

INTERPRETATION REPORT S.A. 2851ATTACK ON MANNHEIM on 19 OCT 1944

## (i) INFORMATION RECEIVED ON THE ATTACK

(a) No. of aircraft : 499 with full fighter escort.  
 (b) Command : U.S. 8th AIR FORCE.  
 (c) Time : 1330 A Hours.  
 (d) Bombs : 3006 X 500 lb. G.P.  
           492 X 250 lb. G.P.  
           2631 X 500 lb. I.B.

## (ii) DETAILS OF THE ATTACK

(a) All of the photographs received are eight to ten tenths cloud covered. A concentration of at least 56 H.E. bursts are visible in the center of MANNHEIM in the business district extending from the bridge crossing the RHINE RIVER Northwest within 3/4 of a mile. One direct hit is visible on the bridge, and at least 15 probable hits on buildings in the business district. Five bursts are visible 1-1/4 miles South Southwest on the West bank of the RHINE RIVER. I.B. bursts are seen in the business district extending to 1/2 mile Northwest.

## (b) OTHER BURSTS

A group of 12 bursts is seen in open fields near the town of BRUCHAL 26 miles South-Southwest of MANNHEIM. A cluster of I.B. bursts, and 4 H.E. bursts are visible on an unplotted area.

(iii) ANNOTATED PRINT: None.

(iv) BOMB PLOT: None prepared.

## (v) PHOTOGRAPHS RECEIVED

SAV 379/606-608	19 OCT 44	1351A	hrs. 1/43,500	(F.L. 7")	25,600'	'B'
" 493B/368	"	1259A	" 1/50,100	(F.L. 7")	29,300'	'B'
" 303/1086,1087	"	1323A	" 1/29,200	(F.L.12")	29,200'	'B'
" 305/40A,40B	"	1330A	" 1/50,100	(F.L. 7")	29,300'	'B'
" 305/40A/875	"	1325A	" 1/29,000	(F.L.12")	29,000'	'B'
" 390/1042,1045	"	1324A	" 1/48,850	(F.L. 7")	28,500'	'B'
" 390/1043	"	1324A	" 1/28,900	(F.L.12")	28,900'	'C'
" 34/304	"	1300A	" 1/28,000	(F.L.12")	28,000'	'B'
" 34/305	"	1259A	" 1/46,200	(F.L. 7")	27,000'	'C'
" 487/438,442	"	1318A	" 1/48,000	"	28,000'	'B'
" 486/491	"	1312A	" 1/49,700	"	29,000'	'B'
" 452/661,662	"	1313A	" 1/49,350	"	28,800'	'C'
" 100/961,962,964, 965	"	1306A	" 1/48,850	"	28,400'	'C'
" 100/963	"	1307A	" 1/29,100	(F.L.12")	29,100'	'C'
" 381/892-894	"	1351A	" 1/49,700	(F.L. 7")	29,000'	'C'
" 447/713-715	"	1258A	" 1/48,000	"	28,000'	'C'
" 94/1059,1058	"	1258A	" 1/46,200	"	27,000'	'C'
" 94/1060	"	1258A	" 1/27,000	(F.L.12")	27,000'	'C'
" 351/769-771	"	1343A	" 1/28,700	"	28,700'	'C'
" 384/1000,1001	"	1352A	" 1/46,200	(F.L. 7")	27,000'	'B'
" 384/1002	"	1354A	" 1/27,500	(F.L.12")	27,500'	'C'
" 95/1114,1115	"	1307A	" 1/45,800	(F.L. 7")	26,750'	'B'
" 306/1024,1026	"	1324A	" 1/45,800	"	26,750'	'B'
" 401/718,721	"	1347A	" 1/45,400	"	26,500'	'B'
" 96/658	"	1314A	" 1/49,350	"	28,800'	'B'
" 96/657	"	1314A	" 1/28,200	(F.L.12")	28,200'	'B'
" 388/710	"	1258A	" 1/48,000	(F.L. 7")	28,000'	'C'
" 457/613	"	1356A	" 1/48,000	"	28,000'	'C'

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By EEP NARA Date 1/13/01

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

APC 559.  
21 October 1944

SUBJECT: Operations Officers Narrative - Mission 19 October 1944 - Mannheim,  
Germany.

TO : Commanding Officer, 95th Bomb Gp (H), APC 559.

1. GENERAL NARRATIVE: The 95th A Squadron formation, flying as low Squadron of 13 B Combat Group, took-off at 0910-0957 hours and assembled over the base at 13,000 feet. The squadron was complete by 1000 hours, and started its climb to group assembly altitude. The base was departed at 1030 hours, and the squadron joined 13 B Combat group 20,000' over Dunster # 28 at 1110 hours.

The formation crossed the English coast over Orfordness at 1140 1/2 hours, 1 1/2 minutes ahead of schedule. The group "S" led considerably on the route across the channel in order to avoid over running preceding formations. Climb to bombing altitude was continued, and the Belgium coast was crossed on time at 22,300'. En route to the target a slight deviation was made to the south of course in order to maintain proper group interval, and the IP. was crossed at 26,000' at 1256.5, 6.5 minutes late. Bombs were dropped in group formation on the PFF leader at 1307.5 hours. The return route was flown as briefed, and the Belgium coast was crossed on course at 1447 hours. The low squadron had great difficulty in maintaining group formation on the return route, and airspeeds as high as 165 MPH were used. The English coast was crossed at 1521 hours, 1500 feet over Orfordness. The base was reached at 1531.5 hours, and the formation landed at 1534-1548 hours.

2. AIRCRAFT NOT ATTACKING: Thirteen aircraft were dispatched in the formation as shown in diagram "A". All thirteen aircraft were over the target and are credited with sorties.

3. LOST AIRCRAFT: None.

THOMAS H. HOLBROOK,  
Lt Col., Air Corps,  
Operations Officer.

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By EFC NARA Date 11/13/07

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

E-E-26

19 October 1944.

SUBJECT: Lead Navigator's Narrative, Ninety Fifth "A" Squadron, Mission of 19 October 1944, Mannheim, Germany.

TO : Commanding Officer, 95th Bombardment Group (H), A.A.F.

1. We flew with the Ninety Fifth "A" Squadron as the low squadron of the Thirteenth "B" Group. We took off at 0910 hours and made squadron assembly over BU# 23 at 13000' at 1000 hours. Group assembly was made at BU# 28 at 1110 hours at 20000'.

2. We left the English coast at Orfordness at 1140 $\frac{1}{2}$  hours at 20000'. We crossed the Enemy coast at 5112N 0247E at 1200 hours at 22500'. The only deviation from the flight plan was the Group lead over-ran preceding groups. The I.P. was made as briefed.

3. Bombs were away at 1307 $\frac{1}{2}$  hours on a magnetic heading of 78° at 26700' on the Secondary target. We crossed the coast out at Ostend at 1447 hours at 13000'. We crossed the English coast in at Orfordness at 1621 hours at 1500'. We were over the base at 1631 $\frac{1}{2}$  hours and landed at 1640 hours.

4. Deviations from the flight plan on the route back were four minutes late at the I.P. Six minutes late at the target. Lead Squadron out-ran low squadron which indicated 165 MPH but could not overtake lead. Weather caused slight deviation from briefed route and much Essing.

E. J. MURRAY  
2nd Lt., Air Corps,  
Lead Navigator.

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By EEF NARA Date 11/3/01

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

V-A-1.

APO 559,  
19 October 1944.

SUBJECT: Engineering Report on Combat Mission of 19 October 1944.

TO : Commanding Officer, 95th Bombardment Group (H), Attention:  
Lt Col MUMFORD.

1. The following information is submitted concerning combat mission of 19 October 1944.

- a. Thirteen (13) B-17 airplanes took-off as scheduled.
- b. Thirteen (13) B-17 airplanes returned to base after completion of mission.

2. There were no abortive airplanes.
3. There was no battle damage.

CLARENCE D. FIELDS,  
Major, Air Corps,  
Base Engr. Officer.

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By EEF NARA Date 11/13/07

HEADQUARTERS  
NINETY FIFTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)  
OFFICE OF THE INTELLIGENCE OFFICER

19 October 1944

SUBJECT: S-2 Report.

TO : Commanding Officer, 95th Bomb Gp. (H), APO 559.

1. Thirteen A/C of the 95th Gp. took off beginning at 0910 hours to form the low squadron of the 13B Combat Group and attack Mannheim, Germany. No A/C returned early.

2. No E/A were encountered.

3. Meager, inaccurate, barrage type flak was encountered at Mannheim.

4. Bombing was accomplished using PFF technique thru solid undercast. Bombing unobserved.

5. The assigned PFF target was attacked with this group dropping on the PFF markers of preceding groups. No PFF A/C with this group. All A/C returned to this base and landed by 1630 hours.

For the Intelligence Officer:

STANLEY R. WHEATON,  
Capt., Air Corps,  
Ass't S-2 Officer.

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Authority AND 745008  
D. C. NADA Date 7/12/12

HEADQUARTERS EIGHTH AIR FORCE  
AAF STATION 101  
APO 634

INTOPS SUMMARY NO. 172

PERIOD: 0001 hours 19 October to 2400 hours 19 October 1944

A. STATISTICS

	Missions	Disp.	Sorties	Atkg.	Tonnage	Claims	E/A	Losses			Totals
								AA	N/E	OT	
Heavy Bomber Atks.	7	1022x	999	945	2726.7	0-0-0	0	2	2	6	10
Fighter Escort	15	753	707	0	0	0-0-0	0	2	1	4	7
Fighter Sweeps	0	0	0	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	0	0
Fighter Bombing	0	0	0	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	0	0
Photo Recon.	2	2	2	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	0	0
Weather Recon.	9	36	32	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	0	0
Air/Sea Rescue	8	8	8	0	0	0-0-0	0	0	0	0	0
Special Operations	<u>30</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0-0-0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Totals	71	1852	1779	945	2726.7	0-0-0	0	4	3	10	17

x Includes 14 spares; 7 used.

B. OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

1. Bomber Attacks

Twenty-five combat wings (641 B-17s, 381 B-24s - 1022 a/c) dispatched against M/T plants, oil storage and ordnance depots at Mannheim, an oil and storage depot at Ludwigshafen, an AFV plant at Gustavsborg and military barracks and stores buildings at Mainz. Seven assigned targets. Support by fifteen fighter groups. 945 a/c dropped 2726.7 tons GP and IB on two primaries, two PFF secondaries and several T/Os. 7/10 to 10/10 cloud with tops from 20,000-28,000 feet caused some formations to deviate from briefed course and to fly higher than briefed altitudes and necessitated bombing on instruments except in the case of a few groups which bombed visually through small breaks in the clouds. No e/a opposition; some twelve s/e and t/e e/a plus six to nine probable jet a/c sighted, none of which made any attempt to attack. Claims: nil. Losses: 10 a/c (6 B-24s, 4 B-17s).

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First Force

Eight combat wings (381 B-24s) dispatched against Gustavsborg diesel engine and armored force vehicle plant, and military barracks and stores buildings at Mainz. 330 a/c dropped 595.4 tons GP, 373.2 tons IB - total 968.6 tons - on one primary and the PFF secondary at 1244-1310 hours from 22,000-26,300 feet. All bombing on PFF and Gee-H. Leaflets dropped on Mainz M/Y. Weather: 7/10 to 8/10 cumulus over targets necessitated bombing on instruments; 9/10 to 10/10 towering cumulus building up to 27,000 feet over continent caused formations to deviate from briefed course. Flak: moderate to intense, fairly accurate at Gustavsborg, moderate and accurate at Mainz. Rockets observed at Mainz and Gustavsborg. Battle Damage: 143 minor, 5 major. E/a opposition: no attacks; two FW-190s and two u/i t/e e/a observed at 5010N-0730E, eight Me-110s at 4947N-0812E, six to eight probable t/e jet a/c in vicinity of Neunkirchen and one probable jet a/c at 5005N-0619E. Claims: nil. Losses: 6 B-24s (1 to AA, 2 to accident, 3 to unknown causes).

Fighter Support: Five groups (193 P-51s, 47 P-47s - 240 a/c) dispatched. Up 1041-1055 hours, down 1449-1641 hours. 226 sorties. E/a opposition: nil. Claims: nil. Losses: 2 P-51s (1 to AA, 1 to unknown causes).

Details of bomber attacks as follows:

<u>Assigned Targets</u>	<u>Dispatched</u>	<u>Attacking</u>	<u>Tonnage</u>		<u>Results</u>
			<u>GP</u>	<u>IB</u>	
Gustavsborg M.A.N. & AFV Plant	178	50	172.0		Unobserved
Mainz Military Barracks and Stores Bldgs.	203	Not Attacked			
<u>Other Targets</u>					
Mainz M/Y (PFF Secondary)	—	<u>280</u>	<u>423.4</u>	<u>373.2</u>	Unobserved
Totals	381	330	595.4	373.2	

Second Force

Seven combat wings (267 B-17s) dispatched against oil storage depot and Daimler Benz M/T plant at Mannheim. 251 a/c dropped 376.5 tons GP, 342 tons IB - total 718.5 tons - on the PFF secondary (AFV & Artillery Tractor plant at Mannheim) and four T/Os at 1258-1323 hours from 26,700-30,000 feet. Bombing on PFF. Leaflets dropped in Mannheim and Worms areas. Weather: 9/10 to 10/10 over target; persistent contrails and cloud tops from 27,000-28,000 feet forced groups to fly higher than briefed altitude. Flak: moderate, accurate on a few formations at Mannheim. Battle Damage: 87 minor, 10 major. E/a opposition: nil - no sightings. Claims: nil. Losses: 1 B-17 to AA.

Fighter Support: Four groups (153 P-51s, 50 P-47s - 203 a/c) dispatched. Up 1115-1129 hours, down 1505-1542 hours. 195 sorties. E/a opposition: nil. Claims: nil. Losses: nil.

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 By **EE** NARA Date **11/13/01**

Details of bomber attacks as follows:

<u>Assigned Targets</u>	<u>Dispatched</u>	<u>Attacking</u>	<u>Tonnage</u>		<u>Results</u>
			<u>GP</u>	<u>IB</u>	
Mannheim Daimler Benz M/T Plant	189	Not Attacked			
Mannheim Oil Storage	78	Not Attacked			
<u>Other Targets</u>					
Mannheim (PFF Secondary)		217	335.0	303.5	Unobserved
T/O (4943N-0835E)		1	1.5	1.5	Unobserved
T/O (4920N-0740E)		1	1.5	1.5	Unobserved
T/O (4940N-0830E)		1	1.2	1.2	Unobserved
T/O (4935N-0823E)		<u>31</u>	<u>37.3</u>	<u>34.3</u>	
Totals	267	251	376.5	342.0	

Third Force

Ten combat wings (374 B-17s) dispatched against ordnance depot and AFV and Artillery Tractor plant at Mannheim, and oil and storage depot at Ludwigshafen. 364 a/c dropped 541.6 tons GP, 498 tons IB - total 1039.6 tons - on one primary, the PFF secondary (AFV & Artillery Tractor plant at Mannheim), and seven T/Os at 1324-1406 hours from 26,300-30,000 feet. Bombing mostly by PFF and Gee-H; a few groups bombed visually through small breaks in clouds. Leaflets dropped on Mannheim and Kreuznach. Weather: 8/10 to 10/10 with tops from 20,000-28,000 feet; dense persistent contrails above 25,000 feet. Flak: meager to moderate, accurate on some formations over Mannheim; meager and generally inaccurate over other targets. Battle Damage: 129 minor, 53 major. E/a opposition: no attacks; a few u/i e/a sighted in the distance in target area. Claims: nil. Losses: 3 B-17s to unknown causes.

Fighter Support: Six groups (260 P-51s, 50 P-47s - 310 a/c) dispatched. Up 1048-1137 hours, down 1528-1630 hours. 286 sorties. Two groups patrolled assigned areas in advance of first bomber force and gave withdrawal support to third force. E/a opposition: nil. Claims: nil. Losses: 5 P-51s (1 to AA, 1 to mechanical failure, 3 to unknown causes - 2 of latter believed landed in friendly territory).

Details of bomber attacks as follows:

<u>Assigned Targets</u>	<u>Dispatched</u>	<u>Attacking</u>	<u>Tonnage</u>		<u>Results</u>
			<u>GP</u>	<u>IB</u>	
Mannheim Ordnance Depot	72	Not Attacked			
Mannheim AFV & Artillery Tractor Plant	228	25	38.7	35.75	Unobserved
Ludwigshafen Oil & Storage Depot	74	Not Attacked			

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<u>Other Targets</u>	<u>Dispatched</u>	<u>Attacking</u>	<u>Tonnage</u>		<u>Results</u>
			<u>GP</u>	<u>IB</u>	
Mannheim (PTF Secondary)		257	377.7	380.0	Unobserved
Rudesheim		9	11.5	12.75	Unobserved
Bad Kreuznach		8	12.0	12.0	Unobserved
Karlsruhe		32	53.0	26.0	Fair
Steyer		2	3.0	3.0	Unobserved
Kreuznach		10	13.6	4.5	Unobserved
T/O (4955N-0755E)		12	17.2	18.0	Unobserved
U/I T/Os		<u>9</u>	<u>14.9</u>	<u>6.0</u>	Unobserved
Totals	374	364	541.6	498.0	

2. Fighter Escort

Fifteen groups (606 P-51s, 147 P-47s - 753 a/c) dispatched to support three bomber forces attacking targets in western Germany. Up 1041-1137 hours, down 1449-1641 hours. 707 sorties. E/a opposition: nil. Claims: nil. Losses: 7 P-51s (2 to AA, 1 to mechanical failure, 4 to unknown causes - 2 of latter believed landed in friendly territory).

3. Fighter Sweeps

Nil

4. Fighter Bombing

Nil

5. Photo Reconnaissance

Two a/c (1 F-5, 1 Mosquito) dispatched. The F-5 on D/A of Osnabrück, Handorf A/F, Apeldoorn area, Utrecht area, Amsterdam/Schipol A/F, Teuge A/F, Ladbergen A/F, Kassel A/F, and Nordhausen A/F, the Mosquito on routine photo reconnaissance. All a/c returned safely.

6. Weather Reconnaissance

36 a/c (30 P-51s, 4 B-24s, 2 Mosquitoes) dispatched. P-51s scouted bomber targets, 26 P-51s completing missions. Three B-24s flew routine weather mission to the Azores, one B-24 flew weather mission to NW of Lands End, and two Mosquitoes were dispatched on weather missions over the Continent. All a/c returned safely.

7. Air/Sea Rescue

Eight P-47s dispatched on routine Air/Sea Rescue patrols. No incidents. All a/c returned safely.

8. Special Operations

31 a/c dispatched as follows:

- 22 a/c (16 P-51s, 4 P-47s, 2 B-17s) as Airborne Radio Relays.
- 2 P-51s as escort to three of these radio relay a/c.
- 7 B-24s on RCM, jamming from 1925-2245 hours.

All 31 a/c returned safely.

C. INTELLIGENCE

1. Enemy Air Opposition

There was no opposition to today's heavy bomber attacks. Escorting fighters reported no e/a sightings and bombers only a few. B-24s of the first force reported two FW-190s and two u/i t/e e/a about 15 miles south of Coblenz (5010N-0730E) at 1215-1253 hours; eight Me-110s at 1300 hours about five miles east of Worms (4947N-0812E); six to eight probable t/e jet a/c with single fins and rudders at 1233 hours in the vicinity of Neunkirchen, and one probable jet a/c at 1315 hours near Arzfeld (5005N-0619E). This plane was described as being fairly large, with twin tail, very fast and leaving heavy contrails. The second bomber force reported no e/a sightings. B-17s of the third force observed a few e/a in the Mannheim area. Although e/a were at a considerable distance, crews believed that one of them was a s/e rocket-propelled type a/c and that six others may have been Me-109s. These sightings were made at about 1410 hours. In no case did e/a make any attempt to attack.

2. Flak

- Gustavsburg - moderate to intense, fairly accurate.
- Mannheim - meager to moderate, accurate on some formations.
- Worms - meager, accurate.
- Weisbaden - meager, accurate.
- Ingelheim - meager, accurate
- Bad Kreuznach - meager, inaccurate.
- Triers - meager, inaccurate.
- Neunkirchen - meager, inaccurate.
- Karlsruhe - meager, inaccurate.
- Speyer - meager, inaccurate.
- Bergen - meager, inaccurate.

3. Observations

Large barracks area at 4938N-0728E.  
 Large camp located near Bad Kreuznach.  
 New buildings and built up area on north edge of A/F at Speyer. Many buildings seen intact.

4. Damage to Enemy Installations

Mannheim - Unobserved Results

Only a minute portion of bombs dropped can be plotted through dense

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cloud over city. One concentration of GP and scattered incendiaries is seen breaking in the central city area. A road and rail bridge over the Rhine in this area appears to be hit. A small concentration of incendiaries is also seen on the western edge of Ludwigshafen approximately  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the center of the city.

Mainz M/Y - Unobserved Results

Cloud cover prevents detailed assessment. Four bursts are observed on M/Y and some bursts are seen in the built-up edge of the city.

Karlsruhe - Fair Results

One concentration of GP fell  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles southwest of the center of the city. Another concentration of GP is seen bursting on Karlsruhe A/F at the northwestern edge of the town.

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

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