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C O N F I D E N T I A L

HEADQUARTERS  
 VIII BOMBER COMMAND  
 A.P.O. 634

Bomber Command Narrative of Operations  
 Day Operation - 12 August, 1943  
 Mission No. 81

Targets in the Ruhr were attacked by 243 B-17s which dropped 560.1 tons on Bochum, Bonn, Gelsenkirchen, Recklinghausen and other targets of opportunity. Leaflets were dropped in the Bonn area. Bombing results were fair to good. 330 B-17s were dispatched but 87 failed to bomb. Enemy opposition was strong and 25 B-17s were lost as against claims of 29-7-13. Fighter support was provided by P-47s and Spitfires while diversions against Courtrai, Merville and Poix Airfields were carried out by B-26s and Typhoons.

Unit	Number of A/C					Claims	Personnel Casualties		
	(Dispatched)	(Attacking)	Abortive+ A.	B.	(Lost)		(Killed)	(Wounded)	(Missing)
91	22	10	9	3	4	0-1-0	2	5	40
92	19	12	4	3	4	3-0-4	2	7	41
303	20	19	1	0	1	6-1-1	0	0	10
305	20	16	3	1	1	2-0-2	0	11	10
306	20	16	4	0	1	1-2-1	0	3	10
351	21	14	5	2	0	4-0-2	1	7	0
379	21	19	2	0	4	6-1-1	0	6	41
381	20	16	4	0	3	3-0-0	0	0	30
384	20	11	4	5	5	0-0-0	0	10	50
	<u>183</u>	<u>133</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>25-5-11</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>49</u>	<u>232</u>
<u>4TH WING</u>									
94	21	17	4	0	0	0-0-2	1	4	0
95	21	9	5	7	2	3-2-0	0	2	21
96	21	16	5	0	0	1-0-0	0	0	0
100	21	20	1	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0
385	21	11	0	10	0	0-0-0	0	0	0
388	21	18	3	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0
390	21	19	2	0	0	0-0-0	0	1	0
	<u>147</u>	<u>110</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4-2-2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>21</u>
TOTALS	330	243	56	31	25	29-7-13	6	56	253

+ Abortive A - Mechanical, Equipment and Personnel Failures.  
 B - Enemy Action, Spares and Weather.

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TARGETS: 1st Wing - Bochum, Gelsenkirchen, Recklinghausen and Targets of Opportunity in the Ruhr.

4th Wing - Bonn and Targets of Opportunity in the Ruhr.

BOMBING RESULTS: 1st Wing - 133 B-17s dropped 836 x 500 G.P. fused 1/10 sec. nose and 1/100 sec. tail and 784 x 250 British incendiaries from 25,600 - 30,300 feet at 0845 - 0925 hrs. on targets in the Ruhr. After leaving the I.P. the Combat Wings became separated and various targets in the Ruhr were bombed.

At Bochum, The Vereinigte Stahlwerke - the largest electric steel furnace plant in the world with a capacity of 1,000,000 tons of steel per year - was bombed with good results. The largest building which houses 26 basic steel furnaces had two direct hits. There were hits on or quite close to the blast furnaces. Two machine shops and two fabricating sheds were hit and there was also a possible hit on one of the gas works buildings. South of the main works, a building used for shell casting was hit and bursts were seen on adjacent industrial establishments.

Two Groups dropped incendiaries on the By-Products Plant and Synthetic Oil Plant of Gelsenberg - Benzin A.G. at Gelsenkirchen. The smoke screen there was most effective and results could not be observed.

Recklinghausen was bombed with fair results. The warehouse area along the railroad, as well as suburbs of the city proper, was hit. Other targets of opportunity were bombed but detailed information is not available.

4th Wing - Bonn - 106 B-17s dropped 2 x 2000 G.P. and 703 x 500 G.P. fused 1/10 sec. nose and 1/100 sec. tail and 523 x 250 British incendiaries from 23,000-27,000 feet at 0850 - 0858 hrs. with good results. Strike photos show that the main concentration of bursts fell in the city near the approach to the bridge across the Rhine. There were good concentrations on both the east and west approaches and one possible direct hit on the center of the bridge.

4 a/c dropped 40 x 500 G.P. on targets of opportunity with unobserved results.

REASONS FOR FAILURE TO BOMB: 1st Wing - 50 a/c failed to bomb - 33 because of mechanical and equipment failures, 3 because of personnel failures, 2 were spares and returned as scheduled, and 12 were lost and it is unknown whether they bombed.

4th Wing - 37 a/c failed to bomb - 18 because of mechanical and equipment failures, 2 because of personnel failures, 1 was lost and 16 jettisoned bombs because e/a action forced the leading a/c to do so and the following a/c were bombing on them.

ENCOUNTERS: 1st Wing - 75 to 125 e/a were encountered, most being FW 190s and Me 109s, with a few JU 88s, Me 110s and Me 210s. Attacks, which began shortly after enemy coast was crossed and continued to P-47 rendezvous, were principally from 12-2 o'clock from above and out of the sun. Before the target, and especially between I.P. and target, attacks were vicious and sustained with e/a in groups of 4 to 12 attempting to break up formation by coming straight into formation, and then rolling over and under and out to right or left. After bombing, attacks were less vicious and were concentrated on stragglers, with many attacks from 6 o'clock level and out of the sun. Some e/a were observed to dive from 12 or 6 o'clock and come up under bellies to open fire as they executed violent half twists, with other e/a attacking simultaneously from 3 and 9 o'clock level, preventing both waist gunners from firing properly. E/a also attempted to keep one of our a/c in

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background so gunners could not fire. The few attacks made after the P-47s were met were preceded by an imitation of P-47 tactics. Several Me 109s were reported with unretracted tail wheels and braces on horizontal tail planes. Colors noted were: FW190s - silver gray with black crosses, dark gray with yellow bellies and noses, yellow fins and rudders, red and blue bellies with yellow cowlings; Me 109s - principally silver or sky blue, several light gray with camouflage splotches, some all yellow, silver with yellow tail, and gray with yellow stripe across each wing; JU 88s - black or gray, and some with white tails; Me 110s and Me 210s - black or gray.

4th Wing - E/a opposition as a whole was weak, with sporadic attacks by 20-30 FW 190s and Me 109s being made, but for the most part not pressed home, at various points between Antwerp and target area. Only one Group reported vicious attacks, these being by 15-25 e/a between the I.P. and Bonn. E/a were again reported attacking in formation of 3-5 a/c. Approximately 60-100 e/a, which did not attack, were reported seen at a distance on the route in and out.

CASUALTIES: 1st Wing - Personnel - 5 crew members were killed, 12 seriously wounded, 37 slightly wounded and 232 are missing.

Equipment - 23 B-17s were lost - 7 to flak, 3 to e/a and 13 from unknown reasons.

Estimated Battle Damage - 56 category "A" and 17 category "AC"

4th Wing - Personnel - 1 crew member was killed, 2 seriously wounded, 5 slightly wounded and 21 are missing.

Equipment - 2 B-17s were lost from unknown reasons,

Estimated Battle Damage - 51 category "A", 1 category "AC", and 1 category "E".

FLAK: 1st Wing - AA fire was first encountered at enemy coast on the way in. Intense accurate fire was reported at Wesel, Ruhr area, Gelsenkirchen area, Koblenz, Duren; moderate inaccurate flak was reported at Goch, Haspres and Antwerp; meagre inaccurate flak was reported at Noord Beveland, Leiden, Hague, Schouwen, Amsterdam, Wuppertal, Sliedrecht, Rotterdam, Scheveningen, Roermond, Herenthals, Steenberg, Emmerich, Walcheren and near Brecht and Woensdrecht. Barrage, continuous following and predicted concentration types of fire were encountered.

4th Wing - AA fire from landfall to I.P. was meagre and inaccurate, and from I.P. through target area was reported as moderate and accurate. A large fixed barrage was seen over Cologne, out of range, but inaccurate for altitude. In the Wesseling-Bonn area AA fire was only partly accurate.

ORDERED ROUTE: 1st Wing - Bases to Great Yarmouth to 52°17'N - 03°30'E to 52°10'N - 04°20'E to 51°41'N - 06°10'E to I.P. at 51°40'N - 06°45'E to target; to 51°25'N - 07°30'E to 50°25'N - 07°28'E to Sittard to 51°35'N - 03°40'E to Orfordness to bases.

Ordered route was generally followed to the I.P. Then the Combat Wings separated and bombed targets in the Ruhr. Two Groups turned right about six miles north of Cologne and headed directly back to England. The remaining seven Groups met the fighter withdrawal support and then headed back.



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4th Wing - Bases to Felixstowe to 51°35'N - 03°40'E to Beverloo to I.P. at 50°46'N - 06°29'E to target; to 50°38'N - 07°13'E to 50°36'N - 06°39'E to 51°00'N - 05°52'E to 51°25'N - 04°25'E to Orfortness to bases.

WEATHER: Route Out - Clear becoming 3 to 5/10 stratocumulus at 1500 to 2500 feet to 15 miles from English Coast. From here to Continental Coast 7/10 swelling cumulus with tops at 8000 feet. Dutch Coast 4/10 cloud further decreasing to nil over Holland. Cloud increased to 3 to 5/10 patchy stratocumulus 50 miles from target. Visibility 2 to 3 miles over England, increasing to 10 miles over water and thence decreasing to 4 to 6 miles over the Continent. Target: Target Areas generally clear except for isolated patches of broken stratocumulus. A patch of broken cloud was reported over the 4th Wing primary target, but their secondary target was clear. Visibility was 10 miles or better. Extensive and effective smoke screens were reported over the various targets in the target area. Moderate contrails at 23,000 feet. Winds accurate. Return Route: Similar to route out except cloud had decreased somewhat over Continental Coast and North Sea.

FIGHTER SUPPORT AND DIVERSIONS: The operation was directly supported by 9 P-47s and 6 Spitfire Squadrons. 6 Squadrons of P-47s provided withdrawal cover for 1st Wing formations. 3 Squadrons of P-47s provided escort on part of route to target for 4th Wing formations, and 6 Squadrons of Spitfires furnished withdrawal cover. In connection with the operations, escorted RAF Typhoon bombers carried out attacks against Courtrai and Merville Airfields, and B-26s of VIII Air Support Command escorted by RAF Spitfires attacked the airfield at Poix. In those operations supporting fighters destroyed 3 Me 109s, probably destroyed 1 FW 190, and damaged 6 Me 109s and 1 FW 190. One Spitfire came down in the sea and the pilot was rescued.

OBSERVATIONS: 1st Wing - A light ineffective smoke screen was seen at Wesel, and strike photos show a very effective smoke screen in operation at Gelsenkirchen. 15 guns were reported at mouth of river north of Dunkirk. 5 large unidentified e/a were seen on airfield at 51°13'N - 04°50'E.

4th Wing - Balloon barrages were seen at Antwerp and Aachen. Two huge cone-shaped mounds, three miles apart, approximately 500 ft. in diameter and 50 ft. high were seen between Moll and Beverloo. New construction was observed around what appeared to be a dock area on the east bank of the Rhine between Cologne and Wesseling. It looked as though a canal ran into a basin area in the south side of which three pens were dug. Smoke pots were seen at Wesseling. A single unidentified B-17 was observed at 51°20'N - 02°40'E heading south into France.

CORRECTION - Narrative of Mission No. 77, 26 July, 1943.

The first two sentences under OBSERVATIONS on page 4 of Narrative No. 77, which pertain to strange B-17s, are amended to read: "A single strange B-17 joined a 1st Wing formation over Germany and stayed with it until the formation was about five minutes off the German coast. At that time, 2 twin-engined fighters appeared and the single strange B-17 joined them and headed inland."

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Combat Duplication check form

Duplicate

Julius 21-717

95th Bomb Group (H)

Date 12-8-43

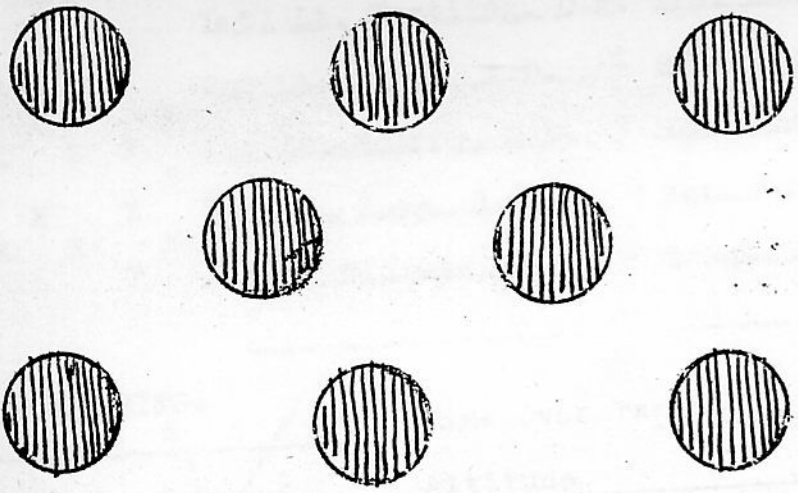
Group  
mb GP.

0181

0178

~~0646 Me109~~  
~~0838 Me109~~

0176

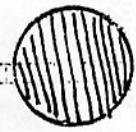


~~0843 Me109~~  
~~0845 Me109~~  
~~0840 Me109~~  
~~0841 Me109~~

0353

?

?



?



Plane #0353  
Tacked on to  
these targets. They  
do not know who  
they were.

WELELING, Germany  
August 12, 1943

LEAD Element

Hamilton  
0194

Snow  
0181

Sundberg  
0176

Knowlton  
0178 (camera)

Carson  
0353

Ransom  
0271 (camera)

LOW

Storie  
0255

Adams  
0322

Kring C  
0233

Eastling C  
0185

Komurka C  
3317

Eherts  
0288

Extra ships:

Hayden  
3194

Baker  
0274

HIGH

Bender  
0226 (camera)

O'Neal  
3283

Rothschild  
0244 (camera)

Mason  
0283 (camera)

Palmer  
0161

Yuenger  
0167

Thomas  
0045 (camera)

Lenke  
0418 (camera)

Noyes  
0182