

Sortie No. 30)
Mission No. 27)

27 August 1943

TARGET: Aeronautical Facilities Station at Watten, France.

1. Seven A/C of the 95th Formed the high Squadron of the Group made up by th 402nd CBW. All seven A/C attacked the target at 1940 with the results of the bombing questionable because of a change in course by the lead squadron just before bombs were away. Ours crews reported the target readily identified and showing signs of having been previously attacked. Magnificent cover, close by Spit IX's and high by P-47's was furnished in consequence of which no E/A attacked this Squadron. Only at St. Omer was our formation subjected to AA fire with any degree of effectiveness, resulting however in but slight damage.

VIII BC Narrative: The fourth Wing dispatched 65 A/C to attack Watten, France, 63 attacked and 2 aborted. Target was completely blanketed. Fighter escort was provided by Spitfires and P-47's, and diversions were carried out by AAF and RAF medium and light bombers.

159 A/C were dispatched to attack Watten, France. 124 attacked, 35 aborted and 4 were missing. E/A claims 7-0-6.

STORIE

ADAMS

KCMURKA

EASTLING

PALMER

RANSOM

CROCKETT

DECLASSIFIED

C O N F I D E N T I A LAuthority AWD 745005By DTD NARA Date 7/14/81HEADQUARTERS
VIII BOMBER COMMAND
APO 634*L. Lackie*
*830*Bomber Command Narrative of Operations
Day Operation - 27 August, 1943
Mission No. 87

Three task forces of one Combat Wing each of the First Air Division, and another task force of three Combat Wings of the Fourth Air Division were dispatched to attack an Aeronautical Facilities Station at Watten in occupied France. The bombers dropped 368 tons on their pin-point target and completely blanketed it. Fighter escort was provided by Spitfires and P-47s, and diversions were carried out by AAF and RAF medium and light bombers. Four B-17s were lost from this operation. Claims are 7-0-6.

Unit	(Dispatched)	Number of A/C		Lost	Claims	Personnel Casualties			
		Attacked	Failed			(Killed)	Wounded	Missing	
<u>1ST WING</u>		To Bomb+							
		A.	B.						
91	13	11	2	0	1-0-2	0	0	1	
92	19	16	2	1	0-0-0	1	4	0	
303	20	19	0	1	0-0-0	0	4	10	
305	18	17	0	1	0-0-0	0	1	11	
306	18	9	1	8	0-0-0	0	2	0	
351	22	20	1	1	5-0-1	0	1	10	
379	21	21	0	0	1-0-2	0	3	0	
381	10	10	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	
384	18	1	0	17	0-0-1	0	3	0	
	<u>159</u>	<u>124</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>7-0-6</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>32</u>	
<u>4TH WING</u>									
94	11	11	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	
95	7	7	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	
96	9	9	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	
100	7	7	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	
385	12	10	2	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	
388	12	12	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	
390	7	7	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	
	<u>65</u>	<u>63</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0-0-0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	
TOTALS	224	187	8	29	4	7-0-6	1	18	32

+ A - Mechanical and Equipment Failures.

B - Other than Mechanical and Equipment Failures (incl. weather, enemy action, recall, etc.)

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

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Authority VND 745005By SPD NARA Date 7/14/81C O N F I D E N T I A LTARGET: AERONAUTICAL FACILITIES STATION AT WATTEN.

BOMBING RESULTS: 186 B-17s dropped 368 x 2000 G.P. fused 1/10 sec. nose and 1/10 sec. tail from 14,000 - 17,000 feet at 1846 - 1941 hours on an Aeronautical Facilities Station at Watten. The attack was carried out in four waves with two Combat Wings bombing by groups and two Combat Wings bombing by individual squadrons. Two concentrated groups of bombs fell directly on the target and blanketed it. Direct hits were made on temporary buildings used for construction activity to the north and south of the main installations. Direct hits were also scored on a light railway loop to the east of the principal installation. Bursts were also observed in a storage area west of the pin-point target. One a/c dropped 2 x 2000 G.P. on a target of opportunity.

REASONS FOR FAILURE TO BOMB: 37 a/c failed to bomb - 8 because of mechanical and equipment failures; 1 was lost before reaching the target area; 2 because of flak damage; 2 because of personnel failures; 16 because lead bombardier did not bomb, and 8 because of interference from other squadron.

ENCOUNTERS: The 4th Wing had practically no fighter opposition. There were only three instances of e/a attacking and the attacks were not pressed home. Excellent fighter cover kept e/a away from the bombers. 1st Wing formations report seeing up to 40 e/a which were mostly FW-190s, a few Me-109s, 1 He-113 and 1 Me-210. Attacks occurred from Hesdin to Gravelines between 1830 - 1900 hours. Coordinated tactics were used by the e/a as two to three would make feints from port and starboard positions in order to cover attacks which were made head on at the same time.

CASUALTIES: Personnel - 1 crew member was killed, 2 seriously wounded, 16 slightly wounded and 32 are missing.

Equipment - 4 B-17s were lost - 2 to flak, 1 to e/a and 1 for unknown reasons.

Estimated Battle Damage - 57 category "A", 7 category "AC" and 1 category "E".

ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE: Moderate to intense AA fire was encountered between St. Omer and the target. Meagre to moderate opposition was encountered at other places enroute.

ROUTE: Bases to Dungeness to 50°25'N - 01°35'E to 50°23'N - 02°02'E to I.P. at 50°26'N - 02°16'E to target; to 51°02'N - 02°08'E to 51°24'N - 01°45'E to Clacton to bases.

WEATHER: Route Out - Cumulus increased over England to 5/10 to 7/10 cumulus, base 3,000 feet, tops 10,000 feet. Decreasing from English coast to 3/10 to 5/10 cumulus over channel. Cumulus increased at continental coast to 5/10 to 7/10 cumulus. Cumulus decreased to 4/10 just inland from coast. Altocumulus decreased on route out to patchy over channel and remainder of distance to target area. Visibility increased to 10+ miles over channel. Target: 1945 hours - 4/10 cumulus, base 3,000 feet, tops 7,000 feet, isolated patches of altocumulus at 10,000 feet. Visibility 8 to 10 miles. Return Route: Similar to route out except cumulus increased over England to 6/10 to 8/10, base 4,000 feet, tops 9,000 feet. Scattered rain showers over England. Visibility 8 to 10 miles.

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

