.

I will try to answer your questions. John was on his 24th mission. He did not receive his 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal. (He would have had to fly 35 missions.) He would have after that mission and probably will as soon as he comes back. He appeared to show no signs of nervousness or fatigue while flying his missions. None of our crew did. Not many fellows do for that matter. Of course we all were a little scared at times, as anyone would be under some of the circumstances of combat, but nothing chronic. Our crew had rather easy missions, I believe, at least easier than many fellows have. Of course on our last few missions when things began to go bad for us, everything happened at once and not so favorably. Nevertheless, I'm sure we all feel we were lucky, and realize it could have been much worse.

As for their landing the plane under control near Berlin, I wouldn't know. I'm sure I can't imagine how you heard it, but there is no possible way such information could be sent to this country. We always had strict orders to never land a plane under control in enemy territory, because to capture a whole B-17 is extremely valuable to the enemy. Unless there were seriously wounded men aboard, which apparently isn't so, I don't think they would have landed intact. I would guess they bailed out, which is the safest thing to do.

Thanks a million for the clippings which I am returning. Johnny had shown me the one about the shuttle trip which you had sent him. You should have seen him after he was interviewed by that reporter. He was beaming all over. I am not surprised that the girls all like him. He's the kind of fellow everyone would be fond of. There is no doubt he was brought up the right way.

Please let me know if you hear any more, and if you wish to ask any more questions I'll gladly answer any I can. Sincerely, "Bob" Rowe

24 Went to morning devotion. Had choir practice. [In the minstrel show] I was in the chorus but was made interlocutor. [Sounding] better. Walked around camp. Went to Bible study class. Finished book on Jesus of Nazareth. Went to lecture on swimming and lifesaving.

Somehow I ended up with the Minstrel Show program on two sheets of paper written by Tom Edwards. I believe we did all the numbers listed. Letters following the titles are in my handwriting and refer to the beginning note. I also wrote in Sleepy Time Down South and Shortin' Bread. My main job was to train the singers.

At the time Minstrel Shows had been popular in the United States for about a hundred years since the first minstrel show on record took place in 1843. Mr. Interlocutor was center stage with the soloists and end men on either side. The chorus, composed of members of the glee club and the choir, were in the back rows in black face.

The entrance used the song Weep no more. The opening chorus was Waiting for the Robert E. Lee. The Parade of Men had the endmen each doing a solo: Moonlight & Roses by Sommers, Beautiful Dreamer by McDonald, Alex Ragtime by McGonigle, Darktown Strutters by O Leary, Shine on Harvest Moon by Phillips, and finally Swanee and Sleepy Time Down South [by all]. A quartette sang O Susanna and Camptown. Next came a soft shoe number and a Whistler. The Haymakers Band did St. Louis Blues.

Under comic routine is Shortin Bread and K. G. F. Jones. This last number needs some explanation. On a flimsy piece of paper I have the words of a popular number during the thirties:

There's a big holiday everywhere
For the Jones family has a brand new heir
He's a joy H[eaven] sent
As we proudly present
Mr. F[ranklin] D. R[oosevelt] J[ones]

When he grows up he never will stray
With the name like the one he's gct today
How can he be a dud or a stick in the mud
When he's F D R J....

For the program F D R Jones was changed to K G F Jones which stood for Kriegsgefangenen Jones. I think that is a nice touch.

Spoons is listed at the bottom of the program.

The program finally was ready for three performances.

25 Went to morning devotion. Washed clothes. Had [performance of minstrel show]. Had a dead audience. Took a hot shower. It really felt good. Walked around camp. Led [Bible study] and then round table discussion on the movies. We have good times here.

We had worked hard on the minstrel show and the opening number went well but the applause was light. As Interlocutor I then said, "Gentlemen, be seated." Next, I greeted the audience. I remember the feeling I had as the show began and I was really savoring the experience. Tom cued me to continue but it took me about five seconds to get under way. He didn't like that so the next day I joined the chorus. I learned a lesson I never forgot. You must keep the tempo of the show moving.

The shower was much better than the first time. We had more hot water this time.

26 Colder with lots of wind. Went to morning devotion. Went to choir practice [then to church] council, not many came. Had minstrel show again. Led at vesper services. Went to lecture on art of ___?___ by Drexel Lange in our room. Interesting. Wrote letter home.

For this performance I had to blacken my face and it was hard to get off. I believe the audience's response was better than the day before. I cannot remember if Tom took the role of Mr. Interlocutor or not.

My letter never reached home.

27 Went to morning devotion again. Got to Bible study [late]. ...public speaking. I guess I'm not a showman. [Had Bible study] and discussion on college education.

This was the last performance of the minstrel show.

28 Sunday Taught Sunday School class again. Cleworth and Wetzer [handled the church service]. Talked Had vesper service in barracks. Had 10 there. Wrote letter to Vivian. Played ping pong.

While we did not have a regulation table it was a joy to be able to play ping pong.

My last letter home did not get there.

29 Big blizzard. Snowed all day. Went to morning devotion. Peeled spuds. Went to choir practice. Had church council meeting. Had 20 in choir. Had vesper service. Played records for fellows. They asked for more classical records. Wish we had alot more.

One other record we had was the Overture to William Tell which everyone knew and enjoyed. I gave some background on Rossini and played the record. I do not remember the other record I played.

30 Been in army two years. First shipment of fellows left. Cleworth went with them. Went to morning devotion. No Bible study. Washed clothes. Something about to happen soon. Played some chess. Had vesper service and then debate-- Post-war Immigration. Affirmative won.

All the prisoners who had been wounded or were sickly were taken out and shipped by railroad somewhere. Recently I heard that they went to the camp at Barth. Then B compound was evacuated and the men in that compound were divided into the other three compounds. Soon after that happened, in fact I think it was that evening, a group of prisoners of other nationalities came into B compound from the north, stayed a night, and then marched on. The marchers were in sad shape and we began to worry about having to march also, but the Germans assured us that the Americans would stay. Only the other nationalities were marching. Camp seemed to be the best of the alternatives.

31 Went to morning devotion. Played more chess. Getting almost no bread or rations for quite awhile. Had choir practice and church council meeting. Inducted 3 new members. Played cards. Had vesper service. Frenchy gave lecture on The Lugar. I wish I could read my last comment. Not all our topics were edifying.

Letter dated January 31, 1944 Postmarked Feb. 1 Cotton
Plant, Arkansas

Dear Mrs. Anderson, I thought maybe you would be interested to know that I had a card written October 6, from Ernest. He said that he was getting along fine except that he was hungry. That sure did hurt because only God knows how hungry he was. He said that he made a cookless cake and that it sure was good. I sure will be glad when all the boys can come home. I was sure glad to hear that your son was in the same prison camp with mine. I received a card from Mrs. Maurer today she said that she had a nice letter from her boy that was written August 21. And he was getting along well. From my standpoint I believe the boys will get to come home soon. I sure hope so. I had a nice letter from Lt. Rowe. He said that he was just fine. And was in Florida now. I have received 2 cards and 1 letter from Ernest. And I sent two packages to him although he asked me not to send him any. When I get more information I will write to you. I always enjoy hearing from you. Sincerely,
Mrs. Cora Crawford

February 1 A new month. Much ___? Quite slippery out.
Went to morning devotion. Played chess. Rations finally began
to come in again. Had vesper service. Crawford led. Had
round table discussion on Swing vs. Classics. Couldn't sleep.

Card dated Feb. 1, 1945 postmarked same date Minneapclis,
Minn.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, I sure was glad to get your card yesterday and we had a card too from Don dated Sept 28 and we got it this week. But that's all. I sure wish it was all over so they could all come home. We had a letter from Lt. Rowe also and was glad to get it. Don didn't say much only that he was all right and not to worry. I am so glad that those boys are together. I sure will be glad to hear from you when ever you get any news. Sincerely,
Eleanor K. Nelson

Letter dated Feb. 1, 1945 postmarked Feb.2 Lake Nebagamon,
Wis.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, Received your card today so will ans. at once. So glad you received mail from John. We too received mail from Augie. A card dated August 21, also a letter dated Nov. 9. That sure came through fast. He said in his last letter that the boys were all in good spirits as Nelson had received mail from his folks and they informed him that you & I and the Nelsons were corresponding so they were sure we knew of their whereabouts. He said they were all well and not much to find fault with only would be glad to get home.

I wrote Lt. Rowe a week ago to his N.H. address. Hope I hear again from him soon. I did enjoy his letters so much. If you have his address would you send it next time you write.

We attended a Prisoner of War meeting last week got a lot of valuable information there.

Our boy in England married an English girl on Dec. 26. Wondering what she's like. The war picture in Europe looks good. Hope its not too long before our boys can all come home.

Will keep you informed as to my mail from Augie. Sincerely, Esma Maurer

2 Getting warmer. Soup for lunch. _____? from B lager to our lager. Piano came too. Moved to upper bunk. Steve gave lecture on aircraft combustion.

I believe two more men came into our room, this time from B lager. I had forgotten that we got the piano from B lager. I remember going with a group into B compound to remove some items, and it was obvious that the prisoners who had stayed there had been hungry. I recall some one saying that they had even cooked and eaten some grass. I doubt that now. I remember they had emptied some powder they had found.

By having a piano available my joy must have been complete.

By teaching music to a number of fellows in camp I had learned a number of techniques that worked as well as a few that didn't. This was also a help to me when I started teaching theory at the University of Georgia in 1947. The only trouble was that the war ended too soon. Despite the deprivations--not enough food, really cold weather, barbed wire, practically no materials with which to work--I really was having a good time and learning a lot. We all felt that something was going to happen, but we did not know what. We had been assured that we would remain in camp until the war was over. We began to hear what sounded like guns in the distance. Life went on with a bit more pressure from events beyond our control.

3 Wet out. Went to morning devotion. Had barley for breakfast. Had choir practice. Worked some more on sermon. I'm not sure ___?_. Andy came over. Met church council of Lager B. Had vesper service in barracks. 14 there.

As a member of the church council it was my turn to preach at the Sunday service if the Padre did not show up. I was not a preacher but I did write out a sermon in my notebook which I hoped I would not have to give. Leading the singing and the choir was not difficult. I knew I could do that. Preaching was more demanding. I thought up another prayer I could give during the service. I tried to be prepared.

One of the boys who came into our room had the most unbelievable story of all. He was a tail gunner who turned around during the mission and found that the tail had been

cut off from the plane and that his chute was not there. It reminds me of a scene in the recent movie Memphis Belle. The tail section floated (?) down and evidently hit the earth on an upswing. He was unconscious for awhile but lived through the experience. Often at night he relived the experience, and we had to wake him up to stop his screaming.

On this day the Allies dropped 3,000 tons of bombs on Berlin. 4 Sunday Taught Sunday School class. Led song service waiting for Padre Davis but he came. Good crowd at church. Took a nap. Lights went dim for awhile. Maurer led vesper service. Had 20 there. Getting more each week. Talked awhile.

The service started with singing some hymns. When the Padre failed to come I had them sing some more. Finally, it seemed obvious that he wouldn't make it. I had one of the assistants read my text and the Padre arrived. He wanted us to sing one more hymn while he got settled. I was saved at the last moment although I thought my sermon had more meaning than the one the Padre gave. The notes to my sermon are in the back of my notebook. Maybe, some day, I'll have the opportunity to preach.

My notes remained in my notebook for almost 49 years before I really looked at them again. My pastor at the First United Methodist Church in Mexico Beach, Florida had to be out of town and asked me to pinch-hit for him. I gave my sermon(?) and it was not as bad as I had anticipated. I covered the material quickly and filled up the rest of the time talking about my experiences in Germany.

An excerpt from a letter written by my mother to me which I did not receive until summer reads:

I heard from Mrs. Crawford and Mrs. Nelson Friday. They had heard from Ernest and Don. I just wrote a letter to R. Rowe. He wrote me such nice things about you.

5 Cold. Went to morning devotion. Our barracks went to have showers again. It sure felt good. Had choir practice. Started "Men and Music" Had hymn service. Played organ. Had round table discussion on Cha ? .

Unfortunately, the last line is unreadable, but I can recall what happened. Word reached us that evening that the camp would leave in the morning. Lights would be on an extra length of time in order to get ready. It did not take long to pack up. I ate some of the food I had stashed away which would be hard to carry. I got all my choir music, my hymnals, my knife, fork, and spoon, a powdered milk can to use for drinking, the library book I was reading, and probably the other few things I had accumulated. We were told we would march three days, rest one, march two more days and arrive at a new camp. At least, it seemed as if we were nearing the end. What we didn't know was that the instructions were wrong.

Letter dated Feb. 2, 1945 postmarked Feb. 5 Pittsburgh, Pa.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, I was very happy to hear from you again and to hear that you have heard from your son. I have also heard from my son Robert. I had a letter last month dated Sept. 14th and a card yesterday dated Oct. 29th in which he says he is in good health only I don't think he gets enough to eat because he says to keep the ice box well stocked for when he gets back. The war dept. informed me that Robert was transferred from Stalag 7 A to Stalag Luft # 4 three weeks ago. But I think according to what the Russians are doing the boys have

been moved. I hope and pray every night that they will soon be released and get back home. Is it very cold out your way? I certainly am sick of snow this winter. I have had a nice letter from Lt. Rowe. Will write again and hope to hear from you again. Sincerely, Mrs. R. F. McIntyre

Card dated Feb. 5, 1945 postmarked same date Lake Nebagamon, Wis.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, Received a letter from Augie written Nov. 9 said they were all well. Said Nelson had received 7 letters from his folks and they had said that we were all in touch with each other so the boys know that we all knew of their whereabouts. Said they were in good spirits. Said they had church services & were not too bad off. Not to worry. Just wonder if they may have been moved now that the Russians are going through that territory. More later. Sincerely, Mrs. Maurer

Card dated Feb. 5, 1945 postmarked Feb. 6 Miami, Fla

Dear Mrs. Anderson: On Dec. 23 we had a letter from our Walt, then Jan 31 another letter dated Oct. 3. On Feb 1 a card dated Sept. 11. We were so happy to receive them. He did not give us any news, just that he was o.k. & wanted us to take care of ourselves, as he would try and take care of himself. The October 3 letter said that it was rather chilly. I shudder when I think how they are with zero temp. at this time. Lt. Robert Rowe called on us Saturday with his wife. He told us, our boys, as well as he, were bombed in Russia after doing some shuttle bombing. They had landed in this Russian field, no one was hurt, their plane was only slightly damaged, where many were totally destroyed. I wonder whether you have had any late news. We have had no report on Stalag Luft 3 being moved, but feel it has been. Please let us hear from you, with wishes, I am Sincerely, Marion Collins

It seems odd that the 3 letters mention our being moved, and we did not know we were to move until about 12 hours before we left.

This ends this first section which covers the best part of the POW experience. We had spent 17 days in A lager and 133 days in C lager for a total of 150 days at Stalag Luft 4, and I must say it was an enriching and rewarding educational experience. My recital of the events as written in my diary have been somewhat monotonous. I did not realize until I got into it how many times I went to morning devotion. If I had transcribed my notes in 1946 I could have mentioned more interesting items, but after fifty years I am lucky to remember as much as I did.

On April 30, 1994 the group I was with left the Arka Hotel at Koszalin, Poland by bus and went to the train station near the camp. It had been called Kiefheide but now bears the name Podborsko. We stood on the platform and took alot of pictures. I had no memory of the station, but according to my diary I had arrived there on Sept. ⁹11th.

From the station the bus drove north to the campsite. A crowd had gathered and a number of cars lined the road. The bus drove to a spot just in front of the monument which had been placed there near the potato cellar of lager D and dedicated on Sept. 4, 1992. TV cameras were there and a contingent of 30 Polish soldiers were lined up on the right. The ceremony started with the sound truck playing what I presumed was the Polish national anthem. The mayor of Tychowo (formerly called Gross Tychow) presided. He read a short history of the camp and then

called out the names of different organizations. Representatives of each group came forward and presented flowers to two goose-stepping soldiers who took the flowers to the monument. Two scouts brought candles in glass containers at the end of the presentations. We were lined up on the left. An American colonel presented greetings. Col. Andrew Porth is stationed in Warsaw and was ordered by the Pentagon to attend the ceremony. He spoke in Polish also. We had an interpreter tell us what was being said.

The soldiers then took their rifles and pointed them in the air. For a moment the thought of a firing squad entered our minds. They fired three times and then marched off. Children then rushed in to pick up the spent shells.

This ended the ceremony, and then we had a "soldier's meal" inside a tent. It was bean soup (probably split pea) with a lot of potatoes and a piece of kielbassa in the middle. It was very good. Drinks were also furnished.

I walked down to C lager and Leonard Rose (head of the POW organization) showed me where the Red Cross building had been. I took a piece of concrete from the ground and then located the site of Barracks 1. The entire camp is covered with trees, many of them fallen, but it was not hard to locate the barracks. The foundations for the latrine and the washroom on the back of the barracks is all that is left. The latrine hole is still there. Just the bricks and the concrete of the washroom is all that remains. I stood in the place where Room 3 was located and I'dfd

get a feeling of nostalgia.

The next day I was one of five fellows who went back and tramped all over C compound. It was a lot of fun. We found the well and could see the remains of all ten of the barracks. We ever went into the next compound which was Lager F, no different than C. I did not know it even existed. The group back at the monument first honked a horn and then sent a car to pick us up. After the Germans left the Poles came to the camp and removed everything of value and then later they planted trees. The paved road is on the ground between A-B lagers and D-C lagers going in a northerly direction. Two metal plaques have been placed on big stones on either side of the monument, one in Polish and the other in English. It reads:

MAY 1944 - FEBRUARY 1945
KRIEGSGEFANGENEN LAGER LUFT IV
KIEFHEIDE BEI GROSS TYCHOW
/PODBORSKO/ WHERE 10000
AMERICAN, CANADIAN, BRITISH
FRENCH, BELGIAN, AUSTRALIAN
POLISH, RUSSIAN AND OTHER
AIRMEN WERE KEPT PRISONERS
OF WAR. ON FEBRUARY THE SIXTH,
1945, THE CAMP WAS EVACUATED
BY THE "DEATH MARCH" TO
THE STALAG XI B FROM WHERE
PRISONERS WERE LIBERATED
ON MAY THE 2ND.

I was told the Russians never came to the camp. One resident of Tychowo said she had lived there all her life and did not know the camp was there until 1990. That seems almost impossible.

All in all it was an emotional experience.

SECTION 2

The Bad Memories Begin

6 According to what I heard recently D lager left camp on February 5th. When I wrote this in 1991 I thought C compound led the camp. It would be logical for D to go first since they were nearer the gate. I do know that Barracks 1 was the first in the formation. The rooms drew straws for order of marching and our room, room 3, was the first in line and we took up the first four rows. We were in front of the whole formation. I had all my stuff wrapped up in my blanket. Just before we left we were told to run through a place where the extra food was laying out. As I recall all I grabbed was a chocolate bar because we had to keep moving. The Red Cross food had been a life saver, and what we took with us was more to our benefit. I remember regretting that I had not taken advantage of the situation.

The formation looked like it was about a mile long. I started out in the second row on the right, and we had a fairly brisk pace. I would say that our morale was high. I wrote that we went at least 14 kilometers with just 3 stops. Kilometers are marked beside the roads. Sometime that afternocrn I began to get an ache in my right foot. It kept hurting so I decided I would fall back and find Steve and ask him to tape it up, or at least wrap it to give it support. When I found Steve near the back he was talking with an older soldier who wanted to just sit down. He was in agony and kept saying he would have to stop. Steve was keeping him going. He told me there was no

tape. One ox-drawn wagon was in back of the formation carrying the guards' bags. There were not a lot of guards. Many fellows talked about taking off and waiting for the Russians. That did not have much appeal to me. I could see that my pain was much less than what others were experiencing. At the end of the formation the walking tempo seemed much faster than it did in front. I told them I would go back to the front and try to slow down the pace. Finally, in late afternoon we arrived at a farm where the barn formed a square around a big compound. We were put in the barn and locked in. If we got any food that day it was two boiled potatoes and a cup of hot water which required us to stand in long lines to receive. We were tired and cold, and accommodations were not the best. The last thing I wrote in my diary that day was: Seeing Germany on foot.

7 Up at 6:30. On the road. I was stiff and not used to so much walking. I guess it had been quite awhile since I had done any exercising. We should have thought about that sooner. We kept walking steadily all day. I didn't think I would make it. Stopped all night in Stolzenburg. Stayed on the second floor of a barn.

Letter addressed to my mother dated 7 February 1945 from the War Department:

My dear Mrs. Anderson: I have the honor to inform you that, by direction of the President, the Air Medal and three Oak-Leaf Clusters, representing three additional awards of the same decoration, have been awarded to your son, Technical Sergeant John H. Anderson, Air Corps. The citation is as follows:

AIR MEDAL AND THREE OAK-LEAF CLUSTERS

"For meritorious achievement while participating in heavy bombardment missions in the air offensive against the enemy over enemy occupied Continental Europe. The courage, coolness, and skill displayed by this Enlisted Man upon these occasions reflect great credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of the United States."

Since these awards cannot be formally presented to your son at this time, the decorations will be presented to you. The Air Medal and three Oak-Leaf Clusters will be forwarded to the Commanding General, Seventh Service Command, Omaha, Nebraska, who will select an officer to make the presentation. The officer selected will communicate with you concerning your wishes in the matter. Sincerely yours, J. A. Ulio, Major General, The Adjutant General.

8 Left some things. I really didn't need all the books I had with me. Went at least 2 hours straight without a break. If Maurer hadn't taken my pack I would not have made it. It was wrong to let someone else carry my pack. Count, Hoover, Smith and others helped too. I remember King giving it back to me. Finally we went down a slight incline and I could see some barns so I knew I could make it. At the bottom of the hill the formation turned left and started up a long incline on the left side of the road. On the right side of the road was a stream of refugees fleeing with everything they had. Some were walking and some had horse-drawn wagons. I knew I could not climb that hill. I crossed the road and found a wagon with back open. I threw my pack on the wagon and sat on the edge.

A young boy seated by his grandfather was on the seat in front, and he told his grandfather about me. The old man turned around and yelled at me but he spoke German and I didn't understand, but I did get his meaning. He was not going to stop and hold up the procession behind him. Just behind me was a family on a wagon being pulled by a white horse. The horse was stumbling, faltering and it looked like it would take its last step soon. The man was whipping it to make it continue up the hill. I could see other people were having problems too. It was painful to watch the horse. I got to ride all the way to the top of the hill. I think a guard saw me and made me get off. However, I had made it up the hill and thought of things other than myself.

Stopped at big barn in country. That night I slept squeezed up against a piece of farm machinery. My crew and I were separated.

9 Not so cold out. Got some potatoes to eat. Felt quite stiff but worked it out. Crew not with me. Going to bed early. Tired out yesterday but not so bad today.

10 Started raining. Went through Boity. Doss shared with me. Went through bypath. It seems unlikely that this will do much. Barn for tonight.

Doss was on the church council. I remember he sold me a roll of toilet paper for a pack of cigarettes I had. The roll lasted me a long time as I learned how to conserve.

11 Sunday If it hadn't been for Doss I wouldn't have made it. Got sick during night. Was weak all day. Doss carried my pack most of the way. I doubt if I can make another. Alot of fellows have dropped out already.

This was the second of the many low points I had on this march. Now for awhile things did get better.

12 Lucky, another day of rest. Stayed in bed most of morning. Cold outside. Went out and got some spuds and cooked them. Doss got some milk. Felt alot better. Jerry gave us cooked spuds after lockup. It rained some today.

13 ___? Felt better anyway. Started walking in snow. Went through G[reifenberg](?). ___? over fences. The Germans don't care much how they treat us. Perhaps the war won't last much longer. Stopped in Dopperphil.

14 ___ yet. Went 40 kilometres. I felt good most of the way. Got a ___ on the way. Went through Wollen. Stopped outside Swindemunde and had to sleep outside. Raining too. Built a little shelter and sat around fire with English kriegies. Had air raid. Got cramped sleeping so sat up.

This day we went about 25 miles and I was getting used to it. This was probably the day when a Russian farm worker handed me a carrot. I cleaned it as best I could and ate it which was not a good idea. They do not eat raw vegetables because they use human manure to fertilize everything. It went right through me. Just as it got dark we were herded into a big fenced-in area. My friend (I don't remember who I was with then) and I saw a small fire in the distance so we walked over to it. A group of about 8 English soldiers with one guard were sitting around the fire. They had been on the road for weeks, coming from central Poland. The smoke got a bit much for me so my

friend and I built a shelter out of branches and tried to sleep but it was very uncomfortable. We sat up the rest of the night and dozed some before morning. At the air raid signal the Germans made them put out the fire. I still recall this night every time I smell a wood fire.

Back to the present. On May 2, 1994 we ex-POWs checked out of our hotel at Koszalin and drove up to see the Baltic. We had wanted to go back to Germany through Swinemunde but were told that busses were not allowed. Maybe they still have a small ferry. We stopped at Wollen and I exchanged \$10 for 210,000 zoltys so I could buy a souvenir and have lunch. I had a hot dog and son Jack had a hamburger and fries. I also had a warm Sprite and two ice cream bars. The woman in the small kiossk-type building, typical in Poland, did a booming business that day. The merchants on the square had nothing of interest that I wanted to buy. I did enjoy meeting some Polish people. I have a newly-found respect for them. I have now been in Wollen twice in my life. From Wollen we went back to Stettin, which used to be the capitol of Pomerania when it was Germany, and is now called Szczecin. We had stopped there at the Raddison Hotel for a fine buffet lunch on our way from Berlin to Koszalin.

15 No sleep. On the road. Went through Swinemunde and got on ferry. Went across Stettin Bay. Walked some more. Stopped at barn but got nothing to eat or drink. Getting hungry and tired of it alot. Met crew for 1st time since 3 days.

16 Good night's sleep. Walked over 30 kilos today. Fair day for walking but got cold in evening. Moved us across a field with mud a foot deep. Wore me out. Stayed all night in barn full of manure and straw. Cold night.

This was another unforgettable experience. After a long walk we saw a barn in the distance and the guards indicated that was where we were going. The road went straight and then came a 90° turn to the right to the barn. We decided to save some steps by going across the hypotenuse of the triangle. After we got started we ran into deep mud. It was laborious to pick up each foot and this required a lot of energy which we did not have to expend. If you ran you could stay on top without sinking, but the distance was excessive and a run was not what we needed. We arrived exhausted. It was a terrible barn. This, I believe, was the night that I won't forget either. We were all tired and thirsty. Nelson decided to try and get some water. The guard took a few fellows including Nelson out of the locked barn to the well, and Don came back with a full cup of water. He gave it to us and went back to get some more. We left his share for him, but when he didn't come back we figured he was probably stocking up on the water so we split the water between us and drank it. Nelson came back with no water but knew he had some water waiting for him. You can imagine the scene. It was a heart-rending experience. Many times I have regretted our actions. Don, we are truly sorry.

17 On again. Stopped some in afternoon after going through Anklem, a fairly large town. Promised a day of rest. Got spuds and hot water which made me feel better. Thought about home.

I recall going through one fairly large town and having to go to the bathroom. There was no place to go except on the curb. I remember one woman driving by on a wagon and trying not to look at me. Diarrhea was ever present. The doctor told us to examine our stool because if it contained blood it might be dysentery. Almost everyone had diarrhea. The doctor said the only thing worse than dysentery would be cholera where the intestines come out. We had been inoculated against cholera.

18 Sunday Instead of staying we went on about 22 kilos stopping at Seltz. I intended on having a service today but not a chance when we move. Wish we could have a day of rest.

19 Fed us more spuds. Also got a tenth of a loaf of bread, butter and a can of corned beef. Count helped me cook some soup with bouillon. Jerry gave us two cupfuls of potato soup. Better. Moved 8 kilos to Schoessol.

20 Finally a day of rest. It felt good not to move. Cold outside. Had some spuds. Talked with Rosie, a Russian from Poltava. Got some cabbage. Had more spuds. Feel better.

Often there were Russian workers on the farm but we were not allowed to converse with them. This time the Germans were not watching so closely. This hefty Russian woman was working, and we stopped to talk. When she said she was from Poltava I told her I had been to Poltava which made her more friendly.

She saw to it that I got some more to eat and I was truly grateful. She was doing a lot of manual labor and took a chance on not getting caught feeding me. You can find good people all over.

21 Left at 9:30 after cooking some cabbage. Went 4 kilos and got a R.C. parcel for 3 men. Went about 12 more. Ate salmon. They gave us a lot of spuds. Ate too many. Had to get up at night. Staying at Farrow.

I recall we tried to make a dish like escalloped potatoes. We put in alot of butter and it tasted good, but it was hard on stomach nct used to so much grease.

22 Had the G.I.'s. Sick to my stomach. Stayed in bed almost all day. Crew members took good care of me. Had some cereal and soup. Stayed there another night but had to get up during night.

For quite a few days I had been feeling fairly good. This was a relapse which kept happening to me. I was lucky to have friends who helped me.

23 Ate some breakfast and left. Supposed to arrive today. Went slow and had a lot of breaks. Seemed to almost be there and had to backtrack. Went to a town and waited outside. It started raining. Moved back again in rain. Felt miserable. Got to barn after dark. Hard finding place.

Sometimes we would arrive after dark and they would herd us into the barn and lock the door. Everybody was milling around looking for a dry place to lie down. It took quite a while for everyone to get settled. It was a lot easier when we could stop while it was still light.

24 Had roll call. Still feeling bad. Had soup and spuds late at night. Stayed in bed most of day. Got sick in night as usual. I wonder if it will ever end.

25 Sunday Only got up twice during day. Stayed in even for roll call. Felt weak. Didn't eat much. Not much to eat anyway.

26 Still the same. Went almost 24 hours without food but it didn't help much. Had a better night of sleep. Took some aspirin.

One of our lager leaders whose name is forgotten now gave me 4 aspirins and made me promise I would not take them all at one time.

27 Still another day. Ate some spuds in morning. Read some in Testament. Some fellows left and guards didn't like it. Shut up early.

28 Felt a little better. Stayed outside awhile. Red Cross parcels came one per man. That helped morale around here. Still didn't eat much.

I had tried to help my situation by not eating for awhile. I think it did some good, but I decided to consult with the American doctor we had with us. I did not know he was with us until about this time. Capt. Leslie Caplan saved a lot of lives. I have read the article he wrote in a book by Joseph P. O'Donnell about "The Shoe Leather Express". It was quite a challenge to work with so many men and make decisions. I believe he was the one who made arrangements with the Germans for one group of prisoners to go ahead and get to the barn early. They would clean out the pots which were used to cook food for the hogs and have some hot water and boiled potatoes for us when we arrived.

They also fixed up temporary latrines. The doctor held sick call in the morning, and I started to go when I was exhausted. One night I woke up with my feet uncovered and they were very cold. They were to hurt constantly for over a month.

March 1 Another month. March came in like a lion. Quite windy. Read some. Felt weak. Orders came that we move tomorrow.

2 Started out again. If Ira Lewis and Ray Landman hadn't carried my R.C. parcel some I wouldn't have made it. Just did make the 28 kilometers. The wind was fierce.

My recollections have been that the first of the month was the last day I marched, but it turns out to be the second of March. It snowed and wind blew so hard you could almost lean against the wind. My feet ached constantly and it was difficult to keep going. This was one of the most miserable days I had. The next morning I, along with about 30 others, reported to Capt. Caplan who was doing his best to keep everybody going, and he helped to cheer everybody up. The formation had one wagon drawn by an ox which carried the belongings of the guards. The doctor had requested that the wagon carry some of the worst cases and the Germans had given permission for about eight soldiers to ride. The wagon was at the end of the formation and had been used for a number of days. On the morning of the 3rd the doctor told me to ride on the wagon which was a mistake, but I didn't know it then. I remember one soldier who had rheumatism which was painful, but the doctor told him to march as the pain was not debilitating. I almost gave him my place on the wagon but didn't.

*Remember to do
copy it*

3 Had to get on the wagon. Went through Warren. Just about froze on the wagon. Ate a little more. Still sick.

At least when you are marching, or rather trudging through the snow, you are active and the blood must flow better. On the wagon we just sat uncomfortably and froze.

4 Sunday Snowed all day. Rode on wagon. Got cramped and cold. It can't last too much longer. Stopped at Sparrow. Quite weak. In with hospital group now.

The doctor had a group he called the hospital group which got more of his attention.

5 On the wagon again. Steve helped me some now. It is certainly fine to have friends. Went quite a ways. Getting weaker.

I was not writing much now. I never knew one could be so miserable. Almost every day I would say to myself--This is as bad as it can get. It cannot get worse. The next day it was worse. I could never get warm; I caught a cold and my nose started running. Diarrhea makes you weak. Then comes the problem of lice: once you get them you cannot get rid of them. One of the daily joys was removing each piece of clothing and finding a louse and squeezing it to death. Finally, they would all be gone. Then in the middle of the night the eggs would hatch and the new generation would start to move all over your body. I had lice until I was liberated. My main problem was my feet. They seem to keep getting worse.

6 Dr. gave me an egg. Can hardly stand up. Only went about 11 kilos today. Arrived early. Ate some spuds. Saw Doss again. Got some soup.

The doctor tried to get extra food for the men in the hospital group.

7 A day of rest. Getting better. Conrad visited awhile. Got some barley. Been sick two weeks. Really weak. Bedded up with Huffman.

Card dated Mar. 7, 1945 Lake Nebagamon, Wis. postmarked same date Superior, Wis.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, Have you heard any thing more from your son? Our last word came on Feb. 7 written on Nov. 9. Said Nelson had received 7 letters from his folks in which they said we all knew about the boys' plight. Said Andy and he were so glad to at least know that we know about them. (our boy calls your son Andy I guess) Do you know anything about prisoners being moved? Have been hearing on radio that Stalag Luft 4 were among the ones being moved. Did you hear it? I'll write soon as I get more information. Mrs. Maurer

8 Stayed over another day. This farm isn't too bad. Always seem to be thirsty. Pretty cold out. Didn't get out of bed much.

Thirst is worse than hunger. The doctor had told us not to drink from a well. Water was to be boiled first. I saw one man eating snow because he was so thirsty.

9 Moved on wagon about 6 kilos. Cold but not windy. Got some scrambled eggs and bread. Certainly good. Feeling better. Small barn. Stayed at Stralenberg.

10 Almost went to hospital but got on wagon and went on 14 more. Windy and cold. Feet hurt badly. Got soup and lots of spuds. Went through Parchim today.

11 Sunday A day of rest. Laid in bed all day. Getting more strength back. Got some more scrambled eggs and lots of spuds. Ate some salmon. Nice day. Hear 2 days to go.

12 Started out again. Walked without pack. Did fairly well until the last 3 kilos. Got weak and had to get on wagon. Feet ached and burned.

13 Got bread. Hospital group left but wagon group didn't go until 1:30. Ken got me some soup. Rained. No fun on wagon. Left Troy's bunch & got to Miller's group. Saw crew members. Got barley.

Ken had gone to the farmer's wife at the farm and asked for some soup. She gave him some and he split it with me. It was good.

14 A day of rest. Just changed barns. Bought some onions. Feet still hurt badly. Read. Fairly nice day. Hungry most of the time.

Someone had dropped a German-English phrase book and I found it. Some children were outside their home and I tried some phrases on them. I remember asking for some salt but they had no way of giving me some. I evidently bought some onions which probably were bad for me. I have no idea what I gave in exchange.

15 Maurer and Nelson joined hospital. Got a piece of Spam. Crawford shaved and washed my face. Nice day. Getting hungry. Feet got worse. Hot water & spuds.

Crawford helped my morale by giving me a shave and washing my face. I was blessed to have such a fine crew.

16 Had to be carried out all the time. Getting hungry. Got spoonful of salmon. Nothing to do. Tired of lying in bed. Hot water & spuds.

17 No rest last night. Feet ache and burn continuously. Not getting better. When will war end? Hungrier yet. Soup & spuds.

18 Sunday One more day. Read some. The nights are the most miserable possible. Fairly good food today. Got fifth of R.C. parcel. Not much.

The New Testament was my reading material. I tried to read a book a day but not in sequence.

19 Moved by wagon. With Troy's bunch again. Got 2/5ths of a loaf of bread and 1/8th lb. of butter. Nice barn. Another miserable night. Had good barley soup.

20 Moved by truck. Didn't take long to go 16 kilos. Went to small barn. Got lots of hot water and spuds. A better night.

21 Dr. Caplan put Steve in charge of group going to hospital. Put us on an open box car. Pretty cold. Didn't arrive til after dark. Laid in station for over an hour getting a wagon for fellows to push.

I owe my life to Dr. Caplan. He had lived in Steubenville, Ohio. After the war I tried to contact him when I went through his town, but I never found him. I never did thank him properly. I remember him telling me how much better I looked after Crawford had shaved me. He tried to keep our spirits up but he had very little to work with. He would beg for some eggs and see that the fellows in the hospital group would share. I remember him getting a cup of milk and giving everyone in the group a spoonful. One time he told me that my feet got so bad he was considering amputation but he only had a razor blade. When he had too many men who needed to ride the wagon he would take about 12 of them and leave them in a barn with a medic, or at least someone in pretty good shape. When he finally had to leave me I was fortunate to have Steve in charge.

22 Nice day. Felt better until I got into sun. Feet burned.
20 of us were put on train with 2 guards. Passenger train.
Didn't go far but on all night. Feet hurt. Got 1½ R.C.parcels

My feet hurt so much it was almost unbearable. On the train I tried leaving my feet out the window so they would stay frozen and I could sleep. I was not thinking rationally. If they started to thaw the pain was intense. I consider myself lucky that I didn't lose my feet like the doctor suggested. The weather finally warmed up enough for them to thaw out and I just couldn't stop them. For years afterwards I never wanted cover on my feet at night.

Letter from my mother to me which I read when I was home:
...had a card from Mrs. Maurer asking if I knew anything. I wrote her right away. We should be getting some mail from you written in December. The last we got was written Nov. 17 and we got it Mar. 10.

This was the day the allies crossed the Rhine.

23 Seven of us missed the train. Stayed in station at Uelzen
from 5:30 til 11:00. Caught up with rest of group. Had an hour's
rest & moved to barn. Was made to walk. I'm a poor soldier.

While waiting for the train on the platform at Uelzen we had an air raid. We were asked if we wanted to go to the air raid shelter, but we decided we had a better chance with allied bombs than we would with German civilians. Luckily their target for the day did not include the marshalling yards. The train had pulled out with only 13 of the 20 aboard with one guard. Out of the 7 who missed the train only one could walk. One guard was with us but he would not carry us. Steve carried me many times.

At the train station there was a large baggage wagon and six of us could sit or lie on it. We waited until another train came and we got on the best way we could. We had missed the earlier train because we could not move fast enough. When we got to our destination and had to go to a barn there was no way for the six of us to ride, and the others could not carry us. We had to walk. I guess I made it.

This reminds me of an incident which must have happened earlier. It was late afternoon and I had had to stop a few times because of my diarrhea. I had fallen to the back of the group. Nature called again and I went off to the left a few feet and squatted. In a moment the trailing guard walked by and did not notice me. When I got back to the road everyone was gone. I remember thinking; "I am free.", but it was short-lived. I had no way of subsisting by myself in my condition. I walked on in the same direction and caught up with them when they stopped about 20 minutes later. I guess misery loves company. This was another time when my morale got pretty low.

24 Stayed in bed most of day. I lost my R.C. parcel on train. They made collection and I got a little food. Everything happens to me. More fellows coming all the time. Soup once a day.

On the first train I got separated from my R.C. parcel. I was by the window and it was by the door. They told me not to worry about it. It had nowhere to go. When the group got split I figured my parcel was with the other group. When we finally got back with them they had no knowledge of my parcel. Talk about having low spirits! The fellows did take up a collection for me.

I must have received some good things but the only thing I can remember is that I got a can of butter. Just what I needed!

25 Sunday Talked with Churchill. Split a can of meat & beans. Walked a bit. Washed a little. Getting diarrhea again. Need some bread.

26 Cooler today. Stayed in bed in morning. Steve came in. Finished Acts. Got haircut that I really needed. Time passes rather slowly.

Somewhere on this trek I found myself going through a town and no guards were in sight. I went up to the door of a house and knocked. A woman answered and I said, "Cigaretten für brot." I had a package of cigarettes and I wanted to trade. She called her husband and I repeated my request. He told his wife something and she came with a rather large round loaf of bread. He took out a knife and cut the bread in half. At that moment a guard yelled at me. I often have thought how I should have given him half the cigarettes, but I exchanged the pack for half a loaf. That bread sustained me when I had very little else to eat.

27 Still cool. Getting hungrier. Got spuds and soup today. Impossible to get more. All I can do is just lie and wait. Could be worse I guess.

28 Didn't get much to eat. Got on wagon and went to railway station. Was put in boxcar. Stayed there all night without moving. Quite an experience. Got some bread.

The 40 hours we spent in the bcx car was probably the most traumatic experience of my life (except possibly bailing out).

It started about 2 in the afternoon when we were herded into the boxcar. Most of the cars had 60 prisoners, but since I was in the so-called hospital group only 55 were in my boxcar. I recall meeting a lieutenant who knew my sister at Kansas State. He was a nice fellow and I enjoyed talking with him. It was unusual to meet an officer as all of us were enlisted men.

We knew the train would not move until after dark. Just before dark we decided to see if it could be arranged for everyone to lie down. Everyone got on their right side with their knees bent and squeezed up to the next fellow. That way we got two rows. It worked pretty well. Only one fellow had to stand. I guess he exchanged positions during the night. I fell asleep and woke up cramped and with a feeling of claustrophobia. The train had not moved. I stretched out my left leg. I knew if I got up to stretch my place on the floor would disappear. I felt a real need to stretch out my right leg. I had lost my freedom months ago and adjusted to it, but here I had lost the freedom to stretch. I vowed never to get into a situation like this again. As light came into the car everybody woke up. They were all thirsty and hungry. I still had a crust of the bread I had bought with cigarettes, but I knew if I took it out of my pocket someone would grab it. At my end of the car across from me was a small window about 7-feet high. The can was constantly being passed to the fellow by the window to throw out. We began to act like a bunch of animals. I really cannot recall much of what

happened. My diary says: Got some bread. I have no recollection of that. We stayed in the car all the next day and finally the train moved during the night. We were really a bedraggled bunch of survivors. The new camp was at Fallingbostal, Stalag XI B, and had over 10,000 prisoners of all different nationalities. Of course, we had to climb a hill to get to it. We were put in tents in the American sector where the barracks were occupied by infantry troops.

29 Train moved about 60 kilos. Arrived at a lager. Looked good. No food. Raining. Was put in tent. Really hungry.

This is the day the allies take Mannheim and Frankfurt.

30 Got quarter Red Cross parcel. Ate most of it right away. Somebody swiped my bread during the night. Lost a D-bar too. War news good.

31 Finally got some soup and spuds. Really good. Still extra hungry. Hope it can't last much longer. Had stomach pains.

April 1 Easter Sunday Began to draw rations. Got bread, sugar & butter. I don't like lying in bed all the time. Hungry. Padre Morgan said prayer in tent. Wish I were home. Soon I hope.

On Easter Sunday 1944 we had left Ardmore, Oklahoma. My father had died the day after Easter in 1943. On Easter 1945 I was thankful to be alive.

Undated card postmarked April 1, 1945 (possibly April 10)

Dear Mrs. Anderson, Have you had any word from your boy lately? I surely hope so. The last letter I had from Ernest was written Nov. 12. I would appreciate it if you let me know if you had any news, and I hope the boys will soon be home. Yours truly, Mrs. Cora Crawford

2 Got less rations today. No spuds or butter. Read some. Played cards. The time passes slowly. Rained most of day.

3 Quite cool. Rain storm for awhile. Soup wasn't so good but had to eat something. Time is heavy on my hands. Don't feel too good either.

4 I don't see how we keep on living. Wrote letter home. Read some. Quite cool and rainy. Air raids all the time. News good.

Needless to say this letter never arrived. News reports came often. They were still bringing in prisoners who had been captured less than 50 miles away. Each day the distance kept getting less.

5 Got some oleo. Only 2 spuds today. Moved to convalescent tent next door. Getting cold. News came that we may have to move again. Finished Gospel of John.

6 Cold day. News and rumors going around. Got a quarter R.C. parcel. Got more soup than usual. Took typhus shot. Toast some bread. Had more to eat today.

7 Warmed up into a fairly nice day. Got quarter Canadian R.C. parcel. Got good soup today. The food situation isn't so bad now. Had some peanuts. Good.

8 Sunday German order woke us up. Everybody to move. All air corps left except sick. Read some. Felt better. Air raid all day. Cold in evening. Washed and shaved.

I knew I could not march again. I was barely able to walk. In order to avoid the formation I went up to the French section. The prisoners there had been prisoners for years and were getting personal parcels from home. I remember one fellow was baking bread. The aroma was mouth-watering. The Germans didn't like it when some of the air corps men remained. If we were sick we were to go to the hospital. If we were not sick then we would march. This was not a good choice. Every day a contingent of soldiers carried a body out of the hospital and buried it a short ways away. No one wanted to go to the hospital. The Germans threatened to cut off the food supply. The next day we were to fall out for inspection.

9 Not quite so good today. Got small ration of bread and no spuds. Soup was OK. Afternoon was nice and warm. Fighters did some strafing.

We got into formation at noon but an air raid made us take cover. It lasted all afternoon. We were told to report at noon the next day. The next morning most of the Germans were gone. Arrangements had been made with the British for their help in running the camp. The few Germans still carried the guns and patrolled around the camp, but a British soldier was allowed to accompany the guard.

10 Got a half a parcel so we eat awhile longer. Another nice day. The war can't last much longer. Went walking about the camp. Some fellows are worse off than I.

11 Day went faster. A lot of gunfire last night. News is good. Finally got a shower. Really felt good. Traded shirt for 17 crackers. Warm today. Hear Germans are leaving.

Another thing the French had, besides the fact that American Red Cross for relief of French prisoners of war was evidently plentiful, was a good supply of crackers. I decided to sell the extra shirt that I had been wearing for more than two months. I deloused it the best I could and took it up to the French barracks to sell it. I went through the rooms asking for vingt (20) crackers. No one seemed interested, but at the last room one Frenchman said quinze (15). I knew then what was going to happen. It was a good shirt and worth more than 20 crackers. I lowered the price to 19 and he went up to 16. After more haggling we arrived at 18 and 17. Neither would budge. Finally he shrugged his shoulders and walked off. I conceded the cracker and accepted 17. He went to a chest of drawers and inside the drawer was a tremendous number of crackers. He counted out 17 and I gave him the shirt.

This is the day the allies reached the Elbe river.

12 Water shut off most of day. Got some opium medicine which stopped me up. Very little soup today and bad stuff anyway. Ate peanut butter crackers and tuna fish for supper.

13 This is just mere existence. My diarrhea returned in force. 3rd day without bread. Cooked up some meat & beans (C rations) and spuds. Maybe tomorrow.

14 Cooler today. Felt a little better. Got half a R.C. parcel and a fifth a loaf of bread. Ate quite a bit but never enough to get full. Read some. Getting impatient.

As I read this now it seems that I was getting plenty to eat. My recollection is that food was very scarce and never far from my mind and thoughts.

15 Sunday Went to communion service at 9:00. Cool today. Hungry today. Went to 3:00 church service. Hear Padre Morgan on "Being a Real Person". It did me good. Fried some spuds. Looks like tonight. Got another typhus shot. Did some thinking about myself. I don't do so good. I guess I'm lazy. Made big breakfast.

I had been reading my New Testament and only had one more chapter to read. It seemed that the war kept dragging on. Rumors were in every day about how close the troops were. They evidently bypassed the camp before they arrived so as to provide more protection.

16 Finally the British arrived. Change over was made. Fellows started confiscating Jerry supplies. Had sauerkraut for lunch. Heated up some meat and beans. Cooked macaroni.

I shall never forget this day. At 8:37 A.M. as I was finishing reading the final chapter a tank from the British 2nd army drove up to the gate and everyone started shouting. The German guards got into formation and marched into a building in camp. A command car drove up and the transfer was made to British command. Some of the British and American commandos went over the barbed wire fence and went into town. I recall

seeing one pair of GIs setting a table with silver candlesticks and silverware and having a real feast.

We were told to remain in camp but many guys went off the base. Some of them even went to a concentration camp a few miles off. They said what they saw was unbelievable. Some gunfire was still heard so I had no desire to leave the camp.

Card dated April 16, 1945 postmarked same date Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, Just a few lines to see if you have heard from John recently. I sincerely hope that you have and will let us hear from you. The last letter we had from Ernest was dated Nov 12th, and we received the letter about the middle of Feb. We have kept in touch with the Red Cross, and they told us that Luft 4 was being moved into the vicinity of Hankurg and were supposed to have reached there some time in March, but they had no report that they had arrived. John was in Luft 4, wasn't he? If you have heard since we have, will you please write to my mother or me. Mom's address is Cotton Plant, Ark. Thanking you very much, I am, Sincerely, Ovie Crawford

17 Slept better. Nothing but dry rations today. Fried spuds and cooked macaroni. Was issued white bread. Went to show but generator broke. Fried more spuds.

The British saw to it that everyone got a loaf of white bread which I ate immediately. That afternoon I got a good seat for the movie that was to be shown. The projector wouldn't work. Did anyone know how to make it work? After about an hour we went back to our tents.

18 Cooler. Didn't feel too good. Fixed myself enough to eat today. First shipment left. Wrote letter home. Went to show with Churchill but didn't stay. Tomorrow I hope.

This time the room for the movie was packed before I got there. I was able to lie down and stick my head under the screen but the view was not so good, so I didn't stay.

Letter dated April 18, 1945

Am still in Germany but at least I'm free. Should be leaving soon. I will write a longer letter as soon as I get some time and get a bit more settled. We are eating white bread again now. The other boys are not with me but by the sound of the news they should be liberated soon if not already now. This camp is near Fallingbomel. I have certainly had a lot of experiences lately but that can wait for now. The main thing is that I'm free now. The British arrived 2 days ago. Hope I am home before long. Am well and on my way to full recovery.

I have an Identity Card for ExPrisoner of War issued at Stalag XI B signed by W. P. Lightfoot, Maj A C

19 Fried some bread and cheese. Got sprayed for lice. Rode on truck to British transient camp. Had some good stew. Went to show. Saw "Pin-up Girl". Slept in tent. Last night in Germany.

As my group hobbled out of camp to get into the trucks we broke out singing "Off we go into the wild, blue yonder". The line about "down in flames" had a special meaning to all of us. I had tears in my eyes this time.

20 Late in getting breakfast. Had powdered eggs. Laid around most of day. Took truck to airport. Flew in DC-3 from Dieholtz to Brussels. Got deloused and a good dinner. Tired.

At the airport we saw Eisenhower's plane. He was there for some kind of a meeting. The YMCA had a booth at the airport and they offered some nice things to eat and drink. I forgot to mention that the stew I ate the day before tasted good but I could only eat a few bites before I was full. That was a new sensation for me.

My plane was supposed to fly to England, but due to a late start it got dark and the decision was made to land in Brussels so as not to fly the channel at night.

Letter dated April 20, '45 on YMCA stationery with no postmark, only the sign stamped Passed by censor No. 15032

Just got served tea, cake and cookies by the YMCA and they certainly tasted delicious. We are waiting now to board a plane to leave Germany. It feels good to eat regular meals again that are real meals. Also ate alot of jam sandwiches this afternoon. Should be home soon.

Mother told me later she gave a donation to the YMCA after she received this letter.

21 Stomach out of order. Took shower and got new clothes.
Missed shipment leaving. Went to town. Saw tomb of Unknown
Soldier & cathedral. Had cream filled cookies and ice cream.
Went to news theater. Bought lace handkerchieves. Went to
dance & floor show. Got stranded in city.

The morning I woke up in Brussels I wandered around the camp and found a shower. I stayed in the shower for at least a half hour. When I went back the group I was with had gone to England. One other fellow was in the same situation. A British

officer told us to go to supply and get a uniform. Then we reported to him and he gave each of us 2,000 Belgium francs. We had to sign a receipt. I expect the US government reimbursed the British. We went to town and had a good time. I remember going into a restaurant and saying in my best high school French, "Donnez-moi un plat de glacé, s'il vous plaît." The waiter replied, "Chocolate or vanilla?" I had a dish of each.

I sent the handkerchieves home to my mother and sister. The street cars quit running at midnight and I didn't know that. Luckily, a military vehicle picked me up and took me back to camp. This was such a nice day that we decided to do the same the next day. The officer gave us 2.000 more francs but said it would be the last.

22 Sunday Still not in top shape. Went downtown. Ate ice cream. Came back to base. Went to symphony concert. Enjoyed it. Not much excitement today. Wrote home.

Another letter on YMCA stationery with stamp: Passed by Base 1081 Army Examiner, another stamp marked PAID Great Britain and a postmark May 23, 1945 APO. The back of the envelope has some scotch tape printed with the words Opened by U.S. Examiner. The letter is dated April 21, 1945, but it was evidently written on April 22nd.

It is Sunday morning and I'm still in Brussels. I have the opportunity to stay here as long as I want or leave by plane for either England or France any day. This seems like a wonderful chance to see things so I may delay my coming home for awhile and lock the city over. Yesterday I went into town and saw a

number of interesting places. Today I want to go to the Conservatory here and see what it is like. Perhaps I'll go to an opera tonight.

I am still in British hands. I don't mind it at all because they treat us fine. As soon as I leave here I go to the American authorities. At present, I'm even wearing a British uniform with a big broad hat. I'm sitting in the canteen here now where everything is free. Yesterday in town I had ice cream again. I'm looking forward to a lot of good things to eat when I get home.

Guess I'll quit now. Will write more later. Save the last few days' papers for me.

23 Up fairly early. Had fried eggs & bacon for breakfast. Went to the Conservatoire de Musique and then to G.I. Joe's (PX). Had coke and candy and peanuts. Left on train. Talked with Belgium soldier. Arrived at Namur. In American hands. Had shower, typhus shot and got new clothes. Ate chicken dinner.

When I started into the PX the MP stopped me and said only American soldiers were allowed in there. I showed him my one dog tag so he took me to the PX officer. After hearing my story the officer told the clerks to let me have whatever I wanted. Many things were still rationed. The coke seemed unusually strong but the candy and peanuts were good. My friend said he was going to Paris. I decided I would rather go into American hands. I eventually got to Paris in 1951.

24 Three good meals today. Ate quite a bit. Went to town and looked around. Went again in afternoon and saw movie "Sensations of 1945". Nothing to do in town. Went to jam session after supper.



Pictures taken in Namur, Belgium on April 24, 1945, eight days after I was liberated. I got weighed also and the amount was in stones (one stone equals 14 pounds), but but I forget what it was. I expect I weighed a few pounds over 100. My weight when I went in the army was 130 pounds.

Letter dated April 24, 1945, postmarked Apr. 27th

I'm in American hands now and finally have on the G.I. uniform. It feels good to return to the old way of life. I am in Namur, Belgium now and should leave here soon. Went to show in town this afternoon and then walked around town. I don't care much for this town.

Yesterday morning while I was still in Brussels I went to the Conservatory which is a pretty good size building. We left by train but I think we will go by plane next.

You should receive some lace which I sent yesterday. Also have some expensive handkerchieves for you. I have a lot of money coming so I may splurge once in awhile. I'll save most of it so I should have quite a sum when I get home. Should be there before long.

Got interviewed today for the paper but it will probably be a dull story. Things aren't too bad in Germany. I'll tell my story when I get home. Getting good meals and all I can eat. Will try and write again tomorrow or next day.

Card dated Apr 24, 1945 postmarked Apr. 26 Robbinsdale, Minn.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, I know you will be glad to hear that we have heard from Don. We got a card Sat last dated Dec. 17. He said he was OK but sure wished he was home. He also said he had heard from us. I have been going to write but I haven't been too well. I had an operation 4 weeks ago was in the hospital 14 days. I feel pretty good but I get tired fast. It was so good to hear from Don even if it was dated a while back. I do hope and pray they will be able to come home soon and that this all will be over. I will write any other news we get and will you do the same please. Sincerely, Mrs. Carl Nelson

25 Ate quite a bit again. Wrote home. Wish I could leave here.
After supper went to show on base "Kansas City Kitty". Not so hot.
Heard jazz band again.

V-Mail letter dated April 25, 1945, postmarked May 7

Things are moving slowly around here. I don't know why they are keeping us here but there is a hold-up somewhere. I wish I had stayed in Brussels another day before coming here. We are getting good meals here. I had steak and ice cream for dinner today. They don't allow us to go into town now so there is nothing much to do. I would like to get to Paris while I'm over here. I doubt if I'll ever be back on this side of the ocean again.

There are various stories as to how much furlough time we will get in the U.S. I want to get home before the school term is over if possible. I may even be discharged before long but I'm not counting on it yet.

Hope everything is all right at home. You probably won't get a chance to write to me before I get home but I'll keep you informed as to my whereabouts.

Card dated April 25, 1945 postmarked same date Superior, Wis.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, Have been wondering if you've heard any thing more about the boys.

We understand that some of the Allied Prisoners have been liberated. Hope our boys are among them. Let me hear from you please. Lt. Rowe wrote me a letter he is stationed in Fla.

Sincerely, Mrs. Maurer

26 Read some. Played some ping pong. Went on a couple of rides in a jeep. Felt good to do that again. Went to town in afternoon. Came back for supper. Went to Red Cross Club and to Allied Forces Club. Got doughnuts, shave and coke.

27 Up at 5:00. After breakfast we rode in open trucks through rain to get to Liege to catch a plane which never arrived. Rode back to Namur. Had a big meal. Wrote home. Went to Red Cross Casino Club. Had doughnuts. Saw some Luft 4 men. Went to show. Saw "Show Business". Entertaining.

V-Mail letter dated April 27, 1945, postmarked May 4

Delayed one more day. Went to Liege to catch plane today but it never came. Beginning to wonder if I will ever leave here. Getting anxious to get home or at least to the states. I'll telephone or telegraph as soon as I arrive in the U.S. At least I'm getting good meals here. Only wish there was more to do. Going to town again tonight but not much to do there. They do have a nice Red Cross Club. Will write again soon.

28 Supposed to go again but it was cancelled. More fellows always coming in. Took a nap in afternoon. Saw show on base "Gambler's Choice". Maybe tomorrow.

29 Sunday Raining. Went to church in town at the Allied Forces Club. Started snowing when I got back. Ate dinner four times. Finally we got on train and left. It's about time. Stopped for coffee at 8:00. Quite chilly outside.

Letter dated April 29, 1945 postmarked May 2

Sunday again and I'm still at Namur. The weather has been bad for the last three days which is the reason I guess we havn't flown out of here. The rumor ~~that~~ is going about now is that we leave this afternoon by train. I sure hope so.

It is certainly cold for this time of the year. It even snowed awhile this morning.

Went to church in town this morning. Belgium is a Catholic nation so there arn't many Protestant churches here. Church was held in a theater for us.

I bought an Eversharp pencil at the PX which is just like the one I had when I was shot down. It is blue and I like it. I left the other one in the plane when I bailed out. It only cost 80¢.

Went to a good movie in town Friday night. Saw Eddie Cantor in "Show Business". Last night we wern't allowed in town but they showed a film here on the base. It wasn't so hot. They havn't got much around here in the way of entertainment but they are trying to add more all the time. We should have left here long ago anyhow.

My small knowledge of French comes in handy around here. I can tell people what I want but I can't understand everything

they say in return. Since I've been overseas I've heard alot of languages. I never thought I'd have the chance to use any of them. Unfortunately I forgot all the German I had that summer. I picked up a little but I can forget it now.

Havn't written anybody else since I've been freed and think I will wait until I get home. I bet alot has happened in the year I've been gone. Get ready to tell me all about it. Will get home some time in May.

30 Ate chow at stop on the way. 1:30 chicken again. Had to sleep on train. Stopped again at 9:00 for breakfast. Had fried eggs and oatmeal. Arrived at camp near Le Harve at 2:00. Still chilly. Chow was cold when I got it. Not as good either. Saw part of a U.S.O. show. Not much to do. Staying in tent.

May 1 Snow and rain. Didn't go to breakfast. Doctor looked at me. Got French money for Belgium money. Got issued more clothes. Wrote air mail letter home. Took a nap. Given PX rations. Ate two good meals today. Moved to another area.

Letter dated May 1, 1945 on American Red Cross stationery postmarked May 3. Envelope has 6¢ stamp marked Air Mail

It may be the first day of May but it is still cold here. I'll be glad to get to a warm climate again.

Finally we left our last station and have moved again. Going through some more processing and then awaiting the boat home. I should be on the ocean again before long and undoubtedly I will be sea sick as I was before.

I'm sending this air mail as I am able to buy these envelopes here. I wonder if you have been receiving any of the other letters

I've been writing. Was going to send a cable but they only have form messages and they say it isn't any quicker.

The other boys aren't with me so I guess I ought to write somebody's mother when I get back at least. I was luckier than they I think. We'll have to have a big reunion sometime.

There isn't much to write now and besides I'm cold. Will write more soon.

2 Went through processing in morning. Got new dog tags. Ate dinner and supper twice. Went to show. Saw "Rainbow Island". Should be home before long. It'll do me good.

3 Stayed in bed until 10:30. Went to air corps combat movies. Got paid 1000 francs. Moved to shipping area. Maybe leave tomorrow.

A telegram, date stamped May 3, PM 6 27, reached my mother:

THE SECRETARY OF WAR DESIRES ME TO INFORM [sic] YOU THAT YOUR SON T/SGT ANDERSON JOHN H RETURNED TO MILITARY CONTROL 20 APR 45= J A ULIO THE ADJUTANT GENERAL.

4 Rained during night and morning. Got up for breakfast but wished I hadn't. Slept til lunch. Went to show in afternoon. Saw "Secret Command". Ate supper. Went to another theater on base. Saw "Kismet". Had cookies. Wrote entry in war bond contest on post-war plans.

Letter dated May 4, 1945 postmarked May 10 Miami, Fla

Dear Mrs. Anderson, It is one of those nights, I have had so many of lately, where I am unable to sleep--so I'm catching up on some writing. We are so very happy for you, that John, our little "Static Happy" has been liberated. Just knowing he is safe & alive helps the eternity it will seem to take before he arrives home. Although some of the boys have been returning 3 & 4 weeks after being liberated.

I have been extremely busy at Red Cross, assisting the Prisoners of War Consultant, in this office we get all missing in action cases--whether casualty or Prisoners so you can well realize what a "heart-full" job it must be, but somehow just the fact of knowing I've helped others makes it easier for me, in spite of the fact that I have to hurry and catch-up with my work at home & neglect other duties likewise. So knowing where & how I have spent my time, keeping busy, you will find it a little easier to forget my carelessness in not writing sooner.

Our Walt was last heard of in Stalag Luft 3 in Sagen. When the Fussians were near they were moved to Nurnburg--when Patch's 7th neared that town, apparently they were moved again for only 200 Americans were found. We are led to believe they were moved to Moosburg--7 A and that camp was liberated April 29 by Patton. Now there is no definite news of Walt's movements--no official word--only thru Red Cross Bulletins etc., & therefore it is more or less a "guessing game". We last heard from him thru letter dated December 29th and it seems so long ago.

Our Baby Bob is in the Pacific on a Carrier, he is night fighter pilot, NAVY, so it's more to think about. I know we can depend on you praying for our fellows. It is a comfort to us to know you do. Will let you know as soon as we rec. some word of Walt, it should be very soon & again we are happy you heard from John. Write again soon. Sincerely, Peg Collins

Also enclosed is a newspaper clipping marked: for John's scrapbook--Miami Daily News Society Section D, Sunday, Feb. 25, 1945 picture of Mr. & Mrs. L. H. Collins conferring with Mrs. Hazel Dillingham, Red Cross "Prisoner of War" consultant; a picture of their son Lt. Walter G. Collins; and a picture of a Nazi concentration camp.

5 Wrote letter home. Got baggage checked and moved to last shipping barracks. Another physical exam and turned in money. Went to air force tent. Located Lt. Sanborn and Lt. Collins and talked with them for awhile.

The camp in Le Harve was called Camp Lucky Strike. You started at one end of camp and as you got processed you moved toward the other end. Each area had a different mess hall and the food kept getting worse. I kept going back to the first mess hall until they issued mess cards. I was still sick but I did not want to be in a tent hospital in France. I would wait until I got on board a ship to tell them I needed help.

It was good to see Sanborn and Collins again. It was the first time I had seen Sanborn since our last mission. They both seemed to be in pretty good shape.

Letter dated May 5, 1945 postmarked May 9 in Air Mail envelope.

Again I'm just waiting for something to happen. We have been processed and arranged in the final grouping for the shipment home. Now all we have to do is to wait until the time comes to leave. Army life is half waiting anyway.

I had my choice of being sent to either Jefferson Barracks near St. Louis or to Ft. Leavenworth as my reception center. My furlough will start from there. I decided that Ft. Leavenworth was best so I will be sent there. We shouldn't stay there longer than 48 hours. What I've been thinking is that the train will have to go to KC first so I may have a lay over there. I'll try and inform you about the situation when I reach the states.

There aren't many fellows with me that I know. One fellow that I met back in camp that knows Gene Christy is with me. He lives near where Gene had his choir. A new bunch of officers came in recently and I'm going to try and look them over. Maybe some of my crew are among them.

Just read in the paper where our furlough has been extended from 21 days to 60 days. That seems like quite awhile. I'm hoping I get home in May sometime so I can go over to school before it's out. 60 days ought to be a real vacation and in the summer time too.

Here it has been raining every day since I've been here. Weather here in France is similar to that in England. I hope it is warm at home.

Saw a couple of movies yesterday to pass away the time. Don't know what I'll do today. The meals are just regular army meals again. I'm looking forward to eating alot when I get home.

That's all for now. Hope to see you soon.

Card dated May 5, 1945 postmarked same date Lake Nebagamon, Wis.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, Just received word that Augie has been liberated by the Americans on Apr. 26. So suppose your boy is free too. We do thank God very much for making this possible. Hope your word is thru to you. Am writing the others. Let me know when you hear. Sincerely,
Mrs. Maurer

6 Sunday Ate breakfast. Went to church at 9:00. Ate again at 10:30. Loaded on trucks and went to Le Harve. Got on the boat S.S. Marine Fox. Ate too much for supper. Overloaded my stomach and didn't feel too good. Was on KP washing trays. Boat shoved off.

The first meal on board ship was a great meal. I ate it three times. The sergeant in charge asked the soldier with the counter how many had eaten. He gave a number around 1400. The sergeant said that only a little over 500 soldiers were on board

so he shut down the line. About thirty soldiers were still in line and they said, "Sarge, we havn't eaten yet."

7 Had three good solid meals today. I should be gaining weight now. Stayed on deck most of day. Read. Boat pulled into Southampton in afternoon. Took shower early in the morning after nap.

Card dated May 7, 1945 postmarked May 8 Wilkinsburg, Pa

Dear Mrs. Anderson, Received your card and I am happy to hear that you have heard that your son has been liberated and that he will be home soon. As for Robert I havn't had any news concerning him as far as this date. I also had a card today from Mrs. Maurer saying her son was liberated. Will send you a card as soon as I get news. Sincerely, Mrs. R. F. McIntyre

8 Ate breakfast. Slept til dinner. Heard Churchill speak on radio. War is officially over in Europe. I wonder if I will see action in the South Pacific. Attended thanksgiving service on deck of ship. Read. Boat finally pulled out into harbor but stopped again. Ate supper twice again as usual.

Finally the war in Europe was over and I was on board a ship headed for home. It was a great feeling.

9 Finally set sail. Got PX rations. Ate candy bars, peanuts and cookies. Only ate 4 meals today. I'll be glad when this trip is over. Saw "My Kingdom for a Cook". Finished book "A Journey Through the Fog" by Goodhue. Not too interesting.

10 Slept most of day. The sea was a bit rough. Went on deck after supper. Submarine excitement. Surprised I'm not sea-sick yet.

11 Got 2 more boxes of candy bars. I'll get sick yet. Volunteered for duty in serving at chow. Read book "Lost Worlds" by White. Ate early. Chaplain on board had hymn sing. Sat on deck all evening. Listened to recordings of classical music.

I still have an Early Chow Ticket dated May 11, 1945 where I am authorized to eat early chow at 6:30, 11:00 and 16:00. Only one meal at a time was allowed and I wanted to be sure I got all I wanted.

12 Got up early. Ate breakfast and went back. Didn't do much during day. After supper listened to records of semi-classical music on deck. Went to show. Saw "Waikiki Wedding" and "Memphis Belle". I'm probably eating too much candy.

When I went to the movie on board I would take a box of Ritz crackers and a box of Baby Ruth candy bars and finish off both of them. I was still hungry most of the time so I volunteered for KP so I was sure to get more to eat. I remember serving pineapple one time and taking a bite almost every time I served some one.

13 Sunday Mother's Day Wish I could have been home. Worked serving at all meals today. Served prunes for breakfast. Went to church on deck. Nice day. Served fruit for dinner. Went to communion service. Served corn at night. Ate alot. Felt quite tired and full.

Telegram dated May 13 PM 12 51

SAFE AND WELL HAPPY MOTHERS DAY LOVE

Letter dated May 13, 1945 postmarked May 14 Staunton, Va

My dear Mrs. Anderson, I want to tell you how happy I am that John is free and all right. I can say that I know how you feel for last Tuesday I received word that Fred was liberated. My notification came from the associated press. They sent a list of Va, Washington, Maryland and Penn men who were liberated by the Third army in Germany.

As yet, I have not heard from Fred. I do not know where they were or when they were

liberated. All I know is that he is free, and that is plenty for me. I'm so very grateful, thankful, and happy. How I hope Fred and John will both be home soon.

Please keep me posted as I know Fred will want to contact John. I'm so happy for you.

Love, Chloce Sanborn

14 Slept most of morning. Stayed in bed most of afternoon.
Went on deck for a little while. Windy out. Time is passing
rapidly. Will be home soon.

Card dated May 14, 1945 Postmarked May 15 Robbinsdale, Minn

Dear Mrs. Anderson, We got our telegram Sat nite 9:45 that Don was liberated May 11. You can imagine how we felt and how thankful we were. It made a complete Mothers Day for me. We got the message by phone from the Red Cross. I got a letter from Mrs. Collins and they hadn't heard yet but they must have heard by now. Will close for now and I will let you know of any other news too. Sincerely, Mrs. Eleanor Nelson

15 Did serving in mess hall again. Served eggs for breakfast,
soup for dinner and pig knuckles for supper. Went to second show.
Saw "The Fallen Sparrow". Played bingo awhile.

Card dated May 15, 1945 postmarked May 16 Cotton Plant, Ark.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, Just to let you know that I received a telegram yesterday saying that Ernest had been liberated. It didn't say when. I really was relieved. I had been sick. But such news as that is enough to make anyone feel better. I am glad that half the war is over and I pray that the other will be over soon. Sincerely, Mrs. Cora Crawford

16 Felt the worse of any day on trip. The sea was rough during
morning. Went on sick call in afternoon. Wrote letter to Mrs.
Nelson. Read. I'm no sailor.

17 Nice day. Quite hot. Ventilating system broke. Served
cereal for breakfast, apples for lunch and bread and butter for

supper. Read. Went to second show. Saw "Whistling in Brooklyn".

Telegram dated May 17, AM 9 35 reached my mother

THE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ARMY DIRECTS ME TO INFORM YOU
YOUR SON T/SGT ANDERSON JOHN H IS BEING RETURNED TO THE UNITED
STATES WITHIN THE NEAR FUTURE AND WILL BE GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY
TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOU UPON ARRIVAL= J A ULIO THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

18 Went to movie extras early in morning. Slept til 9:00. Read.
Slept on deck in afternoon. Took shower at night.

Evidently I only worked KP every other day. I still had
diarrhea and the medic gave me something but it didn't work. The
next time he said, "This will really stop you up." Sure enough
it did.

19 Served cake for breakfast, ice cream for dinner and peaches
for supper. Went on deck and watched for land. Cold, windy and
raining. Finally docked at pier. Went to special service show in
mess hall. Tired.

Like the movies or the newsreels we all kept looking for the
Statue of Liberty. When it came in sight I must admit that I was
moved. Liberty--that's what it is all about.

20 Left the boat. Went by train to Camp Kilmer. Ate big meal.
Ate alot at PX. More processing. Got khaki clothes. Went to
show. Saw "Those Endearing Young Charms". (Called home twice.
nobody there.) Packed suitcases I bought.

The first meal you get when you return from overseas is
probably the best meal one can get in the service. I remember
we had steak, milk and ice cream. The other items I've forgotten.

Letter dated 5/18/45 postmarked May 19 Minneapolis, Minn

Dear Mrs. Anderson, Have had quite an exciting week this past week so thought I would drop you a line to let you know.

Saturday night the Red Cross called & said Don had been liberated Sunday. I called back to see if I had it straight, & they said it read as follows, May 11th 1945—S/Sgt Donald L. Nelson 37552876 requests Mrs. Donald L Nelson (address) be notified of his liberation.

Then on Tuesday Don's Mother received a call from a lady in Robbinsdale—a small town that joins Mpls on the West. She said her son had written her a letter dated April 29. He is with medical unit in Germany—He wrote how he had recognized Don in the line up, when they were giving their names after the liberation. There were 6,000 air men—right below the Netherlands.

He remembered Don from waiting on him in the store where Don & his folks used to trade in Robbinsdale. After talking to Don awhile Don remembered him too. Then he asked if when he wrote his mother if he would have her call us & tell us he was fine & hoped to be home soon.

This morning I received another telegram saying: The secretary of War desires me to express his pleasure that your husband S/Sgt Don L. Nelson returned to Military Control.

So you see it has been quite an exciting weekend. But a very nice one.

I really think it is just a matter of days before the fellows will be home. Don't you Please let us know if you hear further. Mrs. Genevieve L. Nelson

Picture postcard of The Confederate Memorial Institute on the Boulevard bet ween Kensington and Stuart Avenues Richmond Va.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, I rec'd word through the Red Cross last night (Sat) that Robert had been liberated. I hope you have your son with you soon. F. Stewart.

21 Went to PX and ate. Called home and talked to Viola. Got on train. Left at noon. Took a nap. On troop train. Traveled west.

Mother regretted the fact that she missed my call. She was working and had planned to quit when I got back. ^VViola was a girl staying at our house in my room.

22 Still going. Stopped awhile at Cincinnati. Still going west.
It won't be long.

23 Got to St. Louis too late to catch midnight train. Ate
breakfast and went uptown in taxi. Bought some articles at
military store. Arrived in K.C. at 5:00. Called home. Mother
came to station. Left at 6:00 for Leavenworth. Stayed all night
there.

Riding from St. Louis to Kansas City I think I got more excited every mile. When I began to see some familiar sights it was even more stimulating. Then, finally, I arrived but only for an hour since I had to go to Leavenworth. I called home and Mother was waiting at home for my call. She got Mr. Barrett next door to run her down to the train station. I remember that Mr. Barrett still had on his house slippers. They made it to the station in record time. Mother was surprised to see me looking so well. I guess I weighed more than I had ever weighed before. The visit was short; it would be one more day before I could stay. A sixty-day furlough was coming so I could wait patiently a few more hours. Of the eight crew members coming from Germany I had been the first one liberated and the first one to get home.

24 More papers to sign. Got more clothes. Ate big dinner.
Took shower. Got papers and got paid. Came to K.C. on bus.
Mr. Lantz brought me home. Asbridges visited. Went to station
to get stuff I left there and went to Winsteads.

Mr. Lantz was the father of an Ex-POW from Stalag Luft 4.

He must have been at the station to pick up his son and offered me a ride home.

Winsteads was a favorite drive-in out near the Plaza. They made excellent hamburgers and I had often fantasized about their taste. My main emotion now was joy--joy of being home, joy upon seeing my mother and sister again, and joy upon completing a great adventure. Life was wonderful.

Now I can stop my diary entries. I was home for the first time since March 7, 1944, almost 14½ months. There were times when I wasn't sure I would make it, but God was good to me. His blessings have come to me all my life. Now I have a wife, six children, the twelfth grandchild arrived today (8-16-94), and two great-grandchildren. I have a lot for which to be thankful.

Three more cards should be included. Postcard dated May 27, 1945 postmarked May 28 Wilkinsburg, Pa.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, Received phone call from Red Cross on May 23rd that my son Robert was liberated. They say letter will follow and I hope to hear from him soon. Sincerely, Mrs.

McIntyre

Postcard dated May 29, 1945 postmarked same date Pittsburgh, Pa.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, We received a letter from our son from Camp Ramp France dated May 16th in which he tells us he is O.K. and in good hands. He was liberated May 1st at Earth Germany by the Russians. Then on May 13th he was flown to France in a B 17 Fortress. He says he will be home on a 60 day leave. I hope you have had a letter by this time. Sincerely, Mrs. R. F.

McIntyre

Post card dated June 10, 1945 postmark not clear but looks like June 20 Cotton Plant, Ark.

Dear Mrs. Anderson, I received the letter that John wrote to Ernest Tuesday. Ernest hasn't made it home yet. I have received two letters and a cablegram from him. He said he was getting along fine and would see me in the near future. Soon as he gets home he will write to John. I surely will be proud when he gets here. Sincerely, Mrs. Cora Crawford

A lot of letter writing went on while I was home starting with a letter to Mrs. Nelson on May 26th which she answered on June 3rd. There is no need to list all of my letter writing but it wasn't until July that I heard from Crowder, Crawford and Maurex.

On June 21st another of my dreams came true. I went downtown and marched in a parade from 9th and Locust to the Liberty Memorial across from Union Station. Mayor Gage, the governors of Kansas and Missouri and General Eisenhower spoke to the assembled crowd. I marched with a group of former POWs. As a boy I had seen some Civil War veterans marching and, of course, veterans of World War I. Now it was my turn.

My 60-day furlough ended on July 26th when I took the train to Miami for a week on the army in the Hotel President Madison on the beach. The Collins came over for a visit. On the 29th Lt. Collins picked me up and we went to his house for breakfast. We took pictures and talked. I went out with the family to dinner. I believe it was the first (and last) time I ever ate lobster. I talked to Lt. Sanborn that day on the phone. On Aug. 5th Lt. Rowe was in town but I missed him. I did get to talk to him on the phone.

When I heard the war was over on Aug. 14th I was at the Y in St. Louis. I was stationed at Scott Field where I had been assigned to take a refresher course. I was allowed to go to any

base of my choosing so I picked Sherman Field at Ft. Leavenworth. A 15-day furlough was given before I had to report. My discharge came on October 11th at 5:30 P.M. in Lincoln, Nebraska. Ten days later I was on the train to Ann Arbor, Michigan to attend the University of Michigan. The fall semester started late that year so I was fortunate to get enrolled. Thus I got started on the rest of my life. I could write another book on the rest of my life, but it probably would not be as long as this one.

So before I quit I shall once more recapitulate my thanks to my family for their prayers and support all through my life overseas. At moments when my spirits were low the thoughts of home sustained me.

And to my crew--you were the best. We made it. Rowe was our good luck charm. If he hadn't been shot in the foot we would probably have finished our missions by the end of August and come back to the states. Maybe they would have sent us to the South Pacific. That piece of flak altered our lives. You were a great pilot and leader. Thanks.

Nelson, Maurer, and I will get one more chance at the coming reunion to relive together the intense five minutes around 12:35 P.M. on August 6, 1944. We know that Stewart is responsible for allowing us to live our lives to the fullest. Words cannot express our deepest thanks but words that occur to me when I think of Stewart are staunch, stalwart, responsible, and dependable.

To Sanborn who guided us many times during our training missions in the states and brought us back to the base when we

were by ourselves on Aug. 2nd. You were a good censor and an honorable crew member. I hope you have continued your interest in ecology. Thanks.

To Collins and Crowder who have preceded us in the journey across the chasm: you were good crew members. Thanks. Maybe the ten of us will meet together in fifty years.

To Maurer who was my partner in a great card game, who led our room in prison camp in a most propitious manner, who saved me from dropping out of the march across Germany, who has been a good friend and buddy, thanks.

To Nelson who finally saw the light and has lived his life so as to be an example to others, who overcame his frailties more than the rest of us, who shared his cup of cool water with his crew, thanks.

To Crawford who was inspired by the religious feelings which permeated our camp and started the nightly Bible studies in our barracks, who raised my spirits by giving me a shave when I needed such a gesture, who was a good boy as his mother stated, thanks.

To McIntyre, wherever you are, we are sorry we have lost track of you. You were the youngest and most impressionable. We hope you had a good life.

Fifty years is a life time for many people. We have all lived those past fifty years, raised our families, and now come together again for a short time to relive some great memories. We did have a great adventure together. Most, if not all of us, have had some physical problems, but the important thing is that we have survived.

We can truthfully say that our country called and we responded.
We live in the greatest country in the world and we are free.
"God bless us, everyone."

ADDENDUM TO PART II

In the early nineties as I was beginning to think about writing my memories of the time I was in the service I received a notice that a group of ex-pows was going to try and organize a chapter of AXPOW (American Ex-Prisoners of War) in Panama City, FL. I attended an organizational meeting in a K-Mart store but was unimpressed with the results. Anne Walker was elected as the first Commander of the Hutchison-Poplawski Chapter. Hutchison was the name of Anne's first husband and Poplawski was the name of Reba whose husband had been a pow. Clarence Goad was the next Commander followed by Gerald Duval who had written a book about his experiences, having survived a crash of his B-24.

In 1994 I decided to go with a group of Luft IV members back to the campsite and took Jack, my second son, with me. June Chapek was the tour director and she worked with Leonard Rose who was in charge of the records of Luft IV. It was a great trip and I enjoyed the encounter with people who had had similar experiences to mine.

In 1995 my interest grew as I attended a national convention of AXPOW in Birmingham, AL which was not far from home. Claude Watkins gave an interesting report on Stalag Luft VI at Heydekrug which was a pow camp near Lithuania. No one seemed to know about Luft VI at St. Wendel where I lived for twenty days.

In 1996 I did not attend the convention which was held in Des Moines, IA but after that I attended each national convention for a number of years. The 1997 convention was held in Tacoma, WA and a letter from Roland Geiger was read asking for information about a pow camp held in his home town of St. Wendel. He had heard about a camp but had no knowledge about it. I got his address and wrote him since I was in the first contingent of soldiers to go to St. Wendel. I copied what I had written in my diary during the twenty days I was there. Herr Geiger issued a paper concerning the camp which is still on the internet. I corresponded with some of the

names he said were at camp and wrote my view of the camp. I thought the Bulletin, put out monthly by AXPOW, might publish it if it were in three smaller portions. The editor thanked me for the submission and said she had sent it on to Andersonville, GA, the site of a Civil War prison, and the main museum for pows of all wars. Clarence Goad and I spent a week as pows in residence at the museum, talking to visitors and answering questions they might ask. The library had not been cataloged at the time and I could not find my copy. In 2010 I donated a number of items to the museum that included a copy of the hymnbook we used in camp, the music I wrote out for the choir to sing at church in Luft IV, the individual parts for each member of the choir, a copy of the program for the minstrel show which received three performances in January, 1945, a copy of Stainer's Crucifixion, and a stone from the foundation of the Red Cross Building which was located at the entrance to the Lager which I picked up in 1994.

In 1997 I had the opportunity to go to Australia with my daughter Lezah and her husband Ken. As I went through Los Angeles I tried to contact Crawford, my tail gunner, who lived there but he was not sure about seeing me. I found out later he came to the airport but did not make himself known. The three of us flew to Sydney and met Ken's brother Jim and his wife Cheryl. After a couple of days in Sydney in which we got to see the famous opera house we went to the capitol Canberra where Jim worked. We got to go through numerous government buildings. Later, we traveled to the interior to see mountains called the Three Sisters but it was so foggy we could only see part of one. We went down to the southeast coast and had chances to see koala bears, emus, and close communion with kangaroos. From Australia we went to New Zealand for a few days and stayed at a bed and breakfast. I remember climbing a hill that had one tree. We flew next to Hawaii with a stopover at the Fiji Islands at night. I enjoyed seeing Hawaii and we took a tour around the perimeter of Oahu. We got to see Pearl Harbor and see the memorial there to the Arizona. We flew back to Los Angeles and this time I was able to see Crawford and talk with him. He had just lost

his companion and it was not long after that that I got word that he had died.

Lezah, Ken and I took a cruise on the inland waterways to Alaska which added another state to my list of states I had been in. We went through Denali Park and saw a lot of wild life. A train took us to Fairbanks where we had a salmon dinner with Gen Nelson, the wife of Don Nelson, my ball turret gunner, who ran the radio-TV station in North Pole, AK. Don died on May 8, 1997.

Conventions were held in Baton Rouge, LA in 1998, Evansville, IN in 1999, and Louisville, KY in 2000. After I became Commander in 1998 the chapter paid my expenses to attend the state's quarterly meetings and conventions usually held in south or central Florida. I was elected to the position of Junior Vice Commander for the state in 1999. At the national conventions we always had a reunion of Luft IV alumni run by Leonard Rose. It was the highpoint of the convention. It was always interesting to hear the stories some of the men told. We always laughed when "half mission" told his story.

I believe that every year a group of Luft IV went back to the campsite which is not far from the town of Koszalin in Poland. I had gone in 1994, but in 2000 I decided to go again with my eldest son John and my fourth child Peter. June Chapek was the tour director again. This time the group went first to Bergen, Norway. It was an interesting town and we rode a cable car to the top of the mountain that overlooked the city. The group traveled by boat up a fjord. We saw the home town of Knute Rockne and Oslo. From Norway we visited Sweden and then on to Denmark. We stopped in Viborg which was the home of Chris Christiansen. We had a tour of the cathedral there and we had a dinner with the Christiansens. John, my son, entertained the grandchildren of Mr. Christiansen with magic tricks. Mr. Christiansen had sent me a copy of his book that he wrote – Seven Years among Prisoners of War --and I took it with me so he could write a dedication in it. On the way to Copenhagen we saw the birthplace of Hans Christian Andersen. By boat we traveled to Luebeck and saw the organ Bach had played when he was there. We stayed in Koszalin, this time in a palace just outside

of town. John and I roomed together in a room on the third floor (no elevators) and Peter roomed with Leonard Rose. The boys were fascinated by the McDonald store which was doing a good business. The group ended up in Berlin before returning to the states.

Since I had reached home with copies of the choir parts we had sung in camp I thought it might be a good idea to get a group to sing them at the banquet in Tucson, AZ in 2001. The convention was held immediately following the attack on 9-11 and a number of conventions were cancelled but we went ahead as usual. I wrote the National Commander and he agreed to the idea. About a month before the convention I had a call from the program chairman for the convention saying that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs would be unable to speak at the banquet so he wanted us to enlarge our program and take more time. I requested that we be allowed some practice time before the banquet and he agreed. I contacted the Music Department at Arizona State University in Tucson and arranged for a student string quartet to rehearse twice and then play the performance at the banquet. In camp I had used two violins and a cello along with the little pump organ to accompany the choir. I had to write out the parts for the viola which was not hard to do. In place of the organ I used an accordionist, Rudy Vidmar, who played for us in Poland at a "fire" which was their term for a barbeque. Rudy had been in A Lager and could play almost anything. He agreed to do it if he were allowed to play a solo group for the crowd. To enlarge the program I thought the people might enjoy singing the service songs that they all knew. I had some patriotic songs ready also in case I needed them. Getting the singers together would be the big problem.

After arriving in Tucson I found that our rehearsal room had been taken over by the convention which needed a room available for handicap persons. The hotel had a policy that no posters were allowed on the walls. I asked Leonard if he would allow me to have a rehearsal after the reunion. The reunion was Friday and the banquet was Saturday night. At the reunion I asked the group how many had ever sung in a choir. A sizable group stood. I told them that they were to sing at the

Britain and got to go through a B-17. We spent three days in London and saw the Tower of London and the British Museum along with Trafalgar Square and Picadilly Circus. On the night before we returned to the states the Anderson family entertained the group by recalling the events of the trip in song.

I suggested to Leonard that we should have a session and honor Dr. Leslie Caplan who accompanied the men of C Lager on the march across Germany. I knew that the doctor kept a Journal and thought it might be available. The doctor had died in the eighties but his wife still lived in Minneapolis. Leonard gave me her phone number and I gave her a call. She said she knew of the Journal, but her daughter, Laura, who lived in New York City, would be better able to help me. I called Laura and she told me the Journal was in Minneapolis and that she was going back there and would try and send me a copy. I wrote out what I thought was a tribute to the doctor and since the next convention in 2002 was in Rochester, MN I invited her to attend. She sent a copy of the Journal but half of some pages were missing so it was difficult to get the whole story. At the reunion Laura was somewhat overwhelmed by the outpouring of affection the group demonstrated to her. She decided to work with me on the Journal and sent me a complete copy. I spent most of the year transcribing the Journal which Laura called "Domain of Heroes". The doctor listed the amount of food issued each day on the march and the names and hometowns of the men he treated. During the month of February he did not write every day. Each day he omitted I included in the Foreword. During the month of March his entries became more plentiful. After we reached Stalag XIB at Fallingbostel he was asked to remain to work in the hospital there. But when the airmen had to march on after a week he decided to march with them. The last of the group was liberated on May 2nd. The march lasted over eighty days in all. At the end I made an index of all the names mentioned in the Journal and an index of all places and hometowns used in the book. My name was listed three times.

While in England I met Beulah and Jim Godwin who lived in Panama City, FL. Jim was the lead bombardier on my

banquet and we would rehearse the music, have a short rehearsal before the banquet and then sing. Luckily, I had a few men although there were more women participating than men. I had to rearrange the music to accommodate the women. Surprisingly, it went well. "The Bells of St. Mary" was a favorite and the crowd joined in on the chorus after a soloist sang the verse. The cellist even played from the scrap of paper that was used in the performance in Germany. In camp it was sung on Sunday, December 3, 1944. "The Holy City" was sung on Christmas Day and repeated on Sunday, December 31st. The *ad hoc* choir sang it at the banquet. The accordionist gave his group of numbers but the crowd grew restless and many talked during his presentation. I decided to cut out most of the patriotic songs. My cousin who had lived in central Florida had moved to northern Arizona, so I invited him to attend the concert. He was impressed and helped me collect money to pay for the quartet. Pow people are usually generous people and always willing to help. Over 800 people attended the banquet.

In 2002 the 388th Bomb Group decided to have a reunion at their home base Knettishall in England. I decided to join them and took with me three of my sons and their wives: John and Arlene came from Palm Bay, FL; Peter and Barbara came from Ocala, FL; and Phillip and Ellen came from Snellville, GA. We spent four days in Cambridge and visited the airbase by bus. John Nichol, who had called me from England for information for his book about the migration of all the prisoners of war leaving their camps and marching westward to avoid the onslaught of the Russian army, was the first airman shot down in the Gulf War and held as a prisoner in Iraq. The book is entitled "The Last Escape" and my children gave me a copy of the book. John talked to our group while he showed a video on the bus ride out to the base. One day the local flying club brought some planes into the base and took us for a ride from the base out over to the channel as if we were on a mission. A taxi strip was used as the runway for the planes. All the buildings are gone now except for one which is used as a museum. My family enjoyed seeing the sights in Cambridge. We went to the American Air Museum in

last mission. He was busy dropping the bombs on the mission when we got shot down so he did not know about us. The Godwins had been attending the annual meetings of the 388th Bomb Group and they asked me to ride with them to Savannah for the convention in 2003. The 8th Air Force has a museum there.

In 2003 the AXPOW convention was held in Greenville, SC. Laura Caplan was able to give a report on the progress of the book she was writing about her father. David Dorfmeier, the son of the barracks chief of Barracks 3 in C Lager, attended the reunion and asked for help as he was writing a book about his father. Since I had kept a diary while I was in camp I was able to assist him about events in camp with dates. David would write a chapter and send it to me for approval. He now lives in Paso Robles, California and his book is about ready for publication. He visited us once in Mexico Beach, FL while he was in Florida. He often calls on the weekends now.

In the state organization as Junior Vice Commander I was responsible for the chapters of AXPOW which were located in the panhandle. We had one quarterly meeting in Panama City that our chapter sponsored. In 2003 I became the Senior Vice Commander. The national convention was held in Arlington, TX in 2004.

As Senior Vice Commander my job was to arrange the state convention in Florida. With the help of the members of the Hutchison-Poplowski Chapter and the assistance of Tyndall Air Force Base we put on a great convention. We had our banquet at the NCO Club on Tyndall following a demonstration of the stealth fighter called the Raptor, the F-22. The featured speaker at the banquet was the Medal of Honor holder Col. George "Bud" Day who is probably the most decorated airman in the country. He was introduced by a member of our chapter, Bill Robinson, who was the longest held POW enlisted man in the Vietnam War. Bill and I participated in giving the Pledge of Allegiance at the opening of the state legislature that year.

I became Commander of the State of Florida Department. Early in the convention the group took a cruise on the Gulf of

Mexico with a buffet supper. Laura Caplan gave a review of her father's Journal. An auction and a band concert were parts of the program. The convention program had a striking picture of the F-22 on the cover. Paul Dallas of North Carolina was national Commander and was scheduled to speak at the convention, but his brother died and he was unable to attend. Now Paul runs the state department in North Carolina. They recently had a quarterly meeting in Greensboro which is my chapter now.

The 388th meeting was held in Akron, OH and the Godwins had enough air miles to cover the cost of my plane ticket. I had been corresponding with Larry Witt who lived in Michigan. His daughter was writing a paper in a class she was taking at the University about her father. Larry was the only person I have met who was in my choir in camp. He and his daughter, Laura Edge, wanted to come visit me while I was close by. I met with them and showed them the music that we had used in camp. Larry died a couple of years ago but we had kept connected. Laura decided to expand her paper into a book about her father and the last e-mail I got she says that the book has been copyedited and typeset and in its final review. I sent her my picture which was taken eight days after I was liberated and had just gone into American hands. I had helped her with some of the facts that were included in the book.

In the spring of 2005 our local chapter of AXPOW had the state quarterly meeting in Mexico Beach at the El Governor Motel. My wife furnished the evening meal for the group. It was one of the least expensive meetings we have had.

Lezah, my daughter, attended conventions with me in Rochester, MN, Greenville, SC. and Denver, CO. I had been looking forward to the meeting in Denver because it meant that I would have a chance to see my engineer for the first time since the end of the war. We had corresponded by mail at times and I called him, usually on the anniversary of our last mission, but nothing takes the place of actually seeing a person and being able to talk with him. Augie Maurer, my engineer, had lost his wife and was living with his daughter Cheryl and her husband Udo Zahn. Udo had been in Berlin at

the time we were bombing the city.

Leonard Rose started out to go to the convention in Denver but developed problems in breathing so he called me and asked me to handle the reunion for Luft IV. Augie didn't want to meet with all the people so his family and Lezah and I went on a picnic and had a good time looking at scrapbooks and talking. Laura Caplan had taken pictures of Augie and me when we first got together so I invited her to go with us. It was not quite what I had expected because Augie really did not want to talk about the war. My buddy had written up his story and then had a stroke so he avoided the topic. Still, it was good to see him again and renew our friendship.

The last national convention I attended was in Nashville, TN in 2006. The attendance was less than it had been. One of the high points of the reunion was I got to meet Walter "Bud" Lawrence, who was originally from Texas and called "Tex" but now lives in Kansas. He remembered that on Christmas Day in camp he went with me and a group of glee club members to the different barracks where we sang carols. Since then we have corresponded regularly and he wrote out his story and sent it to me. I judged it like the other stories I have been receiving. He did not ask me to do so. He recently lost his wife also. In 2008 the convention was in Kansas City and I had looked forward to seeing my hometown again. "Bud" Lawrence attended and gave a report. Attendance is down and soon there will be no one to attend the Luft IV reunions.

The 388th B.G. is meeting in Savannah at the end of August this year. Phil Turner read an article that was in the Winston-Salem Journal and picked up by other papers. He visited us in Augusta and videoed my telling my story. He wanted to help me redo what I had written in 1991 and 1994 and I thought it could be done. I have also been in contact with Neale Musolff of Lansing, MI who was the brother of the engineer of Sarten's crew that went down a few days after our crew. That crew was along side of us in training in Ardmore, OK and was in our squadron in the 388th B.G. It has been fun thinking about how to update my story.

In 2009 I went to the mail box and brought in the mail. I tripped on the one step up to the porch and broke my nose. In

December 2011 my kidneys began to fail and a month later they did. My nephrologist gave me a choice of dialysis or hospice. I took dialysis and have it now three times a week for three and a half hours each session. I still consider myself fortunate. It is my hope that I can attend the 388th reunion in Savannah this year. Hopefully, one or more of my sons will be able to go with me. This December I shall turn ninety and was surprised when I made it to the year 2000. Now that I have updated my story I can rest in peace.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not mention my wife Hazel as being supportive of all my trips and helpful in all the activities that I undertook. She was more than helpful many times and has not received the recognition she deserves for all the work she has done for AXPOW, both in Florida and North Carolina. She really wanted to stay in Florida but we were not near a hospital there and I thought it would be better to have our daughter, who lives here in Kernersville, take responsibility for our health. This year it has been hotter in North Carolina than it was in Florida. It has been a strange year weather-wise. All my sons have been to visit us this year so in that way it has been a good year. Thanks Hazel for providing me with a good home and family which gave me a good life. You are loved and appreciated.

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OCT 19, 12:00 AM EDT

NC man vividly remembers being a prisoner of war

By KIM UNDERWOOD
Winston-Salem Journal

KERNERSVILLE, N.C. (AP)

-- On Aug. 6, 1944, John Anderson was on a bombing mission near Berlin when German anti-aircraft fire hit his B-17. The plane went into a spin. For a time, the centrifugal force was so strong that Anderson couldn't move, much less make his way toward the door in the tail to escape.



John H. Anderson
Sergeant—ROG



George T. Crowder
Corporal—AAEG

He thought he was a dead man.

The Winston-Salem Journal reported that instead, his fate was to become a prisoner of war.

Today, Anderson is 86. Music is a passion, and before being



drafted in early 1943, he completed a degree at the Conservatory of Music in Kansas City, Mo. After being discharged on Oct. 11, 1945, he received a master's degree and embarked on a career that began as the assistant band director at the University of Georgia and closed as chairman of fine arts at Georgia's Columbus College, now Columbus State University.

Along the way, he earned a doctorate and met and married his wife, Hazel. They had six children. Their third child, Lezah Arney, lives in Kernersville, which is how they ended up living there.

In 1944, Anderson was a 21-year-old Army Air Corps tech sergeant serving as the radio man in the 388 Bomb Group, 561 Squadron. In June, on his third mission, he had flown in support of the D-Day Invasion. The Aug. 6 mission out of England to bomb a tank factory was the crew's 24th. The flak was heavy.

"You could feel the plane get hit," Anderson said. "I looked up and suddenly the front of the bomb bay was in flames. I was reaching for the fire extinguisher when the order came to bail out."

Because of the fire, he started toward the tail. Not seeing the ball-turret gunner climbing up from below, Anderson tripped over him and went sprawling. By the time they both got up, the plane had gone into a spin.

"You couldn't move," Anderson said. "We decided this is it. After a while - it seemed like a lifetime - the force is gone. Relief comes."

To this day, he has no idea what stopped the spin.

"The fact that we came out of the spin was sort of a miracle," Anderson said.

Once he reached the door, he hesitated because it looked as if he might be thrown into the tail. In that moment of hesitation, the door ripped off and he shot out of the plane. Falling backside down, he could see his boots and socks fly

off. Spinning, he knew he had to do what he could to control the spin before opening his parachute.

Once he stabilized a bit, he counted to 10 three times before pulling the rip cord. When he did, he had a scare: "It came off in my hand - nobody ever told me that."

The parachute opened. He landed in a field. First came a farmer armed with a pitchfork, then a soldier, finally a local policeman. He wasn't afraid, he said. "I'm glad I'm alive."

The next day found him - still barefoot - in a German jail with a couple of other members of the crew. Eventually, they would learn that all nine men on the plane made it to the ground alive and that their plane was one of six shot down.

Anderson eventually ended up in Stalag Luft IV. The food was minimal - no breakfast, soup with some vegetables and, rarely, a scrap of meat for lunch, potatoes for dinner. Red Cross boxes helped a bit. Anderson says he knows it sounds odd to say this, but he found parts of the experience really satisfying. He became the leader of the camp choir, and so many fellow prisoners wanted to sing that he started a glee club, too.

Paper was at a premium, and he would write down music on the back of Chesterfield cigarette wrappers. When he came into possession of two hymnals, he considered them real treasures. After the Germans evacuated the camp because of the Russian advance, he had to abandon them in a barn during a forced march because they became too heavy to carry.

By then, it was the winter of 1945 - "the wind was so strong you could almost lean into it and it would hold you up" - and, when his feet froze, he was no longer able to march and was put on a train.

By the time American forces liberated him from another POW camp at 8:37 a.m. on April 16, he had dysentery and weighed about 100 pounds, down from the 130 he weighed before being shot down. He still vividly remembers the scent of the loaf of white bread that they gave each of the liberated

Addition to John Anderson's Part II "Life as a P.O.W."

By

Neale Musolff, brother of T/Sgt. Ranold Musolf, Top Turret Gunner & Engineer on the Sarten Crew. T/Sgt. August Mauer TT Gunner & Engineer on the Rowe crew was my brothers best friend from their time at Ardmore, OK AFB.

In 1950 my parents and I traveled to the Western part of the United States. We stopped in Wisconsin to meet and talk with Augie Mauer. He recounted his experience on bailing out of his aircraft in considerable detail. When I read the newspaper account relating the incident by John Anderson, I was struck by the how close the 2 versions were in detail.

Augie told us that they had a replacement pilot (on his 28th mission) 3rd mission as a pilot. (Previously he was a copilot on other crews.) When the order to bail out was given, the pilot was the 1st one to exit the aircraft. The Copilot Robert Stewart stayed with the aircraft until all of the crew was out. Mauer in his account to us indicated Stewart died in the craft. Lt. Stewart suffered severe burns on his face and hands.

The fire forward prevented Mauer from using the forward hatch so he had to make his way to the rear door over open bomb bay doors. The plane went into a spin and threw him onto the catwalk. When the ship righted itself (most likely with the help of the copilot) the soles of his boots were like butter and he nearly slipped off of the catwalk. When he got back by the door for escape, there was a crewman kneeling by the door. I thought he was going to say he was praying. Instead, he was trying to snap on his parachute. Then the other crewman tried to open the door instead of pulling the release pins. The door slammed shut and was sprung. The plane then went into a 2nd spin and again righted itself (again, probably with the help of the co-pilot). They were able to release the door and exit the plane.

Mauer said when he reached the ground, there were two groups headed in their direction. One was soldiers from an AA battery and the other was a group of very angry locals armed with clubs and pitchforks. He was very grateful the soldiers arrived first. (Although in a phone conversation with Mauer's daughter in 2009, she told me he suffered with 80% hearing loss in one ear and 90% in the other. Also he was in mid-stage Alzheimers. Doctors attributed these conditions to the beatings he received after capture.)

As the reader will note, my recollection matches very closely that of John's in the newspaper article. Hearing the story from my "big brother's" closest service friend made an indelible impression on an 18 year old boy.

In a letter to my mother after the war, Augie indicated he had entered the ministry.

Robert M. Rowe
Second Lieutenant—P



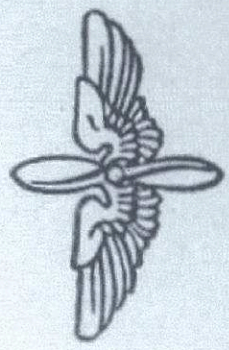
Robert S. Stewart
Second Lieutenant—CP



W. G. Collins
Lieutenant—B
Navigator



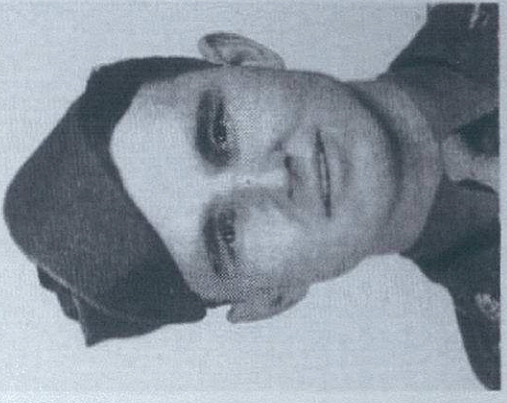
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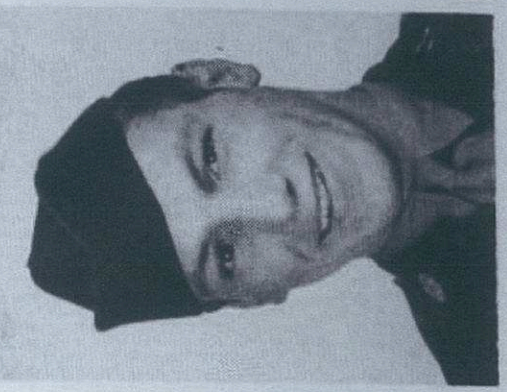
John H. Anderson
Sergeant—ROG



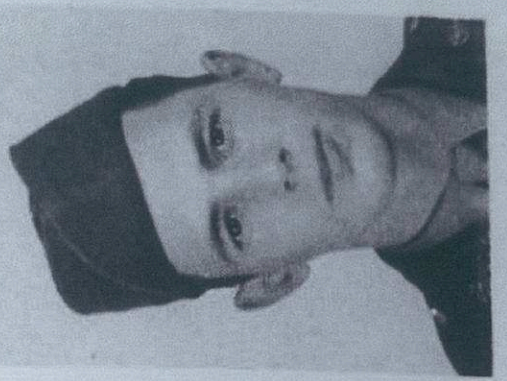
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Corporal—AAEG



Ernest Crawford
Corporal—GUN



Robert J. McIntyre
Sergeant—AG



07/26/2009