

HEADQUARTERS
NINETY FIFTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Operations Officer

6 March 1944.

SUBJECT: Report of Operations Officer, Mission of 6 March--
Berlin.

TO : Commanding Officer, 95th Bomb Group (H), APO 634.

1. GENERAL NARRATIVE: The 95th Group formation took off at 0821 - 0846 hours. By 0850 hours the Group formation had assembled over the base at 4,000', (not at 2,000' as planned because there was a layer of patchy stratus cloud at 2000') and proceeded to Colchester thence to Buncher # 12 where we tacked on as low Group to 390th, who were leading 13th A Combat Wing.

The 13th A Combat Wing proceeded to Splasher # 6. The 13th B Combat Wing, comprised of two Groups from the 100th, was directly behind and very close, not more than $\frac{1}{2}$ mile.

The climb to bombing altitude was begun at 1014 at Oxfordness and was made at 150 IAS and 250' per minute. The formation leveled out at 20,000' as briefed. During the climb the Combat Wing did not string out more than a mile and upon reaching altitude closed up to not more than a $\frac{1}{2}$ mile.

Crossing the enemy coast at 1106 hours the route to the target was flown as ordered. 100 to 150 S/E E/A; FW 190s and ME 109s made vicious attacks on this Combat Wing. The first attack was at 1200 hours just North of Osnobruck and lasted about 30 minutes. The two 100th Groups forming 13 B Combat Wing consolidated after the attack, formed a high Group making 13 A a three Group Wing. A few ships from the 100th tacked on to 95th Group.

A RR flare was fired at the IP by the lead Group. The 95th Group uncovered to the right of the 390th for the bomb run. 95th Lead Bombardier was able to use check points to determine location of target which was partially obscured by 2 - 3/10 strata cumulus. Bombs were away at 1323 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours on the primary target. Fighters made persistent attacks during bombing run. They were with us for about fifteen minutes.

After the bombing we lost 1000' and rally was effected. The 100th Group still flying as high Group.

At 52°18'N 12°40'E let down was begun at 150' per minute 160 IAS terminating at 14,000'. At 1415 and just north of Brunswick fighters hit again, attacking persistently and viciously for about twenty minutes. After recrossing the enemy coast at 1510 hours at 14000', five miles north of course, further let down was effected over North Sea through patchy strata cumulus. Base was reached at 1555, landing at 1603 - 1614 hours.

2. AIRCRAFT NOT ATTACKING: 21 A/C and two spares left base in the formation shown in the attached diagram "A". A/C # 0342 and # 8140 turned back as the formation had no vacancies. Thus 21 A/C were dispatched.

Of these 21 A/C 15 attack the target. A/C # 1329 dropped bombs before reaching target.

21 A/C are credited with sorties. A/C # 3529 and # 8024 which were lost in target area are presumed to have bombed. Formation over the target is shown in Diagram "B".

3. AIRCRAFT LOST: No. 42-37495 - Attacked by E/A North of Osnobruck on way in to target, was observed in a long glide with a fire between # 1 and # 2 engines. 6 or 7 chutes.

No. 42-29943 - Attacked by E/A North of Osnobruck on way in to target. Fell out of formation, went down with right wing on fire. 7 chutes.

No. 42-31251 - Attacked by E/A North of Osnobruck on way in to target. Caught fire and went into a dive. It did not seem to be under control when it entered the clouds below. No chutes were seen.

No. 42-39793 - Attacked by E/A North of Osnobruck on way in to target. Headed down in a steep dive with # 2 engine feathered, was reported as damaged during same attack. 8 or 9 chutes.

No. 42-32002 - Attacked by E/A North of Osnobruck on way in to target. Was reported with fire coming from 2 engines. 5 chutes.

No. 42-28024 - Attacked by E/A and hit by AA fire in target area, Berlin, # 3 engine on fire, went down in steep dive. 7 chutes.

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Authority NND 745005

By AR NARA Date 4-27-11

No. 42-23529 - Attacked by E/A North of Brunswick on route out. Hit by FW - 190 and enveloped in flames. No chutes were seen.

No. 42-31299 - Attacked by E/A near 52°40'N 06°20'E. Went down on fire. 10 chutes.

HARRY G. MUMFORD,
Lt. Colonel, Air Corps,
Operations Officer.

*Stoffman*C O N F I D E N T I A LHEADQUARTERS EIGHTH AIR FORCE
AAF STATION 101
APO 634E I G H T H A I R F O R C E N A R R A T I V E O F O P E R A T I O N S

250th Operation - 6 March 1944

1st Bombardment Division - BERLIN AREA
2nd Bombardment Division - BERLIN AREA
3rd Bombardment Division - BERLIN AREA

Eleven combat wings of B-17s and three of B-24s, dispatched to attack Berlin achieved the first large scale daylight attack against the German capital. Finding weather conditions over their primaries generally unfavorable for visual bombing, formations concentrated their attack on the secondary, the city of Berlin itself. Of the 504 B-17s and 226 B-24s dispatched, a force of 474 B-17s and 198 B-24s attacked, dropping 1,199 tons of GP and 450 tons of IB on targets in the Greater Berlin area, and on scattered targets of opportunity in Germany with generally poor results.

Very strong enemy fighter opposition was encountered by some of our formations, particularly by the first two combat wings of 1st Bombardment Division, which flew first over the target, and by the middle combat wings of 3rd Division, which flew second over the target. Attacks against these formations accounted for the loss of at least 41 of the B-17s lost. 2nd Division reported very weak e/a opposition. Intense and accurate flak was encountered in the Berlin area resulting in considerable battle damage to our bombers and the loss of at least five B-24s.

Escort was provided by 19 groups of USAAF fighters - 13 of P-47s, 3 of P-38s and 3 of P-51s. Three of the P-47 groups flew second sorties. Additional support was provided by 2 squadrons of RAF Mustangs, which flew an uneventful mission. 5 P-47s, 5 P-51s and 1 P-38 are missing and fighter pilots make claims of 82-9-32.

B O M B E R O P E R A T I O N S

Unit	(AB)	Number of Aircraft				Tons on O.T.'s		Claims
		Disp.	Attacked Primary	O.T.'s	Lost)	G.P.	I.B.	
1st BOMB DIV.								
1st C.W.	60	57	0	56	9	92	37.5	20-10-26
94th C.W.	65	56	0	53	3+	86.5	30	8-8-11
41st C.W.	56	54	0	52	1	90	31.5	3-3-1
40th C.W.(A)	61	54	0	47	5	102	10.5	3-2-3
Comp. C.W.	54	36	0	35	0	85	0	2-1-2
Pathfinders	5	5	0	5	0	4	0	5-0-2
	<u>301</u>	<u>262</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>248</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>459.5</u>	<u>109.5</u>	<u>41-24-45</u>

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Unit	(AB	Disp.	Attacked		Lost)	Tons on O.T.'s		Claims
			Primary	O.T.'s		G.P.	I.B.	
<u>2ND BOMB DIV.</u>								
20th C.W.	78	76	0	72	3	155	50	1-0-0
2nd C.W.	79	66	0	52	7	85	45	2-0-0
14th C.W.	88	80	0	70	6	125	70	2-0-0
Pathfinders	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0-0-0</u>
	249	226	0	198	16	368	165	5-0-0
<u>3RD BOMB DIV.</u>								
4th C.W. (A&B)	81	78	0	74	1	116	61	4-0-2
13th C.W. (A&B)	86	80	0	72	24	136	40	35-15-15
45th C.W. (A&B)	92	81	0	77	9++	116	74	8-5-4
Pathfinders	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0-0-0</u>
	262	242	0	226	35 x	371	175	47-20-21
TOTALS	812	730	0	672	69	1198.5	449.5	93-44-66

+ One a/c was lost after being struck by a B-17 spinning through the formation as a result of e/a action.

++ One a/c, engaged by e/a, collided with another B-17 - both lost.

x Three bombers reported to have landed in Sweden - all crews uninjured.

BOMBING RESULTS: 413 B-17s dropped 2899 x 500 G.P., 2345 x 100 I.B., and 510 x 500 I.B., a total of 970 tons; and 196 B-24s dropped 1441 x 500 G.P., 2406 x 100 I.B., and 180 x 500 I.B., a total of 530 tons, on the Greater Berlin area. 1st Division attacked between 1315 and 1330 hours from 17,500 to 22,000 feet; 3rd Division between 1322 and 1335 hours from 19,500 to 22,000 feet; and 2nd Division attacked between 1321 and 1346 hours from 18,000 to 24,000 feet. 2,448,000 US G 26, 28 and 29 type leaflets were dropped in the Berlin area.

Bombing was generally scattered. However, there were good concentrations in the southwestern suburbs of Berlin, especially in the Zehlendorf area. Bombs also fell in the Spandau section where the main railway line was severed. PRU cover taken at 1530 hours shows fires still burning in the residential districts of Steglitz and Zehlendorf. It is possible that damage was caused to industrial establishments in Berlin, but this cannot be verified until complete assessment has been made of all strike photos and further PRU cover.

16 B-17s dropped 160 x 500 G.P., 40 tons, at 1407 hours from 19,400 feet on a textile factory in Wittenberge with probably very good results. 45 B-17s and 2 B-24s dropped 68 tons G.P. and 40 tons I.B. on scattered targets of opportunity in northcentral and western Germany with generally poor results.

ENCOUNTERS: 1st Division led the attack on Berlin with 3rd Division flying second and 2nd Division flying third. Vicious enemy fighter attacks were experienced by the first two combat wings of 1st Division and by the middle two combat wings of 3rd Division. 2nd Division encountered very weak e/a opposition.

The first e/a attacks began at about 1200 hours against the 3rd Division formations in the area north of Osnabruck and continued until 1230 hours just north of Brunswick. Approximately 100 plus Me-109s and FW-190s were encountered

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

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

and they attacked in groups of six to fifteen at a time concentrating mostly on the low groups. All types of tactics were employed and e/a pilots were described as being very experienced and eager for combat. At approximately 1329 hours, e/a renewed their attacks against the two middle combat wings of 3rd Division and continued them for fifteen minutes in the area just north of Berlin. At approximately 1415 hours attacks again started in the area north of Brunswick and lasted until 1435 hours north of Osnabruck. One group reports e/a attacking up to the Zuider Zee on the route home. 30 3rd Division B-17s were lost to e/a. In addition, one B-17 while under e/a attack, collided with another B-17 resulting in the loss of both.

1st Division reports first e/a attacks at approximately 1250 hours in the vicinity of the I.P., continuing over the target and to 5305N - 1300E at 1340 hours. Over 100 e/a were reported of both single and twin-engine varieties. Attacks were made both in small numbers and in mass and were mainly from head-on.

Enemy tactics included rockets followed up by 20 mm fire and an incident of attempted air-to-air bombing with the use of parachute bombs was reported. 3rd Division crews report that all of their aircraft lost to e/a were seen burning as they went down and believe that this was due to e/a firing fused incendiary shells from 20 mm cannon. This shell was reported to have a burst with a sparkler effect.

REASONS FOR FAILURE TO BOMB: 30 B-17s and 28 B-24s failed to bomb - 14 B-17s and 23 B-24s due to mechanical or equipment failure, 12 B-17s and 2 B-24s due to e/a and 4 B-17s and 3 B-24s due to other reasons.

CASUALTIES: Personnel - 14 crew members were killed, 38 wounded and 708 are missing.

Equipment - 53 B-17s and 16 B-24s were lost - 3 B-17s and 5 B-24s to AA fire, 41 B-17s to e/a, 4 B-17s and 2 B-24s due to AA and e/a, 2 B-17s due to accident and 1 B-17 due to collision and 2 B-17s and 9 B-24s due to unknown reasons.

Estimated Battle Damage - 239 B-17s and 97 B-24s category "A" and "AC", 53 B-17s and 5 B-24s category "B" and 2 B-17s category "E".

ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE: AA fire on the way in and out was meager to moderate and generally inaccurate. Flak over the Berlin area was intense and accurate. AA fire at Diepholz, Lingen and Vechta was reported as moderate to intense and accurate for the 2nd Bombardment Division and meager to moderate and generally inaccurate for the other divisions. Ground rockets were reported at various points.

WEATHER: Weather was generally as briefed with no contrails. 2/10 to 5/10 cloud were reported over the entire route to the target. Visibility at primaries varied by groups, but was generally 5/10 to 7/10 cloud. About 4/10 cloud was encountered over other areas of the city, but cloud patches caused most combat wings to bomb by PFF.

OBSERVATIONS: Smoke screens were observed at Brunswick, Hanover, Bremen and Osnabruck. A large and well camouflaged ammunition dump was seen at Schwarmsted and a large aircraft factory with a great number of planes on the field about 25 miles southwest of Brandenburg. An ordnance dump was also observed three miles west of Celle and a large factory and construction with considerable activity west of Walstrode.

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C O N F I D E N T I A LFIGHTER OPERATIONS

<u>Group</u>	<u>Type of A/C</u>	<u>Type of Support</u>	<u>No. A/C on Mission</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>Claims</u>
365x	P-47	Penetration	16	0	0-0-0
362x	P-47	"	50	1	0-0-0
359	P-47	"	51	0	0-0-0
358x	P-47	"	45	0	0-0-0
56A	P-47	"	32	1	8-1-2
56B	P-47	"	34	0	3-1-5
78A	P-47	"	36	2	2-1-1
353	P-47	"	31	0	3-0-0
4	P-51	Target	25	4	15-0-11
357	P-51	Target	33	0	20-1-7
55	P-38	Target	31	0	0-0-0
354x	P-51	Target & Area Support	34	1	8-0-2
355	P-47	Withdrawal	35	0	7-1-1
361	P-47	Withdrawal	37	0	5-0-0
20	P-38	Withdrawal	23	0	1-0-0
78B	P-47	Withdrawal	32	0	0-0-0
352	P-47	Withdrawal	47	0	0-0-0
364	P-38	Withdrawal	32	1	2-1-0
356	P-47	Withdrawal	40	1	5-2-2
359*	P-47	Withdrawal	44	0	3-1-1
358*x	P-47	Withdrawal	46	0	0-0-0
362*x	P-47	Withdrawal	42	0	0-0-0
			<u>796</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>82-9-32</u>

x Ninth Air Force a/c

* Second sortie.

15 groups of Eighth Air Force fighters, four groups of the Ninth Air Force and two squadrons of RAF Mustangs provided continuous escort for this operation. Two groups of the Ninth Air Force and one of the Eighth Air Force flew double sorties. Fighters met one of the strongest defensive efforts yet achieved by the G.A.F. which threw in both s/e and t/e night fighters. The first two combat wings of the 1st Bombardment Division over the target and the middle wings of the 3rd Bombardment Division met the fullest intensity of these attacks while other formations of these divisions and the entire 2nd Bombardment Division met generally weak opposition. The enemy effort was concentrated principally in the target area although attacks began in the Osnabruck area on penetration and persisted until 100 miles off the Dutch coast on withdrawal. 11 fighters were lost; five P-47s, five P-51s and one P-38, and fighter pilots claim 82-9-32.

ESCORT TO 1ST DIVISION

Penetration: The 359th Group rendezvoused with bombers east of Egmond and escorted to vicinity of Hardenburgh. The 358th Group rendezvoused 30 miles west

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

of the Dutch coast at 1050 hours and escorted without incident to Dummer Lake. The 56 A Group made rendezvous at Lingen and escorted to a point between Dummer Lake and Nienberg. North of Dummer Lake about 100 s/e e/a attacked bombers and further east at Nienburg an additional 10 FW 190s joined the attacks. Ensuing combats resulted in claims of 8-1-2. The 78 A Group rendezvoused north of Dummer Lake and escorted to Celle. About 25 s/e e/a attacked fighters first, then bombers, between Dummer and Steinhuder Lakes.

Target: The 4th Group rendezvoused with five combat wings of B-17s northeast of Brunswick. 30 e/e e/a and 40-50 t/e e/a attacked bombers at 1240 hours. 15 e/a were destroyed in ensuing combats. Escort was broken at 1325 hours near Neu Ruppin. The 55th Group made rendezvous at 1305 hours but could not contact bombers. When they climbed to 33,000 feet to meet bogies, engine trouble developed in many planes so they returned.

Withdrawal: The 355th Group made rendezvous at 1425 hours in the Diepholz area. 10-15 Me 109s and FW 190s encountered from the rendezvous to 1500 hours, attacking stragglers, and nine FW 190s later made rocket attacks on bombers after the fighters broke escort. The 361st Group escorted the B-17s to the enemy coast, and returning in search of more bombers, picked up some B-24s under attack, first dispersing a small force of e/a.

ESCORT TO 3RD DIVISION

Penetration: The 365th Group carried out an uneventful mission, followed by the 353rd, which rendezvoused in the vicinity of Dummer Lake. An attack by 8-12 FW 190s near Steinhuder Lake was broken up and three e/a destroyed.

Target: The 354th Group rendezvoused early north of Helmstedt and took bombers over the target. Shortly after rendezvous 50 e/a approached the bombers near Brandenburg. In the resulting fight eight e/a were destroyed. The 20th Group made rendezvous 15 miles west of Berlin at 1332, shortly after which more than 20 e/a were engaged. The group withdrew at 1420 north of Dummer Lake.

Withdrawal: The 78 B Group continued on its withdrawal route until 1425, in the Nienburg area, when a message apparently from bombers under attack was received. The fighters turned back but were unable to find the bombers sending the message. The 352nd Group picked up B-17s from both 1st and 3rd Divisions in the Barnstorf area and found them escorted by both P-51s and P-47s. A few e/a seen near Balfsen were driven away, and the group escorted uneventfully to mid-channel.

ESCORT TO 2ND DIVISION

Penetration: The 362nd Group escorted the Liberators from the Zuider Zee to Quackenbruck. At 1145 the 56 B Group rendezvoused, taking the bombers to the Hamburg area. Along the route small groups of e/a approaching from the northeast were dispersed and three were destroyed.

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

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Target: The 357th Group rendezvoused with bombers over Berlin and escorted boxes of B-17s and B-24s over the target, driving off 30-40 e/a. Combats with e/a on withdrawal were carried out from 25,000 feet down to the deck. This group claims 20 destroyed in all.

Withdrawal: E/a attacking the bombers as the 364th Group rendezvoused evaded as the fighters approached. Northwest of Hanover seven Me 109s were dispersed. The 356th Group rendezvoused in the Neinberg area and reported the bombers "strung out and hard to cover". Twenty Me 109's approaching the bombers at rendezvous were driven off with claims of five destroyed. Escort was carried to the Polder area.

General Withdrawal Support: The 358th Group on its second mission rendezvoused east of Dummer Lake and continued to the enemy coast. Combats took place at Uchte, Quackenbruck and Vechta. The 358th, on its second mission escorted many stragglers to the English coast, meeting no e/a. The 362nd on its second sortie patrolled uneventfully from the Zuider Zee to the German border.

Two squadrons of RAF Mustangs totalling 31 a/c provided withdrawal escort. They rendezvoused with the bombers in the Brunswick area. All a/c returned safely and no claims are made.

NOTE: The foregoing is based on preliminary information and should not be used for record purposes.

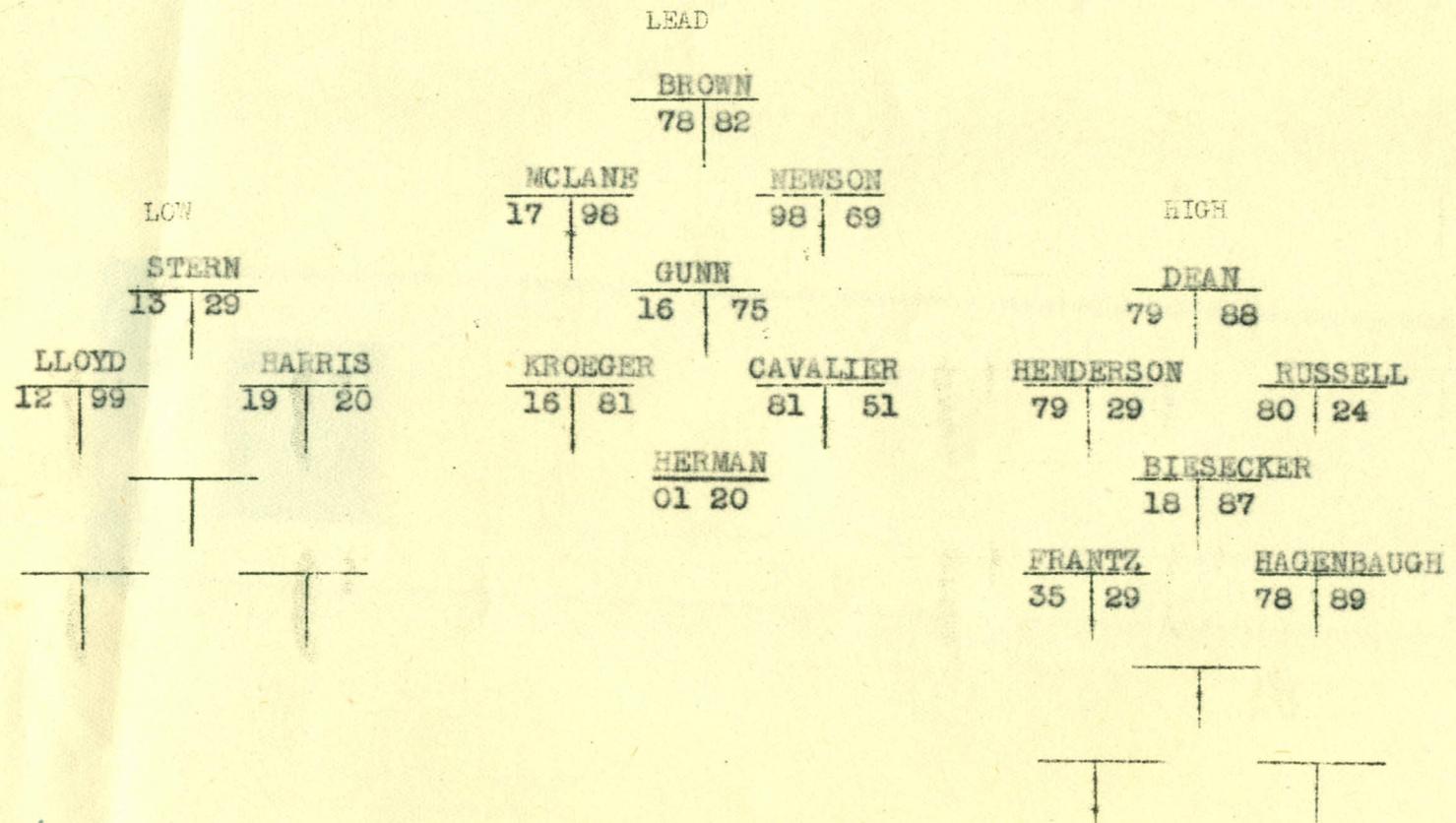
C O N F I D E N T I A L

95th GROUP
DIAGRAM "B"
OVER TARGET

NINETY FIFTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (E)
Office of the Operations Officer

GROUP FORMATION FORM

DATE 6 March 1944.



EXTRA SHIPS
334 _____
335 _____
336 _____
412 _____

Authority NND 745005
By AL NARA Date 4-27-11
REF ID: A66500
REF ID: A66500
REF ID: A66500
REF ID: A66500
REF ID: A66500

A.T.F.

13"A" C.W.

13"B" C.W.

390A

100A

95B

100B

Low

Stearns

1329

Lloyd
1299

Kearby
1251

Mailman
9943

LEAD

Brown

7882

McLane

1798

Newson

9869

Harris

1920

Gunn

1675

HIGH

Conley
7495

Russell
8024

Cavalier
8151

Dean
7988

Read
9793

Barksdale
2002

Woodcock
0342

Fagan
3263

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1887

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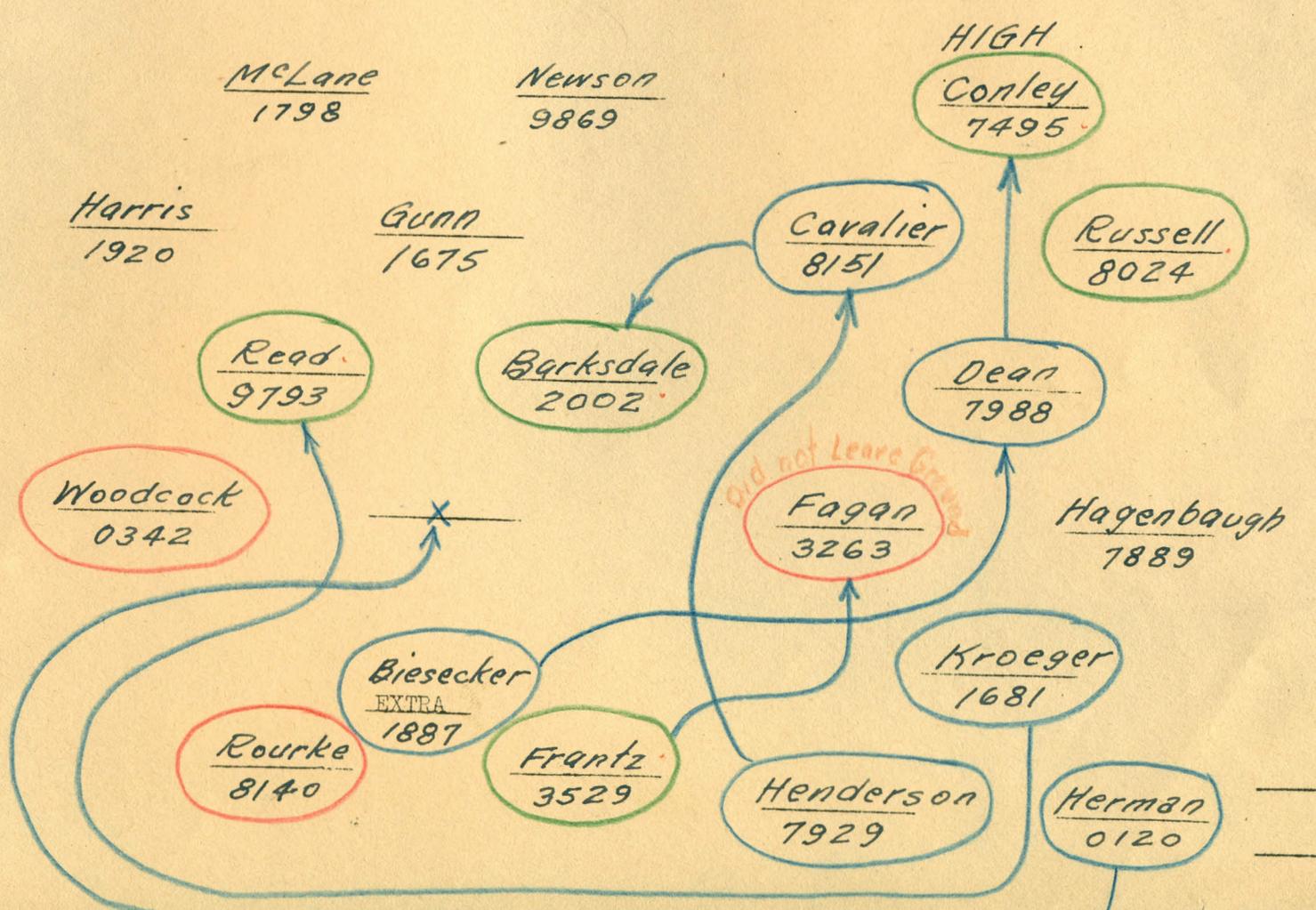
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FORMATION DIAGRAM

95TH BOMB. GROUP (H)

DATE

TIME 6-3-44



DECLASSIFIED
 Authority NND 745005
 By AL NARA Date 4-11-11

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EXTRA A

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3RD BOMBARDMENT DIVISION
OPERATIONAL NARRATIVE ANNEX MISSION 6 MARCH 1944

2. BOMBING RESULTS:

PRELIMINARY PHOTO INTERPRETATION SHOWS: 447

- A. BOMBS OF THREE GROUPS (94-385A-447COMP) STRIKING IN SPARSE RESIDENTIAL AREAS 5 MILES EAST OF MPI WITH ONE HIT ON RAILROAD TRACKS NOTED.
- B. PHOTOS OF 385B GROUP INDICATE A BOMB RUN OVER TARGET BUT NO BOMB STRIKED ARE VISIBLE.
- C. PHOTOS OF 95 GROUPS SHOWS BOMBS HITTING IN WOODED AREA JUST SOUTH OF TARGET.
- D. BOMBS OF 100 GROUP ARE SEEN STRIKING IN WOODS APPROXIMATELY 2 MILES NW OF POTSDAM .
- E. BOMBS OF 390 GROUP ARE SEEN HITTING IN A LAKE IN WEST BERLIN ABOUT 10 MILES NORTH OF MPI.
- F. BOMBS OF 388A GROUP HIT A PRIORITY TEXTILE WORKS WITH PROBABLY VERY GOOD RESULTS AT WITTENBERGE.
- G. BOMBS OF 388B GROUP ARE SEEN BURSTING IN A RESIDENTIAL AREA IN ORANIENBURG.
- H. BOMBS OF 96 GROUP HIT AN INDUSTRIAL SITE APPARENTLY A CEMENT PLANT AT KALKBERGE 16 MILES EAST OF BERLIN. RESULTS FAIR TO GOOD.
- I. BOMBS OF 452 GROUP ARE SEEN HITTING IN OPEN COUNTRY JUST NORTH OF KALKBERGE.

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AS FOR R

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MOIHRM
OIHRM R FOR TWO SIGNS.....07/0320A JRD AR

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