

CONFIDENTIAL

OPERATIONAL MISSION SUMMARY

The Group took part in 20 missions in the month of May. Targets to Faenza R.R. Bridge, Ploesti M/Y, Compina R.R. Siding, Bucharest Main M/Y, La Spenzia Harbor, San Ruffilo Rail Installations, Piscenza M/Y, Bos Novi, Graz/Thalerhof A/D, Chambery M/Y, Montpellier A/D, Knin, Wels A/D. These targets were in France, Austria, Yugoslavia, Italy, Romania.

The totals for the month of May and totals to date are as follows:

	<u>MAY</u>	<u>Totals to date</u>
Missions	20	55
Sorties	693	1694
Early Returns	39	152
A/C Bombing	549	1440
Tonnage	1205.02	3197.1
Loses Flak	2	5
E/A	0	17
Other	6	16
Missing	2	2
Damage Flak	3	19
E/A	1	13
Other	1	4
E/A Destroyed in Air	6	78
Probable Destroyed	0	18
Damaged	1	26
E/A Destroyed on Ground	18	59
Damaged	12	23

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OPERATIONAL MISSION SUMMARY continued:

2 May 1944, Mission #36, At 0830 hours, 35 B-24's took off to bomb the primary target, return Faenza R.R. Bridge, Italy.

2 a/c returned early because of lack of fuel. 2 of these a/c jettisoned 6 x 1000 lb. bombs in the Adriatic Sea. 2 a/c returned prior to bombing because of engine trouble. 1 of these jettisoned 6 bombs in the Adriatic Sea.

28 a/c dropped 159 x 1000 lb. (79.5 tons) GP, .1 second nose, .01 tail fused bombs on primary target, Faenza R.R. Bridge 1253 hours from 19,300 feet. 1 of these a/c returned to Base with 5 x 1000 lb. (2.5 tons) of bombs because of rack malfunctions. 1 of these a/c jettisoned 2 x 1000 lb. (1 ton) bombs in the Adriatic Sea because of rack malfunctions. 1 a/c dropped 6 x 1000 lb. (3 tons) bombs on Ostiglia R.R. Bridge because it joined another formation after a late take off. 1 a/c returned 6 x 1000 lb. bombs to Base because of rack malfunctions. 30 a/c returned to Base at 1433 hours.

Results: Faenza R.R. Bridge, was attacked, but not hit. Bombs fell in town, in M/Y, in Northwestern portion of town, and possibly on Northern approach to R.R. Bridge.

Enemy resistance: Fighters: None seen or encountered. Flak: Scant, inaccurate, heavy at Cesanatico, Rimini.

5 May 1944, Mission #37. At 1030 hours, 41 B-24's took off to bomb Ploesti M/Y and Military installations, escorted by P-38's, P-47's, and P-51's.

5 a/c returned early, 1 because of oxygen leak, 2 because of engine trouble, 1 because bombardier was sick. 36 a/c dropped 348 x 500 lb. (87 tons) GP, 1 second nose, .01 second tail fuse bombs on primary target at 1413 hours from 23,000 feet. 1 of the above a/c, jettisoned 2 x 500 lb. (.5 tons) bombs off Yugoslavian Coast, rack malfunctions. 36 a/c returned to Base at 1728 hours.

Results: Unobserved due to smoke and partial undercast. Bombed on pathfinder. Operator estimates target hit.

Enemy resistance: Fighters: 10-15 FW 190's and ME 109's was seen in the target area. Single FW 190 made 2 attacks on the low left of the second Combat Unit from 5 o'clock level, breaking at 600 yards at 3 o'clock, and 1 FW 190 attacked from 7 o'clock high, 2 ME 109's attacked –

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OPERATIONAL MISSION SUMMARY continued:

the high right of the first Combat Unit from 3 o'clock level, breaking at 6 o'clock, 1 FW 190 was black with yellow markings on one wing, ME 109's had red noses and wing tips. Flak: Intense, accurate, heavy, barrage, and tracking at target. Black burst with white and red burst above formation.

6 May 1944, Mission #38. At 0755 hours, 38 B-24's took off to bomb Campino M/Y and military installations, escorted by P-38's.

2 a/c returned early, 1 because its engine was throwing oil, and 1 because its manifold pressure was too great. The latter jettisoned 10 x 500 lb. bombs in the Adriatic Sea. 1 a/c returned prior to bombing because of an inoperative supercharger.

34 a/c dropped 314 x 500 lb. (81 tons) RDX, .11 second nose, .01 and .025 tail fuse bombs on primary target at 1132 hours from 21,500 feet. 1 of these a/c returned to Base with 2 x 500 lb. (.5 ton) bombs because of rack malfunction. 1 a/c jettisoned 10 x 500 lb. bombs at 4524N/2517E because of a feathered engine and an inoperative . 35 a/c returned to Base at 1458 hours.

Results: Crews report concentration in target area and many explosions observed. Smoke rose to 15,000 feet and was visible for 25 miles. Some bombs fell short into the town.

Enemy resistance: Fighters: 15 – 20 FW 190's, ME 109's, and JU 88's were seen in the target area. ME 109's had yellow bands around the wings and tails. Except for one attack by a JU 88, the e/a were most effectively dealt with by the escorts. One JU 88 came in at 12 o'clock low, closing to 700 yards and peeling off at 1:30 o'clock. This a/c is claimed destroyed. 2 ME 109's attacked singly from 9 to 10 o'clock high. No, Me 109 was claimed damaged.

Flak: Intense, accurate, heavy at target and rally, mobile along Campino – Ploesti railroad, barrage type. Black and some white burst. Moderate to heavy at Zajecar.

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7 May 1944, Mission #39. At 0755 hours, 43 B-24's took off to bomb Bucharest M/Y, escorted by P-38's and P-47's. 2 of these a/c joined the formation of the 459th BG. as ordered. 5 a/c returned to base early, 2 because of mechanical failures, 2 because of gas leaks, and 1 flying with the 459th BG. returned because the latter did. 3 a/c returned prior to bombing, 1 because pilot was sick, and 2 because of engine trouble. 1 of these a/c jettisoned 10 x 500 lb. bombs at 4255N/1938E. 35 a/c dropped 334 x 500 lb. (86 tons) GP., 1 second nose, .01 to .025 second tail fuse bombs on primary target at 1129 hours from 19,400 feet. 1 of these bombed with an unidentified Group of B-24's, when the 459th BG. with which he was flying became scattered because of weather. 33 a/c returned to base at 1436 hours. 2 a/c were missing, not known when they left the formation.

Personnel casualties: 20 crew members missing in action.

Results: Bombs fell to the S.W. of target.

Enemy resistance: Fighters: 3 ME 109's and 2 FW 190's were seen in the target area. 1 ME 109 made one pass from 9 o'clock high, closing to 300 yards and breaking away at o'clock low. The e/a was black with a white spinner.

Flak: Intense, accurate, heavy, barrage and tracking type at target. Intense, heavy observed at Nis and Pristina.

12 May 1944, Mission #40. At 0525 hours, 42 B-24's took off to bomb La Spezia quay area.

1 a/c returned early because one engine was out. 33 a/c dropped 326 x 500 (81.5 tons) GP., 1 second nose, .025 tail fused bombs on the primary target at 0933 hours from 21,500 feet. 1 of these a/c jettisoned 4 x 500 lb. bombs at Genoa, because of bomb rack malfunctions. 8 a/c returned 80 x500 lb. bombs to Base because the Box Leader could not see the target. 41 a/c returned to Base at 1146 hours.

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OPERATIONAL MISSION SUMMARY continued:

12 May 1944, Mission #40 continued:

Results: Crews report hits in the dock area and port installations, and near misses on M/Y at Anchor. Clouds obscured observation.

Enemy resistance: Fighters: None.

Flak: Moderate, accurate, and heavy at Genoa.

13 May 1944, Mission #41. At 1032 hours, 38 B-24's took off to bomb San Rufillo Rail installations.

2 a/c returned early because of mechanical failures. 33 a/c dropped 198 x 1000 lb. (99 tons) GP., 1 second nose, .025 tail fuse bombs on the primary target at 1224 hours from 20,000 feet.

3 a/c dropped 19 x 1000 lb. (9tons) bombs on Tesi Airdrome (433N/1316E) because Box Leader had bomb rack malfunctions over primary target, so picked target of opportunity, 36 a/c returned to Base at 1612 Hours.

Results: Target well covered. Bombs fell in, short, and over. Many fires and smoke rising to 2000 feet was observed. At Tesi, 3 bombs fell on runways.

Enemy resistance: Fighters: None seen or encountered.

Flak: Moderate, inaccurate, and heavy at target.

14 May 1944, Mission #42. At 0919 hours, 39 B-24's took off to bomb Piacenza, Italy. 1 a/c returned early because of engine trouble. This a/c jettisoned its bombs into the sea.

34 a/c dropped 1208 x 120 lb. (72.8 tons) frags, instantaneous fuse bombs on the primary target at 1304 hours from 19,200 feet. 3 of the above a/c returned 34 x 120 lb. bombs to Base. 7 of the above a/c jettisoned 98 x 120 lb. bombs into the sea, due to bomb rack malfunctions. 4 a/c jettisoned 160 x 120 lb. frag bombs into the sea, due to bomb rack malfunctions. 38 a/c returned to Base at 1526 hours.

Results: Bombs fell between runway and buildings, and into the Southern dispersal area.

Enemy resistance: Fighters: None seen or encountered.

Flak: Intense, accurate, and heavy at Pola.

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18 May 1944, Mission #43. At 0734 hours, 40 B-24's took off to bomb Ploesti Redevente Refinery, escorted by P-51's and P-38's.

3 a/c returned early, 1 because a gunner had the wrong parachute, 1 because the pilot had the bends, and 1 because of a supercharger was out. 2 a/c returned 20 x 500 lb. bombs to Base because they did not identify the target. 32 a/c jettisoned 314 x 500 lb. bombs in the vicinity of the target and in the Adriatic Sea. 2 a/c are at Brindial A/D, and 1 a/c is at Bari A/D. 1 a/c is missing: not known when last seen. 33 a/c returned to Base at 1455 hours.

Personnel casualties were a Navigator, killed by flak and 10 crew members missing in action.

Results: Target was alternately obscured and visible. on the run from 6 miles South of IP, Pathfinder instruments became inoperative. At target time, ground was visible, but formation was not over the target, and bombs were not dropped. No run in alternative target was made because of undercast.

Enemy resistance: Fighters: 5 – 10 ME 109's and FW 190's were encountered in the target area and were effectively dealt with by the fighter escort. Probably 4 to 5 attacks were made by single a/c from 6 to 12 o'clock. FW 190's had yellow wing tips. ME 109's had red spinners.

Flak: Intense, accurate and heavy at Ploesti. Intense and heavy observed at Campina . Scant and heavy observed at Bar and Belgrace.

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OPERATIONAL MISSION SUMMARY continued:

19 May 1944, Mission # 44. At 0610 hours, 38 B-24's took off to bomb the primary target area, Plan Able, and bomb a target of opportunity, La Spezia Harbor, escorted by P-38's.

1 a/c returned early because it took off with a dead cylinder and could not maintain climb. 36 a/c dropped 359 x 500 lb. (89.75 tons) GP., 01 second nose, .025 tail fuse bombs on the target of opportunity at 1024 hours from 19,400 feet. Both primary and secondary targets were obscured by 10/10 clouds at 17,000 feet. 1 a/c returned to Base with 1 x 500 lb. bomb because of bomb rack malfunction. 1 a/c jettisoned 10 x 500 lb. of bombs into the sea, Southwest of Genoa because one engine went out. 35 a/c returned to Base at 1249 hours.

1 a/c missing and was last seen near the Anzio beachhead. One engine was seen feathered.

Personnel casualties were 10 crewmen missing in action.

Results: La Spezia was bombed because both primary and secondary targets were obscured. Harbor and dock installations were well covered. Numerous fires and considerable smoke reported. 1 large mv and 1 small mv each was reported to have received one direct hit.

Enemy resistance: Fighters: 4 unidentified s/e e/a, believed to be FW 190's, silver with black stripes on fuselages, were observed South of La Spezia. They passed across the front of the formation, came around to 6 o'clock and then dropped out of sight.

Flak: Scant, inaccurate, and heavy at Genoa, Livorno, Viareggio, and Elba. Moderate, inaccurate, and heavy at La Spezia. In this flak was small, white projectiles, resembling cellophane rolled into a ball. 2 beacons flashed green lights at same location.

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22 May 1944, Mission #45. At 1115 hours, 36 B-24's took off to bomb La Spezia M/Y's, escorted by P-38's.

2 a/c returned to Base early because of engine trouble. 34 a/c dropped 334 x 500 lb. (83.5 tons) GP., .1 second nose, .01 to .025 second tail fuse bombs on primary target at 1542 hours from 19,600 feet. 34 a/c returned to Base at 1749 hours.

Results: A good pattern of bombs fell on M/Y and oil storage facilities. A train, with engine under steam was hit. Three large oil tanks were on fire. Sub pens may have been hit.

Enemy resistance: Fighters: None seen or encountered.

Flak: Moderate, inaccurate, and heavy at La Spezia.

23 May 1944, Mission #46. At 0710 hours, 42 B-24's took off to bomb Nemi area troop concentrations, escorted by P-38's.

No a/c dropped bombs because the target was completely overcast. 38 a/c returned 374 x 500 lb. of bombs to Base. 4 a/c jettisoned 40 x 500 lb. of bombs in the Tyrrhenian Sea, 3 because of engine trouble, 1 because of bad tires. 42 a/c returned to Base at 1116 hours.

Results: Because of complete overcast, target could not be identified. Bombs were returned to Base, except those jettisoned because of mechanical difficulties.

Enemy resistance: Fighters: None seen or encountered.

Flak: Scant, inaccurate, and heavy at Nemi. On bomb run, two perpendicular, blueish white streamers of smoke rose from the ground at 20,000 feet.

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24 May 1944, Mission #47. At 0615 hours, 40 B-24's took off to bomb the primary target, Plan Able, escorted by P-47's, P-38's, and P-51's.

5 a/c returned early, 1 because of inoperative fuel system. 4 of these a/c jettisoned their bombs into the Adriatic Sea.

28 a/c dropped 5028 x 20lb lb. (50.28 tons) Frag Bombs on Graz/Thalerhof

A/C , the secondary target at 0954 hours from 22,000 feet, having become separated from the rest of the formation and finding complete overcast in the direction of primary target. 5 of these a/c returned to Base with 264 x 20 lb. bombs and 2 a/c jettisoned 120 x 20 lb. bombs in the Adriatic Sea, all because of bomb rack malfunctions. 2 other a/c returned to Base with 480 x 20 lb. bombs to base and 5 a/c jettisoned 1200 x 20 lb. bombs into the Adriatic Sea due to bomb rack malfunctions as well. 34 a/c returned to Base at 1204 hours.

1 a/c missing and was last seen at 4440N/1440E of the Yugoslavian Coast at 1040 hours, heading South on a heading of 150 deg., mag. It was observed hit by 20mm e/a fire at 1018 hours.

Personnel casualties were 1 Photographer, slightly wounded by machine gun fire from another B-24, which was engaged by e/a. There were also 10 men missing in action.

Results: Unobserved because of overcast. Possible hits on Northwestern edge of A/D. Available photographs show that some bombs fell into the Mur River, East of target.

Enemy resistance: Fighters: 10 – 15 ME 109's and FW 190's attacked from 1012 hours from 4600N/1520E to 4530N/1520E. Attacks were against Box F, made singly and in trail from 3 to 7 o'clock level. Attacks were not aggressive. 1 ME 109 destroyed. At 0755 hours at 16,000 feet at 4230N/1530E, a vapor trail believed to be cause by an enemy reconnaissance plane was observed.

Flak: Scant, inaccurate, and heavy at Graz/Thalerhof A/D. Flak guns were located along the railway to Graz. Scant, heavy flak observed at Maribor, Celje, Ljubljana, Gleisdorf, and Zagreb.

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OPERATIONAL MISSION SUMMARY continued:

25 May 1944, Mission # 48. At 1000 hours, 39 B-24's took off to bomb Piacenza A/D, escorted by P-51's.

2 a/c returned to Base early, 1 because of a burning engine, 1 because of an inoperative generators. 37 a/c dropped 4818 x 20 lb. (48.18 tons) frag bombs on primary target at 1318 hours from 20,000 feet. 5 of these a/c returned to Base with 216 x 20 lb. bombs, because of bomb rack malfunctions, 5 a/c jettisoned 186 x 20 lb. bombs, 2 in the Adriatic Sea, 2 just after the target, 1 at 4230N/1440E, all because of bomb rack malfunctions. 37 a/c returned to Base at 1527 hours.

Results: Majority of bombs fell within target area. Some carried over. Multiple e/a and 1 unidentified e/a were seen to explode on hardstands North of runway. The target area was heavy smoke covered after the bombing.

Enemy resistance: Fighters: 7 – 10 ME 109's and FW 190's were seen at 20,000 feet engaged by P-38's from the South of Ostiglia to target, 5 ME 109's attacked E Box from 6 o'clock level at 20,000 feet. One of these e/a came in to 150 yards, and upon being fired on, was seen to smoke heavily and crashed into the ground.

Flak: 4 – 6 bursts of scant, inaccurate, and heavy flak at target.

26 May 1944, Mission #49. At 0619 hours, 37 B-24's took off to bomb Chambery M/Y, escorted by P-38's.

2 a/c returned to Base early, 1 because of a sick gunner and 1 because of engine trouble. 1 of these a/c jettisoned 10 x 500 lb. bombs at 4456N/0609E, and the other 10 x 500 lb. bombs in the Tyrrhenian Sea. 2 a/c returned prior to bombing because of engine trouble. 31 a/c dropped 310 x 500 lb. (77.15 tons) GP., 1 second nose, .025 second tail fuse bombs on the primary target at 1046 hours from 22,000 feet. 2 a/c jettisoned 20 x 500 lb. bombs at 4504N/0555E and 4530N/0509E because of engine trouble and bomb bay door malfunctions. 33 a/c returned to Base at 1357 hours.

Results: Excellent pattern of bombs fell into the target. Crews report that the First Combat Unit hit the Eastside, the Second Combat Unit the Westside of the M/Y. Hits reported in the vicinity of the roundhouse and dense black smoke was reported. There was hits on the Southeastern choke point.

Enemy Resistance: Fighters: None seen or encountered.

Flak: Scant, heave observed at Nis, but not encountered.

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OPERATIONAL MISSION SUMMARY continued:

27 May 1944, Mission #50. At 0600 hours, 30 B-24's took off to bomb Montpellier A/D, escorted by P-51's.

1 a/c returned prior to bombing because of inoperative engines (bombs jettisoned in sea).
28 a/c dropped 945 x 100 lb. (47.25 tons) CP., clustered instantaneous fuse bombs on the primary target at 1019 hours from 19,600 feet. 1 of these a/c returned to Base with 8 x 100 lb. bombs due to bomb rack malfunction. 13 of these a/c jettisoned 138 x 100 lb. bombs in the Mediterranean Sea because of bomb rack malfunctions. 27 a/c returned to Base at 1354 hours. 1 a/c missing.
1 a/c was lost at Cap Roux. It was hit by flak, went into a spin at 0926 hours and crashed into the sea. 1 parachute observed to open.

Personnel casualties were 2 crews, 20 men, missing in action. Missing a/c was last seen near Corsica.

Results: The bombing results in good pattern on the dispersal area of A/D except for the Northwest area. Crews report at least 5 JU 88's on the hardstands were hit or damaged.

Enemy resistance: Fighters: At 1020 hours, 8 s/e e/a were observed in the target area.

Flak: Scant, inaccurate, and heavy at the target. Moderate, accurate, and heavy at Cap Roux.

28 May 1944, Mission # 51. At 0730 hours, 21 B-24's took off to bomb primary target, Plan Able, escorted by P-51's.

1 a/c returned early to Base because of an inoperative supercharger (jettisoned 10 x 500 lb. bombs into the Ligurian Sea). The primary and secondary targets were both covered with complete undercast and no bombs were dropped. 19 a/c returned 185 x 500 lb. bombs to Base and 1 jettisoned 10 x 500 lb. bombs at 4135N/1147E in order to lighten the load because of fuel shortage. 20 a/c returned to Base at 1433 hours.

Results: At primary and secondary targets, there was 10/10 undercast. Milan was selected as a target of opportunity, but there, the weather was also 10/10's.

Enemy Resistance: Fighters: None seen or encountered.

Flak: Nil.

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29 May 1944, Mission # 52. At 0650 hours, 33 B-24's took off to bomb Bos Novi troop concentrations, Yugoslavia. No escort.

33 a/c dropped 1066 x 100 lb. (53.3 tons) GP., 1 second nose, .025 seconds tail fuse bombs on the primary target at 0919 hours from 14,600 feet. 1 of these a/c returned to Base, 12 x 100 lb. bombs, and 12 a/c jettisoned 172 x 100 lb. bombs into the Adriatic Sea. 33 a/c returned to Base at 1100 hours.

Results: Good pattern of bombs in the target area. Bridge East of the target believed hit.

Enemy resistance: Fighters: No fighters seen or encountered.

Flak: None.

29 May 1944, Mission #53. At 1354 hours, 31 B-24's took off to bomb Knin troop concentrations, Yugoslavia, Escorted by P-38's.

30 a/c dropped 913 x 100 lb. (45.65 tons) GP., clustered, .1 second nose, .025 second tail fuse bombs on the primary target at 1609 hours from 15,600 feet. 6 of these a/c returned to Base 96 x 100 lb. bombs and 7 jettisoned 198 x 100 lb. bombs into the sea, all because of bomb rack malfunctions. 1 a/c jettisoned 10 x 100 lb. bombs in the Adriatic Sea, because of bomb rack malfunctions. 31 a/c returned to Base at 1715 hours.

Results: A good concentration of bombs hit the target area, covering the built-up area.

Enemy resistance: Fighters: 5 unidentified s/e e/a were seen heading South as the formation crossed the Yugoslavian coast.

Flak: Scant, inaccurate, and heavy at Knin.

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30 May 1944, Mission #54. At 0655 hours, 34 B-24's took off to bomb dispersal a/c on Wels A/D, Austria, escorted by P-38's and P-51's.

1 a/c returned early to base because the pilot was ill (jettisoned 132 bombs in the Adriatic Sea and returned 108 bombs to Base). 1 a/c returned prior to bombing because of engine trouble (jettisoned 240 bombs into the Adriatic Sea).

31 a/c dropped 5628 x 20 lb. (56.28 tons) frag, clustered, instantaneous fuse bombs on the primary target at 1099 hours from 19,400 feet. 7 of these a/c returned to Base, 528 x 20 lb. bombs and 9 a/c jettisoned 900 x 20 lb. bombs into the sea and Southwest Austria, all because of bomb rack malfunctions. 1 a/c jettisoned 240 x 20 lb. bombs at 4630N/1450E and 24 bombs in the sea and 216 bombs at 4630N/1450E. 32 a/c returned to Base at 1308 hour.

Results: Bombs covered the assigned target area, though some strings hit to the South. A/C in the Northwest dispersal area are believed to have been hit, as well as buildings between M/Y and Southwest corner of A/D.

Enemy resistance: Fighters: None seen or encountered.

Flak: Moderate, intense, and heavy at Steyr, Klagenfurt, Zelteg, Kapfenburg, Hosching, St. Michael, and Wiener Neustadt.

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31 May 1944, Mission #55. At 0600 hours, 35 B-24's took off to bomb Oil Refinery at Ploesti, Rumania, escorted by P-38's and P-51's.

3 a/c returned to Base early, 1 because of oxygen failure, all because of a disconnected throttle, and 1 because of inoperative engine (the last jettisoned 10 bombs in the Adriatic Sea). 7 a/c returned prior to bombing, 3 because of oxygen leaks, and 2 because of inoperative prop governors. 4 of these a/c jettisoned 40 bombs in the Adriatic Sea.

24 a/c dropped 223 x 500 lb. (55.75 tons) GP., 1 second nose, .025 tail fuse bombs on the primary target at 0959 hours from 23,000 feet. 1 of these a/c jettisoned 5 x 500 lb. bombs at 4415N/2240E because of bomb rack malfunctions. 24 a/c returned to Base at 1312 hours. 1 a/c missing, and it was last seen at 4314N/1935E at 0812 hours.

Personnel casualties were one crew of 10 men missing in action.

Results: Smoke pots giving out white smoke effectively obscured the target. Three columns of dense black smoke rose to 8000 feet from the target area, and two large fires were reported. Bombing was done by PPF and visually, and from the image seen on screen, the operator believes that target was well covered.

Enemy resistance: Fighters: 5 to 10 unidentified, single engine e/a were seen in the target area, well below the formation. They were no encounters

Flak: Intense, accurate, and heavy at the target.

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454th Bombardment Group (H)

WAR DIARIES

1 May 1944 – S/Sgt. Giles E. Crider, 19060857, assigned to the 6649th Nav. Aids Sqdn. (Prov) per par 22 SO 114, Hqs. 15th AF since 22 April 1944 and DS with 6649th Nav. Aids Sqdn. (Prov).

**2 May 1944 – 1st Lt. Grady, 0792015, promoted to Captain since 22 April 1944.
S/Sgt. Crider, 19060857, promoted to T/Sgt. since 1 May 1944.**

Mission #36. Target Faenza Railroad Bridge.

Results: Bomb strike photos show the concentration of bombs falling on the junction or rail lines scoring 5/4 direct hit 600 yards N.W. of target probably cutting the tracks. Several strikes were noted in the M/Y to the N.W. of the target.

4 May 1944 – Pfc. O’Leary, 33476959, promoted to Corporal.

5 May 1944 – Mission #37. Target Ploesti; M/Y and Pumping Station.

Results: Bomb strike photos show many direct hits on tracks rolling stock at R.R. junction at North end of South M/Y causing explosions and starting fires among tank cars and wagons. Direct hits are seen in M/Y West of Concordia Vega Refinery on the Ploesti North Station and in the S.E. corner of the Boosting Station area of Sterna Romana Refinery. Many lines are cut. Bombs carried into the Astro/Romana and Phenix Refinery and across S.W. end of the Columbia Refinery. Several fires are visible. Dense clouds of smoke render further Appreciation of bombing difficult. These results include the bombing of the 5th Wing, 47th Wing, 55th Wing, and the 304th Wing.

WAR DIARIES Continued:

6 May 1944 – Mission #38. Target Campina R.R. Siding. Target obscured by smoke rendering estimate of bombing damage impossible, Target area believed well covered.

7 May 1944 – Major Warren, 0425600, put on DS to Capri Rest Camp returned to Duty. Sgt. Hagel, 17071094, relieved from and for SD and assigned to 738th BS.

Mission #39. Target Bucharest Main M/Y.

Results: Bomb strike photos show scattered hits in the target area of Chitila M/Y. Some hits at very West end of M/Y near a large roundhouse and hits on tracks and rolling stock in the central portion of S.E. corner. 2 direct hits on branch of main line N.W of repair shops and 2 direct hits on approach to R.R. overpass at S.E. end of the overpass. Several hits were scored on mainline running into N. Station at S.E. end of the overpass. Some bombs fell across S. side of Bucharest/Guilesti A/D. Many hits in buildup areas N.E. of M/Y.

8 May 1944 – 2nd Lt. George Brandes, assigned and joined from the 737th BS. since 6 May 1944, Duty, Assistant Group S-2 Officer.

M/Sgt. Roes, 37038995, from duty to DS San Spirito Rest Camp.

Major McConnell, 0412947, from duty to DS Capri Rest Camp.

Cpl. L.J. Arillo, 32558252, assigned and joined from the 737th BS.

Cpl. L.J. Arillo, promoted to Sgt.

WAR DIARIES Continued:

9 May 1944 – S/Sgt. Redwing, 37298889, reduced to Pvt. for misconduct.

Pvt. Redwing transferred to 738th BS.

Lt. Col. Aynesworth, 022399, promoted to Colonel since 4 May 1944.

10 May 1944 – Major J.O. Nance, 0426855, Major H.A. Harper, 0412729, assigned and joined from 739th BS. Duty as Asst. Group Nav. Officer and Asst. Gp. Bomb O.

12 May 1944 – Mission # 40. Target La Spezia M/Y and Harbor. Results: Bomb Strike photos of the 454th BG. and 459th BG., showed good concentration of bombs 2000 yards S.W. of assigned target to the Northwest of the Naval Harbor, hitting the dry docks and numerous shipping installations, including ship building shops, covered slipway and torpedo workshops.

13 May 1944 – T/Sgt. Crider, 19060857, from Ds 6649th Nav. Aids Sqdn. (Prob) relieved from assignment duty in Group and transferred to 6649th Nav. Aids Sqdn. (Prob).

T/Sgt. D.D. Peterson, 6934704, assigned and joined from 15th AF. Duty, Public Relations Clerk.

Mission #41. Target San Rufillo M/Y. Results: Bomb strike photos Show a good concentration in assigned target area, scoring hits on, freight cars and trackage. Burst fell across Prato – Bologna and Ancona line, possibly cut it. Another strike fell across double track R.R. between Bologna and Ancona scoring direct hits on tracks.

WAR DIARIES Continued:

14 May 1944 – Mission #42. Target Piacenza A/D. Results: Bomb strike photos show that the frags fell across the assigned target (W. dispersal area) and claim is made of 6 fighters destroyed and 2 damaged along with 1 bomber/transport damaged.

15 May 1944 – M/Sgt. Roes, 37038995, from DS San Spirito Rest Camp to Duty.

M/Sgt. Hagan, 33482465, from duty to DS San Spirito Rest Camp.

16 May 1944 – Pvt. George Stanley, 6124313, assigned and joined from Hqs. 304th Bombardment Wing per SO 52 par. 2. Duty as Clerk.

1st Lt. Roland Merrell Jr. 0572640, attached from duty with Group S-3 from 739th BS.

17 May 1944 – 1st Lt. Hart, Edward J., 01554392, attached for duty only from 739th BS.

18 May 1944 – Mission # 43. Target Ploesti Oil Refinery. Results: no photo or visual results are available due to overcast.

19 May 1944 – Mission # 44. Target La Spezia Port. Results: Bomb strike photos show bombs fell across harbor facilities and ship building and repair installations in naval harbor. Hits scored on small boats and barges in naval basin, with near misses on 3 large naval vessels, 3 submarines and a M/Y.

WAR DIARIES Continued:

21 May 1944 – Major McConnell, 0412947, from DS Capri Rest Camp to Duty.

22 May 1944 – Mission # 45. Target La Spezia Port. Results: Heavy concentration of bombs fell across electrical works and naval building installations, another scored hits on submarine installations and other clusters fell on the industrial plant to the S.E. of the power station, Gas works in the storage tank area, thru rail lines and M/Y buildings, commercial harbor, jute factory, and S.W. corner of heavy gun manufacturing plant received many hits and near misses.

23 May 1944 – Major Warren, 0425600, from hospital to Duty.

M/Sgt. Hagan, 33482465, from DS San Spirito Rest Camp to Duty.

Mission # 46. All targets abandoned due to weather conditions.

24 May 1944 - Mission # 47. Target Graz/Thalerhof A/D. 28 a/c dropped 5028 x 20 lb. frag bombs on Graz/Thalerhof A/D at 0954 hours from 22,000 feet with unobserved results.

25 May 1944 – Mission #48. Target Piacenza A/D and dispersal area. Results: Bomb strike photos show both dispersal areas well covered by Fragmentation bombs, out of a total of 41 a/c present (29 s/e and bomber types), 13 s/e and 5 bomber types have been destroyed and 6 s/e and 2 bomber types damaged.

WAR DIARIES Continued:

26 May 1944 – Capt. Jamison, 0380623, promoted to Major since the 17th.

2nd Lt. Grasse, 0873236, promoted to 1st Lt. since the 17th.

Cpl. Addis, 33553468, from duty to DS Hqs. 15th AF.

Mission #49 Target Chamber M/Y. Results: Bomb strike photos show a heavy concentration of bombs fell in the assigned target area, scoring much damage to tracks, rolling stock and other facilities. Both roundhouses, turn table and shops received many hits. A large unidentified building on the West side of the R.R. received several hits. One cluster of bombs fell on S.E. choke point of the M/Y, possibly cutting the rail line to Montemelian. There are many strikes in the area adjacent to the M/Y and scattered hits in the main section of the city.

27 May 1944 – Mission #50. Target Montpellier A/D. This was our Golden Anniversary Mission. The Group celebrated its fiftieth mission on the 27 May by dropping (47.25 tons) of 100 lb. bombs on Montpellier A/D with a score of 78% within a 2,000-foot radius. The best score of the Wing for the month. No enemy a/c and encountered and flak was scant, accurate, and heavy. One ship lost. How different from some of our earlier missions when we had no cover and e/a came in all around the clock, singly and formations, and the wounded duck or anyone who did not keep up with the formation. The mission was led by Major Aynesworth, who had led the first mission to Orvieto A/D on 8 Feb. 1944, which was described by the Wing as the best -

(Cont'd)

WAR DIARIES Continued:

(Cont'd) bombing by any Group on their Freshman mission. Time marches on. Pictures of bombs away are enclosed.

28 May 1944 – T/Sgt. Arch, 12036110, Sgt. Garice, 18083687, from Duty to DS San Spirito Rest Camp.

Mission #51. Targets were abandoned due to weather conditions.

29 May 1944 – Mission #52 Target was Bon Novi Troop Concentrations.

Results: Bomb strike photos show a concentration of bombs in a town section showing signs of military activity. The road bridge over the Sana river was hit directly.

29 May 1944 – Mission #53. Target was Knin Troop Concentrations.

Results: Bomb strike photos show a good concentration on the East side of town, where considerable military activity was observed. The M/Y West of the town received several direct hits. A rail road bridge N.W. of town was hit directly. Bombs carried over target.

30 May 1944 – Major Warren, 0425600, from Duty to DS 15th AF per VO CG.

Cpl. Ardie, 33553468, from Hqs. 15th AF to Duty.

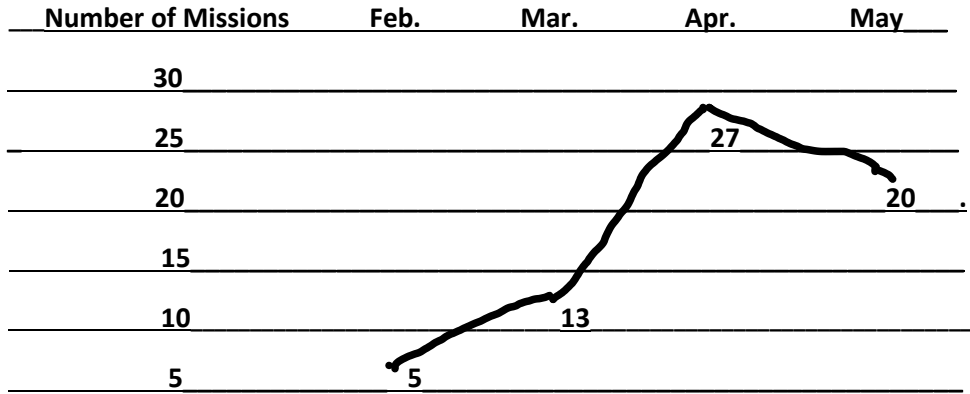
WAR DIARIES Continued:

30 May 1944 – Mission #54. Target Wels A/D. Results: Bomb strike photos show strings along the edge of the landing ground carrying through the hangers, barracks, and facilities in the S.W. corner of the airdrome.

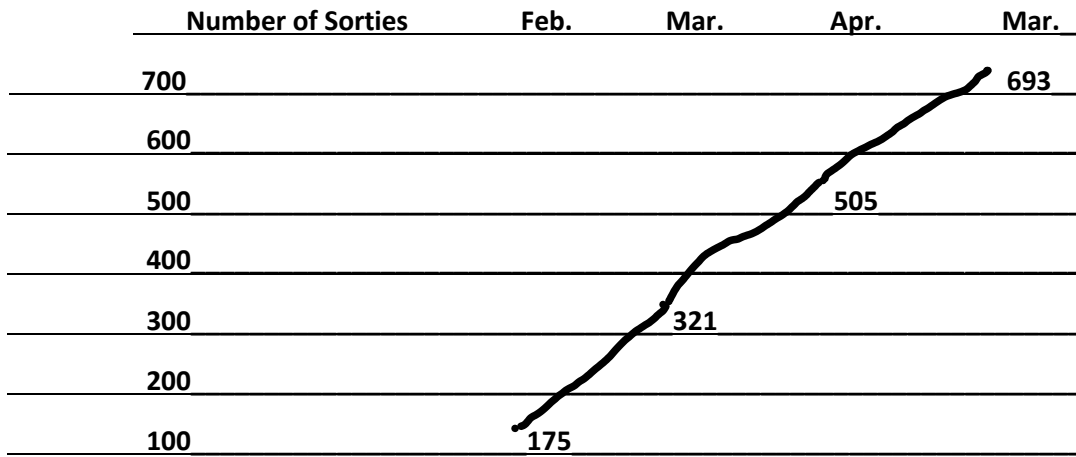
31 May 1944 – Mission # 55. Target Ploesti Oil Refinery. Bomb strike photos shows concentration in the center of the city and one string through the Astro Romana Oil Refinery.

For 15th AF

Mission Flown



Group Sortie



454 TH Bomb GP/

TONNAGE

