

765TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)

WFF/jdk

461ST BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)

Office of the Combat Intelligence Officer

APO 520, NY, NY

31 JULY 1944

SUMMARY OF THE SQUADRON HISTORY FOR THE MONTH OF JULY

The first mission of the month of July was flown on the 2nd of this month, and was to Budapest, Hungary. It was reported that there were large fires, and lots of smoke. Observations to damage of the target were unobserved. Lt. Arbuthnot had to jettison his bombs due to engine trouble, and on the way back he escorted another crippled ship. They ran into a flak field at low altitude; however, he was able to make it back to the base, and the ship had quite a few flak holes.

On the 5th of July the mission was to the Marshalling Yards at Beziers, France. It was one of the longest flights we have made, and 3 of the returning planes had to land at Corsica to refuel. The flak over the target was light and there were no fighters. Lt. Warner left the formation 30 minutes before the IF, and two other ships were early returns. Seven of our planes made it over the target, and really blasted it.

One of the best missions of the month as far as hits on the target is concerned was flown the 6th of this month, and was to Aviano, Italy. We had 48% of our bombs within 1,000 yds. from the center of the target. No flak or fighters were encountered on this mission.

One of the most discussed targets for the month was the synthetic oil refineries at Blechhammer, Germany, before it was flown on the seventh. As expected the flak was very heavy, and there were a lot of E/A to and from the target. The fighter coverage was very good, and all of our aircraft returned safely. They had to bomb through a smoke screen and the results didn't show up in the pictures, but it is believed that the target was well hit. Pfc Buffalo, and S/Sgt. Geo. M. Smith on Lt. Wasters crew got credit for a ME-109 apiece, and Sgt. Ness on Lt. Arbuthnots crew had a probable on a ME-109. Lt. Chester James was wounded by flak and was recommended for the Purple Heart.

July the eighth was a day for a big celebration for two of our men, 1st Lt. Thomas Moss, and S/Sgt. Peter Grozeh were the first to complete 50 combat missions in the 765th Bombardment Squadron.

The sixth mission on the 12th of July was to the Marshalling Yards at Nimes, France, and what seemed to be a "milk run" turned into a very rough one. Just before the ships made their run on the target, 8 to 12 ME-109's came out of nowhere into the front of the formation. Before the gunners could collect their wits 3 of the bombers from our Group were shot down, and the fourth flew into the water on the way back. Two of our ships were returning, and had us sweating for a while. Lt. Morse had to land at Corsica for gas, and Lt. Nestke had to land at Spinacola, Italy. Flak over the target was intense and accurate. The results were not too good and a lot of the aircraft returned with flak holes; however, some of the bombs were on the target and did quite a bit of damage. Lt. Amoroso and Rothberg were

slightly injured by flak and will receive the "Purple Heart".

On the morning of the 15th of July we received word that Lt. Smit and crew, who were on a non operational flight, crashed on an Air Field near Rome, Italy, at approximately 2100 last night. All of the particulars as to why the accident happened are not available but from reports that we received it seemed that he tried to "go around" after over-shooting the field, with an engine out. A list of the crew, who were all killed, is as follows: Lt's John M. Nee, Roy E. Johnson, Chester James, and S/Sgt. Manley. Mission 62 was flown today, and was to the oil refineries at Ploesti, Rumania. Flak was reported light; however, Lt. Weems ship was hit and all of the crew had to bail out, approximately 10 minutes from the target. It was the crew's 48th mission, and it is sincerely hoped they all made a safe landing. A list of the crewmembers is as follows: 1st Lt. Weems, William M. Jr, 2nd Lt. Myllmain, Edward S., 2nd Lt. Rudder, Peter J., 2nd Lt. Moore, Orville S., S/Sgt. Stringer, Glenn S., S/Sgt. Mahuta, Eugene A., S/Sgt. Ryan, Timothy J. Sr., S/Sgt. Semore, Bonnie E., S/Sgt. Weaver, Arthur D., S/Sgt. Manuele Harry C. The results of this mission were reported good; however, they had to bomb through clouds. Smoke was seen 100 miles from the target.

The 18th of July on the mission to Friedrichshafen, Germany, Sgt. Antozak was slightly injured by flak and has been recommended for the Purple Heart.

On the 19th the target was Schleissheim, Germany. The flak for the area was intense, accurate and heavy. Lt. Abadi, Lt. Kahn's Bombardier was slightly injured in the leg by a piece of flak, and will receive the Purple Heart. No fighters were encountered. The bomb pattern was very good, but seemed to start a little short.

The 22nd of July was really filled with a lot of excitement. The mission today was to Ploesti, Rumania, and as usual the flak was very heavy. The oil refineries were the target for today, and some of the last sources of oil that Hitler has were well defended. In the lead ship we had a special crew made up of the men with just a few missions to go before completing their 50, also Colonel Glantzberg, and the Group Bombardier, and Navigator. At half way to the target this ship had to turn back, because two of the engines were out. One having been knocked out by flak, and the other, on the same side, had to be feathered also, the broken gas line was throwing gasoline above the engine and a shroud of fire was trailing well beyond the tail of the ship. Colonel Glantzberg gave the order for the crew to get ready to bail out, but due to the quick thinking of T/Sgt. Hotzel and T/Sgt. Bayfield the fuel line was plugged up with a 50 cal. Machine gun bullet, and the fire in the engine soon went out due to no gasoline. They were able to start the other engine, and made it back to the base. Due to the ability of Colonel Glantzberg, Lt. Specht and the two EM mentioned above all of the men on the crew will be able to hit at the enemy again. Lt. Simeroth the navigator, flying in the nose was slightly injured in the hand by flak and will receive the Purple Heart. Lt. Kahn and crew had to abort because his landing gear wouldn't stay up, and also his carburetors were inoperative. They hit a RR bridge and highway in Bulgaria. As for the results of this mission most of the ships toggled on the lead ship and their bombs fell a little short; however, a couple of the ships had their bombs on the target. Lt. Taylor and crew made it back to the base, but were unable to land because #4 engine was dead, windmilling with no oil, and his hydraulic system was shot out. Being unable to land, he headed the ship out and all of the crew bailed out near the 464th Group. F/O Smithkin bailed out all right but for some reason unknown to any man the chute failed to open until he was about 100 feet from the ground, and of course that was too late. Lt. Jack Gunn received a broken ankle from the jump. S/Sgt. Daniels, and Lt. Kaufman are in the hospital with slight ankle and leg injuries. Another thing that happened today was a grass fire that got out of control and swept through the Bomb Dump. A lot of Frags and ammo exploded. The men of

this Squadron were called to assist the fire fighters, and the fire was soon put out. The damage wasn't too bad.

The most costly day for the Squadron was the 25th. The men were briefed to hit the German Goering Tank Works at Linz, Austria, and also that this would be a rough mission, with lots of flak and fighters. Without a doubt this was the **blackest day** for the Squadron. Of the six ships that made it to the target area, only one was able to make it back to our field, and one was able to land at Foggia. Lt. Foster was able to make Vis Island and bail out. The story that two returning crews told was that approximately 150 to 170 fighters jumped them just before they started over the target. Things happened so fast, and there was so many ships failing that the men had no time to watch other ships or much of anything else. They were too busy shooting at ME's and FW's. A list of the crews that failed to return today is as follows: 1st Lt. Fulks, Glenial, 2nd Lt. Ludium, Marion C., 1st Lt. First, Harry M., F/O Stewart, N. B., S/Sgt. Krivitsky, Morris, S/Sgt. Diamond, Geo., S/Sgt. Binartino, Louis, S/Sgt. Jaske, Walter E., S/Sgt. Duran, Fred C. Jr., S/Sgt. Godino, Peter S., 2nd Lt. Githens, Kenneth C., 2nd Lt. Gidez, Calvin D., 2nd Lt. Tarp, Roland F., 1st Lt. Patterson, ?????, S/Sgt. Peterson, Geo. C., S/Sgt. Esser, Geo., S/Sgt. Farr, H. J., S/Sgt. Morrison, Hermit C., S/Sgt. Wendte, D. S., S/Sgt. Sipple, C. B., 2nd Lt. Warren, Rbt. A., 2nd Lt. Schwinow, W. M., 2nd Lt. Enghroch, C. N., F/O Griton, D. N., S/Sgt. Wiseman, W. N., S/Sgt. Flaker, M. R., Cpl. Connan, R. M., Cpl. Myers, S. R., Cpl. Wilson, N. S., Sgt. Roznicek, R. T. The gunners on Lt. Arbuthnot's crew accounted for 10 destroyed, Lt. Cockrins gunners accounted for 7, and Lt. Fosters crew accounted for 4 destroyed. Quite a few men on these crews were hurt due to the bail out, flak, and fighter fire. The men who will receive Purple Hearts are as follows: Lt's Foster, Racek, Dennis, and Carter, Rodecker, Buffalo, Antcsar, Walsh, Navio, Smith, Gore, J. D. Lt. Jenkins made a nice landing at Foggia. His nose wheel was inoperative, and he was able to keep the nose off the ground until the ship had slowed down to about 20 MPH.

On the 28th of July our bombers hit Greece for the first time since we have been operating. The target was the M/Y at Phlorina. The results of this mission were very good.

After the mission to Budapest, Hungary all of our ships returned safely to the field; however, Lt. Mohan's engineer failed to transfer gas and they were forced to make a landing in a field about four miles from the Squadron. The plane just did stop in time before going over a steep embankment.

During the month of July 21 combat missions were flown. We lost seven ships. Four over the target, one bail out near the Sqd. Area, one bail out over the Island of Vis, and one forced landing. 19 officers and 24 enlisted men are "Missing in Action". 5 officers and one enlisted man were killed in a crash near home. One Flight Officer was killed parachuting from a disabled aircraft. The Purple Heart and two clusters were awarded this month, one posthumously to F/O Smithkins family. A number of our men were able to go to rest camps for periods of 5 to 7 days. 10 officers and 20 enlisted men were able to pay a visit to Rome. 28 E/A were destroyed, 10 damaged, and 3 probables by our gunners, with the men on Lt. Arbuthnot's crew high with 14 destroyed in a single day. Three 1st Lts were promoted to Captain. 31 2nd Lt. To 1st, and one F/O to 2nd Lt. We had an average of 6.2 ships over the target per mission. As a majority of the missions haven't been scored by Group yet, there is no breakdown on the results. However, of the five scored we have 2 Superior, 1 Excellent, 1 Fair and 1 Poor.

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EXTRACTS FROM THE SQUADRON HISTORY FOR THE MONTH OF JULY

July 1. No combat mission was flown today. Lt. Norris was promoted to 1ST Lt. Enlisted men and officers were paid.

July 2. Today's mission was the first for the month of July and was to Budapest, Hungary. The flak over the target wasn't as intense as it had been in the past, and only a few E/A were seen. The reports state that there were large fires, and a lot of smoke over the target so it must have been hit. Lt. Arbuthnot had to jettison his bombs due to engine trouble, and return to the base. On the way back he escorted a crippled ship and ran into a flak area at low altitude. The ship was badly shot up when they returned but no one was hurt. The mission was the 53rd for the Squadron. Promotions for enlisted men were posted today.

July 3. The 54th mission for the Squadron was flown to Bucharest, Roumania today. As the lead ship started the bomb run, they changed their mind and decided to go to an alternate. The other ships had their bomb bay doors open and were ready to drop their bombs when **xxx xxx** flares came from the lead ship. It was too late for them to do anything but drop their bombs, so most of the bombing today went unobserved. As far as our ships were concerned the flak wasn't too bad. One ship, from another Group was seen to go down.

July 4. No combat mission was flown today. Lt. William E. Waggoner joined our Squadron from the 49th Bomb Wing.

July 5. Today's mission makes the 55th for the Group, and was flown to the Marshalling Yards at Beziers, France. It was one of the longest flights we have made, and 3 of the ships had to land at Corsica to refuel. The flak over the target was very light and there were no fighters. Lt. Warner left the formation 30 minutes before the **xx**, and Lt. Jenkins and Huber were "Early Returns". Seven of our ships made it over the target and really Blasted it.

July 6. The mission today was Aviano, Italy. We had 80% hits on the target which is really good bombing. Eight of our ships made it over the target, and all returned safely by 1230. No flak or fighters were seen. This mission makes the 56th for the Squadron. Captain Foster left us today to go to the 26th General Hospital.

July 7. Mission number 57 was to the **xxxx xxxxxx** synthetic Oil of **xxxxx** at Blechhammer, Germany. As expected the flak was very heavy, and there were a lot of E/A to and from the target. The fighter coverage was very good, and all of our aircraft returned safely. They had to bomb through a smoke

screen and the results didn't show up in the pictures, but it is believed that the target was well hit. We had seven ships over the target, and two abortions. Four of the ships had holes in them from flak and fighters. Pfc Edward Boffalo, and S/Sgt. George W. Smith, on Lt. Fosters crew, claimed a ME-110 a piece, and Sgt. Moss on Lt. Arbuthnots crew got credit for a probable on a FW-100.

July 8. The mission today was to Korneuburg, Austria, which is about seven miles from Vienna. From all reports the fighter pilots did a good job protecting our bombers. The flak today was accurate and intense and a couple of B-24s were seen to go down, but it is believed that all the men got out of them safely. Another was seen to blow up and it is doubtful than any of the crew got out. From photographs and reports the target was well blasted. Lt. Moss and S/Sgt. Prozob (??) were the first of our organization to finish fifty missions.

July 9. No combat mission was flown today. 2nd Lt. Edward E. Myllmaki was assigned from the 49th Bomb Wing. 2nd Lt. Eugene E. Mahlock was promoted to 1st Lt.

July 10. No combat mission was flown today. 2nd Lt. Frank E. Maxson (??) was assigned from the 49th Bomb Gp. Xx officers and xx EM were put on DS to the United States, on rotation.

July 11. The mission today was to Toulon, France. The target was the harbor, and this makes the 59th for the Squadron. We had seven ships over the target, and from all reports we did a good job; however, smoke from other bombings partially obscured the briefed target, and some of the bombs fell further in the harbor. Lt. Garrison had a salvo of bombs in the sea, and Lt. Smith had to abort, and land at Salerno. Flak was accurate and intense. Also, some of the boats in the harbor were throwing it up at us. Lt. Louis (NMI) Grayner flying in the nose of the lead ship was hit by a piece of flak in the arm, and was awarded the "Purple Heart".

July 12. The 60th mission for the Group was the M/Y at Nimes, France. The mission was coming off fine until just this side of the target. The gunners were watching some ME-100's that were playing around high and to the rear, when all of a sudden 6 to 8 xx's came into the front of the formation. Before the men could collect their wits 3 of our aircraft were shot down, and the 4th flew into the water on the way back. Two of our ships were late returning, and had us sweating for a while. Lt. Morse had to land at Corsica for gas, and Lt. XXXXXX had to land at Spinazola, Italy. At last all our crews returned safely. The results of the mission were not too good, with the bombs a little south of the target. Lt. Amoroso, and Lt. Rothberg were slightly injured by flak and will receive the "Purple Heart".

July 13. No combat mission was flown today.

July 14. Today's mission was the 61st for the Squadron and the target was the Oil Refineries at Petfurdo, Hungary. All seven of our ships made it over the target, and from all reports this was a very good mission, with approximately 70% of the bombs on the target. There was a little flak, and a few fighters were seen, but caused no trouble. All the aircraft returned safely at xxxx.

July 15. We received word this morning that Lt. Smith and crew, who were on a non-operational flight, crashed on an airport near xxxx, Italy at approximately 2100 last night. From reports received it seems that he tried to "Go around" after over shooting the field, with one engine out. A list of the crew, who were all killed, is as follows: Lt's. John H. Smith, Roy L. Johnson, and S/Sgt. Hanley. Mission #62 was flown today, and the target was the Oil Installations at Ploesti, Roumania. Flak was reported light, however, Lt. Weems ship was hit, and all of the crew had to "bail out" approximately 10 minutes from

the target. It was the crews 10th mission, and it is sincerely hoped that they all made a safe landing. A list of the crew is as follows: 1st Lt. Weems, William Z. Jr., 2nd Lt. Myllmaki, Edward E., 2nd Lt. DeRudder, Peter J., 2nd Lt. Moore, Orville S., T/Sgt. Stringer, Glenn E., S/Sgt. Mahuta, Eugene A., S/Sgt. Ryan, Timothy J. Jr., S/Sgt. Powers, Donnie E., S/Sgt. Weaver, Arthur D., S/Sgt. Samuels, Harry C. As for the mission itself they had to bomb through clouds, but from all reports the mission was a success. Smoke was seen 100 miles from the target. 1st Lt's. Murphy and Robinson were promoted to Captain, and the following 2nd Lt's. were promoted to 1st: Campo-Lightbody-Malita-Moore-Kovak-Rapp-Warner-Wester. X S/Sgts were promoted to T/Sgt.

July 16. Today's mission was to the Aircraft Factory at Wiener Neudorf, Austria, and was the 63rd for the Squadron. An 8 to 9 tenths coverage over the target was reported, and the results were unobserved. The flak for this area was reported as intense, accurate, and heavy, and a few of our ships returned with flak holes.

July 17. No combat mission was flown today. 2nd Lt. John X. XXXXXXX (Radar Navigator) asgd to us from the 764th Bomb Sqd.

July 18. The 64th mission was flown to Friedrichshafen, Germany, and the target was an A/C Factory. Not much flak was encountered, however, it was accurate and heavy. All of the ships had a few holes when they returned. We had six ships over the target, and the results of this mission were fair. We had a few hits on the target, but most of them were over to the right. Sgt. Antczak was hit by a small piece of flak, and was slightly wounded. He will receive the "Purple Heart".

July 19. Mission 65 was to Schleissheim, Germany. The flak for this area was intense, accurate, and heavy. Lt. Abadi, Lt. Kahn's bombardier, was slightly injured in the leg by a piece of flak, and will receive the "Purple Heart". No fighters were encountered on this mission. The bomb pattern was pretty good, but seemed to start a little short. One B-24 was seen to go down, but it wasn't from this Group. F/O Panagiotopoulos (Molly), John N. was assigned to us from the 764th Squadron. He is a Radar Navigator.

July 20. No combat mission was flown today.

July 21. Today's mission makes number 66, and was to Brux, Germany, or Czechoslovakia depending on what map you use. They had to bomb by PFF and it was believed that the target was hit. The following 2nd Lt's. were promoted to 1st. Carvelas-XXXXXX-First-Graynor-Kaufman-Raymond-XXXXXX.

July 22. The crews were briefed for Ploesti, Roumania today, and as usual the flak was very heavy. The Romana Americana Oil Refinery was the target, and being one of the last operative refineries in this area, all of the enemy's guns were mashed on this target. In the lead ship today we had a special crew made up of the men who just had one or two to go before completing 50 missions. Also, Colonel Glantzberg, and the Group Bombardier, and Navigator. A half a minute from the target this ship had to turn back, because two of the engines were out. One having been knocked out by flak and the other, on the same side, had to be feathered also. The broken gas line was throwing gasoline above the engine and a stream of fire was trailing well beyond the tail of the ship. Colonel Glantzberg gave the order in preparation for the crew to bail out, but due to the quick thinking of T/Sgt. Hotsel and T/Sgt. Mayfield the fuel line was plugged with a 50 cal. shell, and the fire in the engine soon went out due to no gasoline. They were able to start the other engine and make it on back to the base. Due to the ability of

Colonel Glantzberg, Lt. Specht and the two EM mentioned above all of these men are back to hit the enemy again. Lt. Simeroth, the Navigator flying in the nose turret, was slightly injured in the hand by flak and will receive the "Purple Heart". Lt. Kahn and crew had to abort because his landing gear wouldn't stay up, and also his carburetors were inoperative. They hit a RR and Highway in Bulgaria. As for the results of this mission: Most of the ships toggled on the lead ship and their bombs fell a little short. However, a couple of the ships had their bombs on the target. Lt. Taylor and crew made it back to the base, but were unable to land so headed the ship out and all crew bailed out near the 464th Group. F/O Franklin bailed out all right, but for some reason unknown to anyone his chute failed to open until he was 100 feet from the ground, and of course that was too late. S/Sgt. Daniels and Lt. **Xxxx** are in the hospital with leg and ankle sprains, and Lt. **Xxxx** had a broken ankle.

July 23. No combat mission was flown today. X officers and xx EM to Rome for a visit. One officer and x EM to the United States for "Change of Station". The following 2nd Lts. Were promoted to 1st: Johnson-Shipley-~~xxxxxxx-xxxxxx-xxxxxx~~.

July 24. The mission today was to Andrijevica, Yugoslavia, and the target was "Troop Concentrations". There was no flak or fighters seen on this mission, and would have been a very successful one if all the ships had toggled on the lead ship. After making one pass at the target and not having things lined up to suit Captain Murphy, they went around again. This time things still weren't right, however, Lt. Abadi got his go, and the rest of the ships did the same. Their bombs were a little short and to the left. Captain Murphy then went around again and let his right at the center of the target. This makes the 68th mission for the Squadron.

July 25. The crews were briefed to hit the Herman Goering Tank Works at Linz, Austria, and also that this would be a rough mission, with lots of flak and fighters. Without a doubt this was the **BLACKEST DAY** for the Squadron. Of the six ships that made it to the target area, only one was able to make it back to our field, and one was able to land at Foggia. Lt. Hester was able to make it to the Island of Vis and bail out. The story that the two returning crews told was that approximately 150 to 170 fighters jumped them just before they started over the target. Things happened so fast, and there are so many ships falling that the men had no time to watch other ships or much of anything else. They were busy shooting at E/A's. A list of crews that failed to return is as follows: **List is unreadable. The rest of today is also unreadable.**

July 26. No combat mission was flown today.

July 27. The 70th mission was to Pec, Yugoslavia. There was no flak or fighters; however, the 1st section dropped their bombs x miles before the target. We had 5 ships over the target. F/O Richman was promoted to 2nd Lt.

July 28. The target for today was a M/Y at Phlorina, Greece and makes the first time this Bomb Group has dropped their bombs on this country. The crews ran into no fighters or flak. It was reported that the bomb pattern was good. We had five ships over the target and one ship had to jettison their bombs at the **xx**. All of our ships returned safely. The target makes the 71st for the Group. 2nd Lt. Githens was promoted to 1st Lt.

July 29. No combat mission was flown today. Captain Ribinson relieved from his duties and assigned to Group Operations. 1st Lt. Specht was promoted to Captain.

July 30. The mission today was to Budapest, Hungary, and makes the 72nd for the Squadron. A few E/A were seen, but none of them made a pass at our formation. The flak was moderate and inaccurate. From reports there was a good bomb pattern, but seemed to be to the right of the target. All of our ships returned safely, but Lt. Mohan after circling the field 2 or 3 times, and ... **The rest of today is unreadable.**

July 31. The 73rd and last mission for the month was to Bucharest, Roumania, and the target was oil refineries. After two abortions we had x ships over the target. The flak for this area was intense, but inaccurate. The reports for the mission were good, with a lot of hits on the target.