

La Merit
831

DECLASSIFIED
Authority WFO 745005
By DTD NARA Date 3/14/91

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

HEADQUARTERS
VIII BOMBER COMMAND
APO 634

Bomber Command Narrative of Operations
Day Operation - 31 August, 1943
Mission No. 88

One Air Task Force of 1st Bombardment Wing, and two Air Task Forces of 4th Bombardment Wing were dispatched to attack airfields in France and Belgium. Heavy cloud conditions prevented attacks on assigned targets. The 4th Air Division formations returned without bombing. The 1st Air Division Task Force successfully bombed, through a break in the clouds, the Amiens/Glisy Airfield a last resort target. E/A opposition was weak. USAAF P-47s and RAF Spitfires provided fighter support. One B-17 is missing for reasons unknown, and as a result of a collision off the English coast two were lost and a third crashed near Polegate.

Unit	(Dispatched)	Number of A/C		Lost	Claims	Personnel Casualties			
		Attacked	Failed To Bomb+			(Killed)	Wounded	Missing	
<u>1ST WING</u>									
91	16	7	3	6	2++	0-0-0	5	3	22
92	19	18	1	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0
303	20	9	4	7	1	0-0-0	0	0	11
305	18	17	1	0	0	3-0-3	0	4	0
306	18	0	4	14	0	0-0-0	0	0	0
351	21	19	2	0	0	1-0-0	0	0	0
379	21	16	5	0	0	1-1-0	0	1	0
381	19	19	0	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0
384	18	0	4	14	0	0-0-0	0	0	0
	<u>170</u>	<u>105</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>3++</u>	<u>5-1-3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>33</u>
<u>4TH WING</u>									
94	21	0	7	14	0	0-0-0	0	0	0
95	22	1	3	18	0	0-0-0	0	0	0
96	21	0	3	18	0	0-0-0	0	0	0
100	19	0	2	17	0	0-0-0	0	0	0
385	21	0	1	20	0	0-0-0	0	0	0
388	22	0	1	21	0	0-0-0	0	0	0
390	23	0	2	21	0	0-0-0	0	1	0
	<u>149</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>129</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0-0-0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTALS	319	106	43	170	3++	5-1-3	5	9	33

+ A - Mechanical and Equipment Failures.
 B - Other than Mechanical and Equipment Failures (incl. weather, enemy action, recall, etc.)
 ++ - Does not include B-17 which crashed near Polegate.

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Authority MND 745005By DRD NARA Date 7/14/71C O N F I D E N T I A LTARGETS: 1st Wing - Amiens/Glisy Airfield.4th Wing - Airfields in France and Belgium.

BOMBING RESULTS: 1st Wing - 105 B-17s dropped 1240 x 500 G.P. fused 1/10 sec. nose and 1/100 sec. tail from 23,000 - 24,800 feet at 1807 - 1824 hours with good results. There were five dense concentrations of bursts in the target area, and the only parts of the target which failed to receive direct hits were the eastern part of the north dispersal area, and the eastern part of the ammunition storage area. There were direct hits on hangars, workshops, barracks; the northwest-southeast runway and ammunition storage area; the north and south dispersal areas; station headquarters, Amiens Marshalling Yards and adjacent railroad lines, and numerous hits in the landing area.

4th Wing - Targets were not bombed because of adverse weather conditions. 1 a/c dropped 12 x 500 G.P. on a railroad approximately ten miles northeast of Rouen.

REASONS FOR FAILURE TO BOMB: 1st Wing - 65 a/c failed to bomb - 24 because of mechanical or equipment failures, 34 because of adverse weather, 1 because of personnel failure and 6 because of formation being broken up as a result of a collision on route out.

4th Wing - 148 a/c failed to bomb - 109 because of adverse weather, 19 because of mechanical or equipment failure and 20 because they were unable to make the formation.

ENCOUNTERS: 1st Wing - The number of e/a encountered varied from approximately 50 by the lead group to 6 - 15 by the other groups in the formation. Types reported were mostly FW-190s and Me-109s. Attacks began at 1740 hours at Beaumont-Sur-Oise and continued until 1820 hours at Auxi-le-Chateau. Attacks, which were generally out of the sun, were not pressed. FW-190s again simulated P-47 tactics.

4th Wing - None.

CASUALTIES: 1st Wing - Personnel - 5 crew members were killed, 4 seriously wounded, 4 slightly wounded and 33 are missing.

Equipment - 3 B-17s - 1 to enemy action, and 2 in collision on route out.

Estimated Battle Damage - 23 category "A" and 1 category "E".

4th Wing - Personnel - 1 slightly wounded.

Equipment - None.

Estimated Battle Damage - 16 category "A".

ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE: 1st Wing - Meagre inaccurate fire along the route was reported. Fire at Amiens was moderate and accurate, with type of fire believed to be continuously pointed.

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4th Wing - Meagre inaccurate fire was encountered along the route, with moderate inaccurate fire reported at Rouen and in the vicinity of Dieppe.

ROUTE: 1st Wing - First Air Task Force - Beachy Head to 49°59'N - 01°15'E, to 49°25'N - 02°02'E, to 49°05'N - 02°25'E, to 49°28'N - 02°22'E, to 49°37'N - 02°08'E to target (Amiens/Glisy); to 49°53'N - 02°23'E to 50°17'N - 01°52'E to 50°21'N - 01°33'E to Beachy Head to bases.

4th Wing - Second Air Task Force - Clacton to 51°30'N - 02°10'E to 51°48'N - 02°53'E to Felixstowe to Bradwell Bay to 51°18'N - 03°05'E to I.P. at 50°53'N - 03°50'E to Target (did not bomb); to 51°40'N - 05°00'E, to 51°40'N - 03°30'E to Clacton to bases.

Third Air Task Force - Selsey Bill to Fecamp to I.P. (Pacy Sur E) to target (did not bomb); to Chars to 49°35'N - 01°35'E, to 49°55'N - 00°58'E to Boxhill to bases.

WEATHER: 1st Wing - Route Out - 7/10 to 9/10 stratocumulus and swelling cumulus decreasing to 4/10 to 6/10 at English Coast. Conditions remained unchanged across Channel and over French Coast, then low cloud increased inland to 8/10 to 10/10 with occasional large breaks; medium cloud decreased to nil over mid-channel; trace of thin cirrus along route. Visibility 10 miles. Target: 8/10 to 10/10 low cloud in target area with large break over target with 3/10 cumulus and trace of cirrus. Visibility 10 miles. Return Route: Similar to route out except low cloud decreased over England to 3/10 to 5/10 and medium cloud increased to 5/10 to 7/10. Visibility 3 to 5 miles over England.

4th Wing - Route Out - 8/10 to 10/10 cumulus and stratocumulus breaking over mid-channel to 6/10. Visibility 6 to 10 miles. Targets: 8/10 to 10/10 cumulus and stratocumulus, tops occasionally building to 10,000 feet. Visibility 10 miles. Return Route: Similar to route out except cirrus increasing from Belgium to England becoming 3/10 to 5/10 over Channel and decreasing to 2/10 to 4/10 over England. Visibility slowly decreasing from 10 miles in target area to 3 to 5 miles over England.

FIGHTER SUPPORT AND DIVERSIONS: The First Air Task Force was covered by three groups of P-47s comprising 142 a/c. One group of 36 P-47s covered the Third Air Task Force B-17s which returned without bombing. Five squadrons of Spit IX's escorted the Second Air Task Force inland over Belgium. Seven squadrons of Spit IX's totalling 76 a/c made rendezvous with the B-17s between Blankenborgh and Ghent and covered them uneventfully on their way back. Fighter operations resulted in claims of two destroyed, one probable and one damaged. Losses amounted to two P-47s which collided South of St. Omer.

Five forces of AAF B-26s, and RAF Mitchells, Venturas, and Typhoon bombers were detailed to attack three targets in Northern France, but owing to weather conditions all the attacks were abortive.

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OBSERVATIONS: Smoke pots were observed 10 to 15 miles inland from Dieppe. Attacking Me-109s were equipped with belly tanks. A number of small white or cream colored balloons 4 to 8 feet in diameter were observed at various places over enemy territory at altitudes ranging from 24,000 to 28,000 feet in the vicinity of 50°53'N - 03°50'E. Some crews reported cylindrical objects 18 to 24 inches long and 4 to 6 inches in diameter were attached to them. They are probably meteorological balloons.

(3)	X	X	X	X	X	2nd Lt. Carrara, R.	Sgt. Drake, J. C.	NW
	X	X	X	X	X	2nd Lt. Paul Martin, B	S/S Christie, H. R.	LV
	X	X	X	X	X	S/S Stalickler, L. P.	S/S Schraute, J. E.	TC
								CB

4. RESULTS OF COMBAT:

Target no Time Over Target 17:36

Number of Bombs Dropped none Altitude 23,000

Observed Results of Bombing none Heading _____

Bombs Brought Back 12-500#

Bombs Jettisoned no
(Time, Place, Reason)

5. ENEMY FIGHTER OPPOSITION:

(Estimated Number of E/A Seen) no (Types) _____

(Story of Attacks--Where, When, Altitude, Duration, Intensity) _____

(New or Unusual Enemy Tactics) _____

(Color, Markings, etc of E/A) _____

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Combat Claims of Crew: no

- 4 -

Destroyed Probably Destroyed Damaged

6. FIGHTER SUPPORT:

P-47's all the way in & all the way out their alt approx same

(What, When, Where, Type, Altitude, Their Altitude, Direction, Dogfights)

if they had no dogfights